

2020 Annual Report



**GUNPOWDER
VALLEY**
CONSERVANCY



**Healthy Lands.
Healthy Waterways.
Healthy Communities.**
Since 1989



Reflections from 2020

Photo: Kathleen Crostic

Many of us turned inward as a result of the worldwide pandemic and it forced us to delay some things as we adjusted to that new reality. Gunpowder Valley Conservancy (GVC) was no exception. This, our 2020 annual report, reflects our status at the end of that year and we hope to catch up by publishing the 2021 report by the end of this year.

We reflected on *why we do what we do* as we drafted our most recent 3 year strategic plan, new vision statement, and even our new logo. Here are just a few of our 2020 accomplishments:

Healthy Lands: In late 2019, we were able to place an additional 181 acres into conservation easement. Building upon this momentum, the Land Preservation committee spent 2020 focused on planning and a shift to GIS prioritization of properties that will not only help us achieve our land preservation goals, but also water quality and habitat goals.

Healthy Waterways: To this end, the program team successfully navigated the onset of the pandemic and met all of our restoration goals for the year. They created sound personal protection protocols to safely host environmental stewardship events that were flexible enough to meet the changing COVID-19 regulations and recommendations. We are so grateful for the efforts from staff and volunteers; organizing activities, communicating events, and getting trees and gardens in the ground.

Healthy Communities: 2020 saw us reaching out to our partners in the greater Baltimore community to forge new collaborations. Joining with the the [Greater Baltimore Wilderness Coalition](#), we hope to expand our capacity to clean our waters while increasing our efficiency by working with like minded groups who can share the administrative load. We are looking to attract larger funding sources that target these regional coalitions.

While 2020 certainly was a strange year, your help and support helped us navigate it successfully and emerge even stronger. We are ready to push towards a watershed that we all envision for our children's future.

Sincerely,



Lou Etgen
Executive Director



Cyrus Green
Board President



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GVC at a Glance

Photo: Kathleen Crostic

Our Mission

To educate and mobilize people and resources to preserve and restore the lands and waterways of the Gunpowder watershed. The GVC is committed to clean water for the two million people who live in, visit or benefit from the Gunpowder Watershed by preserving land, restoring ecosystems and mobilizing people to become environmental stewards.

Where We Work

The **Gunpowder Watershed** drains 500 square miles from York County, PA through Baltimore, Carroll & Harford counties, to the shores of the Chesapeake Bay. Most of the Baltimore area's drinking water supply comes from two reservoirs located within our watershed: Prettyboy and Loch Raven.



What We Do



Coming soon! Our updated website aims to provide concise, action-oriented information to help YOU get involved with Gunpowder Valley Conservancy. You'll soon have our history, calendar of events, and programs at your fingertips. Anticipated launch date in summer 2022.

www.gunpowdervalleyconservancy.org



GVC's Year In Review

Photo: Kathleen Crostic

Clean Water from a Parking Lot

In 2020, GVC received a **\$75,000 Restoration and Outreach Grant from the Chesapeake Bay Trust to continue our Bay-Wise Project at Our Lady of Mount Carmel (OLMC)**, a Catholic parish and school situated on 8.5 acres in Essex, MD. The OLMC campus is very close to Hopkins Creek and the Chesapeake Bay. However, with multiple buildings and a large parking lot, the OLMC campus is full of impervious surfaces that generate a large volume of runoff when it rains. GVC piloted an innovative solution to reduce water pollution at OLMC-- remove four parking spaces to create special gardens known as microbioretenment practices (MBRs), designed with engineering features and water-loving native plants to soak up and filter the extra water. [Watch our short video](#) to see the result!



Special thanks to **Eli Golding**, a recent graduate of the George Washington Carver Center for Arts and Technology, for his creative vision and talents. His video both simplifies a complicated project as well as conveys beautiful testimonials from our OLMC partners!





2020: Year of the Reforestation Crew Chief



Thirty years ago, on a rainy Earth Day, a group of Kingsville residents, Boy Scouts, and local politicians came together to plant a single tree. It was **the first tree planted by GVC**. Many of you reading this report have helped the GVC plant more trees--over 34,000--in subsequent years. Together, we have restored over 180 acres of forested land and wildlife habitat within the Gunpowder watershed. And we did it one tree at a time.

