

Havre de Grace Green Team

Year in Review 2020



Both challenging and rewarding, 2020 showed the critical role that the Havre de Grace (HdG) Green Team mission plays in bringing together residents and improving our environment. We adapted some programs and discovered from others that our mission contributes to participants' physical and mental health.

Even with the pandemic, we made great strides this year, and we are extremely grateful for all the volunteers, donors and supporters who helped make this year a success. Read on for highlights of their many and varied activities, get a sense of our plans for 2021, and consider participating in our programs, becoming a community gardener or signing up as a volunteer – we have lots of options for individuals and groups!

Zero Waste

One of our biggest efforts in 2020 kicked off in June with the opening of the HdG Green Team Food Waste Drop Off enclosure in Hutchins Park. This is a free program for residents to drop off their food waste and compostable paper products such as pizza boxes(!) to be picked up for composting by Veteran Compost.

The pilot program is the result of the tireless efforts of **Danielle Wolfe**, our project lead for this effort. Food waste can make up as much as 24% of landfilled Municipal Solid Waste. Given the constraints with existing landfill space, any efforts to reduce the amount of waste going to the landfill are critical. Composting also reduces the output of methane, a harmful greenhouse gas that is generated during the decomposition of food waste in landfills. During this initial six-month pilot, we collected approximately 16,000 pounds of food waste

2020 At A Glance

- Collected over 16,000 pounds of food waste for composting
- Provided 7 Documentary films
- Expanded hiking, biking and paddling trail information on hdgreenteam.org
- Donated 1,420 pounds of vegetables to three local food pantries
- Supported 29 volunteer Tree Adopters at Todd Park Food Forest
- Offered 1 "How To" virtual gardening course on microgreens
- Maintained 3 beehives which provided 100 lbs of honey
- Achieved Bee City designation
- Issued 6 Think Green Eat Green newsletters
- Maintained 67 plots at four gardens serving 50 households

and compostable paper at the compost drop off. This surpassed our initial six-month goal by over 10,000 pounds.



Figure 1 Citizens of Havre de Grace caught in action at the food waste drop off!

This effort was supported by volunteers staffing an information table at the Farmer's Market over the summer. Volunteers included **Carole Andrews**, **Joan Black**, **Sue Capp**, **Jean Johnson**, and **Carol Zimmerman**. These volunteers provided information on what types of waste is compostable and how the disposal site operates as well as managed giveaways of countertop compost pails (donated by **Vulcan Materials**) and compostable bags. Other support came from:

- The **City of Havre de Grace** provided the bin enclosure and staff to unlock and lock.
- **Big House Signs** donated graphic design labor for additional promotional materials following our initial sign purchase
- **Linnea Tober** of Morph Gallery designed and provided other promotional graphics

In the News

[Havre de Grace Compost Center has surpassed expectations since opening](#)

By MIKE KLINGAMAN

BALTIMORE SUN | NOV 16, 2020

Havre de Grace Green Team Environmental Film Series

Our film series, which began in 2017 with the support of the [Havre de Grace Maritime Museum](#) and the [Joseph Robert Foundation](#), saw the biggest adaptation this year. The films are selected by **Jean Johnson** and **Patty McAllister-Shakeshaft**, who started us off with three films that generated lively discussion following each film:

- **Tidewater** - Hampton Roads, VA is a coastal region with 14 military installations spread across 17 local jurisdictions facing challenges with rising waters. Tidewater is a study of how military and local jurisdictions work to combat sea level rise. With representatives from Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG) and Harford County Planning

staff as well as local residents in attendance, we discussed the similarities that HdG and APG face in planning for coastal resiliency.

- **The Devil We Know** unravels one of the biggest environmental scandals of our time. A group of citizens in West Virginia take on DuPont after they discover it has knowingly been dumping a toxic chemical used in Teflon kitchenware - now found in the blood of 99.7% of Americans - into the air and public water supply. They file one of the largest class action lawsuits in the history of environmental law.
- **Overload: America's Toxic Love Story**, our last live screening before the pandemic. The audience included high school students from Iowa visiting the Mid-Atlantic to learn about careers in oceanography and related fields and to visit Washington, D.C. Some from farming families reacted quite strongly to the message about the astounding human health costs of industrial chemicals and herbicides.

