

Annual Meeting – Saturday March 20, 2004

Saturday, March 20, 2004, 2 PM to 3 PM, was selected as the date for the FOMPP Annual Meeting. We will have an outdoor celebration at the Park. Election of new Board members. Bill Burruss or Dudley Lindsley will email the agenda and invitation to all members. Light refreshments will be served. If weather inclement, we will meet at the Dudderer's home, adjacent to the Park off Patuxent Blvd. We urge all members to attend.



FRIENDS OF POINT PARK, INC. (FOMPP) First Annual Meeting April 2003

Clean-Up and Hike planned at the Park for March 20, too!

Come join us for a fun group effort, co-sponsored by Friends of Myrtle Point Park and Sierra Club, to clean and clear some of the woods near the picnic area of trash and old junk on Saturday March 20 from 10 AM to Noon. Wear clothes you don't mind getting dirty and bring gloves and water for sure; five-gallon buckets, too. If you pack a lunch, we can enjoy eating together at noon, before some of us set out to trek the varied trails around the 192 acre park. On the walks from noon to 2 PM, we will look for signs of spring: flowers, frogs, buds, and birds.

Please copy and distribute the flyer on page 3 on this newsletter. Thanks.

FOMPP Board of Directors

(elected at 26 April 2003 Annual Mtg)

President: Burruss, Bill 310-373-8305
(billymilkweed@starpower.net)

V-P: (Position currently vacant)

Secretary: Lindsley, Dudley 301-373-2551
(dlindsley@erols.com)

Treasurer: Rogers, Nancy 301-862-3284

Boxwell, Bob 410-394-6153
(bobboxwell@hotmail.com)

Dowgiallo, Ed 301-994-0529
(eddown@erols.com)

Dudderar, Chip 301-863-5520
(chip.dudderar@jhuapl.edu)

Fox, Frank 301-884-8027
(ff725@yahoo.com)

Hanks, Jay

Lang, Peg 301-863-6530
(plang@ameritel.net)

Piotrowski, Mary 301-472-4091
(blbear@erols.com)

Triantos, David 301-997-1409
(mtriantos@erols.com)

Witten, Jack 301-373-5445
(jfxw@erols.com)

Wilkerson, Oran 301-863-8069

(Meetings: 3rd Mondays, 7:00 PM)

FOMPP Action Teams

Education/Recreation: Peg Lang, Bob Boxwell,
Mary Piotrowski

Membership: Suzie Meteyer, Dudley Lindsley

Publicity/Newsletter: Frank Fox, Ed Dowgiallo,
David Triantos, Molly Jones-Quinn

Park Support and Vision: Bill Burruss, Chip
Dudderer, Jay Hanks, Nancy Rogers

Comment Corner

Thomas Jefferson once said that “the price of freedom is eternal vigilance.” I suspect that also is a reminder to us who hold the natural world dear.

And once we get the facts, we must act to advocate for the preservation of open land, species, beauty. For as St. Francis of Assisi said, “Man has as much of knowledge as he executes.” ---Editor

Membership Notes

Accept the Challenge!

Help us preserve, maintain and enhance what is special about Myrtle Point Park. Join the Friends of Myrtle Point Park, Inc. for 2004.

A Special Gift for Special People To Preserve A Special Place

Give a Friends of Myrtle Point Park, Inc. membership for any occasion. [See form on page 7] An appropriate acknowledgement will be sent to the person. Send the contribution and information to: Friends of Myrtle Point Park, Inc. P.O. Box 1433, California, MD 20619 ---Dudley Lindsley

To The Point

Winter 2004, Issue # 3

Frank Fox, Editor

ff725@yahoo.com

Published quarterly.

FOMPP Website: www.myrtlepoint.org

Come join a fun group effort:

Spring Cleaning At Myrtle Point Park

Saturday March 20
from 10 AM to Noon

and a Hike!

Noon to 2 PM.



