



SPRING NEWSLETTER 2019

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Mark Your Calendar

- March 27** **General Meeting and Election** 7 pm—9 pm, Farmland Elem. School
- May 19** **Neighborhood Yard Sale** 8 am—2 pm, front yards all over the community
- June 8** **Community Day & BBQ** 3 pm—6 pm, Farmland Elem. School Park
BBQ, Bounce house, pony rides, games, fun for everyone!
- July 4** **Parade** 10 am start at Farmland Elem. School
- Oct 23** **General Meeting** 7 pm—9 pm, Farmland Elem. School
- Jan 11, 2020** **Winter-on-the-Farmland Holiday Party** 2 pm—5 pm, Farmland Elem. School

Keep an eye on the listserv, GreaterFarmland.org, and facebook.com/GreaterFarmland for details and exciting plans for these events. Board meetings are open to the community and are scheduled for April 10, July 10, and Oct. 2. To attend, please confirm with Ed Rich, ejrich56@yahoo.com.



COME TO THE ANNUAL SPRING GENERAL MEETING WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27, 7 PM AT FARMLAND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER, COUNTY EXECUTIVE MARC ELRICH!

How does Mr. Elrich propose improving Montgomery County? Do you have questions for our newly elected Executive?

Want to know about Governor Hogan's plans for I-270? We have also invited a representative of Don't Widen 270 to discuss the status of the I-270 studies, proposals, and the legislative efforts currently underway to protect neighboring communities.

GFCFA will be holding an election for new and renewing board directors. Paid member households are eligible to vote. If you haven't paid your membership dues yet for 2019, you can pay by cash or check at the meeting. We will be taking memberships starting at 6:45 pm.



UPDATING THE TILDENWOOD DR. ENTRANCE

The entrance wall to Tildenwood Drive at Montrose Road is about to get a facelift! New metal letters have arrived to replace the wooden Tilden Woods sign and will be installed when the weather permits. The wall will be power washed, with landscaping proposed for future installation.

Thank you, Marta Vogel, for two years of research and planning about to be realized.

Help Wanted!

With the directories arriving soon, the GFCFA needs help to distribute them. If you are available, please email info@GreaterFarmland.org

GFCA RESPONDS TO I-495 AND I-270 MANAGED LANES STUDY (MLS)

Governor Hogan has proposed widening I-270 and/or adding toll lanes. With the I-270 and I-495 Managed Lanes Study and P3 Program chugging forward, your civic association has not been idle. Here's the latest: **September 2018 Ed Rich, on behalf of GFCA, submitted written testimony during the public comment period**, excerpt below. Full text is available on the GFCA website, GreaterFarmland.org.

"We are writing to express our vehement opposition to any proposal by Governor Hogan and the Maryland government to further widen Interstate 270 and further degrade our quality of life. We, the residents who live adjacent to Interstate 270 and contribute substantially to the tax coffers of the state, have seen the roadway go from four lanes at its inception to 12 lanes today. Each time the road has been expanded, it was sold as a solution to traffic congestion. This has not happened... The construction of additional lanes at the cost of billions of dollars has simply provided for more single occupancy cars and more traffic congestion, leading to increased environmental degradation of our neighborhood... The focus of this study, simply on figuring out ways to move traffic faster, is flawed. Instead, the state should be looking at a comprehensive approach on how to manage future growth in a way that allows for continued economic growth without the need for major new road infrastructure... This study should be scrapped before too many more precious tax dollars are spent on an approach that is doomed to failure and that will have a significantly negative effect on the quality of life in our neighborhood, our county and our state."

December 2018 At a town hall-style meeting, GFCA President Ed Rich spoke to newly-elected County Executive Marc Elrich about community concerns regarding expansion of I-270.

February-March 2019 GFCA submitted written testimony supporting House Bills 91, 102, 663 and 695. Full text is available on the GFCA website.