With the limits on public gatherings, the Film Series team had to regroup. Unable to offer our usual live screenings and Q&A, we shifted to offering streamed documentaries.

- **Racing to Zero: In Pursuit of Zero Waste**, streamed in June to promote the launch of our Food Waste Compost Drop Off.
- **A Fierce Green Fire: the Battle for a Living Planet** was streamed to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day. Clearly environmental protection has come a long way since 1970 but there is much more to be done.
- **The Antibiotic Hunters** took us around the world with scientists in search of unknown bacteria that might prove to be good antibiotic candidates. From Komodo dragon saliva to bat species in caves, the search for sources for medicines demonstrated the need to retain our environmental and species diversity.
- **Inside the Megafire** Scientists racing to understand what is behind the rise of record-breaking megafires across the American West take to the forest, and even a fire lab, in search of answers. They investigate how forestry practices, climate change, and the physics of fire play a role in the dramatic increase in wildfires.

VOLUNTEER!

- Spend an hour or two helping staff a table at the First Friday events or at the HdG Farmer's Market
- Recommend an environmental film, lead a film discussion or help with set up at the film events.
- Help grow and harvest vegetables at our Heirloom Victory Garden
- Help organize or participate in hiking or bike trail maintenance
- Adopt a Tree and provide periodic monitoring, watering, and maintenance
- Join our beekeepers in maintaining healthy bee colonies and harvesting honey
- Co-lead a project
- Provide social media support to help promote various projects

Contact us at

hdggreenteam@gmail.com for
more information

Our thanks to the volunteers who help set up the equipment before each film: **Mike Capp, Bob Shakeshaft, Carole Andrews, Carol Zimmerman and Jean Johnson**. For some of our films **Jack Hirschfield** introduced the film and moderated the Q&A. If you missed any of our films, most are available on services such as Netflix or Amazon Prime as well as for free using Kanopy from the Harford County Public Library.

Our 2021 plans include additional streamed films and hopefully the return to live screenings, as the group discussion greatly adds to the experience. We are also working on a DVD loan program so that other community groups can leverage our existing film collection – watch for more on our website. Finally, we welcome collaboration with related groups: for example, the Harford Bird Club announced our December 2019 screening of **The Messenger**, a powerful documentary about the decline of songbirds, to its membership. Film recommendations from groups or individuals are welcome; just email hdgreenteam@gmail.com with "Documentary Film Suggestion" in the subject line.

Great Outdoors

Research shows that 2 hours a week outdoors can have tremendous health benefits. The Great Outdoors project is working to promote outdoor activities available in the city and surrounding area. We have greatly expanded the hiking, biking and paddling trail information on our website, and we post outdoor events on our Facebook page.

We also held a soft roll out of our Great Outdoor Challenge, an effort to encourage residents and visitors to take advantage of biking, walking and paddling activities while also learning about Havre de Grace History. Participants who complete the challenge can pick up a free HdG Green Team sticker at the Visitor Center. See our website for further information and look for additional promotion in 2021.



Figure 2: Try our Great Outdoor Challenge in 2021!

Also in 2021, we would like to aid the city with trail improvements to the new Swan Harbor Farm Trail at Clark Road and potentially partner with the Mason Dixon Trail volunteers to improve the connection between the MDT and the North Park Trail. We are also looking for opportunities to improve biking in HdG. If you would like to help us organize a trail improvement or maintenance effort, please email us at hdgreenteam@gmail.com with "Trail volunteer" in the subject line.

Heirloom Victory Garden (HVG)

The HVG is located at the Moore Family Homestead in the rear of 319 Lafayette Street, and is patterned after the Victory Gardens of World Wars I and II. Led by our project leader, **Ennise Bloom**, the HVG relies on more than 20 volunteers, who contributed 320 recorded volunteer hours this year. In 2020, we grew and harvested **1,420 pounds** of vegetables which we contributed to three local food pantries.