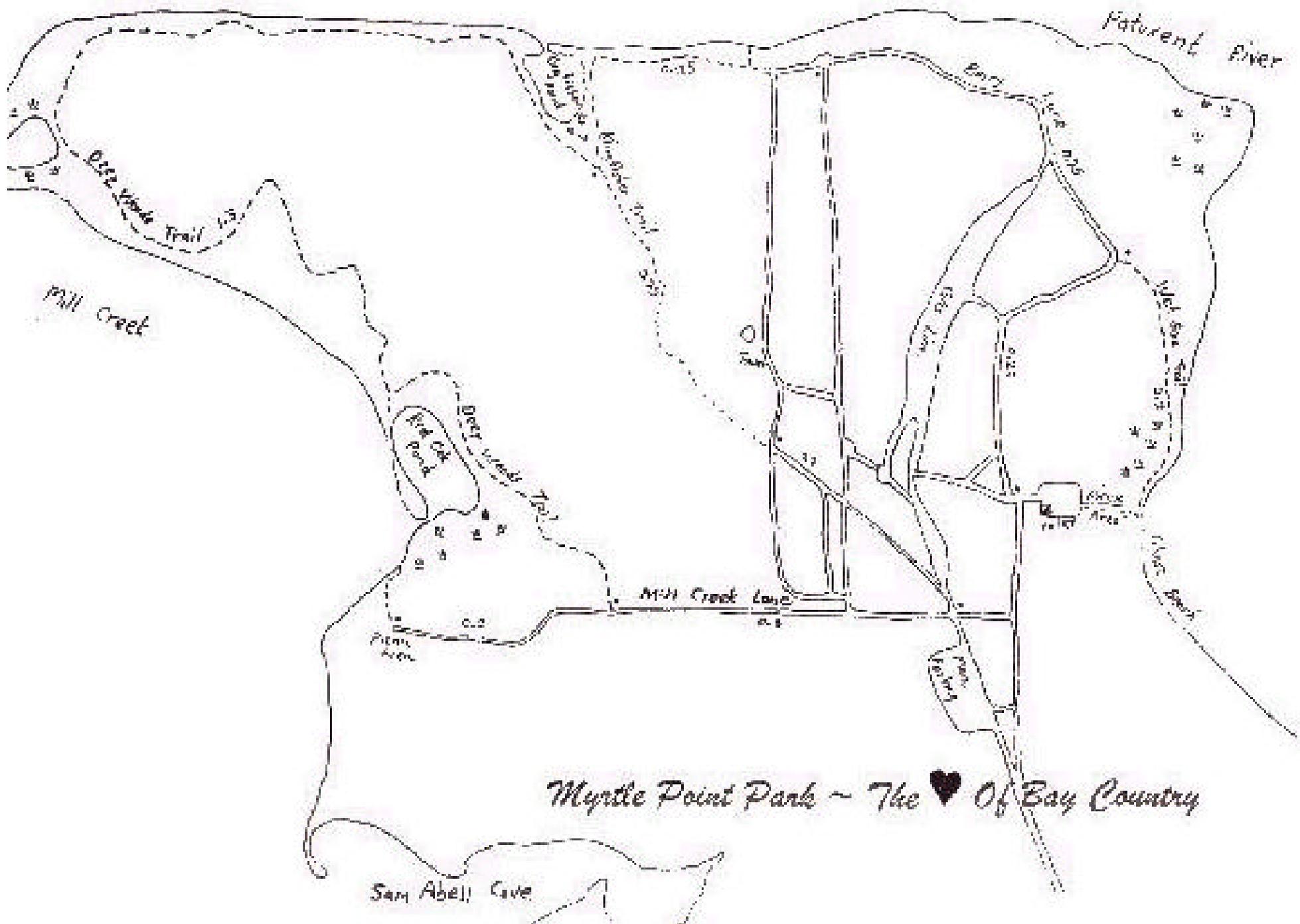
Our plan: to clean and clear some of the woods near the picnic area of trash and old junk. Wear clothes you don't mind getting dirty and bring gloves and water for sure; five-gallon buckets, too.

If you pack a lunch, we can enjoy eating together at noon, before some of us set out to trek the varied trails around the 192-acre park to look for signs of spring: flowers, frogs, buds, and birds.

The Clean-Up and Hike are co-sponsored by Friends of Myrtle Point Park and Sierra Club.

Myrtle Point Park is located in St Mary's County at the end of Patuxent Blvd off Rte. 4 about a half mile east of the Rte. 235 intersection. For more information, call 301-884-8027 or email ff725@yahoo.com.