Fast forward to 2020, GVC had hoped to have a big celebration for the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day. Instead of celebrating, GVC had to put all work events on hold in the initial months of the COVID-19 pandemic. Once we developed acceptable COVID-19 policies, we needed to play catch-up to meet our environmental stewardship goals for the year. Many of our dedicated volunteer leaders stepped up to the challenge. No longer able to accommodate 60-80 volunteers at a single tree planting event, our reforestation crew chiefs rolled up their sleeves to get trees in the ground with fewer helping hands. By November 2020, they **helped GVC plant 826 native trees across 5.5 acres**.

Did You Know...

In 2020, GVC updated the name of its annual award to the **Charlie Conklin Volunteer of the Year** award. **Tim Somers** received the award for his 10 years of service as a Reforestation Crew Chief. He participated in 9 out of the 13 tree plantings in 2020. While most crew chiefs typically work 5 hours on tree planting days, Tim has been known to stay before or after events to do tree maintenance!

Steve Fauser also received the 2020 Charlie Conklin Volunteer of the Year award for his outstanding dedication as a Stream Captain. Steve, who is also a member of Baltimore County of Aging's [Retired and Senior Volunteer Program](#) (RSVP), and his team have removed picnic tables, washing machines, and a sofa from Beaver Dam Run in Cockeysville!



2020 Charlie Conklin Volunteer of the Year winners: Tim Somers (top picture) is second from right next to a tree, while his award's namesake is on the far right. Steve Fauser (bottom picture) pointing out the high water line at his adopted section of Beaver Dam Run.

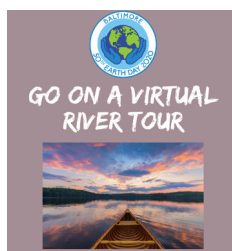


Photo: Kathleen Crostic

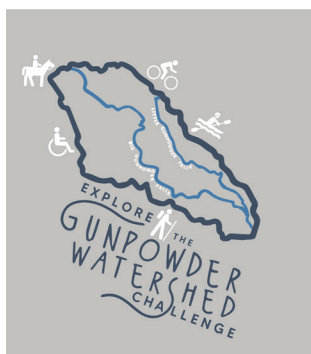
Earth Day Anyway

Earth Day connected millions on its first observance in 1970 and is now a global effort. In early 2020, GVC had formed a robust steering committee to plan a large Earth Day event at Oregon Ridge Park. When it became clear that our original plan was no longer in the cards, we put our heads together to come up with a creative solution. The result? Earth Day Anyway!

We encouraged people to remain connected to the spirit of Earth Day, especially as we were being called to "Think Globally, Act Locally" for the sake of public health. The GVC website hosted a curated list of actions people could perform from home and/or independently in natural spaces.



Explore the Gunpowder Watershed Challenge



As the year progressed, we saw first hand how the use of local parks had dramatically skyrocketed. Maryland Department of Natural Resources reported a [45 percent increase in attendance for Maryland State Parks in 2020 compared to the previous year](#). What we had known for years--that the Gunpowder watershed had a wealth of beauty, history, and ecologically significant habitats--was now becoming common knowledge as more people sought out local trails for recreation, socializing and/or solace.

Simultaneously, we had to scramble to figure out an alternative fundraiser to replace our annual dinner social. Thanks to the creative vision of the GVC Events Committee we decided to launch our inaugural *Explore the Gunpowder Watershed Challenge*. Our goal was simple. We wanted to motivate people to spend time outdoors, on trails or in neighborhoods, while helping to raise \$10,000 for the GVC.



