

CROMWELL VALLEY PARK COUNCIL, INC.

A 501(c)(3) NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION SUPPORTING
AND ADVOCATING FOR
CROMWELL VALLEY PARK

FALL 2026



© Doug Lake



WWW.CROMWELLVALLEYPARK.ORG



INFO@CROMWELLVALLEYPARK.ORG

HONORING A LEGACY

CVPC dedicates this issue to a long-term park photographer, Doug Lake. His photos grace our social media, website and print as he beautifully captured textures, lighting, composition and secret "A-HA!" designs inside of the natural world and environment at CVP. Rest in Peace: 7/22/26

CVPC Board of Directors

OFFICERS:

Mia Walsh, *President*
Bill Curtis, *Vice President*
Deb Lee, *Treasurer*
Kim Shapiro, *Secretary*

DIRECTORS:

Carl R. Gold
Laura Jenifer
Raymond Reed
Lisa Zanti

SERVICEBERRY FARM

Kate Joyce

NEWSLETTER:

Dave Schroeder

STANDING COMMITTEES:

Mia Walsh, *Executive*
Carl Gold, *Governance*
Mike Young, *Finance*
Mia Walsh, *Fundraising*
Rick Childs, *Building & Grounds*
Kelly Emerson, *Programs & Events*
Open, *Communications*
Kelly Goles, *Volunteers*

SPECIAL COMMITTEES & OTHER

Kim Shapiro, *Membership*
Vanessa Blackner, *Nominating*
Keith Kridenoff, *History & Cultural Heritage*
Wayne Skinner, *Trails*
Mike Mauro, *Apple Orchard*
Dave Davenport & Laurie Mitchell, *Weed Warriors*

► A LETTER FROM OUR CVPC PRESIDENT, MIA POTTHAST WALSH

Maintain. Preserve. Protect. Advocate.

2026 has been an exciting time at Cromwell Valley Park. As of this writing, the construction at the Sherwood House entrance has been completed, and focus is now on the Willow Grove Nature Center side of the Park. We thank our community for its patience as these temporary disruptions serve as the launch pad of making CVP safer, more accessible and able to support the growth of residents in Towson and the nearby areas of Baltimore County and Baltimore City.

Cromwell Valley Park Council's Board of Directors and volunteers have been equally as busy during this season. Though the extent of the construction squashed some of our plans for large community events, we have pivoted to attract smaller groups of visitors with our new CVPC-hosted hiking, birding, history tours, and speaker series, along with bringing in external volunteers to help support our mission of maintaining, preserving, and protecting the park. Many hands make light work, as they say.

It's because of the generosity of you, our donors and members, that enables us to perform our mission. This June, with funding provided by you, CVPC was able to hire two external tree companies to combat the lethal Beech Tree Leaf Disease, which has infected the iconic European Beech trees lining the driveway to the Sherwood House. This treatment, which costs approximately \$1,000 per tree, attacks the nematodes that kill the leaves, robbing nutrients to feed the trees. A giant hug of gratitude to A & A Tree Experts and Bartlett Tree Experts for each donating one treatment towards this project. With an additional monetary donation from Baltimore Road Runners Club, we are almost 70% funded for the second treatment for each of these trees in 2028.

Our 2025 Annual Report is included in this newsletter. CVPC thanks you all for your support to our non-profit organization! We couldn't exist without your generosity!



**Together, every
contribution makes
a difference.**

(r) Volunteers from Chesapeake Employers' Insurance Company help weed and mulch the Honor Garden in front of Sherwood House



**The Future Grows With
Every Helping Hand.**



BUILDING A BETTER FUTURE FOR CVP

Construction Update

Sherwood Side Completed - Willow Grove Continues

Baltimore County has finished their efforts at the Sherwood side of Cromwell Valley Park, which included replacing waterlines and electrical conduits, water flow mitigation, security cameras and lighting, and additional parking, with both ADA and standard spots.

The Willow Grove side is still an active construction site with the entrance scheduled to be closed through January 2027. The County is widening the entrance to two lanes, as the single-lane entrance and egress caused confusion and precarious situations. They are adding paved parking, sediment control drainage systems as well as a sediment pond, a retaining wall, an accessible trail for those with mobility issues, and also a small covered pavilion. These additions to the Willow Grove side will enable the park to be more user-friendly to those with mobility challenges with added parking for vans and ADA vehicles requiring additional space. The accessible path will also include interpretive, educational signage, and the pavilion will also be able to accommodate wheelchairs. A full tree and bio-retention planting schedule is included with the plans to further enhance the park's beauty.

We can't wait to see the final results!



► BE PART OF THE CHANGE

Your Priorities Are Helping to Shape the 2027 CVPC Budget



2027 Budgeting

The Cromwell Valley Park Council (CVPC) Board of Directors is currently developing its 2027 budget—and feedback from park patrons is helping guide the process.

In a survey conducted in February, we asked respondents to prioritize their interest in several proposed initiatives.

Fighting invasive species received the highest number of 1st choice votes, followed by offering **educational hikes** and **supporting tree health**.

We also asked, "What one effort would you like to see the Cromwell Valley Park Council Board take on that has not been listed here?" The responses offered additional ideas and valuable insight into what matters most to our park community. Some examples include:

- "More/ better trail signage."
- "Doing more to preserve and attract the bird population."
- "Improved access for those with disabilities."
- "Educational classes on gardening with native plants. Courses at night or on weekends would be nice."
- "Repair and paint the Sherwood fence so that visitors know that this park is well-cared for and values its history as a farm."

