



Howard County  
RECREATION & PARKS

ANNUAL REPORT 2015

A scenic photograph of a pond at sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright lens flare and reflecting on the water. The sky is filled with soft, wispy clouds. The foreground is dominated by tall green grasses and reeds. The background shows a dense line of trees and a house partially visible on the left.

DIVERSE



# FROM THE DIRECTOR



It is my pleasure to present to you the annual report for fiscal year 2015.

This fiscal year was a year of transition. Allan H. Kittleman was sworn in as the new County Executive in December, and the progress we enjoyed under the prior administration continued.

With any transition in leadership comes changes, but County Executive Kittleman has offered the same support and enthusiasm for our mission. He cut the ribbon at Belmont Manor & Historic Park, a project that spanned both administrations, and this fall opened the Howard Astronomical League Observatory at Alpha Ridge Park and the Nature Place at Robinson Nature Center. In addition, he has been a consistent presence at our events and programs, including a week spent with children at different camps.

I firmly believe that the work our staff does in parks, recreation services, and natural resources makes our department easy to support. It never ceases to amaze me the wide range of services we

perform. Our staff manages more than 9,000 acres of parkland, and in this fiscal year ran 5,774 programs and camps. Our staff is enhancing natural areas by removing invasive species. They are preserving the history of our county in the 25 historic sites we manage. They are providing excellent child care services in many of Howard County's elementary and middle schools. They execute large-scale events such as the July 4th Festival and Fireworks and Wine in the Woods.

I encourage you to look through this report to learn about our diverse offerings and the community we serve. It is my honor to lead this department and the excellent staff that makes Howard County a great place to live.

Sincerely,

John R. Byrd  
Director  
Howard County Recreation & Parks



# Howard County

## RECREATION & PARKS

7120 Oakland Mills Road  
Columbia, Maryland 21046

County Executive: Allan H. Kittleman  
Director: John R. Byrd

### **FY2015 Advisory Board:**

Dr. Joel Goodman (Chair)  
Ms. Sylvia Ramsey (Vice Chair)  
Mr. John R. Byrd (Executive Secretary)  
Ms. Cynthia Vaillancourt (Board of Education)  
Mr. Chuck Parvis (Board of Education)  
Mr. William Santos (Planning Board)  
Mr. Thomas Franklin  
Ms. Joanne Kiebler  
Mr. Daniel Tracy  
Ms. Winnie Tsao (Student)

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## MISSION STATEMENT

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### Mission

To responsibly manage natural resources; provide excellent parks, facilities, and recreation opportunities for the community; and ensure the highest quality of life for current and future generations.



### Vision

The Department of Recreation & Parks strives to deliver recreation and leisure opportunities that will improve the health and well-being of the community and to serve as model stewards of the environment by managing, protecting, and conserving our resources for a sustainable future.



### Core Values

- Exceptional Customer Service
- Professionalism
- Accountability
- Knowledgeable, Well-trained Staff
- Teamwork
- Integrity
- Trend-Setting





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## ACCREDITATION

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Howard County Recreation & Parks is accredited through the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA). To achieve accreditation, the Department was required to meet 144 standards encompassing all operations contained in leisure services. These professional standards serve as an aid for improving performance and maintaining quality. They provide park and recreation agencies with an ability to evaluate their operation, while achieving and maintaining a level of efficiency and effectiveness. Howard County Recreation & Parks achieved accreditation in 2001 and re-accreditation in 2006 and 2012. Howard County Recreation & Parks is one of only 102 accredited agencies in the United States.

CAPRA recognizes park and recreation agencies for excellence in operation and service. Charged with providing high quality services and experiences, park and recreation agencies across the United States turn to CAPRA Accreditation as a credible and efficient means of achieving these goals, while providing assurance to the public that the agency meets national standards of best practice. CAPRA accredits departments and agencies that provide park and recreation programs and services.





# Howard County

## RECREATION & PARKS

Howard County Department of Recreation & Parks is committed to offering the best services and amenities to our residents. We serve a diverse population from different backgrounds and with different interests. It is our mission to create a welcoming and accepting atmosphere in our parks, at our programs, and at our events.

The diversity is reflected in the community we serve and the services we provide. From our reforestation efforts to our therapeutic recreation services, Howard County Recreation & Parks holds a wide range of responsibilities to serve those who live, work and recreate here.

# DIVERSE



# GOALS FY2015

## 1 Restructure the FY15 Budget to secure an adequate balance in the self-sustaining fund

Objectives:

- 1) Identify self-sustaining fund (SSF) full-time (FT) positions to transfer to the general fund (GF).
- 2) Evaluate which SSF contingent worker (CW) expenses should be transferred to the GF.
- 3) Identify if we can delay the hiring of FT vacancies in the GF & SSF.
- 4) Identify a funding source for facility repairs.
- 5) Identify how to reduce GF expenses, to absorb the cost of the SSF positions, transferring to the GF.

## 2 Secure a new management contract for the Timbers at Troy Golf Course

Objectives:

- 1) Establish a Golf Course Committee to oversee the management contract process.
- 2) Specify responsibility for Timbers equipment replacement.
- 3) Revise the revenue sharing formula.
- 4) Identify improvements that are needed for the grounds and the facility.
- 5) Identify if a lease or a management contract is the most advantageous option.

## 3 Work with the Superlative Group to promote sponsorship opportunities

Objectives:

- 1) Provide the Superlative Group with a list of our parks, programs, media and sponsorship partners.
- 2) Solicit sponsorship legal expertise from staff in the Office of Law and the Department of Finance.
- 3) Review the Superlative reports to ensure that the Scope of Work requirements are completed.
- 4) Identify the value of current department sponsorships.
- 5) Identify if Phase II of the Consultant Services request for proposal (RFP) is viable.

## 4 Secure a consultant to conduct a comprehensive needs analysis for the 2016 Land Preservation and Recreation Plan

Objectives:

- 1) Establish an in-house committee to develop an RFP.
- 2) Review neighboring and other similar jurisdictions plans.
- 3) Select a qualified consultant to conduct the survey and analysis. (Continued as FY16 goal.)

## 5 Assist new Administration during transition period

Objectives:

- 1) Provide thorough background of DRP.
- 2) Initiate new staff by meeting and providing on site tours.

## 6 Ensure continuation of active capital projects

Objectives:

- 1) Determine adequate budget needs and secure funding.
- 2) Hire another project manager for current vacancy in Capital Project Division.
- 3) Facilitate RFP process for design and construction in a timely manner.



# GOALS FY2016

## 1 Complete the 2017 Land Preservation, Parks & Recreation Plan

Objectives:

- 1) Select a consultant to research and manage the project.
- 2) Conduct a thorough needs analysis of county residents.
- 3) Conduct public meetings to solicit resident input.
- 4) Complete the Plan by July 2017.

## 2 Expand Partnerships with other government and private entities to enhance program opportunities

Objectives:

- 1) Work closely with the Howard County Public School System to expand youth sports opportunities in Columbia elementary and middle schools for baseball, volleyball, and basketball.
- 2) Seek sponsorships and naming opportunities from private corporations as an alternate source of funding for capital and operating budgets.

## 3 Improve the Department's fiscal status in the SSF

Objectives:

- 1) Audit the Department fee structure across the board to determine if we are competitive with other service providers.
- 2) Maximize opportunities for sporting events at turf fields.
- 3) Enact auditors recommendations for managing the SSF.

## 4 Secure management contract for Timbers at Troy Golf Course

Objective:

- 1) Select a qualified management company and negotiate a contract that will relieve the county's financial burden for the operation of the course.

## 5 Complete Phase 3 for Blandair Park, Phase 2 for Troy Park, and East Columbia Library Park.



In April, the Columbia Baseball League (CBL) and Howard County Public School System announced a partnership to increase the availability of school fields for the program.

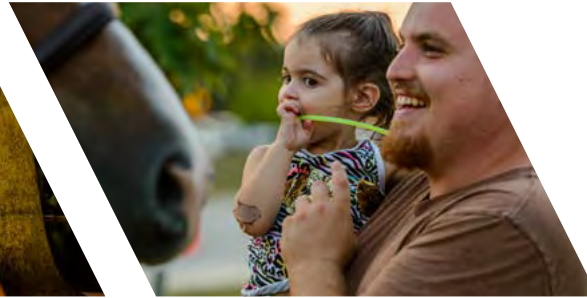


Blandair Park Phase 3 includes the maintenance building, an accessible playground, a backyard games area, shelter and restrooms.



# YEAR IN REVIEW

JULY AUGUST SEPTEMBER OCTOBER NOVEMBER DECEMBER JANUARY FEBRUARY MARCH APRIL MAY JUNE



## JULY

- 4** Several thousand attended the annual July 4<sup>th</sup> Festival and Fireworks in downtown Columbia.
- 8** A Sunset Serenades Concert at Centennial Park featuring children's music by Rainbow Rock.

## AUGUST

- 5** National Night Out at the North Laurel Community Center included a visit by a mounted police officer.
- 16** The People's Choice Award, a 1972 Pontiac Firebird Formula, at the Rockburn Open Car Show.

# YEAR IN REVIEW

JULY AUGUST **SEPTEMBER** OCTOBER NOVEMBER DECEMBER JANUARY FEBRUARY MARCH APRIL MAY JUNE



## SEPTEMBER

- 13** Members of the Chesapeake Lace Maker's Guild showed off their craft outside of the Thomas Isaac Log Cabin.
- 27** The ribbon cutting of Phase I of Troy Park at Elkridge featured a game between the Elkridge Hurricanes and Ellicott City Patriots.

## OCTOBER

- 21** Marilyn Miceli was one of six inductees into the Community Sports Hall of Fame at the Celebration of Sports.
- 26** The Happy Haunted Hayride returned to Rockburn Branch Park. Proceeds went to the Elkridge Adult Athletic Association Scholarship Fund.