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Explore the Gunpowder

Photo: Kathleen Crostic

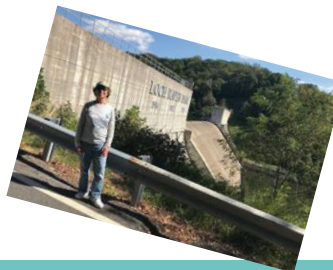
Our first annual Explore the Gunpowder Watershed Challenge was held from October 1 - October 31, 2020. **We exceeded our goal and raised more than \$10,500** for our land preservation and watershed restoration work! One *Explore the Gunpowder* participant, Gregg Petersen, made several trips from Howard County to visit Loch Raven Reservoir, Oregon Ridge Park, Cromwell Valley Park, and Gunpowder Falls State Park as an *Explore the Gunpowder* participant. Gregg shared that: ***“it was a pleasure to discover so many diverse and interesting places to visit...there were always some great natural discoveries to be made.”*** We think you’ll agree when you see his bird photos!



Birds of the Gunpowder watershed

(from upper left to right): Great Blue Heron, Winter Wren, White-throated sparrow, Palm warbler, Bald eagle, Caspian terns, Lesser yellowlegs, Magnolia warbler.

Photo Credits: Gregg Petersen.



The true success of our first *Explore the Gunpowder Watershed* challenge was that it gave us an excuse to have FUN! Throughout October, it was a common sight to see GVC staff, Board Members, volunteer leaders and their families out on the trail.





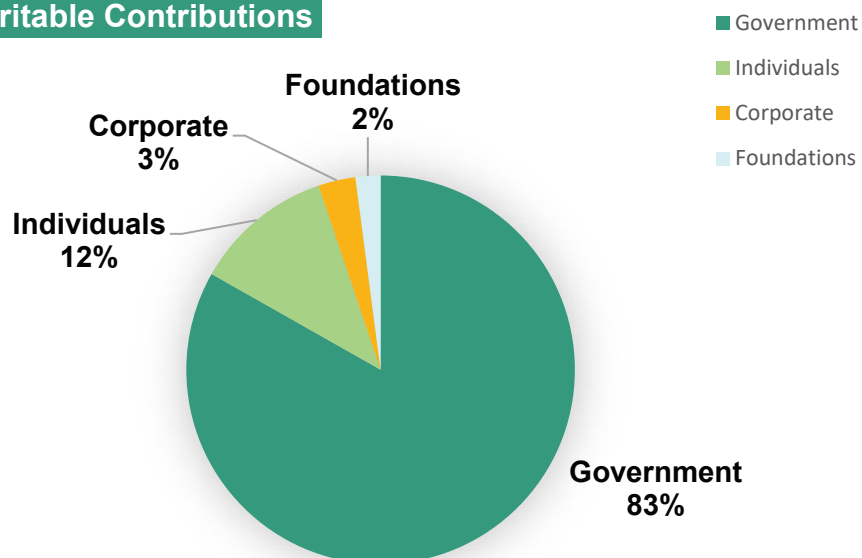
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2020 Financials

Photo: Kathleen Crostic

INCOME

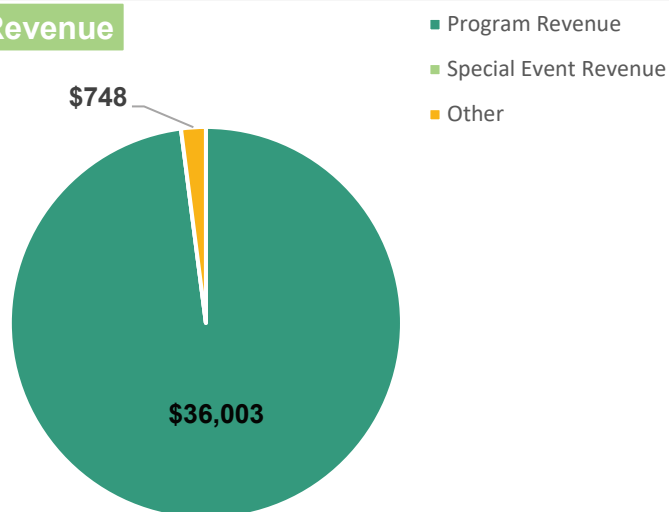
Charitable Contributions



Government: \$350,674
Individuals: \$48,990
Corporate: \$13,065
Foundations: \$8,733