The GFCA Government Affairs Committee, chaired by Dotan Weinman, will be monitoring the I-270 expansion project and advise the board on actions to be taken. If you would like to participate in or give suggestions to the committee, please email info@GreaterFarmland.org.

CHECK OUT MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY'S FABULOUS FREE ONLINE OFFERINGS

Have you checked out the library's website to explore its amazing array of free online materials? Here are highlights of what you can access with your library card number and PIN on montgomerycountymd.gov/library

For kids

Get current issues of *Ranger Rick*, *Ranger Rick Jr.*, and *Boys Life* through **Flipster**. Read the magazines on your pad or desktop, "flipping" pages with the onscreen button. Want books? **Tumblebooks** has e-books for emerging readers like *Abigail the Whale*, which a child can read along with the narrator. And best of all, **Bookflix** pairs a great story with a non-fiction article (usually an article from *Scholastic Weekly News*), which your child can read along with the narrator.

For teens

Learner drivers can access the 2019 MVA practice tests and download the MD driver's manual. The library also offers access to free test prep courses and practice tests for the ACT, SAT, SAT subject tests, LSAT, GRE, and more. Teens looking for jobs or volunteer opportunities can find useful links and even advice about preparing resumes.

For general readers

Through **Flipster**, access a wide range of current magazines, including *Time*, *Consumer Reports*, and *People*. To learn a new technical skill or language, or a new academic topic, you can explore course offerings from **LYNDA.com** (project management, programming languages like Java Script and Python) and **Gale online courses** (foreign languages and much more). Hobbyists can find instructions and projects on **creativebug**. Finally, for genealogical research, you can access **HeritageQuest Online** (containing Federal, State, and County census data from as early as 1790 in some cases), **Revolutionary War era records**, **Freedmans' Bank records**, and more.

Movies and TV shows

The library offers free access to **Kanopy**, containing thousands of popular movies. Imagine watching the Oscar-nominated films on your own device for free. And now, through the latest library feature, **ACORNTV**, you can register for free week-long checkouts of your favorite Acorn shows like *Doc Martin* and *Foyle's War*.

Just grab your library card and start checking it out!

And don't forget that we have our own Little Library at 11405 Rolling House Road! There are always new offerings, themes, and events planned, thanks to the Lowreys :-)

PEDESTRIAN & DRIVER SAFETY—REPORT FROM THE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

The Traffic & Pedestrian Safety Committee is aware of many concerns regarding local traffic safety and has raised many of these concerns with the County. Ed Rich, our President, got crosswalks painted and continues to push for stop signs, sidewalks, repaving, and other traffic calming measures. Addressing these issues is the primary focus of the committee. If you would like to join, email Scott Keohane at skeohane@yahoo.com.

Meanwhile, it is important to remind ourselves and our loved ones to be safe pedestrians and drivers. Here are a few tips from the MD Department of Transportation State Highway Administration:

Look Up. Look Out.

Pedestrians Use sidewalks and marked crosswalks.

When available, press the pedestrian signal button and wait for the walk signal.

Always stop at the curb and look left, right and left before crossing a street.

Watch for cars turning in or leaving driveways.

Wear light or bright colored clothing.

Pay attention and take off headphones while walking – no texting or playing games.

Drivers

Always stop for pedestrians crossing or about to cross streets.

Yield to traffic already in traffic circles.

Follow traffic signs, signals, markings, and lights.

Observe posted speed limits. Speeding makes it more difficult to stop for pedestrians.

It's illegal in Maryland to use a handheld phone/device or text while driving.

LANDSCAPING NEWS

GFCA will renew the common area Trillium maintenance contract for 2019. This includes the circle at Old Stage Road & Stonewood Lane, and the medians on Tilden Lane, Old Stage Road, and Tildenwood Drive

The GFCA Beautification Committee has changed its name to Landscape & Environment. We will continue our efforts to enhance the common areas within the GFCA community while broadening our scope to include environmental stewardship.