Thank you to everyone who participated. Your feedback will be carefully considered as the Board evaluates priorities and prepares the 2027 budget. We look forward to sharing more information as plans are developed.

- Deb Lee, CVPC Treasurer

Beech Tree Leaf Disease Treatments —Phase 1 Complete!

Cromwell Valley Park Council was ahead of the pack regarding the Beech Tree Leaf Disease, which has finally hit Maryland. In 2025, we brought in experts regarding the disease, walked the forests with the Department of Natural Resources, identified iconic trees to save, and created our 2025 year-end and Giving Tuesday fundraisers. But we can't take the accolades; it was all doable because of YOU! 30 donors prioritized this need and gave restricted funds for this treatment.

At CVP, eight mature European Beech trees shade the drive leading to Sherwood House. There are several others close by. They, and every other beech tree in the Park and throughout Maryland, face extinction without our intervention.

Beech Leaf Disease (BLD) is caused by a microscopic nematode worm, killing Maryland beech trees as it spreads east from Ohio. The worm enters the leaf buds (hence the name) and eats them, causing the

leaves to die and drop early. It is evident when dark lines or bands form between the veins of the leaf and the leaves brown early, become leathery, and fall before supplying the tree with the nutrients it needs.

BLD was first discovered in Ohio in 2012 and is rapidly traveling across the country. It is already prevalent in Maryland. Cromwell Valley Park's forests are full of American Beech trees, many over 100 years old. Beech trees are often the oldest surviving woodland residents because

they are not highly sought after for their lumber. The wood tends to crack and warp more easily than other hardwoods like oak and walnut. Nevertheless, they have a profound environmental impact.

According to arborists at Cylburn Arboretum, they are the 6th most common tree in Baltimore, ranking 3rd in carbon storage and 2nd in pollution amelioration. They are slow-growing, shade-tolerant and provide habitat for many species. Unlike many other trees, beech trees can survive in lower light

strata beneath oaks, tulip poplars, and other sun-seekers.

Once infected, young beech trees will die within 2-5 years, and older trees may survive as long as 10 years.

What, if anything, can we do?

Through July 2026, Cromwell Valley Park Council has raised over \$11,000 to treat the iconic trees lining the Sherwood House driveway. Starting early autumn, 2025, we completed all required permitting with Baltimore County, obtained quotations, and even had to obtain Baltimore County Council approval, since we were donating more than \$5,000 to the County property for treatment. Thank you to Councilman David Marks for his



The F.A. Bartlett Tree Expert Company donated treatment of one of our European Beech trees.



A&A Tree Experts, Inc. donated one of the treatments as well. With your support, CVPC paid to treat 8 of our iconic trees.

letter of recommendation to the Council. With support from all parties along the way, approval was finally given so we could make the small window of treatment—only between June & July, peak nematode eradication time!

Beech Tree Leaf Disease Treatments —Phase 1 Complete!

The trees were treated with an injection at the root flare with a fungicide / nematicide, allowing the tree's vascular system to uptake the poison and kill the invaders.

The treatment, required every two years, must be done safely by a trained, certified arborist. These applications are expensive – as much as \$700 per tree or more, depending on its size and the number of trees treated at the same time.

These treatments are not viable to assist large woodland areas, as those would require a canopy-top spray treatment. Biologists are monitoring attacked trees to see if

any are resistant so their progeny can be used to save the species. Research is continuing for alternative treatments to determine best efforts to save large forest areas.

Members of the CVPC Board went on an informal walking survey in June 2026 with Nathan House, a Baltimore County Project Forester, with the Department of Natural Resources, and determined that American Beeches were not the predominant tree in the forests at Cromwell Valley Park, as our forests also include Yellow Poplar, Oak, and Chestnut trees. Nathan provided suggestions for planting of understory, and some fill plantings for larger expanses of open forests as we begin to lose trees to this disease. A more

formal forest survey will be completed in 2027.

In the meantime, we are actively raising the additional funds for our second treatment of these trees. If you, or your company or organization, wish to sponsor full treatment for one or more trees, please contact Mia Walsh, Cromwell Valley Nature Council President, at president@cromwellvalleypark.org or donate online at <https://cromwellvalleypark.org/donate>

Carl R. Gold is a member of the Cromwell Valley Park Council Board, a Maryland Master Naturalist, and a Baltimore City Arborist certified TreeKeeper, cgold@carlgoldlaw.com; Additional edits by Mia Walsh

Thank you to those donors who contributed to the Beech Leaf Disease treatment fund:

Nicole Baer	Theresa Lancaster
Baltimore Road Runners Club	Steve Loomis
Michael Beck	Tess McClain
Janice Bledsoe	Karen Mitchell
Katherine Cardwell	Graham Peck
Jessica Carter	Barbara Plunkett
Anne Craig	Mark Potthast
Melanie Dodson	John Potthast
Susan Dorsey	Catherine Potthast
Carl R. Gold	Cathy Teixeira
Elizabeth Hughes	Patricia Thomas
George Jackson	Mia Walsh
Laura Jenifer	Judy Walter
James Kelly	Jan Wieczynski
Sue Lake	Patricia Wild



To learn more about the Beech Tree Leaf Disease and watch a video about the European and American Beech Trees at Cromwell Valley Park, scan the QR Code above.

Cromwell Valley Park Council thanks Shafreel Joenaidys for his work on creating the Beech Tree video.