# YEAR IN REVIEW

JULY AUGUST SEPTEMBER OCTOBER **NOVEMBER DECEMBER** JANUARY FEBRUARY MARCH APRIL MAY JUNE



## NOVEMBER

- 1** Family Volunteer Day participants helped beautify parks throughout Howard County.
- 2** The first Pumpkin Chunkin' at the Robinson Nature Center drew STEM teams from local high schools.

## DECEMBER

- 1** Allan H. Kittleman was sworn in as the new Howard County Executive, succeeding Ken Ulman.
- 6** More than 2,000 attendees descended on the Gary J. Arthur Community Center for the 42<sup>nd</sup> annual Holiday Mart.

# YEAR IN REVIEW

JULY AUGUST SEPTEMBER OCTOBER NOVEMBER DECEMBER **JANUARY FEBRUARY** MARCH APRIL MAY JUNE



## JANUARY

- 10** An evening of fun and dancing at the Snowflake Ball for Dads & Daughters at the Gary J. Arthur Community Center.
- 24** The Maryland Science Center and Robinson Nature Center collaborated for a special Scope out the Night Sky program.

## FEBRUARY

- 14** Valentine's Day Truffle-Making and Wine-Tasting at the Robinson Nature Center.
- 20** The Therapeutic Recreation & Inclusion group held its annual Casino Night.

# YEAR IN REVIEW

JULY AUGUST SEPTEMBER OCTOBER NOVEMBER DECEMBER JANUARY FEBRUARY **MARCH** APRIL MAY JUNE



## MARCH

- 8** The Tennis Play Day at the Meadowbrook Athletic Complex drew more than 60 participants.
- 28** Children hunted for Easter Eggs and met the Easter Bunny at the Spring Egg Hunt at the Gary J. Arthur Community Center.

## APRIL

- 4** More than 1,000 people attended the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Kids Fest at the Meadowbrook Athletic Complex.
- 11** Fred Dorsey, descendant of the original owners of Belmont, speaks at its grand opening.



# YEAR IN REVIEW

JULY AUGUST SEPTEMBER OCTOBER NOVEMBER DECEMBER JANUARY FEBRUARY MARCH APRIL **MAY JUNE**



## MAY

- 4** A fun day of buying and selling at the Spring Flea Market at the Gary J. Arthur Community Center.
- 16** Attendees at the 23<sup>rd</sup> Wine in the Woods enjoyed local wine, crafts, food and live music.

## JUNE

- 1** The 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Shred-It Action Sports Video Contest kicked off. Prizes were awarded for the best video edits.
- 5** The North Laurel Community Center celebrated its 4<sup>th</sup> birthday with sports, crafts, music and an ice cream sundae bar.

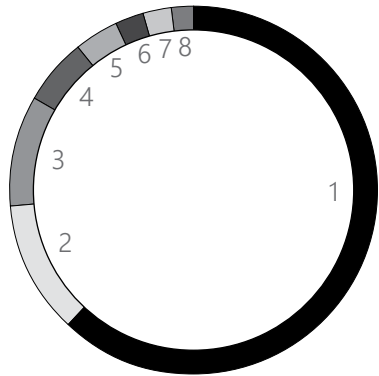
# DIVERSE

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# BUDGET

## Total General Fund Budget

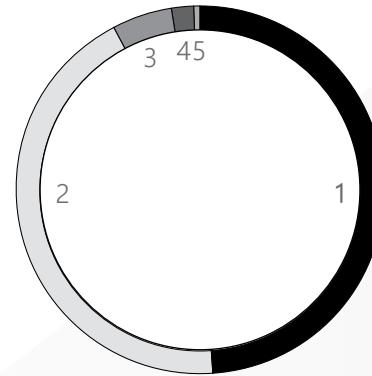
**\$1,027,550,315**



1	Education	62.2%
2	Public Safety	11.6%
3	Non-Department	9.6%
4	Public Facilities	6%
5	Community	3.8%
6	General Government	2.5%
7	Legislative / Judicial	2.4%
8	Recreation & Parks	1.9%

## Recreation & Parks Budget

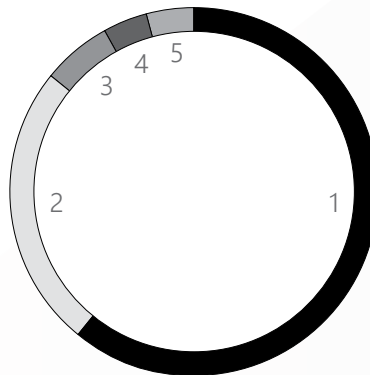
**\$44,761,791**



1	General Fund	49%
2	Self-Sustaining Fund	43.4%
3	Golf	5.2%
4	Forest Conservation	2.1%
5	MPEA & Grant	0.3%

## Recreation & Parks Expenses

**\$39,499,580**



1	Salaries	61%
2	Contractual	25%
3	Supplies	6%
4	Fleet	4%
5	Other	4%



## STAFF



### WHO WE ARE

In FY2015, Howard County Recreation & Parks had 211 full-time positions (10 vacant, three frozen); 97 part-time benefitted positions (17 vacant, one frozen); 963 contingent workers (an average of 414 working 40 hours per week). Of the professional staff, 17 are Certified Recreation & Parks Professionals (CPRP); three are American Sport Education Program certified; and two are Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialists (CTRS). Out of all staff, 3% have 35 or more years of service; 4% have 30-34 years of service; 10% have 25-29 years of service; and 7% have 20-24 years of service.

### FY2015 HIGHLIGHTS



**John Peach**, a Parks Operations Supervisor, was named the Department's Employee of the year. His nomination read:

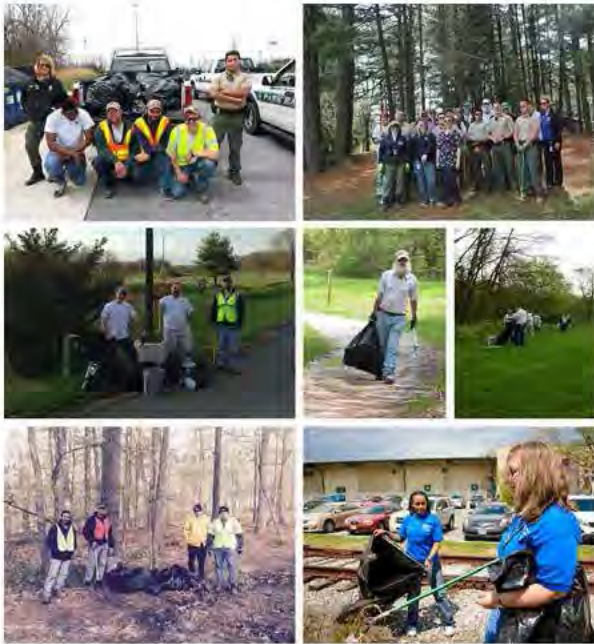
"To contemplate the absence of John Peach at the helm of Zone 2 is distressing, and to county residents a major shortcoming for the county. With 32 years of park experience, he successfully manages approximately 600 acres of the parkland in Howard County. He remains in constant contact with his immediate supervisor, governmental officials and community groups to elicit support and to promote public awareness of park activities such as, special events, temporary closures for repairs and renovations, and during critical situations. Countless times during inclement weather, it's an "on day" for John; sacrificing earned-leave he never redeems in order to address challenging situations of noticeable magnitude.

"His acuity to resolve park situations saves the county humiliation and money. During a rain-storm, after a capital project repair to an eroding area in Centennial Park John came into the office during off hours to ensure that vehicular and pedestrian travel were restricted from the site. John's conduct with this situation and others are reflective of his work ethic. When communicating, he aims to make operations transparent by providing accurate information to the public prior to, during, and following a project."



**Park Ranger Tony Tanner** completed the requirements for the Professional Ranger Certificate through the Park Ranger Institute and the North Carolina Justice Academy. Ranger Tanner is the first in the state of Maryland and only the seventh non-sworn Park Ranger to receive this certificate. The Professional Ranger Certificate Program is open to all park personnel who have been employed for a minimum of five years in the profession.

## STAFF



In April, staff participated in the **20-minute clean-up**, a county government-wide initiative to beautify selected areas around Howard County. Recreation & Parks staff at seven sites -- Schooley Mill Park, Western Regional Park, Blandair Park, Guilford Park, Zone 1 parks, Rockburn Branch Park, and headquarters -- collected 3,388 pounds of trash and 60 pounds of recyclables.



The **All in a Day's Work** event in November gave employees the chance to learn and compete in tasks such as using a forklift, skid loader, bucket lift, backhoe and more. This year's event had 31 participants, an 80% increase over last year.



Three longtime employees retired this year. **Barbara Moore (left)**, head of the licensed childcare division, retired in June after 40 years at Recreation & Parks. She began as a southern area program supervisor in February 1975, and holds the record for longest time work at Recreation & Parks. **Ken Webster (right)**, superintendent of administrative services, retired in June after 39 years with the department. Ken has held several roles in Recreation & Parks. **Janet Fouke**, who worked more than 20 years in registration, retired in September. She totaled 32 years in the department.

The Department continued to expand **succession planning**, highlighted by the mentorship program. The purpose the Succession Plan is to ensure the continued performance of the Recreation & Parks department by making provisions for the development and replacement of staff. Succession Management refers to the identification and development of potential successors in a department. The key is to create a match between the department's future needs and the aspirations of individual employees.

