

M A R C H 2 0 1 4

CARDEROCK SPRINGS COMMUNITY NEWS

Carderock Springs Community Calendar

(All events are at the Club unless otherwise noted)

<u>Date/Day</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Event</u>
Mar 17, Monday	7:00	CSCA Monthly Meeting
Mar 19, Wednesday	11:00-12:00	Fire Safety for Seniors: Prevention, Products, and Planning (Page 3)
Mar 24, Monday	7:30	Spring Environmental Event (Page 4)

It is Time to Volunteer

The Spring meeting of our Carderock Springs Citizens Association traditionally is the "beginning" of our year. It is the time Board members are elected for the coming year and committees are formed....which means....it's the time for you to volunteer to take part in the life and work of our community.

There are several ways you can help. First, volunteer to be take on one of the officer positions on the Board. Officers include: President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, Members at Large, and Club Liaison.

Second, join one of our committees, each of which carries on an important function in Carderock. These include:

- * ARC - (reviews home improvement plans)
- * Membership (Working on the directory and dues)
- * Beautification (Keeping Carderock looking beautiful)
- * Social (A community the plays together, stays together)
- * Environmental (Keeping Carderock "green")
- * Welcoming (makes sure new-comers feel welcomed when they move to Carderock)

Many Carderock "old-timers" have served on the Board and these committees in the past, so the Board would especially encourage newer members of the community to take a turn at volunteering. It is an excellent way to both make a contribution to our neighborhood and meet new people. If you have any interest in saying "yes" to volunteering, please let Phil Rider know ASAP. Thanks.

Update on Pepco Investigation of Carderock Springs Fires

As reported in the December 2013 CSCA newsletter—<http://www.carderockcitizens.org>, following sustained efforts by the CSCA to highlight electrical fires that were preceded by flickering lights or power surges, and single-home brownouts or power surges that have destroyed furnaces and other appliances to MD regulators, Pepco and local elected officials, Pepco agreed to investigate the matter.

Pepco focused its efforts on feeder 15111, one of three feeders that services the neighborhood, because it was shown to distribute power to every house damaged by electrical incidents as well as the four houses destroyed by fires. The following streets in Carderock Springs are fully or partially served by this feeder: Park Overlook Drive, Park Overlook Court, Glenmore Spring Road, Glenmore Spring Way, Hamilton Spring Road, Hamilton Spring Court, part of Stone Trail, Mackenzie Court, Lilly Stone Drive between Seven Locks and the four-way stop sign. There are 209 houses serviced by feeder 15111.

Pepco recently updated the CSCA on its efforts. Pepco did not provide specific technical details on the results of its investigation and monitoring efforts in response to queries placed by CSCA or local elected officials. However, it noted that it would be installing/replacing animal guards, lighting arrestors and cross-arm braces at some locations on the overhead portion of the feeder outside the neighborhood boundaries. More significantly, as a result of its inspection and review of the cables, transformers and outage dates experienced in the community, it concluded that “an overall upgrade of the system would benefit the area” and plans to replace cables and transformers on that feeder.

According to Pepco, “the crews have begun pre-construction work for this upgrade, such as marking utilities and reviewing the work area. The sub-zero conditions are not good for digging and trenching, which makes this work very weather dependent. PEPCO expects to complete the work between the first and second quarter of this year or earlier if weather cooperates.”

Since February 7, 2014, Miss Utility has been marking up the block bordered by Hamilton Spring Road, Glenmore Spring Way, and Glenmore Spring Road. This block is where the four house fires occurred and is scheduled to be completed first. Red lines denote location of power lines, orange denotes



cable lines, and yellow represents gas lines. In addition, Miss Utility has also been placing color-coded flags. Feeder 15111 is about 2.5 miles in length and serves over 200 residents, and that is why the replacement will take almost 6 months.

Equipment such as the Vermeer drilling machine for installation of underground electrical



cable can be seen along the public easements and private property of the above streets. The subcontractor for PEPCO is R.B. Hinkle. Holes have been excavated at various pad transformers along this block of 22 houses. As the new electrical cable is laid or buried, more holes will be excavated in some lawns of Carderock residents.

Again, if you experience any surges, outages, or other electrical events, please notify Pepco at (877) [PEPCO-62](tel:877-PEPCO-62), and more importantly, post your incident on the CS_Chats to keep all 400 residents informed.

Susan Eastman and Michal Freedhoff

March Senior Program

Wednesday Morning, March 19, 11:00 a.m.-12:00 noon

Fire Safety for Seniors: Prevention, Products and Planning

Presenter: Captain Paul Lancaster, Cabin John Fire Department

Did you know?

- * Older adults, aged 65 and more, die in home fires *more often* than the rest of the population.
- * There were *four serious house fires* in Carderock in the past 10 years.