Low-Key Way to
Unplug After Work

► UNPLUG AND ENJOY NATURE

30's and Birdies Program Targets GenZ & Millennials

If you have TikTok, Reels or even Instagram, your algorithm might show you a lot of “bird-fluencers” - young folks watching birds, tracking birds or talking about birds. Birding is now **cool** (!!!) and almost 18% of birders in the USA are aged 30 or younger. This demographic was part of the last group who didn't grow up with an iphone in their hands. Now that they are in the workforce, they value their

disconnected time out in nature even more precious. What started out as a one-off event, an idea by our CVPC President, burst into a continuing series warranted by the fact that every single one in the series was sold out with a waitlist. Building in brunch or burgers at McFaul's Iron Horse Tavern to end the bird walk continues to build the social aspect of the group. It's not all just about the bird, but also social activity.



“I'm 30x2, but love showing the 30-year-olds around the park. They enjoy the hike as much as the birding!”

- Mia Walsh

► CROMWELL VALLEY PARK COUNCIL EXPANDS ITS DEMOGRAPHICS

A popular new series of birding activities launched in July



“

“I moved from New Jersey to Baltimore and wanted to get acclimated to this birding scene. I volunteered to help the Park Council with leading some of the 30's and birdies walks - a win-win as I get to meet some new people as well! Great idea!

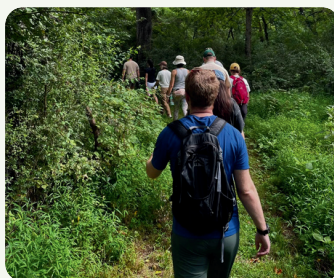
— Ben B.

“

“Still ‘flying high’ from the experience!”

“30's and Birdies and burgers & beer or bloodies & brunch, who comes up with this? Count me in 100% and I'm bringing friends!

— 30's and Birdies Participants



► INCLUSIVITY IN BIRDING

CVPC invests in Birding Education for Inclusivity



Mobility

Cromwell Valley Park Council has invested almost \$1,500 to send three of its bird-walk volunteers to learn about creating Accessible Birding opportunities for the park. This is not just for those with mobility challenges, but also sensory, mental health, learning, chronic illness and other disabilities.



Sensory

What will they be learning in this course? Things to make everyone feel welcome and invited! This may be as simple as building in stops for those with chronic pain, laying out a walk with benches for resting, or simply creating “mindful birding” programs, where it's not about the quantity of birds you can see.



Mental Health

The certification culminates with each person having to lead one of these Accessible bird walks, so keep an eye out for our late fall calendar for some of these ideas incorporated in our programming. We are excited to welcome ALL to the joy of birding at CVP.



Chronic Pain

Two Dam Hike

By: Raul Oteiza

Cromwell Valley Park Council hosted two 4-mile and a 9-mile **HISTORY and HIKING** events on June 13, 2026, to hike and explore the two Loch Raven Reservoir dams and various surrounding features, and learn about their history and impact on the development of Baltimore City and County.

The Big Gunpowder Falls is a centerpiece of Maryland's development. Its history features colonial commerce, early American industry, and extensive conservation. The damming of the Big Gunpowder in the late 19th and early 20th centuries to form Loch Raven Reservoir was key to supplying clean water to the ever-expanding population and industry of Baltimore City and County.

"It was great! The guides were terrific! I have enjoyed the reservoir for years but it was interesting to learn so much about the dams and the water system."



The hikes were well attended, and it was a nice day, albeit a little hot, for the three hikes. A morning and afternoon "Two Dam Close" (4 miles) and a morning "Two Dam Far" (9 miles) were offered for members and non-members. The shade and light breeze kept everyone cool and comfortable as the hikers visited and learned the history of various sights within Cromwell Valley Park. They all then forded the Big Gunpowder Falls to visit and learn the history of the watershed and the two Loch Raven Reservoir dams from the lesser traveled, more forested eastern side. After reaching the upper (new) dam, the Two Dam Short crew returned to the Park using a similar route. The Too Dam Far crew continued up the eastern side of the reservoir and through the Morgan Mill area to cross the Big Gunpowder again via Loch Raven Drive. They returned to the Park hiking through the Glen Ellen area.

Many thanks to our guides, **Raymond Reed** and **Raul Oteiza**, for your guide experience and attention to detail!

You asked, and we responded—look for more programs in the fall!



Hike into History

By: Raul Oteiza

Did you know that before Edgar Allen Poe and the football team, Cromwell Valley was home to the original Ravens? You didn't?! Then you should have joined us on August 1, 2026, when CVPC hosted its second HISTORY & HIKING event for the year for members and non-members – “Hike into



History”. The hike encompassed a 3.5-mile loop through Cromwell Valley Park (CVP) to visit and learn about the history of Cromwell Valley, its early inhabitants and industries, and the park, its properties and families that made it possible.

We also explored some aspects of the Loch Raven watershed and how it integrates into the water supply of Baltimore City and County. Horticultural insights on the native and invasive plant species



found in the Park were also highlighted.

The hike was very well attended (sold out and waitlisted), but in the end we accommodated all and generated several new individual and family members for the Council. And the weather was very cooperative! If you missed it, don't worry, as we hope to repeat this hike in the future.

Our thanks to our guides for their experience and attention to detail!

You asked, we responded, and there will be more to come!

“...we wanted to tell you how much we enjoyed the hike and the history. We saw sections of the park where we have never been and learned so much new information about the area. We are looking forward to joining more of your hikes...in the future. Thank you and the council for all your efforts in maintaining the park's area and history and sponsoring such interesting community events.”