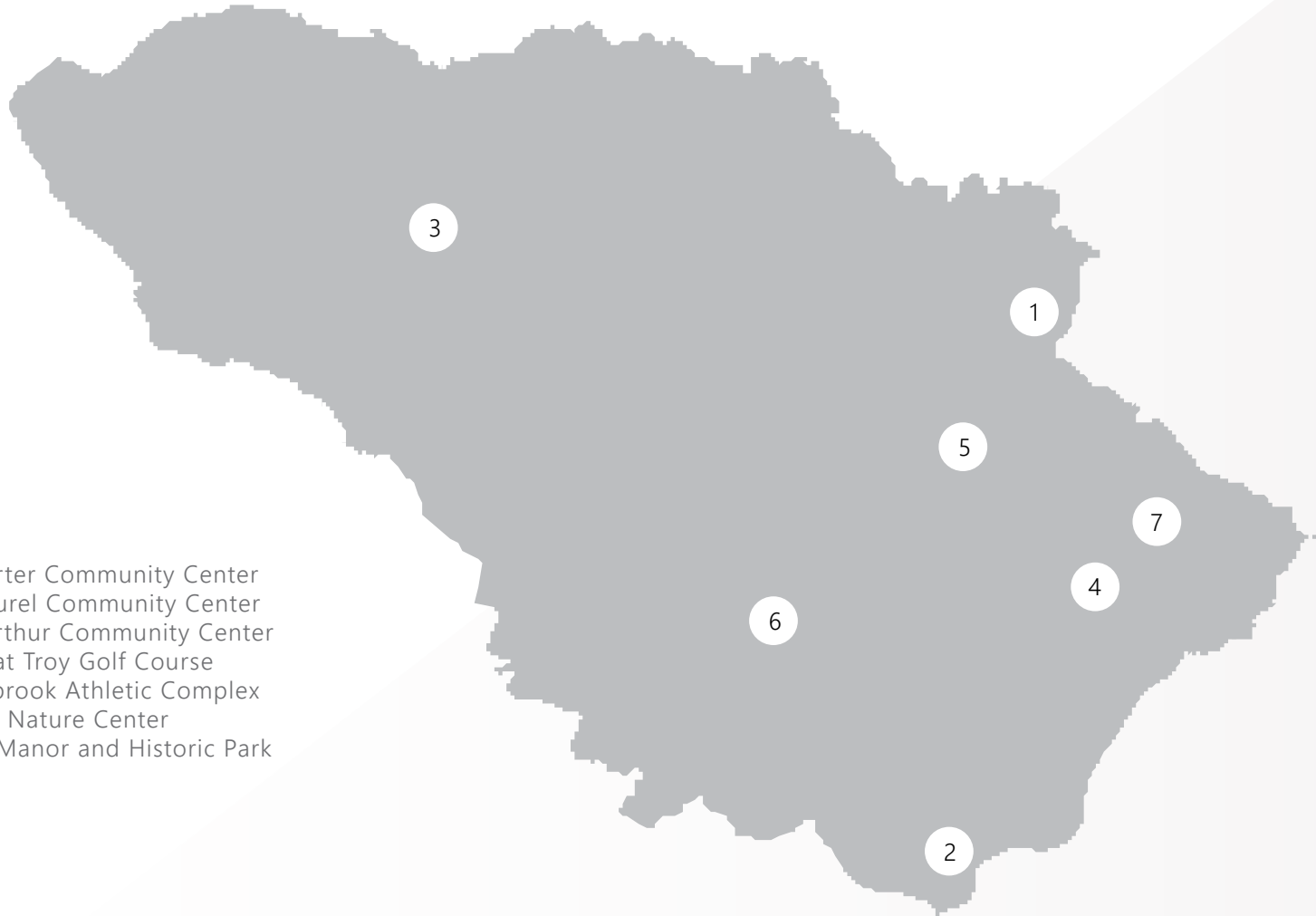
The Mentorship Program opens new channels of communication, information and education while providing an environment for professional diversity. The Mentoring Program demonstrates the Department's investment in staff development providing staff the opportunity to gain experience outside of their traditional work assignments.

DIVERSE

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## FACILITIES

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- 1 Roger Carter Community Center
- 2 North Laurel Community Center
- 3 Gary J. Arthur Community Center
- 4 Timbers at Troy Golf Course
- 5 Meadowbrook Athletic Complex
- 6 Robinson Nature Center
- 7 Belmont Manor and Historic Park



## FACILITIES



6555 BELMONT WOODS ROAD  
ELKRIDGE, 21075

Belmont was built in 1738, home to Caleb and Priscilla Dorsey of Elkridge. The Manor House was passed through generations of Dorseys, Hansons and Bruce families. Howard County purchased the property in 2012 and it is now operated by Howard County Recreation & Parks. The Manor was restored and sits on 68 acres of rolling hills which includes a cottage house, carriage house, barn, caretaker house, pond, trails, cemetery, and large gardens. Belmont now hosts weddings, meetings and other special events. Belmont also offers a variety of programs open to the public.

### FY2015 HIGHLIGHTS

**4.11.15** Belmont held its ribbon cutting ceremony, officially opening the site to the county. Recreation & Parks officials were joined by Howard County Executive Allan H. Kittleman, Howard County Councilmember Jon Weinstein, and Preservation Howard County President Fred Dorsey, who is a descendant of the original owners. The event included a ceremony, tours and open house.



**11.2.14** Belmont hosted the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Celebration of Partners in Parks, which recognizes the partners and volunteers who strive to protect, preserve, and enhance the natural, cultural, historical, and overall park environment through sustainable practices and stewardship.



**5.2.15** Belmont began programming at the site with the Belmont Blockbusters outdoor movie series.

**6.7.15** Belmont hosted an open house with tours, croquet, horseshoes, badminton and other outside games.

**FY15** Belmont hosted a total of 48 events (weddings, meetings, other ceremonies) and 12 programs.

## FACILITIES



2400 ROUTE 97  
COOKSVILLE, 21723

The Gary J. Arthur Community Center is a true "community facility" built to serve the growing population in the western part of the county. Located within Western Regional Park, the facility is shared by the Departments of Recreation & Parks, Health, and the Office on Aging. Features include a fitness room, commercial kitchen, double gymnasium, preschool classrooms, multi-purpose rooms, senior activity room, and more.

### FY2015 HIGHLIGHTS

**7.16.14** Celebrated July is Recreation & Parks Month with free snowballs, chair massages, giveaways, Natural Resources show-and-tell, Park Ranger giveaways and info, and a special "Outside is In" Center art project.



**7.14** The Center implemented a July Fitness Challenge. At sign-up, members received a calendar and pedometer to track steps and other activity/exercise initiatives recommended by the Fitness Coordinator. Participants turned in their calendar every week for the chance to win weekly giveaways, and a grand prize gift certificate at the end of the month. More than 60 members signed up for the challenge, and Fitness Room and Gymnasium membership usage was higher in July than in June.

**9.10.14** Hosted the Fall Outdoor Flea Market with 43 spots rented and approximately 350 in attendance.

**12.6.14** The 42<sup>nd</sup> annual Holiday Mart had 130 juried artisans and 2,432 in attendance.



**3.27.15** The Spring Egg Hunt was full with 70 participants aged 2-10 years old, plus families. It was held indoors due to cold and windy weather. Participants enjoyed the egg hunt, temporary tattoos and face painting, crafts, refreshments, carnival games, and visiting with the Easter Bunny.



**5.2.15** The Center hosted the Tour de Cure, which had 800 riders and 1,000 in attendance.

**5.9.15** The Spring Flea Market had 44 sellers registered and an estimated 350 shoppers.



## FACILITIES



5001 MEADOWBROOK LANE  
ELLCOTT CITY, 21043

The Meadowbrook Athletic Complex (the "MAC") is a destination for indoor basketball, volleyball, field hockey, badminton, jump rope and much more! The facility houses 35,000 square feet of unobstructed gymnasium space designed to serve all ages and all levels of play.

### FY2015 HIGHLIGHTS

**8.2.14** Badminton continues to grow as a popular sport, and the MAC hosted the adult badminton tournament, drawing teams from around the state.



**12.6-7.14** More than 700 participants competed in the partnership Gymnastics Tournament. This is up more than 300 participants from 2013.

**2.15.15** The Mid-Atlantic Indoor Field Hockey Championship tournament filled with 38 teams.

**3.8.15** The free Tennis Play Day drew a record 82 participants to learn the basics of tennis and spend a fun, active morning with friends.



**4.4.15** The second annual Kid's Fest Kid's Fest was a huge success with more than 1,200 kids registered. The estimated total attendees was 4,000, up 100% from 2014.



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## FACILITIES

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9311 WHISKEY BOTTOM ROAD  
LAUREL, 20723

The North Laurel Community Center was built to serve the southeastern portion of the county. The facility is shared by the Departments of Recreation & Parks, Health, and Police as well as the Office on Aging. Features include a fitness room, commercial kitchen, double gymnasium, pre-school classrooms, multi-purpose rooms, senior activity room, and more.

### FY2015 HIGHLIGHTS

**8.14** The Center participated in the Prepare for Success school supply drive in partnership with HCPSS and the Community Action Council. Additionally, the Center participated in the Back to School Clothing Drive with the Multi Service Center.

**8.5.14** Howard County Recreation & Parks partnered with Howard County Police and Fire for National Night Out. The evening is designed to heighten awareness of crime and drug prevention, generate support for local anti-crime programs, and strengthen neighborhood spirit and police-community partnerships.



**10.25.14** Fall Spooktacular was held with 20 participants and with family members had approximately 60 in attendance.

**11.14** Hosted the third annual Thanksgiving Turkey Giveaway, along with a Winter Weather Clothing Giveaway in conjunction with the Community Action Council.

**11.15.14** The Tinsel & Treasure craft fair was held with eight vendors. Event took place during the two-day Snapology LEGO event, which had than 500 attendees. The Center also partnered on a Skate Park event with local skate vendors, which had more than 100 in attendance.

**2.7.15** The first Mommy-Son Valentine Dance was a huge success with 62 couples participating.



**3.29.15** The Spring Egg Hunt for children 2-10 years old had 74 registered participants. Weather cooperated and program evaluations reflected a positive program for all.