Charitable Contribution Total:
\$421,462

Mission-Related Revenue



Program Revenue: \$36,003
Special Event Revenue: \$0
Other: \$748

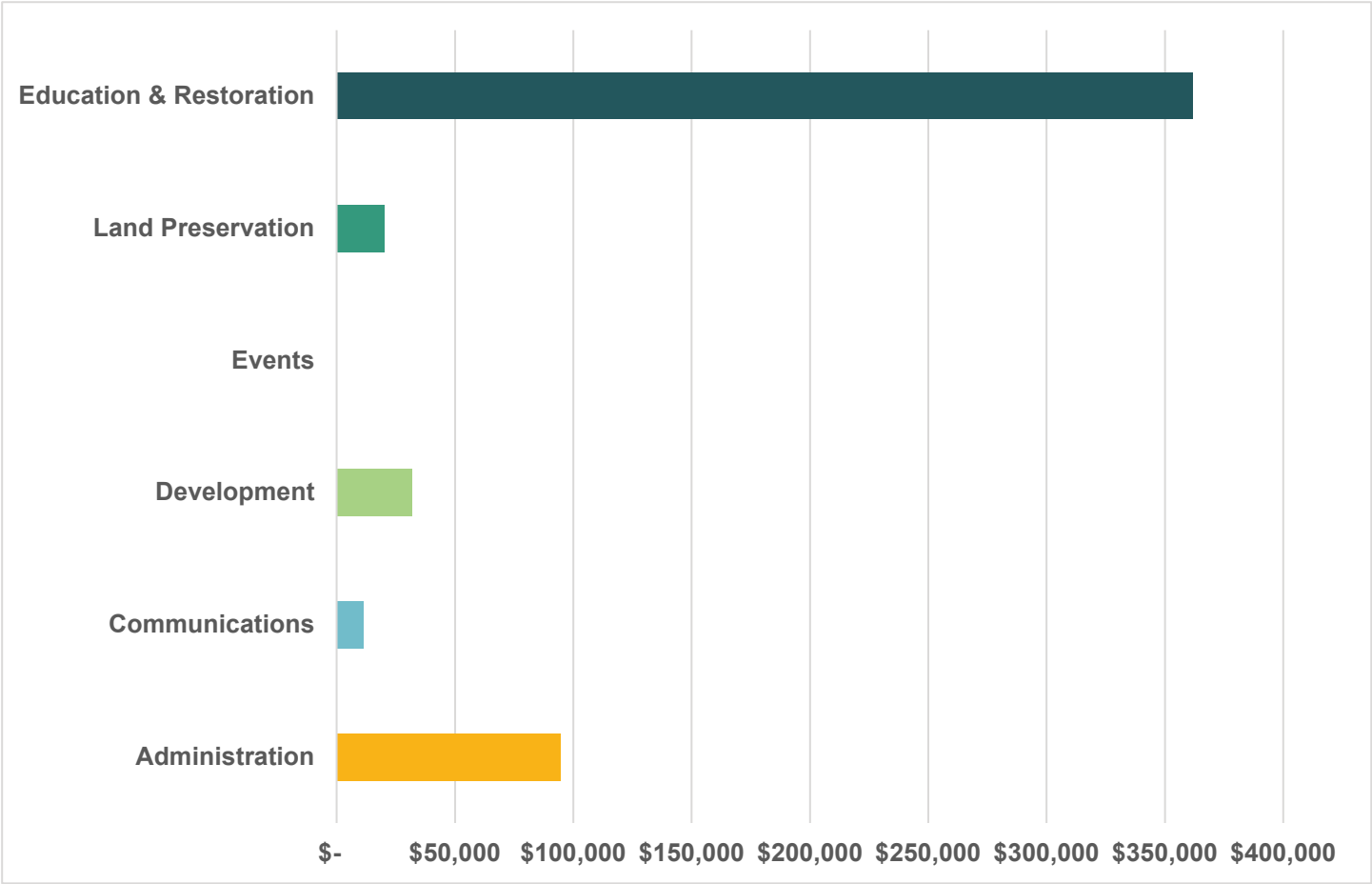
**Mission-Related Revenue
Total:**
\$36,751

Note: The lack of special event revenue is an anomaly due to 2020 restrictions.