2025 Cromwell Valley Park Council Annual Donor Report

Gifts of \$2,000+

Anonymous
Anne Craig**
Dr. Kenneth & Mrs.
Mary McQuage**
Zac Ufnar
Mia & Brian Walsh**

*"Thank you for honoring my husband,
Larry, with the American flag which flew
over our capital." AC*

Gifts of \$1,000–\$1,999

Baltimore County Game and Fish
Protective Association
Baltimore Road Runners Club, Inc.
The Evans Family Charitable Trust**
Carl and Sally Gold
Kate Murphy**
Edwin Noon
Alan Penczek
Pauline Ryder

Gifts of \$500–\$999

David W. Buck Family Foundation**
Charlie Conklin, Jr.**
Abby Kingman
Deb & Ed Lee**
Nancy Mastellone & Bob Peters
Janna & Timothy Mullaney
Pelican Management
Cynthia Silveira
Cathy Teixeira**
Patricia Thomas and Christopher Bever
Debbie & Jerry Trout**
Marc & Wendy Wolff

Gifts of \$151–\$499

William Absalom and Caren Logan-Absalom
Nancy & Martha Bainbridge
Laura Bankey
Barbara Barnes**
Janice Bledsoe
Lynne Cannon & Tony Olsen
Jessica Carter
Rick & Sharon Childs**

Jennifer & Brian Comotto
Bob & Anne Eder**
Margaret & Jeffrey Elseroad**
Nicole Epp
Giant
Laura Henneman
Philip & Mary Jacobson
James & Patricia Kelly**
Sue Lake**
Robert Lewis & Peggy Mellinger Cook**
Melissa Madsen
Michelle Monaghan
Anne Palmer & Bill Vondrasek
Barbara Plunkett
Mark Potthast
Catherine Potthast
John & Ann Potthast
Catherine Renggli & Takeru Igusa
Dave & Kate Schroeder**
Joseph & Michele Schwarzmenn
Allan Scott**
Snap Happy Photo Booth
Amanda & Daniel South
Nancy Stagge
Paul Standeven
Larry & Debby Tupper
Whole Foods
Jan Wiczynski
Patricia Wild

Gifts of \$51–\$150

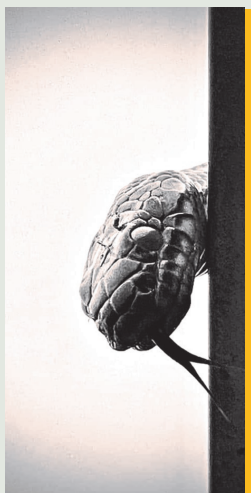
Rachel & David Allshouse
Anne Marie & Dave Anderson
Jeannine August**
Nicole Baer & Adam Conover
Jonathan Bagster-Collins**
Laura & Nik Baltatzis**
Michael Beck**
Deborah Berlin**
Thomas Blanpied & Michele Pucak
Ralph Boecker**
Bill & Barbara Boland**
Patricia Bonnet & Martha Comfort
Alex Bortkiewicz & Sarah Dotson
John & Laura Canoles**
Katherine Cardwell
Ronald & Loretta Davis**
Melanie Dodson
Susan & Jeff Dorsey**
Denise Douce & Drew Rock**
Nancy Dravis
Hathaway Ferebee
Kayleen Fischer & Joseph Hillery
Patricia Flanigan
Jean Frazier



Given 5+
consecutive years

All photos in
Annual Report by

38k
donations



Cromwell Valley Park Council (CVPC) is a volunteer,
non-profit organization dedicated to the stewardship
of Cromwell Valley Park as a public space for
passive recreation and School Programs.

Jessica Garrison & William Garrison
Karen Gieron
Timothy & Lynn Giltinan**
Jeffrey Goldstein
Robin & Hank Grose
Russell & Linda Gunter**
Lou Ann Harman
Robert Harrell
Tim & Linda Holland
Noel Hosking
Elizabeth Hughes
Cindy Hunter & Martin Roberge**
Laura Jenifer & Eric Jenkins
Leslie & Tony Johnston
Paul & Janet Kahla**
Sarah Kiley & Eric Gadsby
Amanda Kilian
Amanda Konradi

Gifts of \$51–\$150 (cont.)

Elias & Alexi Lobel **
 Karen Malinowski
 Lauren & Fitz Malloy **
 Jan Markowitz
 Mr. Barry Marsh
 Michael Mauro & Marcie Weinstein **
 Randolph Mays
 Eva & John McCann
 Barton & Alma McCann
 Georgia & Daniel McDonald **
 Mary McNeish-Stengel & Thomas Stengel
 Melanie & Carl Merhar
 Linda Merriken & Mike Milano
 Lawrence Nogee & Anne Murphy
 Katie Norton & Kyle Norton
 Pat Novak
 Mary Kay Pogar **
 Mr. Kenneth Ramsburg
 Kathleen & Charles Reif
 Brittany Rolf
 Pam Runk
 Jan Sanborn
 Amy & Randy Schreffler
 Lorraine & John Seiler
 Kim Shapiro **
 Eleanor Simon & Patrick O'Neill
 Sarah Smith
 Sprouts
 Elizabeth Stafford
 David Standeven
 Joanne Standeven
 Patricia Supik
 Rita Talley
 Timonium Elementary School
 Donna Tivald
 Alexandra Unfried
 United Way of Central Maryland
 Therese & Murray West
 York Manor Garden Club