**5.9.15** The annual Spring Flea Market was held in partnership with local girl scouts troops with 70 sellers registered. The event was well-attended.

**6.5.15** The Birthday Bash to celebrate the Center's 4<sup>th</sup> year had more than 150 attendees. The Center celebrated with ice cream floats, cake, crafts, and outdoor activities in the courtyard.



## FACILITIES



6692 CEDAR LANE  
COLUMBIA, 21044

The Robinson Nature Center is a nature education facility situated on 18 acres of land adjacent to the Middle Patuxent Environmental Area, which provides 1,021 acres of forest, meadows and river valley to explore. Geothermal heating/air-conditioning, porous paving, solar panels which generate 15% of electric needs, innovative water conservation methods and a host of other features make this building environmentally friendly and one of only three LEED Certified Platinum buildings in Maryland. The Center stands today through the foresight and generosity of James & Anne Robinson and the James & Anne Robinson Foundation.

## DIVERSE

### FY2015 HIGHLIGHTS

**FY2015** Robinson staff led 426 programs (including 114 field trips, 237 public programs and camps, as well as 75 birthday parties). These programs engaged over 16,850 participants. Mission-driven programming connecting participants to their natural resources is a key component of the Nature Center's goals and promotes environmental stewardship to all generations.

**Summer 14** Was listed as one of the *Baltimore Sun's* top 100 places to take kids this summer.

**10.11.14** Worked in partnership with the National Aquarium to develop and host a "Streams to Seas" festival that highlighted our water's journey from the Middle Patuxent River in Howard County to the Chesapeake Bay and, eventually, to the Atlantic Ocean.

**11.2.14** Hosted the first Pumpkin Chunkin' event with catapults designed by local high school students as part of their STEM activities.

**2.22.15** Created an annual event, Bay Day, to celebrate Howard County's connection to the Chesapeake Bay and educate the public on issues related to storm water management and on the important wildlife that inhabit the Bay.

**4.25.15** Collaborated with more than 20 scientists, engineers and educators from local astronomy organizations to celebrate International Astronomy Day with 175 people in attendance.



**5.15** Served close to 18,000 participants (close to 7,000 this school year) through field trips. Robinson staff facilitated 22 field trips in May. In total, approximately 1,720 children, chaperones and teachers participated in these field trips.

**Summer 15** Continued construction on the outdoor Nature Place, designed to provide an area of nature exploration and nature discovery and adventure for children. It will open in September 2015.



## FACILITIES



3000 MILLTOWNE DRIVE  
ELLICOTT CITY, 21043

The Roger Carter Community Center is a state-of-the-art, 46,000 square foot community center that serves as the community center for Ellicott City. It includes swimming and diving pools, basketball and volleyball courts, classrooms, fitness and exercise rooms with cardio and PRECOR strength training equipment, a climbing wall and much more.

### FY2015 HIGHLIGHTS

**8.22.14** The first Teen Pool Party, featuring pool games, music, snacks and more, was attended by 50 teens.

**10.31.14** Hosted the Zombie Bash Halloween party for teens. It featured a costume contest, Xbox tournament, and the zombie apocalypse scavenger hunt.



**10.31.14** Hosted the Daddy-Daughter Sweetheart Dance. Daddys and daughters enjoyed dancing to a live DJ, crafts, an ice cream sundae bar and more.



**1.19.15** The 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Remembrance featured an invocation with a performance by the Bain Center Gospel Choir. The Center collected nonperishable food items to donate to a local food bank.

**4.15** The Center was featured on ABC2's Spotlight on Women program. The crew filmed members exercising in the fitness room and participating in a water aerobics class.

**4.4.15** The Pool Egg Hunt was a success with 69 participants. Children 2-10 years old hunted for eggs in the 25-meter indoor pool.

**4.18.15** The inaugural Earth Day Celebration at Roger Carter had 25 participants who accounted for 117,600 steps and picked up 382 pounds of trash and 51 pounds of recyclables from Historic Ellicott City.



# DIVERSE



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## FACILITIES

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6100 MARSHALEE DRIVE  
ELKRIDGE, 21075

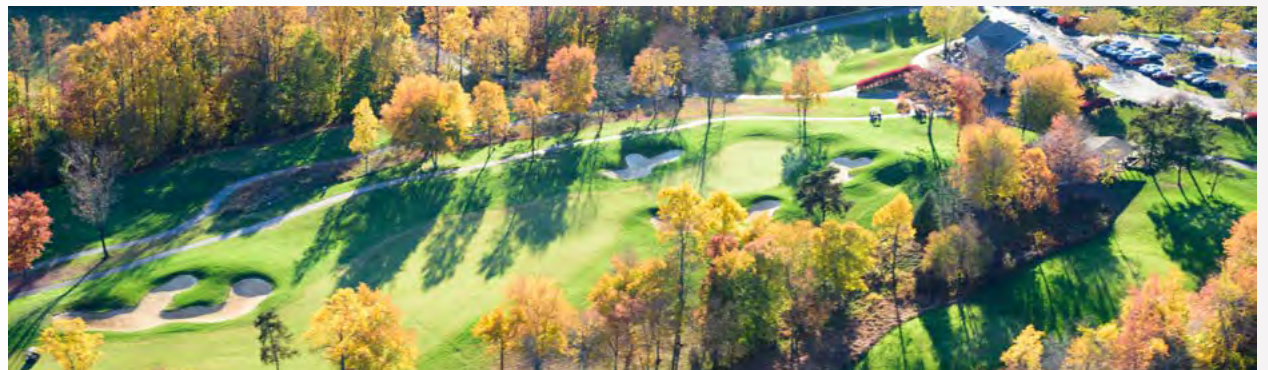
A 6,652-yard par 72 championship layout with a slope rating of 134. The Timbers offers 4 sets of tees that accommodate every skill level. The Timbers is the only public course in the greater Baltimore area with wall-to-wall bent-grass – tees, greens and fairways. The Timbers features a full-service Clubhouse & Grille Room, practice facility featuring driving range, large putting green and a practice chipping green.

### FY2015 HIGHLIGHTS

The U.S. rounds of golf played for 2014/2015 was down 7% and the U.S. rounds of golf played declined by 15% in the first four months of 2015. The amount of rounds played at Timbers was down 8%; 30,353 rounds were played at Timbers vs. the national average of 30,961 rounds played. Unfortunately, weather was a major factor in the Mid-Atlantic from November 2014 through April 2015. The decrease in golf fees can be largely attributed to the extremely difficult weather we had in our region. Overall, in a highly price sensitive market, we are pleased with the stability of Timbers. We continue to see a large increase in the use of technology at facilities (online bookings, reservation systems, video analysis with lessons, online tournament registration, etc.). We saw an 11% decrease in golf fee and we also saw incremental decreases across the board in other revenue departments. Fortunately, with the creation of numerous specials and revenue generators to increase rounds and get golfers to our course, we have remained stable through this difficult time.

**10.3.14** Hosted the Celebration of Sports Golf Tournament.

**6.5.15** Hosted the 6th annual Gary J. Arthur Memorial Golf Tournament.



# DIVERSE

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## RECREATION SERVICES

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### RECREATION

The Recreation Division is comprised of recreation programs and services that relate to arts, crafts, dance, special events and children and adult leisure classes and programs. It also runs recreational summer camps for all ages of children.

### FY2015 HIGHLIGHTS

#### July 2014

96 camp sections offered, 73 successful. Total income of \$144,718, 11% increase compared to July 2013. 911 participants, 6% increase compared to July 2013.

Robotic Programming Camp featured sophisticated circuitry and programming at a level not previously offered in our area. Three filled camps offered 11-15 year olds hands-on robotics experience.



#### August 2014

Ran 8 sections of Chess Camp with 67 children enrolled.

Held 5 successful sections of Gateway to China Camp with 43 children enrolled.



#### September 2014

19 successful classes in the month of September with a total of 224 participants. Highlights include: African Dance, 10 registered; Couples Dance with Mo and Barb Dutterer, 23 couples registered; Intro to Social Ballroom Dance, 23 registered; Watercolor Holiday Cards, 16 registered; Introduction to Polymer Clay, 8 registered; Dog Obedience, 10 registered; Stand Up Comedy, 6 registered.

#### October 2014

As of October 31, total income for fall 2014 Early Childhood & Youth Programs is \$251,927.25. This continues to set the record for any fall season (and any fall/winter/spring season). This is \$23,700 higher than fall 2013, which represents a 10% increase.



#### November 2014

13 successful classes held in the month of November with a total of 161 participants. Highlights include: A Taste of India Vegetarian filled 15 registered; NEW! Holiday Cookie Baking, 12 registered; Bike Maintenance, 11 registered; Painting Flowers in Watercolor, filled with 22 registered; Easy and Exotic Turkish Cooking, 14 registered; and Saturday Night Social Dance Party, 39 registered.

#### December 2014

The fall 2014 season ended with 2,325 children enrolled in our programs, and \$263,706 in revenues. Enrollment increased by 152 kids over fall 2013 (7% increase), while revenues increased by \$29,273 over Fall 2013 (12% increase). These are both records for any fall season.



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## RECREATION SERVICES

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### RECREATION FY2015 HIGHLIGHTS CONTINUED



#### January 2015

Winter 2015 total revenue as of February 1 was \$221,244. This is nearly \$30,000 more than Winter 2014 enrollment as of February 1, 2014 (15% increase). New programs (Science Club; LEGO® NXT Mindstorms, etc.), expanded programs (Bricks4Kidz LEGO®), and longer duration programs (Chess Club – now 12-14 weeks twice-a-year, versus 8 weeks three-times-a-year) contributed to the increase in revenues.

