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SHELTERING

by Your Neighbors

I have found myself going through a full spectrum of emotion through these past few months: fear, anger, sadness, joy, delight, love. This has only been intensified by the current and worldwide disturbance that we now all face following the murder of George Floyd and the unmasking of the ugliness that pervades our culture.

I have been immensely grateful that I closed my business last year so that I am not facing the struggle that most businesses are having to manage. And even more grateful that, in discovering zoom, I have been able to continue teaching weekly and now twice weekly classes. It is just amazing how this has grown to include family and friends from near and far: Pennsylvania, Virginia, California, Colorado, Canada and Italy!

It has been an enormous sadness to me that I cannot dance regularly but again zoom has ameliorated that absence as a group of 8 dance friends have been meeting weekly to talk and get to know each other in a different way off the dance floor. Via zoom I have organized birthday parties for my grandchildren, traded tunes with musical friends and visited with folks that I cannot travel to see for now.

And while I have felt such anger due to the inept and dangerous response to the emergency that we have witnessed, I have found incredible moments of peace in my garden. With all this time now afforded me in semi-retirement and 'stay-at-home' orders, my garden is more beautiful than ever!

Finally, I will say that the hardest part for me has been that I cannot hug my friends, my students, my family and, most importantly, my grandchildren! This whole experience will be a life defining passage for the younger generations. I trust that they will survive, learn, grow stronger and lead a path towards healing.

*** I have felt boredom for the past few months. I have changed by staying at home more often, not seeing friends, and how this online school works.

*** I feel like it's brought me closer to my neighbors, both in-person while on walks or just outside (before it got so hot) as well as sharing suggestions/experiences online re: grocery shopping, etc. I'm also happy to live in such a beautiful neighborhood, which I can appreciate out the window.

*** I have had quite a valuable experience during these unprecedented times. I have learned to be more self aware and how to deal with my family. During these times I was in Deep Creek Lake, Maryland. I was not near my friends so I couldn't see them, but I wouldn't be able to see them anyway. I also missed my graduation for 8th grade. I also feel for the people that actually were affected in their

jobs by this pandemic.

*** So I would have to say that I was impressed with the various creative ideas (i.e. scavenger hunt, bear hunt, Easter eggs, etc.) that were brought up to engage people and to get out (especially for the children). All of our neighbors have been wonderful as usual and we have all helped each other when we can at the appropriate social distance. Our daughter has been working remotely from home for nearly 10 weeks so that has been fantastic!

*** We are a family of five. Two parents in Catonsville and three adult children in their early 30's in Rome, Italy; Durham, New Hampshire and Houston, Texas.

We are all well.

I am an architect with my own small business, C. is a teacher with Baltimore County and our children are studying and working. I have continued to run my business throughout from my office, though at about 60% of capacity. I applied for all the state and federal assistance, only landing a PPP loan about a week ago. C. has been at home and has restarted teaching virtually on the County schedule. It has been frustrating for all of us as we have had to adapt and increase our technological aptitude to participate

"The time sheltered in has helped us re-evaluate the things in our lives that we will not carry forward and the truly important things we will take with us! Like the importance of the human touch, the ability to celebrate the highs and be there to support those going through challenges."

in this new normal. We marvel at how our generation of baby boomers has gone from antenna tv and land lines to cable, wireless and internet with now rapid change in delivery of content and product.

Our son studying in Rome stayed as long as he could before his school and accommodations were shut down in mid-March. He returned here and immediately quarantined in Fenwick Island, Delaware, staying there for about a month. He continues his grad school work here and plans to return to Indiana this summer as universities seem to be opening.

I have come to appreciate the rhythm of the work day and how flexible it can actually be in this moment of technology. I have architects in the office and working from home and the effort continues. I believe that meetings and travel time will remain significantly diminished following this period. The educational experience on all levels will be affected and building use will change as our perception of personal space becomes greater. I believe our personal relationships will flourish as we are able to meet in person and attend gatherings, realizing what we have missed about interpersonal relationships and the need for face to face discourse.

We look forward to Summer and some signs of the rest and relaxation that accompanies it.