TOTAL 2020 INCOME: \$458,213



Expenses



Administration	\$94,581
Communications	\$11,500
Development	\$31,933
Events	\$0
Land Preservation	\$20,443
Education & Restoration	\$361,874

TOTAL 2020 EXPENSES: \$512,853



Thank you to our 2020 funders, sponsors, donors and members!

2020 GRANT FUNDERS



\$1,000+ Level

Anonymous
Ronald Baldwin
Sanford & Susan Buxbaum
Don & Sally Callihan
Charles Conklin

Charles Conklin, III
Randy & Marcy Davis
Justin & Molly Esworthy
Kiwanis Club of Towson-Timonium
Loch Raven Skeet & Trap Center

M&T Charitable Foundation
James Martin & Sandy Davenport
McCormick & Co., Inc.
North County Preservation, Inc.
Ed Stuebing

\$500 - \$999 Level

Nick Abbasi
Baltimore County Game and Fish
Protective Association
Susan & Fred Bath
David Berry
Bluemont Manor Farm, LLC
John Copeland
Kari Gaynor
Tom & Penny Graf

John Leonard, Jr.
Julie and David Lynn
Meredith McDonagh
John Miller & Dr. Jane Wolfson
Pat Novak
Nancy & Bob Pentz
Bill Rees
Thomas Reifsnyder & Lily Im
Rosedale Center of BCPS

Stuart & Bob Sanford
Alyssa Sherman
Matthew & Danielle Simons
SMC
T. Rowe Price Investments
Towson Service Foundation
Kimberly Turner

\$100 - \$499 Level

Carrie Arnold
Balanced Living Counseling
Mary Barber
Dr. Robert & Betty Batchelor
Ruth Bennett
Charles Bizzell
Daniel Brellis
Jo Ann Brooks
Ronald Brown & Susan Powers
Gary Bruno
Kirsten Burger
Graham Campbell
John Canoles
Bob Carrell
Timothy Casey
Chesapeake Stormwater Network

Carole & Bob Chickering
David Class
Garden Architecture, LLC.
Linda and Tom Cole
Lauren Contino
James Cornell
Darin Crew
Donald Cunningham
Edward Decker, Jr.
Robert & Julia Deford
Edrich Lumber Inc.
Leslie Erickson & J. Wright Witcher
Cynthia Etgen
Kenneth Etgen
Paul Etgen
Rob Etgen

Exelon Foundation
Dennis and Janice Flanigan
Fran and John Flanigan
Wini and Roger Frye
Michael Galvin
Sommer Gentry
Minnie & John Gillett
Michael & Doris Goodhues
Sarah & Tom Haines
Luke Hancock
Alta & Jim Haywood
Scott Heacock
Darcy Herman
Scott & Gail Hisey
Cailin Hohman
Patricia Jonas



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2020 Supporters

Photo: Kathleen Crostic

\$100 - \$499 Level (cont.)

James & Patricia Kelly
Inna Kolomiytsev
Rita & Michael Kurek
Deborah & Mark Lancaster
Lynn Lanham & Marty Gaynor
Dr. Roger & Joan Lewin
Michael Mallinoff
McBride Foundation
John McClintock
McCormick Employees Sustainability
Committee
Nicole & Michael McGlynn
David McKibbin
Gary E. Mehr
Mid-Atlantic Farm Credit

Kim Peabody
Gordon & Linda Peltz
Alan Penczek
Lorraine & Joseph Perry
Peggy Perry
Steve Prumo
Marion & Ed Romans
Rus Leonard
Mona & Lee Ann Scott
Jason Shanty
Victoria & Norman Sines
Deborah Slawson
Timothy Somers
Julieta Stack
Robert & Sally Stanhope

David Steele
Henry & Sandy Stromberger
Karen Stupski
Doris Sweet
Martha & Frank Varisco
Donald Vetter
Nancy Voit
Rebecca Volz
William Vondrasek
William & Judy Waldman
Greg Whipp
Laura & Robert Wilke
Olivia Zug

\$50 - \$99+ Level

Anonymous
Eric Anolik
Dottie Berg
Robert Blake
Valerie Brennan
Mark Bright
Katherine & John Brown
Amy Clavijo
Patricia Contino
Kathleen Crostic
Joe Davis
Jennifer & Brian Dougherty
Moriah Dove
David Drummond
Dan & Lisa Edwards
Michele Ellis
Liz Entwisle
Stephanie Gordon & Dane Fichter
Herb Freiburger
Eldon & Lois Gemmill
Jim Giantomasi & Lila Baake