#### February 2015

Summer Camp 2015 registration started February 4. At the end of February, we had generated \$188,000 in 2015 Summer Camp revenue (up from \$180,000 in revenue at this same point last year), with 1,025 registrants (down from 1,100 at this same point last year, however the Pump It Up Jump-N-Art Camps have been transferred out of our section to Adult Programs & Camps, as they supervise the Art Camps).



#### March 2015

Adult program highlights: A Taste of India Cooking Class, 13 registered; Crash Course Photography for Artist, 20 registered; The Art of Basic Table Manners, 13 registered; and Watercolor Pet Portraits, 19 registered.

#### April 2015

25 successful adult programs started the month of April, with 303 participants registered, an 11% increase compared to April 2014.

#### May 2015

During the month of May 2015, recreation services generated \$90,000 in Summer Camp revenue. This is over \$20,000 higher than during May 2014.

#### June 2015

Camps began with the following taking place in June: Engineering for Kids, Little Scientists, My First School, Creative Magic, and HC Elite Basketball. Howard County Police Department Caps program took place at the Park on Wednesdays.



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## RECREATION SERVICES

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### RECREATION SPOTLIGHT - JUDY CENTER OUTSTANDING PARTNER

Howard County's Department of Recreation & Parks in May was named an Outstanding Partner by the Judy Center at Cradlerock Elementary School for providing a variety of enriching programming for preschool children and their parents at the Center. This is the second time the department has received this designation. Recreation & Parks has offered programming at the Judy Center since 2002. The department currently offers six programs that promote various domains of learning, including

literacy, music, socialization, outdoor activities and other motor skills. Since 2014, more than 250 children participated in these programs.

"Recreation & Parks, through its outstanding staff members Cindy Ochs and Adam Wienckowski, has worked closely with the Judy Center Steering Committee and Judy Center staff to ensure that best practices are followed and outstanding instruction for children occurs," said Anne Yenchko, Director of the Judy Center

at Cradlerock.

To honor the partnership, the Judy Center awarded Recreation & Parks a "Letter People Curriculum Kit," a research-based, developmentally appropriate, comprehensive Pre-K curriculum that helps early learners develop the strong reading and writing foundation.

The Center is named as part of the Judith P. Hoyer Early Care and Education Programs and funded by the Maryland State Department of Education.



DIVERSE



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## RECREATION SERVICES

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### SPORTS & ADVENTURE SERVICES

The Sports and Adventure Services Division promotes active lifestyles through instructional programs and community partnerships. It offers programs such as sports instruction and leagues, hikes, astronomy, camping and campfires, fishing, kayaking and canoeing, skiing and tubing, boating classes, nature programs, rock climbing and more.

### FY2015 HIGHLIGHTS

**12.20-21.14** Wrestling had its first recreational tournament and second and final travel tournament at the Gary J. Arthur Community Center. Final wrestling numbers were 61 for clinic, 173 for recreational, and 36 for travel. There were a total of 270 Howard County Vipers.

**Winter 15** There were 70 adult basketball teams playing on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday nights at the Meadowbrook Athletic Complex, Roger Carter Community Center and North Laurel Community Center.

**Winter 15** 900 (up 7%) youth participated in Winter Youth Basketball League (YBL) in the winter.

**Winter 15** Preschool sports program registration increased 48% (318) compared to last winter.

**12.15** 34 field hockey teams participated in tournaments in December, similar to numbers in 2013.

**2.7.15** More than 300 ultra-runners estimated for the 50k (31 miles) Mid-Maryland trail race at Rockburn Branch Park.

**3.14.15** Baseball Festival at Long Reach High School was well-attended with 105 athletes). High school players, the Oriole Bird, and Factory Athletics were on hand for instruction and enjoyment.

**3.15** 137 basketball teams from Maryland and Virginia participated in March Madness Basketball Tournaments. This was up a couple teams from 2014. Games were held at the Meadowbrook Athletic Complex and North Laurel Community Center.

**Spring 15** Youth spring competitive sports saw increases. The Columbia Baseball League had 362 participants (up 17%); Flag Football had 245 players with wait list; and volleyball had 226 participants (up 9%).

**Spring 15** The Adaptive Lacrosse Program at Cedar Lane Park increased from 7 to 14 registrations the first two weeks. The first two weeks were assisted by the Glenelg HS boy's lacrosse team and the following two weeks were assisted by the Howard HS boy's lacrosse team.

**5.15** 127 fast-pitch softball teams participated in tournaments at Cedar Lane, Centennial and North Laurel Parks in May, a 52-team increase from May 2014. For the month of May softball tournaments attracted 152 fast-pitch girls softball teams from four states (116 Maryland, 14 Virginia, 15 Delaware and 7 Pennsylvania) representing 2,280 players. Based on the tourism tournament impact study, 5,472 people attended these tournaments and spent \$519,840 in Howard County.

**5.2.15** The Spring Fishing Tournament on Centennial Lake gave out prizes for bass, bluegill, catfish, crappie and trout in three age divisions.

**5.9.15** 117 runners participated in the Wine in the Woods 5K at Centennial Park, similar number to 2014.

**5.22-24.15** Boat Rentals had an extremely busy Memorial Day weekend with over 500 rentals and over \$7,000 in sales.



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## RECREATION SERVICES

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### SPORTS & ADVENTURE SERVICES SPOTLIGHT - COMMUNITY SPORTS HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Howard County's Department of Recreation & Parks inducted six new members into the Community Sports Hall of Fame at the Celebration of Sports on October 21. The Community Sports Hall of Fame honors outstanding individuals who have gained prominence and/or have made a substantial contribution to community sports in Howard County. The 2014 Induction Class includes Shantha Chandra, Charles "Bernie" Dennison, C. Vernon Gray, Allen Fleming, Art McGinnis, and Marilyn Miceli.

**Shantha Chandra**, Howard County's tennis ambassador, is devoted to teaching the sport to all levels, children and adults alike. **Charles "Bernie" Dennison** has been the bedrock of the Howard County Youth Program (HCYP) for over 34 years. **Allen Fleming** co-founded the Central Maryland Football and Cheer, which later merged with the Carroll County league to form the Mid-Maryland Youth Football and Cheer League. It is now the state's largest football and cheer league.

**C. Vernon Gray** is the founder and driving force of The First Tee of Howard County. Under Vernon's leadership, approximately 6,000 youth have gone through Howard County's program. **Art McGinnis** co-founded the Elkridge Adult Athletic Association (EAAA). **Marilyn Miceli** ensured that the Special Olympics Howard County would continue when it looked like the program would again become inactive. In 2000, Marilyn became the Assistant Director of Special Olympics Maryland Howard County.



DIVERSE



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## RECREATION SERVICES

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### SPECIAL EVENTS

#### July 4<sup>th</sup> Festival & Fireworks

It was another full house at Lake Kittamaqundi for the annual fireworks. The day included kids activities and live music on two stages.



#### National Night Out

The 31<sup>st</sup> annual National Night Out took place on August 5 at North Laurel Community Center. Recreation & Parks joined the Howard County Police and Howard County Fire Department for a neighborhood party.



#### Rockburn Open Car Show

The Rockburn Open Car Show on August 16 showcased 80 vehicles. There was one flea market vendor and one car sale and several hundred people in attendance. Ralph McCarter's 1939 Chevy Sedan won Best of Show.



#### Holiday Mart

The 42<sup>nd</sup> annual Holiday Mart at the Gary J. Arthur Community Center on December 6 drew 130 juried artisans and 2,432 in attendance.



#### Kids Fest

The 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Kids Fest at the Meadowbrook Athletic Complex on April 4 had 1,200 kids registered. The estimated total attendees was 4,000, up 100% from 2014.

#### Camp Day

Hundreds of kids came out to Camp Day at Centennial Park on May 2 for games, sports, crafts, demonstrations and to learn about Howard County Recreation & Parks' summer camps.



#### Wine in the Woods

The 23<sup>rd</sup> annual Wine in the Woods at Symphony Woods in Columbia drew 20,506 attendees. We welcomed more than 30 Maryland wineries, food vendors, crafters, live musicians and more for the two-day event.



DIVERSE

## CHILD CARE



Recreational Licensed Child Care is dedicated to providing a safe, nurturing, quality program for the youth of Howard County. The program takes children as young as 2½ years old up through middle school. We offer a full array of child care programs and all of these programs and all of the staff are licensed through the Maryland State Department of Education Office of Child Care. Howard County Recreation & Parks is a recognized leader in opportunities for individuals with disabilities and complies with all Americans with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.) regulations.

Early Learning Centers (ELC) for preschool-aged children focus on developing a child's social, cognitive, emotional and motor skills through age-appropriate activities following recommendations by the Maryland Model for School Readiness. There are six Early Learning Centers during the school year. Before and after care during the school year is available at 27 locations: 21 serve elementary schools, four serve middle schools (Can-TEEN) and two serve as therapeutic recreation extended care centers (TREC).

### FY2015 HIGHLIGHTS

Program (number enrolled)	ELC	Elementary (before   after)	Can-TEEN	TREC
August	75	1,117   1,199	47	19
September	112	1,317   1,367	52	22
October	116	1,305   1,355	55	22
November	109	1,291   1,348	53	22
December	108	1,285   1,358	53	22
January	115	1,282   1,327	49	22
February	119	1,283   1,337	47	21
March	121	1,282   1,335	47	21
April	120	1,282   1,319	47	21
May	112	1,282   1,308	45	21
June	119	1,255   1,272	44	21



**DIVERSE**

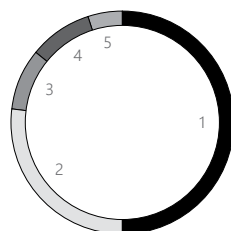


# VOLUNTEERS



Howard County Department of Recreation & Parks welcomed volunteers of all ages and abilities to serve in a variety of capacities during the Fiscal Year 2015, including helping with events, programs, and classes; performing park and facility maintenance; guiding tours; coaching and mentoring youth; and serving in many other capacities department-wide. From July 2014 through June 2015, there were 6,440 volunteers who donated approximately 123,396 hours, saving the department more than \$2,846,745.70 in labor costs (\$23.07 per hour as determined by independent sector). These individuals and groups have enhanced Howard County Department of Recreation & Parks by donating their valuable time, skills, and resources to assist the various divisions.