*** I am retired & take care of anywhere from 1-3 grandchildren as their parents continue to work. The biggest challenge was trying to work with the 5 year old to continue with learning, the babies had another thought. Yet, everyone is healthy and my husband & other adult children do the shopping. We are very blessed here but I know other families have certainly struggled. Very grateful for our peaceful surroundings in OCNA.

*** Trying to flourish—my HS graduating class selected me most likely to become a hermit...Or, like the old blues song (similar to the Mose Allison version): “Sittin’ down here on Parchman Farm, ain’t it doin’ no man no harm...” Parchman Farm was a notorious MS penal hell hole that a prisoner rarely survived.

*** For me, as a mom of three and expecting one more, I never would’ve believed I would be surrounded by my kids 24/7 for 12 weeks non stop without a break and no place to take them and we wouldn’t go insane. But the outdoors are great, and my

kids have shown me how resilient and brave they are. They are 7,6, and 2. The only thing that stresses me out is the online digital learning and the constant changes that come with that. But overall, I can’t say that life has been bad. We are home, we are safe, and we have everything we need. I am a lot more patient than I ever thought I would be, and I’m discovering curbside pick up from grocery stores and it helps save money on buying groceries I don’t need since I’m not there to spot it. I’ve made homemade dinners more and plan them out better since I can’t just go to the store whenever plus the huge shortage in the beginning.

*** Quarantine has provided me with valuable experiences and lessons that I will remember for the rest of my life. At first, the school closings felt surreal and I didn’t understand the

extent of the effect that the pandemic would have on our lives. Three months later, nearly 2 million people in our country have been infected and we have all had to learn how to live with minimal human contact outside of our families. Personally, I have appreciated this time because it has allowed me to pursue new hobbies and subjects, but it has also been difficult to go so long without hanging out with my friends and doing other activities that I used to take for granted. When the pandemic is over, I hope that our society will become more unified and grateful for what we have after having to spend such a long time in isolation.



Illustrations by Christina Drews-Leonard, Cyphers Agency.

*** My silver lining to the quarantine has been the gift of extra time – time to finally attack the jungle of English ivy that is taking nutrients from our trees and bushes, time to read books that have been sitting unread on shelves for years; time to just sit and enjoy the birds and fresh air; time to complete long delayed house projects. I have also enjoyed more conversations than ever before with neighbors walking by, properly distanced of course. I hope to retain some of the good new habits when life returns to “normal”.

The lack of traffic has made the entire environment here more peaceful such that we have been enjoying our front porch more than ever. The air does seem cleaner and the sky clearer.

I feel kind of guilty enjoying these benefits of a beautiful neighborhood knowing others are truly suffering during this time – lack of money and food, lack of Internet and computers and lack of space in small cramped homes with no green space. I know that many people have used this time to help others. I need to examine how I can increase my outreach, too.

*** We have been watching the History Vault Channel learning a lot, some things I remembered and some were new.

Also been working on seven, yes seven, photo books that I have talked about completing for sometime but never had time.

*** This has been the year for piddly garden projects, those little projects you want to do but never take the time to get them done. Our added bonus is my Mom is living with us! She was to move into Charlestown (coming back to MD from SC) and the day before the move they went into strict lockdown. It has been a joyous blessing having my Mom here with us... did I mention that she is an avid gardener so extra awesomeness!

*** I can approach the isolation positively one day and then fall apart the next, with a solid cry. Contemplate things I should be doing (volunteer) vs things I can do (exercise, work, family time). Biking has been a good way for the kids to socialize safely & stay healthy. Baking, cooking new things, walking the dog, reading, & projects around the house have kept the kids busy, too. Screen time limits are still enforced but at a much more lax level. I miss hearing the kids laughing with their friends. The summer break will be a challenge. *Shoutout to Opie's for ditching the Styrofoam cups.

*** Like so many others, my husband and I have had our professional and social lives completely uprooted. We got creative with fun things to do. Our favorite was to order the other person take-out dinner from a local restaurant. We always made it a surprise, and tried to pick a new place and new menu items each week. It's fun to see what someone else thinks you're in the mood to eat!

From my 6-year-old: "I don't like the virus, and I don't like doing school on the computer, but I love having time with my parents."

From my 4-year-old: "I have a lot of time to build my Legos!"

