



# PCA Newsletter

The Plantations Community Association, Inc.



Volume 20 - Issue 1

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## Calendar of Events

3/9 7:00pm PCA Board Meeting at Woodfield Elementary | Room: Teacher's Lounge

4/13 7:00pm PCA Board Meeting at Woodfield Elementary | Room: Teacher's Lounge

5/11 7:00pm PCA Board Meeting at Woodfield Elementary | Room: Teacher's Lounge

All PCA residents are welcome to attend the monthly Board Meeting.

5/16 1:00pm PCA Block Party at Club View Park

## PCA Community Party

PCA members are invited to a neighborhood community party for the whole family at Club View Park on Saturday, May 16<sup>th</sup> at 1:00pm with a back-up day of May 23<sup>rd</sup>. Food and games will be potluck style. We already have soccer goals, frisbee, bubbles, chalk.



The Board wants to identify an organizer for the party who can be the primary point of contact. The Board is also seeking volunteers to help people bring food, games, or equipment to and from their homes. If you are interested in helping to plan or execute any part of the party, please send your contact information to [info@plantations1.org](mailto:info@plantations1.org) with "Block Party Volunteer" in the subject line.

## Volunteers Needed



The PCA volunteer corps is available to help organize shoveling or moving downed tree limb help for those who request it. We also need help to deliver these quarterly newsletters. Email [info@plantaions1.org](mailto:info@plantaions1.org) to request help or to voltuneer.

## Current PCA Board

### Officers

**President:** Nathan Booth  
**VP:** Brandon Martin  
**Secretary:** Debbie Diatz  
**Treasurer:** David Keim

### Board Members

**Kathy Giles**  
**Mike Giles**  
**Denitsa Kirilova**  
**Chris Kiron – Grounds Chair**  
**Evan Margelos – ACC Chair**

## Winter Weather Preparation & Response



Montgomery County recommends winter salt best practices. First, shoveling is your first and most effective line of defense; shovel early and often before snow turns to ice.

Always read the instructions to apply your de-icer effectively and under what conditions. For example, when the pavement is less than 15 degrees, salt doesn't melt ice.

Use the minimum amount of de-icer necessary, spread it evenly, and remember that its purpose is to loosen ice to

make shoveling easier. If your goal is to improve traction, then sand is the more effective tool.

Keep your eye on the weather because the sun and temperature can do the work for you.

Clean up after yourself: you can sweep and reuse any sand, salt, or undissolved de-icer to reuse and reduce the impact on our pets' paws and waterways.

Source: [MoCo Department of Environmental Protection](#)

## PCA Pet Profile



The Trio on Ambergate Court: A Tale of Three Very Different Dogs

*Our backyard has three self-appointed security guards: Harry the Maltipoo, Deniro the Pitbull, and Stanley the Shichi. Harry, our*

*oldest takes his job as head of security very seriously—at ten pounds soaking wet, he patrols the fence line with the authority of a dog ten times his size, alerting us to every squirrel, mailman, and falling leaf. Deniro, our gentle giant Pitbull, backs him up with enthusiastic barking at anything that moves, though his wagging tail usually gives away that he'd rather make friends than stand guard. And then there's Stanley, our youngest Shichi, who defends the family by launching himself at butterflies and engaging in intense stare-downs with the neighbor's cat through the fence.*

*Together, they're a mismatched but devoted trio who take protecting our home very seriously (in their own special ways). Whether it's a delivery truck or a rogue squirrel, nothing gets past this crew—even if their "threatening" presence is undermined by the fact that one is pocket-sized, one is wiggling, and one is somehow upside-down in a bush. – Submitted by Chris Kiron*

Want to make your pet neighborhood famous? Email us their name, age, sex, and favorite activities or short story at [info@plantations1.org](mailto:info@plantations1.org).

## Update: Plantations Two

### Homicide

In the January 11<sup>th</sup> reminder for the January Board Meeting, the Board mentioned the homicide that took place in the Plantations Two parking lot on January 4<sup>th</sup> and what we knew at the time. The Washington Post reported on January 15<sup>th</sup> that two young men were arrested for the homicide. You can read the story at <https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2026/01/15/coat-robbery-homicide/> or <https://mocoshow.com/2026/01/13/16-and-20-year-old-suspects-in-custody-after-fatal-shooting-in-gaithersburg-parking-lot/>.

## PCA Board Activities

### ACC

The Board inspected Newbury Rd and Log House Rd sidewalks and crosswalks on February 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> to ensure children and adult pedestrians have safe means of walking through the neighborhood. The County requires residential property owners to clear their sidewalks, driveways, and entrances within 24 hours of the end of a snowstorm. The County paused snow-clearing enforcement for sidewalks until Feb 2<sup>nd</sup>. County Department of Housing and Community Affairs is authorized to cite properties where the snow has not been cleared. Residents are able to report uncleared sidewalks to County government by calling "311". Thank you to everyone who responded swiftly to the notice.

The ACC Committee will begin inspections from March to April. While we should strive to keep the holiday season in our hearts all year, we don't necessarily need the decorations year round. Please start storing your exterior holiday- or season-specific decorations. As you plan exterior home improvements, remember to submit an ACC Request form through the [PCA website](#).

The PCA is considering a rule for standby or emergency generators in addition to existing County regulations. If you want to provide input, email [acc@plantaions1.org](mailto:acc@plantaions1.org).