## FY2015 HIGHLIGHTS



Volunteer Distribution		
1	Sports & Adventure	50%
2	Natural Resources & Heritage	27%
3	Parks	9%
4	Recreation	9%
5	Licensed Child Care & Community	5%

Summer Adventure Camp participants donated **402 service hours** by working on assigned projects such as trail maintenance, cleaning and weeding garden plots, and learning about Heritage Restoration techniques and stream studies.



More than 40 volunteers planted **200 trees** at West Friendship Park as part of the county's Earth Day events.



Five trail hike leaders contributed **434 hours** to the long-standing Trail Hike Program.

Robinson Nature Center volunteers contributed a total of **3,639.5 hours**; new volunteer programs at Robinson Nature Center include Touch Tank Docents, Advanced Docents, and Nature Place Naturalist.

Volunteers contributed a total of **2,300 hours** to the operation of the Middle Patuxent Environmental Area; 120 volunteers donated a total of **898 hours** to help restore local ecosystems through the Weed Warrior program; Master Gardeners, along with other volunteers, contributed **223 hours** to plant trees and remove non-native, invasive plants in the Middle Patuxent Environmental Area.

Ten Trips and Tours Leaders contributed **266 hours** on various trips from the Library of Congress in Washington D.C., to Winterthur Museum in Wilmington, Delaware with the largest trip being 9 days to New Orleans and Nashville.

## DIVERSE

## ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

### REGISTRATION HIGHLIGHT

	Revenue	Programs (offered   ran)	Programs Filled	Scholarships	Call Count
Summer Programs	\$828,273.95	609   493	109	\$193,681.00	16,601
Summer Camps	\$2,901,232.94	1,097   951	197		
Fall Programs	\$4,334,136.00	2,174   1,734	313	\$213,042.00	11,359
Winter Programs	\$2,939,408.97	1,470   1,192	165	\$146,864.00	6,947
Spring Programs	\$3,241,368.11	1,727   1,404	205	\$130,557.00	14,446
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$14,244,419.97</b>	<b>7,077   5,774</b>	<b>989</b>	<b>\$684,144.00</b>	<b>49,353</b>



### MARKETING HIGHLIGHT

In FY2015, our marketing plan placed great emphasis on social media and the benefits that free platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter and Flickr, can provide to Howard County Recreation & Parks. Analytic programs for each of these platforms allow us to run statistics and monitor our progress in regards to our social media and what our audience members want to see in terms of content.

Throughout FY2015, 1,475 people liked our Facebook page, 21,984 people engaged with our content, generated 564,633 impressions and, in total, reached 239,113 people. Engagement is the number of people who have engaged with our Facebook page, through clicks, likes, comments or shares. Impressions are the number of times our content is displayed,

whether it was looked at or not. Reach encompasses the number of people who have seen any content on our Facebook page.

Twitter was used as our second most important social media platform. Throughout the year, our Twitter account generated 346 likes, 373 retweets, engaged 4370 people and generated 170272 impressions.

Our Flickr page, while used as a free photo storage program, generated traffic as well. We had in total, 1,012,022 views amongst our 165 albums and 6,785 photos stored in the 33.5GB of storage we used. We have 31 followers and continually send people to our Flickr page through links on our Facebook for audience members to view photo albums and more.

### CONSTRUCTION HIGHLIGHT

The lobby at Recreation & Parks headquarters was renovated in FY2015 to create a more open and inviting atmosphere and to increase security for staff in the building.





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## PARKS

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### PARKS IN FALL

The parks showed beautiful colors in fall. From top right, counterclockwise: Centennial Park, Alpha Ridge Park, Schooley Mill Park, Blandair Park, Hammond Park.

# DIVERSE



# PARKS

## PARK INVENTORY

Total Recreation & Parks Land Holdings	
Regional Parks	2,609.2300 acres
Community Parks (with Alpha Ridge Park)	710.8720 acres
Neighborhood Parks (including Playgrounds)	279.1450 acres
Natural Resource Areas	1,887.2800 acres
Historic Places	108.5920 acres
Open Space Total (including above)	3,564.5400 acres
<b>Total:</b>	<b>9,159.6590 acres</b>

### New Parkland Added in FY2015

Open Space in FY2015	87.1650 acres
Open Space	118.9480 acres
Approved for Transfer	



## ZONE 1 REPORT



Zone 1 includes Cedar Lane (pictured) and Savage Regional Parks and parks/school fields in Columbia and North Laurel.

### Athletic Field/Grass Area Aeration and Maintenance

Zone 1 has a very rigorous aeration schedule that it adheres to in order to help with water run-off. The Zone aerates a total of 15 ball diamonds, 15 multipurpose fields, and a number of plateau areas. The total acreage combined is roughly 26 acres.

### Litter Control

Staff spends roughly 7,000 hours picking up loose trash within their zone and another 560 hours for emptying trash/recycle cans, for a total of 7,560 hours per year on litter control. Zone 1 has 100 trash cans within its area. Each can is pulled at least once a day, weigh approximately 40 pounds. Therefore, Zone 1 empties roughly 480 tons worth of trash every year. In addition to trash cans, Zone 1 has 40 recycle dumpsters. The average weight for re-

cycle cans is roughly 40 pounds. Zone 1 empties roughly 195 tons worth of recycling each year. In total, Zone 1 removes roughly 675 tons worth of trash and recycling each year.

### Bio-Retention Ponds

Zone 1 maintains four bio-retention ponds. The purpose of the Bio-retention is the process in which contaminants and sedimentation are removed from storm water runoff.

### Inlets, Storm Drains, and Swales

There are 40 storm drains in Zone 1. Staff spends roughly 50 hours per year on storm drain maintenance. Staff also maintains 10 inlets performing the following functions: removing invasive materials, maintaining a proper buffer zone, fixing any hardware issues, and litter/debris removal. This effort takes approximately 60 hours per year. Staff also maintains roughly 1,000 feet of swales through litter/debris removal, maintaining positive drainage, and routine trimming. This effort takes approximately 50 hours per year.

### ZONE 2 REPORT



*Zone 2 includes Centennial (pictured) and Blandair Regional Parks and parks/school fields in Columbia and Ellicott City.*

#### **Soil Stabilization Projects**

Thirty-five acres of common area were top dressed and aerated, including sports fields and overflow parking field at Centennial Park to stabilize soil. About 70 hours of work was performed by park staff. Meadowbrook Park sports fields were top dressed, aerated and over seeded an area totaling 5 acres which took 24 hours and 700 pounds to complete. Cypressmede Park's natural surface trails were renovated through replacing rotten timbers directing water flow off of the trail into vegetative areas helping to prevent sediment deposits into stream. This effort took 16 hours to complete.

Created and incorporated an Event Parking Contingency Plan for all event agreements

at Centennial Park. The purpose is to reduce damage to turf, helping to eliminate soil erosion and sedimentation into storm water drains and lake. The overflow parking area has also been closed off to daily parking in order to establish and maintain turf.

#### **Watersheds**

Centennial North ponds sediment grate was regularly cleaned to allow for proper water flow during rain events. This effort took 120 hours.

Staff conducted 16 water quality tests to determine bacteria levels before swim events at Centennial Park. This effort took 64 hours to complete.

#### **Recycling**

To promote recycling, Zone 2 added 12 55-gallon recyclable containers and collected approximately 32,500 pounds of recyclables.

#### **Litter Control**

Zone 2 maintains 113 50-gallon trash cans throughout the parks, resulting in 42,000 bags of trash collected. Staff is also responsible for 47 55-gallon recycle cans throughout the parks, resulting in 11,300 bags collected.

#### **Meadowland Management**

Zone and Natural Resources staff partnered to renovate a 4-acre meadow establishing habitat for a variety of wildlife. Cost for seed was obtained through a \$1,300 donation from the Howard County Bird Club. This effort took 220 hours to complete. Additional areas have been identified for future meadow establishment.



## ZONE 3 REPORT



*Zone 3 includes Schooley Mill (pictured) and Western Regional Parks and parks/school fields in western Howard County.*

### **Trail Soil Erosion Repair**

Trail grading at Western Regional and Schooley Mill Parks tread surfacing to reduce water channeling on sloped trail inclines, turns and switch backs. Objective: Prevent soil surface erosion into streams and wetland areas. Also to provide stability and safe tread way for equestrian riders and hikers.

Installed drainage pipe at trail/stream interface crossings. Back fill with bank run stone mixture and clay. Objective: Eliminate water ponding barrier to provide stable trail surface. This was performed by 15 Scout Troop 737 volunteers. Removed woody plant growth at Warfield Pond Park on dam spillways to provide unobstructed water flow at spillways. This was performed by park staff.

### **Soil Analysis**

Annual soil analysis was completed on all athletic fields in Zone 3. The result determined that application of organic liquid fertilizer was needed to sustain a healthy stand of turf. Testing done determined phosphorous levels to be compliant to the 2014 Maryland regulations. Treatment and testing of 57 acres consisted of 300 staff hours.

### **Athletic Field Aeration**

Aeration topdressing and over seeding of 22 athletic fields completed to enhance turf stands at viable capacities to withstand athletic sport activities, reduce compaction, erosion and soil runoff. The project took 6,500 pounds of seed, 180 yards of top soil and 23,000 square feet of sod to complete.

### **Waterway/Stream Cleanup**

16.5 miles of stream waterways within Schooley Mill Park, Warfield Pond Park, Western Regional Park and Benson Branch Park were cleaned through removal of debris and log jams that prevented natural stream water flow producing log jams and bank erosion. Scout troops 007 and 737 committed 320 hours to this project.