*** I really don't have anything for the quarantine experience except to say that I am so thankful and grateful I have a job that allows me to telework and that my work can be done remotely. I am really missing going to the YMCA for my exercise classes (step and bodypump) so I exercise in my den with youtube videos on the tv! Takes a lot of willpower to do it, so much easier to go to the Y.

- Figuring out how to wear your longish hair so you can see while wearing a mask and not be constantly touching your face/trying to adjust the mask.
- Having a Zoom meet-up with my three siblings, nieces, nephews and my 80+ year old parents for the first time, where the image of my parents was really fuzzy. Finding out that when they first got their laptop with a webcam they feared it would spy on them so they put masking tape over the lens. When they removed the tape it left a sticky mess.
- My 15 year old trying to go through the new driver process with stay-at-home orders. She can't get a learner's permit until



Commercial phrases heard often during the pandemic.

the DMV re-opens. She can take the Driver's Ed class online: 3 hour Zoom meetings each day for two weeks. No on-street driving for a while, but practicing in parking lots gets dull very fast.

*** We've had an interesting time. One of us has attended on one of Hopkins Hospital's COVID-19 units for two week-long stretches and the rest of the time has been working long hours with colleagues on a number of efforts related to COVID-19: designing and enrolling patients in clinical trials of potential therapeutic drugs for COVID-19, designing and enrolling patients in studies to help us understand the immune response to COVID-19 during and after the acute phase of illness, writing clinical guidance for use by clinicians within the Johns Hopkins Health System, and staying up-to-date on the literature. The other of us has had to adjust to a new normal of working full-time from home while supporting a busy spouse and two toddler-age kids. The news focuses on the Americans who are 'behaving badly,' but we want to convey how proud of and grateful we are to so many in our community. In the hospitals, nurses, techs, support staff, and physicians are doing a fabulous and physically demanding job caring for our neighbors with COVID-19. Behind the scenes are many more working long hours – clinical labs, facilities, supply chain, administration, and researchers who are working to understand and end the pandemic as quickly as possible. Our friends and neighbors are sewing masks to hand out to patients who walk in our doors and making face shields to protect our public-facing staff and their patients. Outside the hospital, essential workers are showing up every day and doing their jobs well despite the uncertainty, risk, and sometimes a shameful lack of protections for their well-being. And most of our community is staying socially distant despite the hardships because they know it's the best thing they can do to save lives. We're thankful to live among such people.

Continued on the next page.

☼☼☼ And here is another thought, from the other of us: nothing is easy right now. Every bit of kindness and generosity matters. Donate to a food bank if you can. I truly appreciate this snippet of an internal email sent by the Canada Parks department to its staff, which then went viral on twitter (see the story at <https://forge.medium.com/you-are-not-working-from-home-429ff71c7f2b>). If only...

Working Remotely - COVID-19 Principles:

- You are not “working from home”, you are “at your home, during a crisis, trying to work”.
- Your personal physical, mental, and emotional health is far more important than anything else right now.
- You should not try to compensate for lost productivity by working longer hours.
- You will be kind to yourself and not judge how you are coping based on how you see others coping.
- You will be kind to others and not judge how they are coping based on how you are coping.
- Your team’s success will not be measured the same way it was when things were normal.

☼☼☼ Very fortunate to have two working adults—one who is essential going in to the office every day, the other who works from home. It’s almost like a scientific experiment to show the value of social contact and changes in scenery. The mental health of the stay-at-home spouse is greatly decreased. That said, we know we are fortunate to have food, shelter, beautiful surroundings and a supportive family. Trying to do our best to support beloved local businesses like Caffè di Roma, Scittino’s, Oakdale Liquors, and the Wine Bin.

☼☼☼

- We’ve enjoyed quality time with our 3-year-old daughter. Lots of laughs, some crying, plenty of frustrating moments - but the smiles and giggles will be the enduring memory from our pandemic quarantine.
- We’ve made the most of the outdoors: walking loops around the neighborhood, lots of yard work (it’s never looked so good!!), sandbox + swing time, and people-watching on our porch.
- Our dog is most appreciative of the twice daily walks – a luxury she doesn’t often get when we’re normally both rushing to and from our workplace.
- Virtual coffees + happy hours: *yes!! more, please...* I’ve had a weekly coffee with a buddy who lives in TX - some of the best talks we’ve had since college and we’re closer than ever.
- Even the grandparents are getting good with video teleconference technology!!

