



down to earth

Environmental Restoration Quarterly • Summer 2023

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ASFPM Floodplain Manager of the Year

By Kelly Martin, Watershed Grants Technician

We are happy to share that Patrick Varga, CFM, Environmental Review Supervisor and Floodplain Manager in the Bureau of Resource Management, has been awarded the Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM) Larry R. Johnston Local Floodplain Manager of the Year award!

This national award honors outstanding individual efforts and contributions at the local level. It recognizes an individual responsible for the development of a distinguished local program or activity. The award was presented at the [#ASFPM2023](#) annual conference in May in front of roughly 2000 professional peers.

Mr. Varga is a 16-year County employee and has served as the Carroll County Floodplain Manager for the last 8 years. As part of his job responsibilities, Mr. Varga reviews all subdivisions, site plans, and building permits for compliance with the provisions of Chapter 38 Floodplain Construction and Chapter 153 Floodplain Management of the Carroll County Code. In addition to these responsibilities, he has worked tirelessly to enhance the County's National Flood Insurance Program's Community Rating System (CRS) to a level 6 which provides significantly reduced cost of flood insurance for Carroll's citizens.

To celebrate the 50-year anniversary of [Hurricane Agnes](#), which had a significant impact to Carroll County in 1972, Mr. Varga created a County webpage publicizing the event. The webpage included detailed maps, historic photographs, and videos from eyewitnesses. Based on this local effort, the Army Corps of Engineers "Silver Jackets" requested his assistance in creating their own website.

Mr. Varga is an active member of the Maryland Chapter of the ASFPM, serving as its Vice President.



Pat Varga and his wife, Emily

Monocacy River Board—Spring Events

By Byron Madigan, Water Resource Supervisor

The Monocacy River Board spent their spring meetings outside in a couple different riparian areas of the Upper Monocacy Watershed giving back to their community.

During the April meeting, River Board members, along with volunteers from Land and Resource Management, spent the evening cleaning up around the Trevanion Terrace stormwater facility, as well as the adjacent stream corridor.

For the May meeting, members spent the evening performing maintenance of a tree planting at Memorial Park by removing invasive plants as well as shelters from mature trees. This 3-acre planting was installed in 2015 by the Bureau of Resource Management in coordination with the City of Taneytown through the Bureau's tree planting program.

The goal of the Board is to serve as advocates for the Monocacy River, its watershed, and the varied resources contained within. If you are interested in promoting the enhancement of natural resources within the Monocacy River Watershed, the Board currently has one opening for a volunteer who is looking to serve and participate. For additional information contact Byron Madigan at 410-386-2167.



Piney Run Park Stream Cleanup

By Byron Madigan, Water Resource Supervisor

Piney Run Park, Carroll County's oldest developed park, was opened in 1974 and features a 300-acre lake that provides multiple recreational activities such as fishing and boating, including park-sponsored fishing tournaments. The park is also surrounded by 550 acres of fields, forest, and open spaces that contain over 5 miles of hiking trails, including the Martz Road Trail.

In honor of Earth Day this year, volunteers from Carroll County's Department of Land and Resource Management performed a cleanup along an ephemeral stream that bisects the Martz Road Trail and flows into Piney Run Reservoir. Each year birds, turtles and fish become entangled in debris or ingest plastics that have been mistaken for food, and this cleanup, which took place on Tuesday, April 18th removed nearly 100 tires, various metal debris as well as bags of residential trash from the channel and streambank.

Special thanks to all of the volunteers, including the Piney Run Park staff for removing and disposing of all the debris that was collected that day!!



Earth Day Events

By: Kelly Martin, Watershed Grants Technician

Staff from the Bureau of Resource Management were busy this year celebrating Earth Day by assisting with three separate events designed to help young people learn about and appreciate our natural resources.

On April 21st, 20 staff members partnered with Gerstell Academy and McDaniel College for an Earth Day Event at McDaniel College's Environmental Center. The event engaged almost 400 students from Pre-K through 12th grade in learning about ecology, water resources, agriculture, wetlands, soil conservation, geology, watersheds, and beekeeping. The day included some mud painting, leaf identification and tracing, and an environmental-themed scavenger hunt. Students participated in the upkeep of a forested buffer, creating a butterfly garden, and maintaining other plantings throughout the property.