A recent radon system request prompted the Board to remind residents that the standard recommendation for testing your home for radon is every two years. A tested level above 4 pCi/L should be fixed for safety. According to the MD Health Department, radon exposure is the 2<sup>nd</sup> most common cause of preventable lung cancer in the US and MD, after smoking. Radon lacks smell, color, and visibility. You can purchase test kits from a home improvement store or the County (<https://states.aelabs.com/#/md>) or you can find a professional.

### **Grounds**

The PCA selected Howell Brothers for landscaping services for 2026. If you would like to refer a contractor for consideration for 2027, send their information to [grounds@plantations1.org](mailto:grounds@plantations1.org).

The Board continues to gather information for two improvement projects. The first is replacement of the Newbury Rd townhouse mailbox, the last set of mailboxes due for replacement. The second project is a sidewalk from the Newbury Rd townhouses to the sidewalk on Tobacco Leaf Ln so that residents have safer and more direct access to the sidewalk. The sidewalk project is delayed due to the snow and ice.

### **Finances**

The Board is pursuing several projects regarding its financial operations and strategy. First, the PCA started its 2024 financial audit with an accountant. Second, the Board is crafting an investment strategy for a portion of the funds sitting in checking and savings accounts that matches both the Board's low risk appetite and its fiduciary responsibilities to the community. This year, the Treasurer will transition PCA bookkeeping from home-made spreadsheets to QuickBooks to ease the effort required to complete regular reporting and annual financial audits.

## **Resident Responsibilities**

**Pay Assessment:** Remember to pay any past due PCA assessments. Contact the PCA at [info@plantations1.org](mailto:info@plantations1.org)

if you would like to confirm the status of your account. Unpaid assessments risk budget shortfalls that can lead to deferred maintenance, reduced services, and potential special assessments. Budget shortfalls can lead to deterioration of common areas and amenities, decreased property values, and a general decline in the neighborhood's appeal. For individual residents, unpaid assessments can result in lawsuits, collections costs, and liens on the property.

**Current Email:** Remember to provide a current email address to [info@plantations1.org](mailto:info@plantations1.org) so that the Board may stay in touch. Typically, the Board only sends one email each month to remind residents of the monthly Board meeting.

**Landlord and Tenant Contacts:** Reminder for landlords to notify the PCA when they are renting their property. Provide a mailing address for official business. Request that tenants send their contact information to the PCA so that the Board can reach all residents.

## **Community Groups**

**Facebook Users:** There is a group for **Plantations I and II**. It is not affiliated with the PCA but is a nice way to communicate and keep up with the goings on in the neighborhood.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/108739809260974>

## **MoCo News**

### **Brookside Gardens Butterfly Exhibit**

Brookside Gardens' seasonal butterfly exhibit begins April 1 and tickets are available for purchase. The Brookside Gardens outdoor area is free and a recommended exerp

### **Gas-Powered Leaf Blower Ban**

Noise law § 31B-9 was updated in 2025 to ban gas-powered leaf blower usage in the county for private, commercial, and local government and Montgomery County government property. MCPS and Montgomery Parks are managed by the state of Maryland and are

exempt. Violations can result in \$500 fines. File complaints at

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/DEP/property-care/leaf-blowers/leaf-blower-noise-complaints.html>.

Electric leaf blowers cannot exceed 70dBA at 50 feet, so check the machine's specifications. The law is intended to reduce health impacts of gas-powered leaf blowers from emissions and noise.

### **Bring Your Own Bag Law Effective January 2026**

In 2026, plastic carryout bags will be unavailable at many businesses. Pharmacies, fresh or raw food transfer, and dry cleaning services are exempt. Paper bags will cost \$0.10 each. The law is intended to encourage use of reusable bags to save you money, reduce plastic waste, and protect local waterways and wildlife. Details available at <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/bag/residents.html>.

## **Lost Pet Resources**



- [Damascus, MD Lost & Found Pets](#) Facebook group
- Montgomery County MD Lost Pets <https://www.facebook.com/MCMDLostPets>
- If your pet is lost or you find a pet, the Montgomery County Animal Services Center recommends you file a report at [24petconnect.com](http://24petconnect.com)

## **Club View Park**

**Can residents use Club View Park Pavilion for an event?** YES! The use of the park pavilion for activities like family gatherings is included in the HOA dues you pay! In order to accommodate everyone and avoid unwanted issues, a reservation request must be filed with

the PCA (form available online). All requests will be confirmed on a first-come, first-served basis.

**Can my team or athletic group pay to use the Club View Park playing field?** YES! Group and team use of the playing field requires a \$20 fee for a two-hour period of use. This fee helps pay for the upkeep and maintenance of our field and goals, so we can all continue to enjoy them.

**Can residents use the tennis/pickleball courts?** YES! The courts are available to PCA residents and their guests. Just email the PCA for the gate code. To keep the courts in the best shape, we ask all residents to refrain from skateboarding, rollerblading/skating, and other non-racket-type sports that can damage the court surfaces.

Non-residents who live nearby can also use the courts for a small annual fee.

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### **Free business card sized ads for young entrepreneurs**

If your child would like to earn money doing work for neighbors, we will gladly publish their information. Contact the PCA if you would like to have their name and service listed here free of charge. Applies to residents 17 and younger.

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### **Place Your Ad Here**

Your very affordable ad reaches **406** homes! Place an ad, **watch your business grow**, or **sell unneeded items**, or **celebrate upcoming events!** For more information, e-mail: [info@plantations1.org](mailto:info@plantations1.org).

The PCA newsletter is published in February, May, August, and November.

**Full Page \$68.00 - Half Page \$40.00 - Quarter Page \$22.00 - Business Card \$12.00**