☼☼☼ I’ve reconfirmed what I already knew – I cannot be trusted with sweet snacks readily available in the house (this, of course, is being typed while eating a chocolate chip cookie).

☼☼☼ Quarantining at home is interesting. I don’t miss my

long work commute and luckily I’ve been able to work from home. My family has taken to it pretty well. We are more introverted than most. The boys enjoy their screens a bit too much. I enjoy spending more time gardening and getting to some of the projects I’ve been procrastinating on for a while. We miss traveling to visit our families. We hope everyone stays healthy!

☼☼☼ My husband and I are quite elderly so life has not changed too much in our daily life because of the virus. Reading, gardening, puzzles and quilting. I find that I use the computer more to search for recipes for meals with what I have in the pantry. The one fun thing we do is go on mini vacations. We might go to the park and sit in the car for a 1/2 hour just looking at a different scene. Sometimes we go on a county vacation, out Old Frederick road to Lisbon turn around and come back home again. Anything just to get out and then we like to kid about it to our kids.

☼☼☼ I have a different perspective probably because I live with a frontline COVID ICU nurse who happens to be my daughter. I am privy to stories from “behind the mask” and As a result so heartbroken for every COVID patient and their families. We have become very cognizant of how our behavior affects others, especially the immune suppressed and elderly.

The time sheltered in has helped us re-evaluate the things in our lives that we will not carry forward and the truly important things we will take with us! Like the importance of the human touch, the ability to celebrate the highs and be there to support those going through challenges. We have always been aware of disparities but this pandemic has been shining a light on public health issues that need to be urgently addressed.

Finally a fond appreciation for our teachers and the dependency our children and adults have on education and social interaction .

☼☼☼ One thing I’ve been saying over and over during the quarantine is how grateful I am that we live where we do. Patapasco Valley State Park is a jewel in the midst of all else, it sparkles early in the morning when I walk my pup. I feel like both of us dance through the trees – the birds are singing, deer prancing, so refreshing!

☼☼☼ Lots of time together as a family enjoying being outside. Having four different online learning platforms for everyone in the household is exhausting.

☼☼☼ Our COVID experience began with a 14-hour drive from our daughter’s college to home in mid-March. Our daughter was sick with flu-like symptoms including fever and had had a suspected COVID exposure but did not meet the then-stringent testing criteria. I (the mom) got sick a few days later and did manage to get tested but was negative. (I still wonder.) We spent a few stressful weeks trying to quarantine in different parts of the house. Now that everyone has recovered, we’re grateful for our good health, ability to telework in our comfortable home, zooming with friends and family, and good TV. (Highly recommend Unorthodox, A French Village, and Giri/Haji.)

*** We have had a few great “street parties” in which neighbors line up their chairs along both sides of the street, but with each household at least 10 feet apart. They have been a lot of fun, especially a birthday party for our neighbor Dorothy in the rain, with people cheering out the windows of drive-by cars.

*** On a grateful note, I am enjoying the extra time with my son while waiting for him to leave for Air Force basic training. My son and I are not the most social types, so this new way of doing things has been wonderful from our point of view. Watching the world slow down and hopefully learning to be more appreciative of life and mother nature.

But this time has also been absolutely horrible for me. After suffering with Alzheimer’s for over 10 years, my mother died of COVID-19 at the age of 76. She was alone in a nursing home in PA. My sister and I were allowed (with proper PPE) to see her the day before she passed but we were not allowed to be with her and comfort in the days leading up to her death. Then I had to come back home and self isolate for 14 days. We have not been able to be with family to mourn nor have we been able to take her back home to TX for burial. I also missed being able to celebrate my 55th birthday. Strange days indeed.

*** My “household” is myself and a cranky old cat named Nandina. Yes, the plant nandina. One of my daughters degree was in plant sciences so our pets got plant names. After I figured Nandina wasn’t the talkative type I knew I would need another form of entertainment. And also something to give me comfort in the early unpredictable days of “Shelter in Place.”

So, I baked. A lot. Cookies, cakes, breads of all types and rolls. As previously stated, I live alone. Fortunately for me I have very receptive family close by and neighbors who are more than willing to be my baking guinea pigs. I do keep a few finished products for myself but this has led me to my second discovery.