GIFTS OF \$21-\$49

Elliot Abhau
 Silvia Anselmino
 Natalie Avallone & Clare Flynn-Avallone
 Kathryn & Alexander Ball
 Ann Beezley
 Andrew Beiderman
 Barbara & Robert Berner
 Bev Bickel & David Truscillo
 Amy & Harry Bortner
 Bonnie & Steve Bradley
 Margaret & Ben Church
 Randy Clark
 Linda Cooke
 Whitney & Chris Cornwell
 Brenda Curtin
 Dorothy Daiger
 Joseph Davis
 Martina & Nicholas Dilks
 Sarah Dilutis & Beth Fannin
 Mary Eggers
 Jane & John Emory
 Pat & Rich Fuller
 Gary Gillespie & Sarah Bur
 Kelly Goles **
 Ruth Goodlaxson & Tyler St Clare
 Jane Grant
 Mary Gregory & Rhiannon Berglund
 Nancy Groff
 Sue Hafner
 Laura & Donald Hahn
 Nicolle Hahn
 Kyle Ham & Katherine Stolarz
 Ana & Stephen Hart
 Nicole & Evan Hartig
 Janet Hartka
 Karen & Kevin Hattrup
 Jessica Heinz
 Nancy Held
 Kjersten Hewitt
 Patricia & Norman Hogeland
 Tina Holmes
 Aleksandra Horn & Emilia Case
 Jenn Horton
 Adreon Hubbard & Dorothy Stoltz
 Grace & Stephen Hulse
 Jim & Ann Hutson
 Denise Jaeger
 Helen Kennedy
 Stephen & Donna King
 Deborah Kintzing
 Mimi & Jim Knuth
 Christianna Koehler
 Robert Kotova
 Laura & Noah Lechtzin
 Linda Lilly
 Ellen Jo Litsinger **
 Eric Lowenthal & Chloe Thio
 Stephanie Lubitz **
 Lutherville Garden Club **
 Gina Mast **
 Jacqueline & Ted McNeil
 Gayle & Ron Melchior
 Dean Merritt
 Barbara Miller & Connie Brieger
 Jason Miller
 Barbara Miyasaki **
 Kimberly Molesworth
 Kathleen Murray
 Andrea & Joseph Naft
 Lori & Ted Neikirk
 Janet & Douglas Neilson
 Donna & Richard Neuwirth
 Barbara & Robert Newton III **
 Teresa Nick
 Mr. James Novotny
 Kevin O'Neill **
 Marj Paoletti
 Cheryl Parrish & Mike Waltz **
 Stephanie Parry & Brian Shannon **
 Megan & Nathan Parsh
 Joseph Parvana
 Henry & Leigh Peck



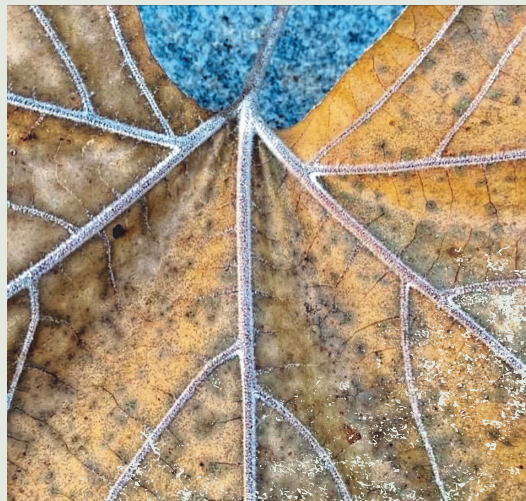
Debra Peroutka
 Kimberly Poitras
 Bryan Puskar
 Ms. Shelli Ramos
 Deborah Raynor
 Michael & Evie Reinsel
 Ann Rentschler
 Paulette Ridgely
 Marlene & Dave Riley
 Katie Rouse
 Jeffrey & Bonnie Rowe **
 Kate & Michael Schmelyun
 Lelane Schmitt & Andrew Peterson
 Dan & Susan Schulze
 Sarah Schwarzmann
 Curt Senft & Dechen Surkhang
 Laura Simms
 Nancy Sinclair **
 Wayne Skinner **
 Judy & Dave Slide
 Sarah & Robert Smithwright
 Timothy Somers **
 Andrew Standeven
 Tom & Marsha Swisher **
 Linda Talley **
 Eric Taylor
 Towson Hot Bagels
 Bruce Trescott
 Alexis Vasilos & Brian Buta
 Meg & Earl Wall
 Kate Walsh
 Abe & Hilarie Yoffe **

TOP 20 2025 HIGHLIGHTS:

- 1) Hike Through History QR Code Posts
- 2) "Almost-live" Critter Cams
- 3) Members & Volunteer Picnic
- 4) Shakespeare in the Park
- 5) Fall Harvest Festival / Arts in the Park
- 6) The Modern Pioneers documentary about CVP
- 7) Revitalization of the Honor Garden
- 8) Website Redesign
- 9) Women of the Valley Presentation
- 10) History & Cultural Heritage Committee

- 11) Goats Eating Invasives
- 12) Apple Orchard Interpretive Display
- 13) Pop-Up Museums of Shanklin Exhibits
- 14) Strategic Plan Development
- 15) Beech Tree Leaf Disease Fundraising and Advocacy
- 16) Implementation of Bloomerang CRM system for donations and memberships
- 17) Sherwood Fence Maintenance Plan
- 18) Pumping Station Advocacy
- 19) Night Out with Nature Speaker Series
- 20) Ongoing Trail Maintenance

.....Just a few of CVPC's initiatives



Land Acknowledgement

Cromwell Valley Park Council acknowledges the history of the land we now steward. It once provided for the Piscataway, Susquehannock, and other Indigenous peoples, who nurtured it for generations. We honor their enduring legacy. We pledge to continue this stewardship tradition by protecting and preserving Cromwell Valley Park.