### **Volunteer Day**

At Western Regional Park and Schooley Mill Park, volunteers installed sediment fencing on Baseball infields to contain soil in place. At Schooley Mill Park, 21 volunteers worked 84 hours to install 160 yards of crushed stone milling grade and compact in place to equestrian ring surfaces to reduce soil runoff and provide safe tread for Equestrian Riders.

## ZONE 4 REPORT



Zone 4 includes Rockburn Branch (pictured) and Troy Regional Parks and parks/school fields in Ellicott City and Elkridge.

### Plantings

Rockburn Park staff planted about 30 trees around sports fields and the maintenance shop with the help of 20 volunteers from the Elkridge Youth Organization.

Rockburn staff planted five trees at the Pfeiffer's Corner School House.

### Trail Maintenance

Mid-Atlantic Off Road Enthusiasts (MORE) performed 124 hours of volunteer work on "problem" areas within our trail system, fixing drainage and erosion issues. At each given time, there were 11 volunteers that covered various areas within the 7.4 miles of trails.

### Storm Drains

Staff re-painted 10 storm drains in Rockburn Branch Park: "Chesapeake Bay Drainage, Do not Dump."

### Ground Stabilization

Installed 319 linear feet of guard rail around the Rockburn Skills Course to prevent bikers from exiting and entering the course which causes new trails where there is not intended to be a trail.

### Bio-Retention Areas

Staff maintains 15 bio-retention areas in the newly developed Troy Park.

### Litter Control

Approximately three tons of waste was removed at Worthington Dog Park, Hillsboro Road and Landing Road. There were 3 tires, 2 bags of recyclables and 3 bags of trash recovered. Rockburn staff spends approximately 986 hours per year on litter removal. This averages out to approximately 490 yards of recyclables and 585 yards of trash.

### Pollution Reduction

Zone 4 cleans paint machines in proper locations, we use turf carts instead of trucks whenever possible, we clean all spills properly and use pig mats when we are aware of machine leaks. In January, staff built a lean-to to house our disposables for which are picked up by Clean Harbors. Our staff fuels all equipment inside as well.

### Storm Water Inlet Inspection

The pond crew comes out annually to mow and remove the woody growth from the storm water pond area. Our staff conducts quarterly inspections to check for holes created by burrowing animals, and to ensure there is no evidence of run off from sediments. The pond crew spends approximately 10-20 hours a year on this task. Our staff spends approximately four hours a year on quarterly inspections and three hours per year on a group inspection conducted by Environmental Services.

### Worthington Dog Park

Processed 867 dog park passes in 2015.



## PARKS

### WHAT'S NEW IN FY2015

**8.14** At Atholton Park, staff installed a new playground and swing area to replace the old equipment. Additionally, the pathway was renovated and new concrete was put down in restroom courtyard area. A new playground was also erected at Cedar Villa Heights Park and the park's pathways were repaired. (Below.)



**9.6.14** Phase I of South Branch Park in Sykesville opened. Phase I included the installation of two age-specific playgrounds – ages 2-5 and 2-12 – situated on a rubberized surface, a 32-by-36-foot picnic pavilion, retaining walls around the play area and an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant parking lot with a path. Phase I also involved the removal of a historic water tower that sat on the property. (Pictured at right.)

**9.27.14** Phase I of Troy Park at Elkridge Opened. The park project, which cost \$8 million, included the construction of two lighted synthetic multipurpose fields with press boxes and bleachers seating 330 for each field. Parking areas that include bio-retention islands with trees and plants to filter stormwater were constructed, along with the paved entrance road to the park. A children's playground opened in October. (Pictured at right.)



**11.17.14** Blandair Park's three turf fields were named in honor of Del. Frank S. Turner in a dedication ceremony. Del. Turner was an advocate for the construction of Blandair Park in Columbia and his support helped the county secure the necessary funds to bring it to fruition. (Pictured at right)





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## NATURAL RESOURCES

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### FY2015 HIGHLIGHTS

#### Stream and Pond Cleanup Program

In FY2015, we had 127 volunteers spend 332 hours in this program. Volunteers collected 1,217 pounds of trash and an additional 4,785 pounds of bottles, cans, tires and scrap metal were recycled. Since 1996, we have had 2,503 people spend 5,493 hours cleaning our waterways. These figures reflect the Department's participation in the Baltimore regional stream and watershed clean-up effort, "Project Clean Stream." This was the sixth year the Department participated in the International Coastal Clean-up providing one location. Since 2000, 40.09 miles of streams/rivers and 102.2 acres of lakes and ponds areas have been cleaned. Trash collected since 2000 totals 30,149 pounds with an additional 17,111 pounds of trash recycled.

#### Bark Ranger Program

In the summer of 2013, the Park Rangers of Howard County Recreation & Parks implemented a new initiative program. "Bark Ranger" encourages patrons to clean up after their pets, more specifically dogs, and to use a leash while visiting a Howard County park. As of FY15, the program has 3,017 participants signed up that have taken the Bark Ranger pledge.

#### Bark Ranger Program

In 2014, the Park Rangers of Howard County Recreation & Parks implemented "Ranger

Walks." These walks are an outreach initiative committed to educating the park patrons on natural resource topics and encourage stewardship of the environment. The four "Walk" topics related to current efforts include: (1) The Native Tree Hike, which teaches the basics of tree identification, the importance of forest buffers and the benefits of trees; (2) The Watershed Walk provides various topics within water conservation and the effects of pollution on local tributaries that lead to the Chesapeake Bay watershed; (3) The Reptiles and Amphibians walk takes patrons through the parks while exploring the wonderful world of turtles, snakes and frogs; and (4) The Junior Naturalist Program provides the basics of being a naturalist and gives park patrons the tools to teach their friends and family how to conserve and protect the environment around them. All Ranger Walks are free of charge.

#### Forest Conservation/Reforestation Program

In FY2015, the Department planted and enhanced a total of 16.27 acres of new forests. To date (1996-2015), a total of 394.42 acres have been planted through this program. This translates to 15.55 miles of stream buffer plantings and 125,501 plants.

#### Students Branching Out - Parkland Reforestation Enhancement Plantings

Two sites were planted through this grant/program in the fall of 2014. The first site was within West Friendship Park near the Middle Patuxent River. A total of 5 acres was planted with

700 trees. The second site planted was an open space lot within the Daniel's Mill subdivision. A total of 4.1 acres was planted with 800 trees. Both of these areas were older forest conservation sites that had suffered tree losses due to deer and drought.

#### Forest Conservation Easement Inspections

The Department of Recreation & Parks, Natural Resources Division is responsible for the inspection of any forest conservation easement established under a forest conservation agreement between a developer and the County pursuant to the Forest Conservation Act of Howard County. In FY2015, Natural Resources conducted 107 inspections with 54 (50.5%) passing.

#### Post-Development Landscaping Inspections

The Department of Recreation & Parks, Natural Resources Division is responsible for the inspection of any perimeter, parking lot, private street, internal residential and storm water management landscaping resulting from the subdivision or redevelopment of land in accordance with the requirements of Section 16.124 of the Howard County Code and the Landscape Manual. In FY2015, Natural Resources conducted 199 inspections with 78 (39.2%) passing.

#### Tree Canopy Program

Tree Canopy is a new program designed to establish and increase urban tree canopy throughout Howard County by providing free native trees to homeowners. Homeowners may have Tree Canopy trees planted anywhere on their property as long as they are not in a utility right-of-way or within existing heavy canopy coverage. In FY2015, 548 trees were planted for 77 participants.

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## NATURAL RESOURCES

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### **Stream ReLeaf Program**

Stream ReLeaf is a program designed to enhance riparian (stream) buffers by providing free native trees and shrubs to homeowners. The homeowner commits to planting the trees and shrubs on their property and the County delivers the requested plants. In FY2015, 2,281 trees were planted for 55 participants.

### **Emerald Ash Borer Project**

The Emerald Ash Borer Project is part of the Students Branching Out Grant. This effort consists of a plan to save the biodiversity of forested areas located within the boundaries of Howard County Park property. The process involves four steps which include surveying park property for the presence of ash forests, site preparation, under planting, and long term forest management. Since starting the project, we have identified 191 acres of ash located on parkland. In FY2015, 645 native trees were planted on 7.91 acres of ash stands.

### **Parkland, Open Space and Natural Resources Regulation Enforcement**

In 1992, parkland regulations were revised to place stronger emphasis on natural resources protection. This gave Howard County its first "post-development" environmental regulations. To date, we have issued over 1,944 warnings and have achieved nearly 100% compliance. In FY2015, 82 warnings were issued.



### **Agricultural Leased Lands**

All lands leased to farmers have conservation plans developed by the Natural Resources Conservation Service and are being farmed accordingly. In FY2015, the Department had 254.2978 acres leased to five farmers.

### **FrogWatch USA**

FrogWatch USA was implemented in 2000. With amphibian populations declining worldwide, researchers at the federal level have a need to gather information on frog and toad population trends across the United States. In FY2015, we had 24 volunteers contribute 160 hours.

### **Weed Warriors**

In FY2015, 21 volunteers reported 42 hours of removing invasive plant species. To date, 171 volunteers have worked together for a total of 703 volunteer hours removing invasive plants.

### **Howard County GreenFest**

FY2015 was the 8<sup>th</sup> year of the GreenFest. The theme this year was "Living with Wildlife" and featured many exhibits and vendors dealing with tree plantings, energy efficient home improvements, rain barrels, gardening and composting, electronics recycling, Goodwill donations, Nike Reuse-a-Shoe collection, Bikes for the World collection, as well as live bird and reptile displays. Other features included the County's recycling program and community tree planting programs as well as many community groups focused on environmental awareness. Festival attendance this year was more than 1,500.