Too much tasting can lead to too much me. So I started taking very long and very interesting walks all throughout the Ville. Every turn leads me to a new adventure. The walking has helped keep me comfy in my clothes but it has also introduced me to the most beautiful yards and gardens, the cutest babies, the most adorable puppies and dogs, clever home improvement ideas and new “friends”. I walk with a purpose now. Not a steps taken goal, although that is nice, but I walk to explore and observe our beautiful area. While keeping the proper distance I have had so many lovely chats with people pushing strollers and walking dogs or just working in their yards.

I grew up here, left for three decades but knew I would return. I love Catonsville on a regular day. While there are fewer regular days I think I love Catonsville more because of it. We really are a village!

Ed. note: My thanks to everyone who contributed to this moving testimonial to how humans cope. I saw my own experiences reflected in many of these stories. One addition: housework doesn’t seem too bad when everyone pitches in, as my family has since March. ■

by Your Neighbors



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MOLLY'S GARDEN

1/8 acre of suburban clay soil plus fourteen years of loving tending = well over fifty species of native plants providing blooms throughout the season, hosting 18 species of butterfly and countless other pollinators, habitat and food for many birds, and a lovely habitat for two humans.

Molly McElwee moved into her newly refurbished split level surrounded by bare turf in 2006 with her new husband, Mac. Happy with the interior of her new house, she set to work on the grounds. The child and grandchild of avid gardeners, Molly grew up loving the gardener's task of making plants happy, and here on Wyndcrest, she fell into her niche of gardening with native plants to attract and nourish wildlife. Molly has Master Gardener and Master Naturalist certifications from the University of Maryland Home Extension Service, and her knowledge of native plant species and the bees, butterflies, and other essential pollinators, is encyclopedic. On my tour of Molly's garden, my pen was in constant motion, just noting the names of the plants I was most attracted to. It is amazing how spacious Molly's garden feels, with its layers of growth sloping down from her back deck. Even the front yard, which some might call "postage stamp" size, holds an amazing amount of botanical interest, and has become a favorite place for school children passing by to stop and look for caterpillars and butterflies, and to talk about metamorphosis.

Molly used the "lasagna garden" technique to build her beds, putting layers of newspapers down, wetting them thoroughly, covering with natural mulches such as leaves, letting sit over the winter, then planting in the spring. She recommends this as an easy no-till, no-weed way to expand garden space gradually. Paths through her shade garden are made from wood chips she got free from a tree service. Molly has the healthiest ash tree I've seen in recent years. She is monitoring it carefully for signs of the ash borer. When she arrived in 2006, the tree was covered with a shroud of English Ivy, its vines so thick that she needed a chainsaw to cut through them. Now there is no evidence that ivy ever covered that lithe trunk.

Now for the plant list. I went home and looked up all these plants online, and you can too. Each one feeds an important link in the food system. I already knew that native plants are desirable, but from Molly I learned that each native pollinator is adapted to a specific native plant, and will only lay its eggs on that plant. No host plant = no pollinator. Incidentally, Molly does have a few non-native plants, and insects and birds may feed from those too, but they are not particularly nutritious. She likes to give the wildlife a diet of good nutritious food, using the native plants best adapted to that end. I wrote this list as we walked through the garden, beginning in the front yard, and the list is sprinkled with pearls of wisdom from Molly.



Baptista – has sweetpea-like purple flowers

Golden Alexander – looks like a yellow Queen Anne's lace, feeds the Black Swallowtail caterpillar

Bee Balm – to me it looks like a firework explosion on a stem

Beautyberry – striking lavender berry clusters bloom all winter—birds love

Allow violets to grow as ground cover. Many creatures eat violets, the flowers are beautiful, and the heart-shaped green leaves are attractive all year long. It is the host plant for the fritillary butterfly.

Winterberry Holly – glorious red berries through the winter—birds eat in early spring

Poplars – hosts for swallowtails

Foxglove Beardtongue – looks like foxglove, but unrelated

Eastern Red Columbine – attracts hummingbirds and hawkmoths

Cut Leaf Coneflower – grows to 8 feet in full sun, shorter in shade, finches love

Boneset – lacy white flower and great attractor of pollinators include the cobalt blue wasp, which really is this amazing color

Ostrich Ferns – The popular butterfly bush is unfortunately one of the worst things to put in your garden. It is beginning to invade our woodlands, and as a food source is like feeding cotton candy to the butterflies.