Figure 3: HVG produce harvested and ready for delivery to local food pantries!



Figure 4: New HVG garden support

Special thanks to Food Pantry Coordinator, **Tammy Jamerson**, and core volunteers who participated multiple times a week: **Kirk Smith**, **Chip Paradis**, and **Andy Goldberg**. Some volunteers adopted specific plots, while others volunteered to help as needed throughout the garden. The HVG / Heirloom Victory Garden backs to Strawberry Lane, and in 2021, we look forward to new signage to further help with identification of the HVG.

Todd Park Food Forest

The adopt-a-tree program was reinvigorated this year thanks to the efforts of Green Team board member **Ennise Bloom**. All 29 trees are now adopted and there is a waiting list. Tree adopters maintain their respective trees by weeding, watering, mulching and reporting any issues to the food forest managers. Due to COVID, we were not able to hold our typical group work



Figure 5: President Carol Zimmerman receives MUCFC Grant from Frank Lopez of Maryland DNR.

sessions, so the individual work by tree adopters provided an especially valuable service in 2020.

In August, the Green Team was awarded a grant of \$1000 from the Maryland Urban Community Forestry Committee (MUCFC). The funds will be used to erect a 3x2 foot information sign to explain the purpose of the Food Forest to visitors. The sign will be installed in early 2021.

Online "How to" Gardening Class "Hydroponic Microgreens: Growing in Baggies" for Elementary School Students and Parents

In October, a session on hydroponic growing was offered in partnership with the Meadowvale PTA to parents and kids. **Danielle Wolfe** facilitated the session where **Ennise Bloom** taught participants over Zoom about growing microgreens. This gardening activity can be tried over the winter months. It was a good foray into doing a class online for children and plans are underway to offer learning options like it to the Havre de Grace Elementary School.

In November, the Chesapeake Bay Trust awarded us a grant for nearly \$5,000. The grant will be used to install three permaculture beds, plant two hybrid chestnut trees, develop a plan for future enhancements to the entire Food Forest, and hold a maintenance workshop in the spring of 2021. **Howard EcoWorks** will be providing staff and design services for the project. Green Team volunteers will maintain the permaculture beds once installed. Work on the project will start in December and be completed in the first half of 2021.

Other support in 2020 came from:

- **Susquehanna Hose Company**, which provides water for the onsite water tanks.
- The **City of Havre de Grace**, which provides woodchips for use by the tree adopters for mulching the areas around the trees.

The Food Forest produced blueberries, serviceberries, peaches, figs, and elderberries that were available for picking by Green Team volunteers and other members of the community.

Think Green Eat Green

The Think Green Eat Green (TGEG) newsletter is researched and written by **Patty McAllister-Shakeshaft** and is designed to be a thought-provoking look at how what we eat affects (or is affected by) the environment. The newsletter was issued bimonthly in 2020

and covered six different topics. These topics ranged from Community Supported Agriculture, biodiversity, soil health, how food choice drives our carbon footprint, food preservation and gut microbiology.

We also use the TGEG platform to notify members about plant-based meals offered by the **Vandiver Inn** in their Supper Club series. Our long-anticipated Cinco de Mayo dinner at the Vandiver moved to pick-up only due to the pandemic, and they have since offered two more plant-based meals- a Summer Bounty dinner and a Taste of India.

Missed an issue of the TGEG newsletter? Find copies of all our newsletters on the [Think Green Eat Green](#) page of our website. And if there is a topic you'd like to see addressed in a future newsletter, email us at hdggreenteam@gmail.com with "TGEG Topic Suggestion" in the subject line.

Save the World Every Day podcast interviewed our own **Patricia McAllister-Shakeshaft**, the author of 'Think Green Eat Green' about how preserving food at home is fun, healthy and good for the environment.