Barbara & Dave Gunter
Katherine Hauser
Christine Hintz
Barbara Hopkins
Nancy Jackson
Dale & Christine Johnson
Ann Jones
Amanda Karnezis
Jeremy Kinstlinger
Anita Kraemer
Francis Kriston
Robert & Paula Kurrus
Chin & Lana Lien
Wally & Priscilla Lippincott
Jonathan Lovell
Judith & Michael Merrill
Suzanne Merryman
Tracey & Nate Miller
Jeremy Monn
Heather Morris
Network for Good

Barbara Newton
Barbara Risacher & Arthur Casserly
Barbara & Dennis Robinson
Frances & Ted Sanderson
Dan Sause
Stephen Schatz
Janet & Doug Schollenberger
Vince Schumaker
Bradford Sharpless
Lois Simmons
Shawn Smith
Alice & Darrell Strathy
Nicole Thomas
Ashley & Katey Traut
Dave & Carol Vanko
David Warfield
Tiffany Watts
Rebecca Wertime
Joseph White
Grace Wiessner
Kelly Yachera



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2020 Supporters

Photo: Kathleen Crostic

\$25 - \$49 Level

Jamie Alberti
Marty Baker
Keeve Brine
James Busch
Donna Carr
Phyllis Carter
Carolyn Colona
Mary Corddry
Ann & Tom Crostic
William Curtis
Adam Douglass
John Etgen
Susan Farinetti
Ben Fertig
Joanna Freeman
Bill & Julie Gaynor
David Hash
Julie Hester
Meagan Hohman
Louis & Hazel Hoxter
Jesse Liff
Corey Johns
Mike Keeney

Keith Campbell Foundation
International Philanthropy
Emily Kneebone
Tommy Lawrence
Meredith Lewis
Pamela Lottero-Perdue
James Manning
Shelby Marciniak
Carol Mason
Tracey & Tim Mason
Mark & Bev Melmed
Alyson & Jack Merget
Andrea Messier
Rommel Miranda
Elena Moschell
Tina & Dave Mudge
Lisa Muhlbach
Kim Myrick
Julie & John Niehaus
Jim Paladino
Catherine Pecci
David Peters
Gregg Peterson

James Peyton
Edna Primose
Caitlin Pristupa
Deborah Raynor
Glenn Roche
Kim Rosenblatt
Mary Sheridan
Jay Sherman
John Shuler
Kathy Snood
Lauire Squire
Mary Stein-Cascio
Corine Stephens
Mary Lou Straughan
Bernard Stupski
Catherine Tipper
Walter & Susan Urie
Cynthia Van Ells
Chrisopher Webster
Scott Wilson
Kerry Wixted
Jill Yonowitz

Did You Know...



There is a **COVID-19 Memorial Grove at Pine Ridge Golf Course** with a plaque that reads:

"The Gunpowder Valley Conservancy dedicates our 2020 native tree and shrub plantings to the heroes of the COVID-19 pandemic: the men and women of our region who have gone above and beyond the call of duty to serve and protect us, heal our families, produce our food, and teach our children. We honor their contributions to the well-being of the Gunpowder Watershed."



Photo: Kathleen Crostic



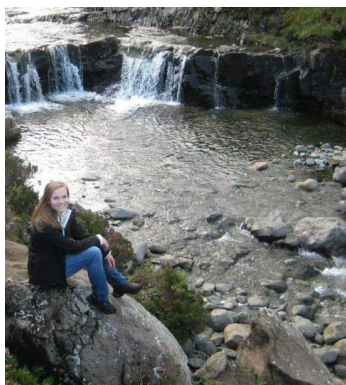
As a child, I really enjoyed being out in nature. I enjoyed the opportunity to use my imagination to explore by making nature my playground. Before I joined the GVC Board, a fellow Board member invited my family to join him and his family to experience the calmness of a stream that runs through the Gunpowder. I saw my son fill with joy as we skipped rocks and relaxed. My family was able to forget about time and responsibilities for a moment. This experience and my enjoyment of nature as a child brought me to the GVC, to ensure my son and others have access to the Gunpowder.