Coral Honeysuckle – great alternative to the invasive honeysuckle—hummingbirds love to drink from its red flower, and it's a host for the clear-winged sphinx moth

People are scared of carpenter bees and call pest control when they see them. But weather will destroy your deck long before the bees will, and they are harmless and some of the best pollinators around.

Pussy Toes – comes in 3 varieties, fuzzy white flowers look like cat paws, it makes a good groundcover, and hosts the American Painted Lady Butterfly

Redbud – you know this lovely tree, which volunteers if you have one in your yard

There are 1200 types of wasps in Maryland, and only 2 sting. Let them flourish, they are important pollinators! And take a close look at their beauty—some come in incredible colors.

John Clayton Honeysuckle – a yellow-flowered cultivar of the coral honeysuckle

Red Twig Dogwood – has striking red branches in winter, and its fruit is loved by birds

Little Bluestem – a prairie grass for full sun, excellent for nesting, nutritious seeds, and host to the dusky skipper butterfly

Oakleaf Hydrangea – a dramatic, white-blooming shrub with four seasons of interest.



Liatriis – this looks like a collection of purple bottle brushed, and attracts a wide range of butterfly species

Elderberry Bush – grows like crazy, but easy to prune, and birds LOVE it

Buttonbush – adorable flowers, loved by butterflies and 24 species of birds

Molly has improved her soil over the years by mixing it with Leafgro compost, found in bags at Home Depot

Joe-pye Weed – a great alternative to the butterfly bush

Spiderwort – many OCNA yards have this purple flower on long stems—its pollen attracts many beneficial insects

Aster – grows to 6 feet, blooms in late summer, loved by butterflies

Mollie's husband knows what she loves for gifts—a personal wood chipper, an electric chainsaw ...

Black Chokeberry – is graced with an abundance of beautiful white flowers for a few weeks in May.

Sweet Bay Magnolia – lovely evergreen with scarlet red seeded fruit in the fall

Woodland garden beds are edged with liriopse for definition

Possums eat ticks like tic tacs. If you see a possum, cheer!

Cardinal Flower – grows in wet clay (hurray!) attracts hummingbirds, spicebush swallowtail butterfly

Jack in the Pulpit – a woodland ephemeral. Molly says it helped her learn patience.

Cranesbill – a native geranium. I have this one—Leslie Coombs gave it to me, and when it bloomed after spending the winter in a bucket, unplanted, I knew it would work for me.

Ragwort – Tall yellow flowers above broad leaves. Groundcover. Will cause invasives like lesser celandine and garlic mustard to vanish!



All types of bees are important pollinators. Many overwinter on the ground, under leaf litter, so don't be too quick to clean up your garden beds in the spring

Maryland's state butterfly, nearly extinct (even Molly hasn't seen it), the Checkerspot

Weeping redbud – "Lavender twist" a very interesting-looking specimen tree

Fleabane – you have probably pulled this "weed" hundreds of times, but it grows into a daisy-like flower that many pollinators nectar on (I just learned that nectar can be a verb)

If you're taking down a big tree, consider leaving part of it behind as a "snag." Woodpeckers will gravitate toward snags even two feet high.

The cicadas are coming! Next year is the big cicada appearance in MD, and the nymphs are moving toward the surface. You may see racoons or certain birds digging for them this year. Benjamin Banneker was one of the first in the world to document the cicada cycles.

Christmas Fern – Got its name because it stays green right through the holiday season.