People in the Park

There's a special spot in the park (IYKYK) with a beautiful view and a little "secret". Quietly resting on a bench is a journal, filled with notes from those who have passed through. If you haven't found it yet, maybe it's time for a little scavenger hunt.

I ended up staying there a while, turning page after page. I got tiny glimpses into strangers' lives - moments of reflection, joy, grief, remembrance, and gratitude. I walked away wondering about the people behind these words.

As I continued my hike, I couldn't help but wonder about the people we pass on the trails and the stories they carry. I imagined there are some really cool people, living unique journeys, and doing extraordinary things that may otherwise go untold.

Maybe someone is training for an ultramarathon, preparing for their first backpacking trip, planning a birding adventure, or recovering from surgery - one hike at a time.

Maybe someone is navigating a major life change- a move, a divorce, loss of a loved one, walking through

grief, or simply finding the courage to begin again.

That spark of curiosity stayed with me. It inspired the idea for a new series in the CVP Council newsletter as a space to share the

stories of those who hike, run, wander, hang, or gather in the park. I hope that through these stories, we can feel more connected to one another and to the park that we all love.

If you would like to share your experiences with the park community and be featured in a future newsletter, I would love to hear from you. Please email lisaatcvc@gmail.com.

Lisa Zanti, CVPC Director



Thursday, October 22 at 10:30-11:30 AM
Project Feeder Watch Training

Ages 18+.

Count birds for science, but first, attend this training to learn how! After the training, we will meet weekly at the Nature Center on Tuesdays or Wednesdays (whichever is better for you) for your 1 hour volunteer shift. This citizen science project begins October 22, 2026 and runs until April 2027.

FREE! REGISTRATION REQUIRED

This is a Baltimore County Recs and Park program. Registration is through their Civic Rec system.

<https://recandparks.baltimorecountymd.gov/MD/baltimore-co-md/catalog>



Saturdays, September 19
to November 28
at 8 AM to 10 AM

Saturday Morning Bird Walks
Ages 14+.

Join a Park Naturalist on Saturdays from 9/19 to 11/28 for an early morning bird walk. Bring binoculars if you have them, and please dress for the weather with wearing sturdy shoes. We will be meeting at the "CVP Bird Hikes Meet Here 8AM" sign at the Sherwood House.

FREE! REGISTRATION REQUIRED

This is a Baltimore County Recs and Park program. Registration is through their Civic Rec system.

<https://recandparks.baltimorecountymd.gov/MD/baltimore-co-md/catalog>

People in the Park

By: Lisa Zanti

A Lifelong Connection

John Landers has been visiting Cromwell Valley Park for so many years that he can't remember exactly when he first visited. It may not have been long after the park opened. What he does know is that he has been returning ever since.



Sherwood Farm (Photo: John Landers)



Hayride at the park circa 1994
(Photo: John Landers)

wonders: birds, butterflies, frogs, insects, and more.

One late summer day in 2017, he came across something memorable: a Hickory Horned Devil, the caterpillar of the Regal Moth. Rarely seen, as it typically stays high in the trees, it was an unforgettable encounter. After photographing it, he shared the discovery with two women walking in the park, inviting them to take a closer look at his photo and to try to find the caterpillar themselves. What began as a chance encounter became a shared moment of discovery, one he still remembers, and



Hickory horned devil
(*Citheronia regalis*) Photo: John Landers

one that likely stayed with the two women as well. John still keeps an eye out for another Hickory Horned Devil. It's his instinct to notice, wonder, and share that shapes how he moves through the

park, and how he connects with others in it.

Since retiring in 2008, his love of nature has taken him a far distance from these local park trails, including birding trips to Panama, Costa Rica, Ecuador, and the Amazon rainforest, and beyond. And no matter how far he travels, he continues to return to Cromwell Valley Park.

Some places stay with us, not because they are extraordinary in a single moment but because they remain present over time. For John, Cromwell Valley Park has been one of those places. While his travels have taken him across continents, these trails have offered something quieter: continuity. A place where seasons return, encounters accumulate, and a relationship with nature deepens over years.

Its treasures are rarely dramatic. They reveal



themselves more subtly: a caterpillar on a summer day, a Woolly Bear crossing the trail, or a quiet exchange with a stranger along the path. Small

encounters that, over time, become part of something larger.

Over decades of walks and photographs, John has become part of the park's story, and the park has become part of his.

And like the journal tucked somewhere along its trails, every person who passes through carries a story. Hopefully, by sharing these stories, we are reminded of something simple: that the park is always here, waiting for us to return, and that connection often comes from simply showing up.



Yellow garden spider
(*Argiope aurantia*) Photo: John Landers

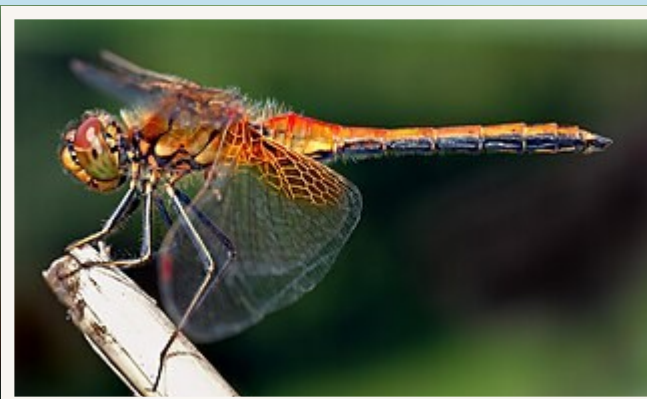
FLYING DRAGONS

BY CARL GOLD

Flying dragons are having a sustained moment. Between serving as instruments of revenge in the “Game of Thrones” TV series and sentient expressions of romance in author Rebecca Yarros’s “Fourth Wing” novels, they are here, there, and everywhere.