What is more important to *aging well* in our homes than *living safely* in them? Captain Lancaster, will tell us how to prevent the most common house fires, educate us on the newest products including smoke/carbon monoxide detectors that will alert you or your children on your/their smart phone, and how to plan ahead for a fire *or* medical emergency.

Please RSVP to me at maryloushannon@verizon.net if you want to help set up, provide refreshments or provide a ride for a fellow senior.

April Meetup Options

There's no program for April but there are opportunities for informal gatherings or "meetups." Small groups are a great way to get to know others seniors. What would you like to

put together----- coffee at your home, lunch at a local restaurant, or a walk on the Canal?

Please RSVP to me at maryloushannon@verizon.net if you want to lead a "meetup" and I'll get the information out to the senior mailing list.

Volunteering will enrich your experiences and expand your relationships, both very important for those senior years.

The Senior Program is designed to help Carderock seniors age well by connecting them with their neighbors, offering opportunities to volunteer, and with programs to expand their minds.

Spring Environmental Event

Monday, March 24 at the Clubhouse 7:30PM

Join Diane Karlik as guest experts share their knowledge and experience so that as we work on and care for our gardens, landscapes, families, communities and the Bay, we have the background to do so in an environmental and sustainable way.

Topics include organic soil, organic lawn care, composting/compost tea/vermiculture, food initiatives within MCPS, the status of the Brickyard Educational Farm, Genetically Modified Foods, and more. The speakers are local as well as known on the national scene.

In addition, there are new laws in effect now that regulate the use of chemicals on our lawns that you need to be aware of, and the companies that may work on your lawn must also adhere to these practices and be licensed. This is definitely something new and we will have the opportunity to hear about that.

There will be presenter tables, brief presentations, demonstrations, hand-outs, and opportunities to ask questions and personally meet with these experts.

I have scheduled an evening rather than weekend daytime because on Saturdays and Sundays, our families are usually going here and there to religious events/sports practices/sports games and tournaments, and thus unavailable. I am hoping that those same families can send at least one representative to this meeting because I am particularly concerned with the current use of herbicides and pesticides on the same ground where these kids play. The future of the Bay is also a player here, and we want to help in the effort to keep that body of water safe for recreational purposes as well as a source of food.

(No food or drink served...even if organic!... so bring your own if need be)

Safe-Guarding Your Property

From recent postings on the chat, it is clear that there seems to be an increase in house break-ins within Carderock Springs. At a recent meeting of the Board, this concern was raised and discussed. Three specific suggestions came out of the meeting. (1) To once again review general safety measures, most likely in a newsletter article; (2) to look into the creation of a Neighborhood Watch Program; and (3) to consider placing a type of recording camera at each of the entryways that would monitor vehicles entering our community. If you have a special interest in working on any or all of these considerations, please let Phil Rider know via email at pmrbthmd@yahoo.com.

The Carder-Eco Column

Maryland Laws on Lawn & Soil Health

As spring rapidly approaches this year there are laws and information that you need to know as you or someone else takes care of your lawn. Last year in 2013 Takoma Park, MD passed the Safe Grow Zone Act. The law restricts the use of pesticides on private and public property in the Takoma Park. Although you are a resident of Carderock Springs this has become a county issue that was discussed by the Montgomery County Council on September 9th last year. Although there is only discussion at this point the state of Maryland has already passed a law affecting how Maryland homeowners take care of their lawns—the Maryland Lawn Fertilizer Law. Here are the details:

- Passed on October 1, 2013
- Affects homeowners, professionals, and stores
- All lawn care professionals are required to:
 - Soil Test for every new client
 - Follow UMD recommendations
 - Keep records of every single fertilizer application
- All lawn care companies applying fertilizer must be licensed
- Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) website lists certified companies
- Homeowner and professionals are not allowed to apply fertilizer to impervious surfaces
- Important Dates
 - Dec. 1st—Mar. 1st: No fertilizer can be applied regardless of applicator
 - Nov. 16th—Dec. 1: Only water soluble nitrogen can be applied at a select rate
- Natural, organic and organic-based providers cannot put apply excess phosphorus
- Enforcement will be by the MDA, and other county officials

For more information visit the following page: http://mda.maryland.gov/resource_conservation/Documents/fertilizerwebpage.pdf

The purpose of the new law is to reduce the amount of nitrogen and phosphorus running into the Chesapeake Bay as well as educate homeowners and professionals about the yards they take care of and the soil that affects it.

Soil is a complex system that can't be measured in nutrients such as Nitrogen (N), Phosphorus (P), or Potassium (K) or pH level alone. When conducting a soil test it does not help that moisture levels and extreme high or low temperatures can throw off pH readings. Like most things in life you get what you pay for.