Blue Lobelia – related to cardinal flower, also likes damp clay soil

Leaf litter makes a great mulch—no need to shred it first

Spicebush – flowers early, shiny red berries, host to Spicebush Swallowtail

Mayapple – distinctive woodland ephemeral

Pink Turtlehead – this late-blooming flower is the host of

Experiment—let things grow, see what they turn into (except lesser celandine)

Learn to accommodate the plants

NY Ironweed – this late-summer sunlover has a fuzzy purple flower

Love wildlife? Want to make a positive impact on our local ecosystem? You don't need to go tear out all your plantings and replant with natives. But next time you replace a planting, or expand a bed, consider buying a native. Certain plants, like Nandina, English Ivy, and the Butterfly Bush, are still sold in local garden centers, but if you do a little research (or just bring this list along), you can find native plants and create a garden that will make both you and the creatures we share the planet with happy.

by Ann Quinn

BACKYARD FIREWORKS

Did you know that setting off fireworks at home is illegal in Maryland? This is not going to be a good year for fireworks, but please don't try to make up for it yourself. Here are some of the laws regulating fireworks, from <https://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/Agencies/fire/safety%20education/fireworks.html>

Fireworks are synonymous with the Fourth of July holiday and other summer celebrations, but these devices are dangerous. Fireworks burn up to 1,800 degrees Fahrenheit and can cause burns, lacerations, amputations and blindness. Fireworks should only be handled by professionals.



Hand-held sparklers that do not contain chlorates or perchlorates (use "gold label" only).

Ground-based sparkling devices that are non-aerial and non-explosive. Legal ground-based sparklers are stationary, sit on the ground and emit a shower of sparks several feet into the air. Some may whistle, but they do not pop or crack. They do not explode, shoot projectiles or move along the ground.

Paper-wrapped snappers that contain less than .03 grains of explosive composition.

Ash-producing pellets known as "snakes."

Backyard Fireworks Are Illegal in Maryland

You cannot have a private display of fireworks at your home without a permit. All fireworks displays, regardless of location, require the proper permits and insurance. Call Baltimore County's Fire Marshal's Office at 410-887-4880 for information.

Violators who possess or discharge illegal fireworks are subject to a misdemeanor fine of up to \$250. The sale of fireworks without a permit is a misdemeanor punishable by up to a \$1,000 fine.

To report suspected illegal use of fireworks, call 911.

Transporting Fireworks Across State Lines Is Illegal

The sale of fireworks is legal in neighboring states, including Pennsylvania. However, it is illegal to purchase fireworks in other states and ignite them in Maryland.

In Baltimore County and most other Maryland counties, it is legal for consumers to purchase and use some hand-held and ground-based sparkler devices.

Under Maryland law, the following are not classified as fireworks and are legal for backyard use in Baltimore County:

Toy pistols, toy canes, toy guns and other devices that use paper caps if the devices are constructed so that a hand cannot touch the cap when the cap is in place for use.

Illegal Fireworks Devices

- Any hand-held or ground-based device that creates an explosion, detonation, loud noise, that launches a projectile or moves along the ground under its own power is illegal in Baltimore County and elsewhere.
- Hand-held sparklers are legal only if their packaging states that they do not contain chlorates or perchlorates.
- Do not allow children to handle ground-based or hand-held sparklers. The temperature of a sparkler can reach 1,800 degrees Fahrenheit.
- When handling sparklers, do not wear loose clothing.
- Keep one or more buckets of water on hand and submerge spent sparklers in the water.
- You must be at least 16 years old to purchase hand-held and ground-based sparklers.

Enjoy your summer, and as they say, be safe! ■

by *Ann Quinn*

ATWATER'S
TRADITIONAL FOOD

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BREAKFAST | LUNCH | DINNER | BRUNCH

Whether you are looking for a hearty meal or a quick snack, visit us in the heart of downtown Catonsville for our homemade soups, breads, jams, pastries and more!

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815 Frederick Road Catonsville, Maryland 21228

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Dan and Lisa Zakai, DVMs
Jessica Beyer, DVM
Candice Flynn, DVM

816 Frederick Road, Catonsville, MD 21228
410-788-FRVH (3784)
Fax 410-788-3060
frederickroadvet@yahoo.com
www.frederickroadvet.com
Mon-Thurs - 8am-7pm
Friday: 8am-5pm
Saturday: 8am-12pm

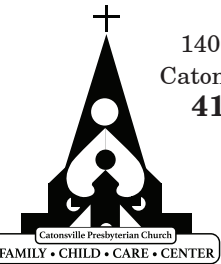
Food Drive

Food drive every Saturday from 8am-10am in the Knights of Columbus parking lot. Contact-less drop off point for shelf-stable foods.

**Catonsville
Presbyterian
Church**

*We seek to find and share God's calling
for this community of faith through
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**For over 130 years
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