What about the creatures that serve as inspiration for these fantasy icons, dragonflies, and damselflies? They are much like dragons- they take a long time to mature, they fly, they are fierce predators, and, due to habitat loss, they too are endangered.

Winged insects, precursors to dragonflies, first appeared about 400 million years ago, long before the earliest hominoid showed up between 2 and 6 million years ago. Dragonflies and damselflies first appeared in the fossil record about 225 million years ago. Both dragonflies and damselflies have two pairs of strong, transparent wings and often come in strikingly beautiful metallic colors, the kind you pay extra for at the car dealership.



Wikipedia Creative Commons License



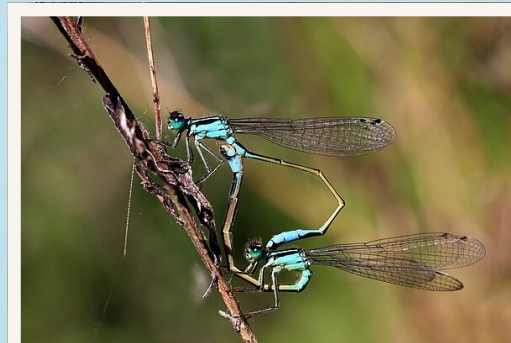
Wikipedia Creative Commons License

Dragonflies hold their wings perpendicular to their bodies, while a damselfly’s wings point straight back, parallel to its body. Both are fearsome hunters in the air and underwater. Maybe you are thinking that it is impossible. Do not those diaphanous wings impede their ability to pursue prey underwater? Surprisingly, most of a dragonfly’s life is spent underwater in nymph form. Spending up to five years below the surface in the nymphal stage, they eat fish, frogs, fly and mosquito larvae and each other. Once they metamorphose into flying creatures, most live only a few short days, with some species living a couple of months at the most.

As soon as they start flying, these creatures focus on two things: hunting and reproducing. Like skilled football cornerbacks, they have an interception-style flight pattern. They catch mosquitoes and other prey in midair by predicting where they are headed and arriving there just as their target does. This takes less energy than chasing and results in a success rate over 90 %. Once energized by feeding, it is time to party. Docking like conjoined spaceships, often in a heart-shaped embrace, they hook up with the opposite sex. The female lays newly-fertilized eggs either directly into water or in the soft tissue of nearby plants. In addition to being hunters, they are also the hunted, a favorite food of birds.

Dragonflies and damselflies are found on every continent. As Pangea’s land mass separated 200 million years ago, dragonflies went with every continent. In the Arctic and elsewhere above 66 degrees latitude, they can survive in permafrost for up to nine months in a frozen state. This has drawn interest from both geriatricians and fertility specialists.

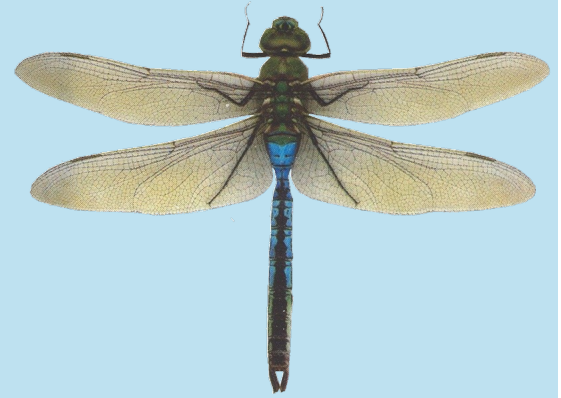
If you have an opportunity, get on any body of water in a kayak or canoe. Even while you are paddling, there is a



Wikipedia Creative Commons License

decent chance a dragonfly or damselfly will stop by to take a rest and visit. They do not sting or bite humans, so resist the impulse to swat them away. Just enjoy their brilliant sheen without having to pay extra for the colorful display. If you can be still, they may even land on you. If you do not have access to a vessel, just sit by any body of freshwater, from a large puddle to a lake.

The hunting prowess of these beautiful creatures and their ability to anticipate the flight path of prey have drawn the attention of the military. Some entomologists are seeking to weaponize them. In 1957, Eric Frank Russell predicted this in his science fiction story *Wasp*. In *Wasp*, future Terrans use covert methods, symbolized by a havoc-wreaking insect, to fight the alien Sirian empire. Imagine the chaos a stealthy dragonfly modified to carry diseases, munitions, or surveillance equipment would cause. Undetectable until it is too late, whoever controls dragonflies controls the earth, and perhaps the universe.



Despite this dominating potential, dragonflies and damselflies, along with many other insects, are in danger. Even in the Arctic, climate change is reducing habitat as there is less permafrost. Many biologists say that, without insects, our food web will collapse and humanity will not survive beyond three months. So, think twice before you spray your lawn with insecticide, herbicide, or anti-mosquito fog. You might be destroying not only an essential link in biodiversity, but also your ability to fend off alien invaders.