Listen to ["Preserving Food at home - Improve your diet and the environment, and stock your pantry with deliciousness!"](#)



Figure 6 Sign up for the TGEG Newsletter on our website

Apiary

In our first full year as beekeepers, the HdG Green Team maintained three hives behind the Seneca Community Garden on Seneca Avenue in the Todd Park area. Our bees generated approximately 100 lbs. of honey, some of which we donated to staff at the City of Havre de Grace for their support of the program, with the rest offered as a fundraiser to help support Green Team programs. This apiary project was developed to help support the endangered pollinator population. In 2019, the US lost 40.7% of its honey bee hives, the most in 13 years of research.



Our thanks to **Linda Zuckerman**, who led the Apiary project through 2020. She is stepping down and has handed the project to **Kim and Dan Rusin**, the new leaders of the Apiary project. Also, special thanks to **Dona Rodenbaugh Bushong** and **Paul Bushong** for ongoing maintenance, advice and assistance with honey harvesting and extractor equipment. We would also like to thank **Ennise Bloom** for the social media and outreach support, and the entire apiary committee volunteers for assistance throughout the year.



Also in support of pollinators, in 2020, the HdG Green Team, led by **Mary Beth Cochran**, worked with the City of Havre de Grace to obtain designation as a Bee City.

- In June the city council passed a resolution in support of applying for the Bee City designation with the Xerces Society. The Green Team submitted the application and in October Havre de Grace became an official Bee City USA affiliate. This designation reflects our commitment to taking care of pollinators through protecting habitat upon which native pollinator bee species depend. Nearly 90% of the world's flowering plants rely on animal pollinators, including many of our food plants.
- The Green Team will be establishing a pollinator garden in 2021 and using it for educational purposes.

We have a variety of volunteer opportunities for individuals and groups associated with the apiary and pollinators, so please reach out if this is an area of interest.

Community Gardens

2020 marked the 9th year for the gardens. The HdG Green Team manages community gardens at four sites, with two at Market Street in downtown Havre de Grace, one at Old Reservoir, and one at Seneca Avenue. Registration for new gardeners to rent garden plots

will open in January 2021. Watch hdggreenteam.org and our social media sites for more information. Community gardens are open to the public — feel free to admire, but please don't pick!

- All 67 plots at our four gardens were in use this season, serving 50 households
- As the season ended, gardeners at the Market St. 1 location, our oldest garden, were in the process of relocating to a field on Strawberry Lane. As the art on Market St. continues to evolve, the owner of the property, **Allen Fair**, wants to develop the garden area as a park for visitors who come to enjoy the murals, and he provided his land on Strawberry Lane for a new garden site. The move is a lot of work, but it will be a lovely garden when it is all completed in 2021. Market St. 1 gardeners came together in mid-November for a bed-building day, all pitching in to construct 13 raised beds at the new site, renamed Strawberry Lane Garden.
- We appreciated the help of the **City of Havre de Grace**, which provided wood chips to all the gardens and water to the Seneca Avenue and Old Reservoir gardens. The **Susquehanna Hose Company** filled our water tanks at the Market St. gardens.
- We wish to thank **Ennise Bloom**, who is stepping down from her role as site leader at Seneca Avenue after many years of great stewardship. Her role will be taken over by **Jeff Matteson**. We also thank **Kathy Tollar**, who stepped in as temporary site leader at Market St. 1, when **Joan Michel** took a break this year. Joan is back leading the new garden on Strawberry Lane (formerly Market St 1). Continuing their site leader roles are **Peter Green** at Market St. 1 and **Kirk Smith** at Old Reservoir.



Figure 7: Volunteers position newly-built raised beds at the new Strawberry Lane community garden.

Website: <https://hdggreenteam.org/>

Sign up for our email distribution list at hdggreenteam@gmail.com

Or Follow us on Social Media:



The Havre de Grace Green Team Ltd. is an all-volunteer, local 501(c)3 non-profit dedicated to promoting environmentally friendly programs and practices.