The Committee will lead the effort to educate the community, and encourage pet owners to **“Scoop It, Bag It, Trash It!”** I have consulted with the MOCO Dept. of Environmental Protection and MOCO Animal Services. If you are frequently experiencing deposits of raw pet matter, or plastic bags with same, on your private property or adjacent common areas, please contact the Chair, Pamela Levine at pamelalevine@verizon.net or 301-468-6699.



DON'T COMMIT CRAPE MURDER!

Late winter/early spring is the best time to prune crape myrtle, but too often the shrub is kept unnaturally compact by shearing off the top. It is much better to choose a smaller variety to begin with, and then prune it to allow for its lovely natural habit, which is vase-like. Here's how to prune a crape myrtle the RIGHT WAY:

Pruning Crape Myrtle

Crape Myrtles bloom on new growth, so prune in late winter or early spring before they break dormancy.

The habit of crape myrtles is to produce multiple trunks, which can cause crowding as the plant matures.

Choose an odd number of main trunks that are growing straight and are not crowding each other.

Prune suckers and any trunk you have not selected as close to the soil line as possible.

Remove unwanted low branches all the way back to the main trunk

Thin out the crown by removing any that are growing into an area already occupied by another branch.

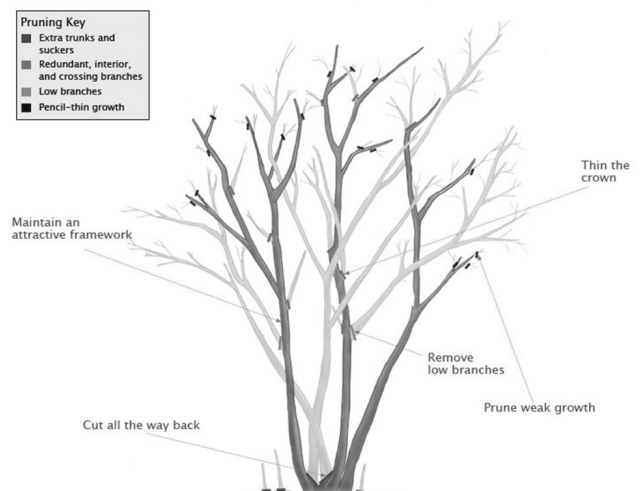
Make your cuts slightly above a bud that faces in the direction in which you want your new branch to grow.

Remove any limbs that cross back through the plant or rub against each other.

Remove excess branches in the interior of the plant to allow for better air circulation, which will help reduce diseases like powdery mildew.

Prune any weak branches or stems that are smaller than a pencil in diameter.

Topping, shearing, or pollarding (Crape Murder!) results in weak branches with fewer blooms.





WINTER-ON-THE-FARMLAND PARTY

What is winter and the holiday season without our annual party? It was great to see everyone who came, enjoyed the crafts, snacks, raptor demonstration, DJ, and visit by Santa and his bestie-elf. Thank you, Kathy Hoffman and her crew of helpers, for organizing our popular event.

The food drive collected many bags of canned and shelf-stable foods for donation to the Food Bank.



NEIGHBORHOOD GARDENERS (OR GARDENING WANNABES)!

Our Neighborhood Garden Club is fast approaching its first anniversary, and we've enjoyed lots of informative, fun gatherings to learn new things and commiserate with our gardening neighbors. We are excited to begin our next year. The club activities have included

- Monthly meetings with speakers on many topics
- December party and cookie exchange
- Plant swap
- Tours of members' gardens

If you are interested in joining the neighborhood garden club, or just want to learn a bit more about what it might offer, please look for information about upcoming meetings on the listserv or email Karen Fricke at karenafricke@gmail.com.



2019 Membership—Renew or Join NOW
GreaterFarmland.org/membership

Your Civic Association is an all-volunteer effort
 By Neighbors for Neighbors



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