### **Trout Stocking**

During FY2015, 6,000 brown and rainbow trout were stocked in the Little Patuxent and Middle Patuxent Rivers. State Fishery officials have determined that the water quality in these rivers are sufficient to support a recreational, three season fishery. In addition, Centennial Lake had 2,500 trout stocked in the spring.



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## NATURAL RESOURCES

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### MIDDLE PATUXENT ENVIRONMENTAL AREA

At 1,021 acres, the MPEA is the largest parkland in Howard County's system of parks, open space and natural resource areas. The County's Department of Recreation & Parks manages the area in a cooperative partnership with the MPEF. The MPEA is home to a diverse wildlife, including about 150 species of birds, over 40 species of mammals and numerous amphibians, reptiles, fishes, butterflies and plants. This parkland is comprised largely of mature, second-growth upland forest and floodplain forest. The Middle Patuxent River runs north to south through the property, with 17 tributary streams found within the boundary.

In FY2015, MPEA staff completed an assessment of the entire 5½ miles of natural surface trails in MPEA and updated the MPEA Trail Management Plan with mapping and descriptions of trail improvement and maintenance projects. The six remaining perpetually wet spots from the FY2014 trail drainage repair project were completed using turnpike construction and/or by addressing the trail tread's side slope, and the running slope, to improve drainage.

2,275 volunteer hours were spent maintaining 5½ miles of trails, conducting wildlife and stream surveys, controlling invasive exotic vegetation, planting native trees and shrubs and assisting with managed deer hunts.

Between the Conservation Stewardship and the Weed Warriors programs, a total of 1,613 volunteer hours were contributed to the removal of non-native, invasive plant species and replanting of native trees and shrubs within the environmental area. A grant from CBT awarded to the MPE Foundation in the amount of \$13,898 helped to fund the MPEA Weed Warriors program, and also funded bringing **EcoGoats to the MPEA** as a new management tool for invasive species control.

In October 2014, 384 resident letters were mailed or presented as door-hangers to all the residents with property bordering on the MPEA. The letters and accompanying information were part of an ongoing public education and outreach program to encourage residents to adopt environmentally responsible habits. The main purpose of the letter was to share resources for proper yard waste disposal, recycling, composting, and environmental landscape management practices.





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## HORTICULTURE & LAND MANAGEMENT

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### FY2015 HIGHLIGHTS

#### Soil Percolation

Staff has scheduled turf areas in heavy traffic areas in front of government buildings to be aerated twice a year to allow more water penetration and less sheet erosion. This aids in water filtering for the bay. These areas include North Laurel and Gary J. Arthur Community Centers, Miller and Glenwood Library and Belmont Historic Manor. Top dressing with compost was done to Miller Library. About 400,000 square feet has been aerated in FY2015.

#### Debris Removal

The Division cleaned up five new sites acquired by the County this year totaling 303,908 square feet. At the Granite Manor, this involved removal of exposed bags of fertilizer, taking a truck load of plant pots to a nursery for reuse, removal of hazardous material, trash and debris, removal of fallen dead trees decaying stone walls, etc. Bare areas were then seeded for vegetation coverage. During FY2015, 100 bags of loose trash, even an engine, were removed from the grounds.

#### Turf Repair

Turf repair was completed by seeding 133,884 square feet to damaged turf over nine different sites. This was caused by construction, snow removal damage, tire ruts, etc. Additionally, sodding was completed on 1,800 square feet because of construction damage.

#### Stump Removal and Seeding

More than 100 stumps were removed in FY2015 and repaired with grass covering of 2,900 square feet.

#### Sink Holes

The Division repaired three sink holes covering 3,520 square feet at three different locations: Howard County Detention Center, Howard County Center of the Arts and open space on Helmart Drive in Laurel.

#### Control of Invasive Species

HLMD was assigned the task of removing invasive pear from more than 2,000 square feet of meadow at Gateway and Thomas Dorsey Building. In the Font Hill Drive area, the Division has continued to mechanically remove and treat a 5,000 square foot area of Japanese Knotweed. The Division cleared a 2,000 square foot area covered by bittersweet at Elkhorn Garden Plots and converted it to turf.

#### Water Pipe Leaks

There were six water pipe leaks that were repaired, and then the ground was reestablished with vegetation. These were in the Columbia Gardener's garden plots.

#### Stream Cleanups

Staff handled several stream obstructing conditions. Two stream cleanups along the Little Patuxent River and Red Hill Branch and removing logs and debris blocking water flow in the stream along the Little Patuxent River.



#### Rain Gardens (pictured above)

The County assisted the Restoring the Environment and Developing Youth organization (READY) with the maintenance of rain gardens in various locations throughout the county. This program uses high school and college students to create rain gardens and other storm water enhancements at churches, schools and open space areas. This year, READY branched out and started handling maintenance of these areas. Staff taught the group the difference between weeds and the existing plants. HLMD also worked alongside the group at Savage Library, Thomas Dorsey Building, Howard Building Complex and the green roof at the Savage Volunteer Fire Station. As a group, they are maintaining 15,000 square feet of bio-retention areas and 22,000 square feet of green roof.

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## HERITAGE SITES

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The mission of Howard County Recreation & Parks Heritage Initiative is to capture and convey the authentic and rich history of Howard County through educational programs and historic preservation. Howard County Recreation & Parks Heritage staff manages 25 heritage sites offers a variety of educational programs, special events, tours of its museums and parks and many opportunities for people of all ages throughout the county.

### FY2015 HIGHLIGHTS

**12.5-6.14** More than 230 children and their families visited Santa at the Thomas Isaac Log Cabin.



**2.15** The Heritage Orientation Center was recognized by the National Park Service *Network to Freedom* trail for the period of 1840-1842 when the building served as an early courthouse and tried cases regarding runaway slaves and other cases that challenged the legality of the institution of slavery. A new exhibit with this information will debut in spring 2016.



**4-6.15** The Ellicott City Colored School, Restored hosted the Historic Ships of Baltimore museum's traveling exhibit *Sailors and Slaves: USS Constellation and the Suppression of the Transatlantic Slave Trade*. More than 400 visitors viewed the exhibit.

**6.15** Shakespeare in the Ruins presented *The Comedy of Errors* at the Patapsco Female Institute Historic Park. Shows took place Thursday-Sunday evenings and saw a total of 3,500 patrons over the 10-week run.



**Summer 2015** Summer internship projects included exhibit design plans for the Firehouse Museum and research on students, teachers and domestics at the Patapsco Female Institute. This information will be used as a part of upcoming exhibits at both of the aforementioned sites.

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## CAPITAL PROJECTS

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### FY2015 HIGHLIGHTS

#### **Timbers at Troy Golf Course Parking Lots**

Contractor crack filled the clubhouse and maintenance center parking lots. Both lots were also overlaid with new asphalt.

#### **Centennial Park Lake Loop Pathway Paving**

Portions of the lake loop were overlaid. Once paving was completed, all path edges were back filled with topsoil, seeded and curflexed. This project should help to eliminate shoulder run off into the lake.

#### **Cedar Villa Park Pathway**

Contractors widened and overlaid the deteriorated pathways in Cedar Villa Park.

#### **Skaggs House & Houchen's Barn Demolition**

The Skaggs house located in Fulton and the Barn located in Woodbine was razed this year, voiding the area of any contaminants from the house and barn interior/exterior components. All debris surrounding the house and barn were also removed from the site.

#### **Dunloggin Bridge Deck Renovations**

The Division contracted the re-decking of three Steadfast bridges bordering Dunloggin Middle School.

#### **Salas Driveway Paving**

Added to the driveway stone sub base and installed four inches of new asphalt to the Salas driveway from the road to the house then up the back hill to side yard parking. The existing stone driveway was severely washed out and the upper hill was eroding. This project eliminated the drainage issues.

#### **Belmont Manor & Pool House Restoration**

Contractors removed all rotted and peeling exterior materials such as loose stucco/paint from the Manor & Pool House. The entire exterior siding surfaces were washed and restored to excellent condition. All trim, windows, doors and shutters were also restored. This restoration project eliminates lead contaminates from entering the grounds and watershed.

#### **Belmont Driveway & Parking Lot Renovation**

Contractors overlaid all existing roadways and parking lots with two inches of new asphalt. All edges were backfilled, seeded and curflexed to prevent erosion.

#### **Centennial Park Boat Ramp**

##### **Intersection Re-Grading**

Contractors corrected the soil grade in the boat ramp pathway intersection area. All areas were sodded along with 8 new trees planted.

#### **High School Turf Fields Renovated to Artificial Turf**

Reservoir, Marriotts Ridge and Wilde Lake High School turf multipurpose fields were renovated into artificial turf fields. These projects eliminated the need for annual applications of nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium, along with the elimination of field erosion.

#### **Bonded Rubber Playground Surfaces**

New bonded rubber playground surfaces were installed at Troy Park, Holiday Hills Park, Centennial Park South area and South Branch Park playgrounds. The rubber safety surface ensure that no erosion occurs even in the highest volume of public use.

#### **Holiday Hills Volleyball Court Removal and Pathway Overlay**

Contractors removed the existing sand volleyball court and installed topsoil, seed and straw to return the area to turf, thus eliminating sand erosion during storm events. The pathway from the playground to the Vista Road entrance to the park was overlaid with new asphalt.

#### **Holiday Hills Volleyball Court Removal and Pathway Overlay**

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## CAPITAL PROJECTS

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### IN PROGRESS...



#### **Blandair Park**

The second phase of Blandair Park has started. The contractor is grading the site.



#### **Troy Park**

The first phase of Troy Park has been completed. Storm water management controls have been installed for the entire phase. Amenities include two artificial turf fields, a playground and parking lots.

# DIVERSE



**Howard County**

RECREATION & PARKS

## **ANNUAL REPORT 2015**

Concept and Design: Seth Hoffman  
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