For the best average soil test reading I recommend you contact an organic lawn care professional to test the soil in mid-to late spring or early fall. With the exception of winter soil tests can be taken year round. The tests that can be performed include:

- pH and Nutrient Test
- Bioassay
- Soil Life Test

There are over-the-counter tests, but I do not recommend them. For more information on each soil test read below:

PH AND NUTRIENT TESTS

This basic test usually gives a good measure of the soil's pH, available micronutrients phosphorous (P), potassium (K), and the percentage of organic matter. For an additional fee professionals can measure the micronutrients sulfur (S), calcium (CA), magnesium (Mg), zinc (Zn), iron (Fe), and Manganese (Mm).

RECOMMENDED FREQUENCY: Annually for 3 years, then once every 3 years.

BIOASSAY

This comprehensive test assesses the amount and activity of bacteria and fungi in the soil and provides professional advice on how to fix any imbalances. Due to the expense (about 10x the cost of pH and Nutrient tests) I recommend this test for anyone planning on major lawn renovation or construction.

RECOMMENDED FREQUENCY: Optional

SOIL LIFE TEST

This test measures the life of the soil—specifically the release of carbon dioxide, which indicates microbial activity.

RECOMMENDED FREQUENCY: Optional

OVER-THE-COUNTER

This test can be found in every garden center as over-the-counter solutions from boxed soil kits with plastic jars and pH litmus strips to spike-style gauges. The success of these tests rests with the price you pay. Instead of wasting your money I recommend you contact a natural, organic professional for one of the above tests.

RECOMMENDED FREQUENCY: Not recommended

Regardless of whatever soil test you choose, it helps to understand the soil food web. The Soil Food Web is the basis for a natural, organic lawn care program.

A natural, organic program feeds each part of the soil food web creating a natural balance. The problem with synthetic programs is that they kill off a part of the soil food web which causes an imbalance in another part of the soil food web. As a result synthetic companies apply a variety of pesticide, fungicide, and insecticides to your lawn. In no time the soil health is deteriorated to the point that you have to either reseed or renovate your lawn.

Before considering a natural, organic program you need to be comfortable with two things:

- 1) Clover
- 2) Understanding a natural, organic program is a process, not an overnight success.

The chart below shows the difference between a synthetic and natural, organic lawn care program.

Conventional (Synthetic) Lawn Care Program	Natural, Organic Lawn Care Program
Synthetic products	Natural, organic products
Chemical pesticides	None
Product approach	Systems approach
Treats symptoms	Does not treat symptoms
Applications/products based on calendar year	Applications based on soil test results
Feeds the plant (grass)	Feeds the soil
Bad cultural practices (mowing and watering)	Good cultural practices (mowing and watering)

Regardless of the decision you make this spring make sure you are familiar with the laws and effects of whatever program you choose. If you have any questions or want more information on information covered in this article feel free to email me at zkline@airlawncare.com.

Zack Kline for Diane Karlik

Diane Karlik, Environmental Committee

Classified

Cabin John Dog Walking: Midday walks to keep your pets happy and healthy. Many happy Cabin John and Carderock pet owners and their pets will happily give their recommendations. Call Carolyn at 240-204-2953.

Do you have more space in your home than you need? Empty nester or travel frequently and don't want to leave the house unattended? You could rent that extra space! Cabin John renter for many years is looking for private space with private bath. Impeccable references (including current landlord). Quiet, dependable, considerate. Please e-mail Carolyn: cd.cabinjohn@gmail.com

Housekeeper/Nanny/Eldercare: Available M-F, part-time or full-time. General housecleaning, laundry/ironing, organizing, cooking, driving/errands, etc. Have own car, speak English/Thai. Reliable, hard working, honest. Good local Carderock references. Contact Nan at 240-423-6314.

Donations of Soccer Gear for Honduran Children: My name is Alexander Oshinsky, I have lived in Carderock my entire life and have been a part of both the swim and dive teams and the tennis team over the years. I also worked at the club for many years doing everything from buildings and grounds to the front desk to the snack bar. For the past three years though I have gone to Honduras on a medical mission trip with the Virginia Medical Brigade. Over the course of a week the brigade helps approximately 3,000 people. Last year I got to play soccer with some of the children in one of the remote villages that we travel to. What I found was that not only did they not have an actual ball to play with but most of them didn't have shoes, needless to say the field they were playing on was not safe to be running around barefoot on. As a result I have taken it upon myself to collect used soccer gear (balls, cleats, shoes, shin guards, shirts, shorts, nets...) to bring down to Honduras with me when I go this year in November. If you do not have gear that you want to donate but you want to get involved you can also provide a monetary donation that I will use to buy new gear to bring down. If you would like to donate gear or get involved you can send me an email at oshinsa@hotmail.com or reach me on my cell phone at 240-731-1686. Thank you!