Carl R. Gold is a Maryland Master Naturalist, cgold@carlgoldlaw.com

MEET TWO OF OUR NEWEST PARK RANGERS!

Hi, my name's **Ranger August Miller** (pronouns: they/them) and I joined Cromwell Valley Park as their new Activity Coordinator in July of 2025. Before joining Cromwell, I was working as a part-time naturalist at Marshy Point Nature Center and Fountain Rock Nature Center. I graduated from Towson University in the spring of 2024 with a degree in geology. While at Towson, I worked in two research labs, one studying the eating habits of praying mantises and the other studying ancient drilling snails. My favorite nature topics to teach about are geology, insects and birds of prey. I'm very excited to be joining the Cromwell family!



Hello! I'm **Ranger Matt Pedri**. I've been an Activity Coordinator here at CVP for almost a year and have been loving every minute of it! I am a Maryland native and



have always been keen on exploring and learning about the diverse ecosystems our state has to offer from a very young age. I got my start as a ranger at Lake Roland Park, where I began working as a part-time naturalist in 2021 while attending Towson

University, working towards a degree in environmental science and studies. During the summer of 2022, I worked for Gunpowder Falls State Park as a full-time seasonal ranger, doing trail work and enforcing park rules at Hammerman Beach. I returned to Lake Roland in 2023 as a full-time ranger, where I led a variety of interpretive programs and chased down off-leash dogs around the park. I'm excited to be at CVP and have been learning nonstop, which is one of my favorite things about my job! This park is rich in history as well as kind folk, so I consider myself extremely lucky to be here!

VOLUNTEER

Opportunities



**SECOND
FRIDAY OF
EACH MONTH**



**9:00 AM
AT SHERWOOD**

WE'RE LOOKING FOR:

**Apple Orchard
Maintenance
Volunteers**

- Repair deer netting
- Trim trees
- Replace educational signs
- Weed and Mulch



To help: see **Ranger Anne Wedgeworth** or
email **Mike Mauro** 55marvey@gmail.com



**THREE DATES
IN SEPTEMBER**

9/5

9:00 AM TO NOON OR 1 - 4 PM

9/12

9:00 AM TO NOON

9/26

9:00 AM TO NOON

SHERWOOD FENCE REPAIR VOLUNTEERS

- Scrape chipping paint
- Prepare fence for repainting
- Repaint Fence w/ rollers
- Finishing touches with brushes



**Register to
Volunteer**

<https://secure.qgiv.com/for/yr9q39/event/fencing/>



Join, Renew or Donate Now

Thank you for your continued membership in the Cromwell Valley Park Council and your support of our park initiatives and events.

We have moved to a rolling date membership program, and your current expiration date (if applicable) is noted in your address label. WE have multiple ways to renew with the easiest being on our website, which includes credit cards, EFT and ACH electronic payments. Members are able to participate in members-only events, member picnics and first dibs on registrations!

<https://cromwellvalleypark.org/membership/>

To join or renew by mail: Make check payable to Cromwell Valley Park Council, Inc. or use one of the methods below. For a check, you may submit this completed page and mail to:

CVPC Membership
2002 Cromwell Bridge Rd
Parkville, MD 21234

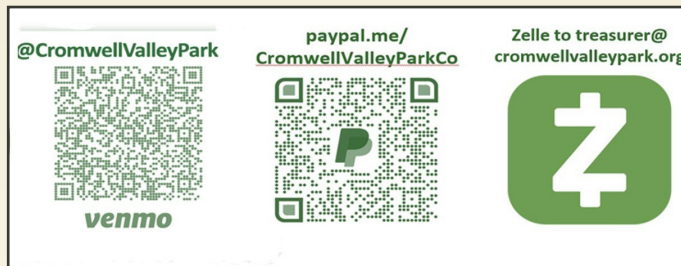


Name: _____

Full Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Phone Number: _____



☐ Individual \$15

☐ Sustaining \$100

☐ Senior (65+) Ind. \$10

☐ Couple/Family \$20

☐ Patron \$250

☐ Senior (65+) Couple \$15

☐ Contributing \$50

☐ Lifetime \$1,000

☐ Corporate \$250-\$1,000



Thank you to all the donors who supported our Sherwood Fence Repair Fund. Work will begin in September!

Janice Bledsoe
 Laura Henneman
 George Jackson
 Christianna Koehler
 Deb Lee
 David Schroeder
 Joseph Schwarzmann

Lorraine Seiler
 Paul Standeven
 Joanne Standeven
 David Standeven
 Andrew Standeven
 Cathy Teixeira
 Marc Wolff



**Oct.
10th**

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Parking
Bake Sale Table
Cider Pressing
Archery
Apple Peeling
Face Painting

Email the Park Staff at
cromwell-rp@baltimorecountymd.gov
or call 410-887-2503

2 hour shifts
9-11 am
11 am - 1 pm
1 - 3 pm

Cromwell Valley Park Council, Inc.
2002 Cromwell Bridge Rd.
Baltimore, MD 21234

Nonprofit Org
US Postage Paid
Baltimore, MD
Permit # 342

YOUR MEMBERSHIP INFO:




**FALL
HARVEST
Festival**

The leaves are turning, the air is crisp, and our tables are full—join us for the Fall Harvest Festival!

10 OCTOBER | 10 AM | CROMWELL VALLEY PARK

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED
email the Park Staff at
cromwell-rp@baltimorecountymd.gov
or call
410-887-2503



For upcoming events, scan this QR code or visit us online at:
www.cromwellvalleypark.org



Construction has been completed at the Sherwood entrance of CVP!