~ Cyrus Green, GVC President



Growing up in the Gunpowder watershed meant that many of my spring and summer days were spent playing outside in the stream or in the woods. I knew I wanted to work with a local group to help make a positive impact in the environment and community that shaped me into the woman I am today. Luckily, during my senior year at Towson University I got the opportunity to intern with GVC, which at the beginning of 2020 became my part-time job...Nothing beats the feeling of accomplishment when you see all the hard work you have put in! I finally feel like I am doing what I was always meant to be doing!

~ Kim Thomas, GVC staff



I originally got involved with the GVC because I wanted the opportunity to give back to my community in a way that was meaningful to me at the time. Living in the city for the last 6 years, I've come to miss green spaces and trees, and have realized once again how important they are to the earth and to humanity. The work that the GVC does, from land preservation to tree planting, rain gardens and bayscapes, becomes more important as the years go by and we see more of the impacts of climate change on weather and temperature. As an added bonus, the people are wonderful - a joy to work with and learn from.

~Stephanie Gordon, GVC Board Member



Photo: Kathleen Crostic



An office inbox labeled 'Charlie' was my first introduction to the GVC. I worked at Baltimore County DEPRM [now Department of Environmental Protection and Sustainability] and one day I finally asked my friend, 'Who is Charlie?' My friend Wally Lippincott's jaw dropped, and he said, 'You don't know Charlie?' So I learned all about the GVC and their role in land preservation efforts from Wally. I eventually met Charlie Conklin and found his passion for the health of the Gunpowder along with the other GVC volunteers undeniable. Clean water, clean air and the solace that comes with spending time outdoors are some of the things that enrich my soul.

~Nancy Pentz, GVC Board Member



Having spent 37 years working at the Bethlehem Steel Sparrows Point plant, my focus was on making the plant profitable. It was my wife who suggested that we participate in the Johns Hopkins University's Certificate for Environmental Studies. I learned that the earth, our home, was like a living organism that helps to maintain and perpetuate the conditions for life on this planet. In 1990, I volunteered with the GVC during their first Gunpowder Falls State Park clean up. What an experience to see all the trash that had been dumped in such a wonderful natural resource. This awakened my commitment to make a difference in caring for our environment. I have now volunteered with the GVC for 30+ years!

~Charlie Conklin, the Heart of GVC



I have loved nature for as long as I can remember, thanks to my Mom's example of loving all of God's creations. My nature explorations included the Little Gunpowder River in Fallston, which we called "Laurel Brook". In 2006, as the Intern Coordinator leading interns to build Baltimore County's first straw bale house at Heathcote Intentional Community, I learned about the GVC from Karen Stupski. Due to my background in natural history, environmental education and program management, Karen and Charlie Conklin, offered me a part-time Assistant Program Director position in 2007. I am so proud to work for this incredible organization, to have been a part of creating, expanding and leading its education and restoration programs for the past 14 years as its Program Director, as well as restoring Loch Raven Reservoir with native trees and shrubs for the past 10 years. I am truly blessed to be a part of the GVC! And I know Mom would feel the same!

~ Peg Perry

GVC Program Director of Education and Restoration



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Get Involved



Photo: Kathleen Crostic

You too can discover your #WhyWeGVC moment!

[Volunteer](#) at an upcoming GVC event

[Make a donation](#) to sustain our work!

[Spend an Evening Among the Trees](#) with GVC



Evening Among the Trees

September 17, 2022

5:00 PM - 8:00 PM

A fundraiser to support:



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Join us for an evening out in support of land preservation and clean water. Our annual fundraiser will be held on the beautiful grounds of St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church at 2504 Cub Hill Road, Parkville, MD. We will be showcasing the conservation gardens that St. Demetrios has implemented this year in partnership with GVC and Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake.

Tickets will go on sale in June 2022. Visit [our event page](#) for the most updated information on ticket sales, live music, food and drink, and silent auction opportunities!

Photo credit: Loch Raven Reservoir, Sarah Bunk