On Saturday, April 22nd staff assisted the Carroll County Master Gardeners who hosted an Earth Day Event at Piney Run Park Nature Center. Numerous environmental groups were on hand to share information about their organizations and ways to protect our

natural resources while recruiting volunteers to assist in implementing their missions. Unfortunately, bad weather cut the event short, but a good time was had by everyone who ventured out.

Finally, on Thursday, May 4th, several staff members traveled to Shiloh Middle School to hold an Earth Day Event with 6th graders attending Outdoor School.

Students arrived by bus from Hashawha and participated in a litter clean-up before rotating through four stations manned by Bureau staff. Students learned about forest conservation and the benefits of planting trees at the tree planting station, utilized macroinvertebrate identification charts to determine stream health, toured the stormwater management facilities on site and learned about how they address water runoff from surrounding areas, and learned about pollution prevention through the use of a water model.

Promoting the preservation, protection, and improvement of the natural resources in Carroll County through public awareness and education is one of the Bureau's missions.



↑ Gerstell at McDaniel Environmental Center ↓



↑ Master Gardeners' Event ↓
Photos by: Mike Washington



← Shiloh Middle School ↓



Stormwater Update

By: Ed Singer, Watershed Management Coordinator

Sun Valley II Stormwater Facility Retrofit

In mid-June, the Bureau of Resource Management began a project to retrofit the existing Sun Valley II stormwater management facility that is located in Taylorsville in southwestern Carroll County. This retrofit will improve downstream water quality by bringing the old facility up to current design standards and improving the outfall of the facility that was eroding. Currently, Kibler Construction Company, Inc. is improving the inflow and outflow infrastructure. The next step will be installing new filter media to provide filtration of stormwater runoff. The construction is expected to be completed in late summer.



Sun Valley II



Brynwood

storm drain improvements and a stream restoration project. The purpose of the project is to alleviate local flooding problems and improve the conditions of a deeply incised stream to reconnect it to the floodplain and reduce sediment and other pollutants that are carried downstream by erosion. The project took a significant amount of time to plan due to all of the coordination with many Carroll County Homeowners and the Homeowners Associations.

CJ Miller, LLC began construction in mid-June, and it will continue into the fall. The early phase of this project included walking the site and selectively determining which trees would need to be removed for construction to be completed. This was done to minimize tree removal. Additionally, many new native trees and shrubs will be planted as part of the project. Construction safety fence is being installed and the next steps will be to begin installing storm drain pipes and structures and in-stream structures that are part of the stream restoration plan.

Brynwood Storm Drain Improvement and Stream Restoration

The Bureau has been working cooperatively for several years with the Department of Public Works and the communities of Brynwood, Carroll Square, and Edgewood in the Eldersburg area to develop plans for

Meet the Staff

**Gianni Assi, EIT
Stormwater Reviewer**



Gianni grew up and went to school in New Oxford, Pennsylvania and received his bachelor's degree in Mathematics from Shippensburg University. For the past 8 years he has worked as a water resource engineer and site designer in both Pennsylvania and Maryland. Gianni has been involved in designing stormwater management facilities, storm drains, erosion and sediment control, floodplain management, and NPDES permitting. Gianni has been married for 10 years to his wife Nicole, with whom he has a 4-year-old daughter. In his free time, he enjoys doing puzzles with his daughter, painting, and playing board games.

CRS Advanced to Class 6

Carroll County is pleased to announce an improved ranking in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Community Rating System (CRS), advancing from Class 7 to Class 6. This change will result in reduced flood insurance premiums for the County and its residents. Credit is provided for community activities such as preserving open space in the floodplain, enforcing stormwater management and floodplain regulations, and providing residents with information on flood insurance. Flood insurance premium reductions are dependent on the number of points that a community accumulates within the program.

Carroll County has a total of 136 flood insurance policies. Improving from a Class 7 (\$118 discount per policy) to a Class 6 (\$174 discount per policy) equates to an average additional savings of \$56 per policy. The total premium discount for all flood insurance policies in the County is \$23,609.

Patrick Varga, CFM, Environmental Review Supervisor and Floodplain Management/GIS Specialist, in the Bureau of Resource Management, is responsible for the improvement in the County's ranking. He is currently working towards additional creditable activities to improve the rating of Carroll County to a Class 5 community. For additional information, contact Pat at 410-386-2844 or pvarga@carrollcountymd.gov.