Myrtle Point Park - The ♥ Of Bay Country

Sam Abell Cave

Great Backyard Bird Count

In keeping with a tradition I started years ago, I like scheduling field trips or outings on holidays. So far I have held hikes or bird walks on New Year's Day, Valentine's Day, Earth Day, Mother's Day, Father's Day, and Fourth of July. So I was disappointed last year not to add President's Day. As with a lot of last winter, it was a very white day with lots of snow on the ground and in the air.

But this was a new year. There hasn't been much snow this year and the weather was actually mild, until the wind kicked up. Still it wasn't bad and right at 9 a.m. the Girl Scout Troop from LaPlata pulled into Myrtle Point Park. The girls were here as part of a merit badge to take part in an official count (Great Backyard Bird Count). So with binoculars in hand we headed out.

I decided the wind would be best dealt with by heading down Mill Creek Lane. We spooked sparrows and cardinals as we walked along the path. Periodically we would stop to listen for an activity and try to pish some birds in. Downy woodpecker and a flicker provided a little background percussion to go with the string like sawing of the pines in the wind. Eventually we also added chickadee, blue jay, and American crow to the list.

One very good stop yielded a puffed up towhee that looked about twice the size it should be (brrrrrr). Upon closer inspection there was another bird working under the shrub. I pished and it moved a little more and into view popped a gray catbird. This is too cool. I haven't seen one all winter and I get to share it with some first time birders.

The creek being frozen didn't provide any new species (a penguin perhaps) so we headed back to the parking lot. We tallied 18 species in about an hour. A nice introduction to the park and everybody gets to tick off a requirement for their badge. So as a birder I am always happy to help a tucker. So many birders are tuckers. Me -- I'm in recovery and don't even keep a year list anymore.

--- Bob Boxwell

[Editor's note: Is there something pish-y about this article. Inquiring minds want a definition.]



February Owl Prowl

Myrtle Point Park experienced its first official owl-calling excursion on February 7th. Though the night was cold and very windy the event was well attended with fourteen guests and two Board members--Dudley Lindsley & Peg Lang-- staffing the gates.

Bob Boxwell, renowned birder, used Great-Horned owl calls but to no avail as the winds were so strong all sound was blown right back at us. We tried for well over an hour. Mary Piotrowski experimented with her ever faithful Barred owl calls, which the kids in the group are all rushing out to buy.

Besides the two owls mentioned we also hoped to possibly attract Screech owls. But no owls responded even though we know they are there. We ended early, as some of us stood in ice water up to our knees. But folks still seemed to enjoy themselves.

It is an event we will be repeating and recording. Keep your eyes and ears open to our website, the Enterprise, and the libraries as the Education Committee tries setting up more spontaneous walks, based on weather or tides; such as a frog night hunt, a salamander search, or a dawn bird walk.

---Mary Piotrowski

Maryland's Open Space Funding Slashed 75%!

The Facts

- State open space programs are funded mainly through a real estate transfer tax, a one-half of percent (0.5%) state tax on the sale of real estate. State law dedicates this tax revenue solely for parks and land conservation. This year the Governor plans to divert ALL of the transfer tax revenues to help balance the state budget.
- In 2004, real estate transfer taxes are expected to generate a record high \$157.6 million for parks and land conservation programs. The Governor's budget proposal, however, includes only \$40.3 million in bonds for land conservation programs—a 75 percent reduction!! This large diversion of open space funding will significantly reduce the state's ability to preserve Maryland's rapidly dwindling open space.
- The Governor's open space budget risks the loss of endangered species habitats and Maryland's most valuable rural and agricultural lands. The budget contains no funds at all for the Heritage Conservation and Rural Legacy programs. The Heritage Conservation program preserves the habitats of threatened and endangered species. Rural Legacy preserves the state's most precious rural open space, lands important for the mixture of agricultural, forestry, historic, and environmental values they contain.

What You Can Do and What You Can Say

Call, write and meet with your elected officials NOW and let them know that:

- Land conservation is important to you. (Local examples make it more real: land you know of that was recently protected by state, local, or land trust funding **or** a property that will likely be developed if the funding is not available soon to buy and protect that property.)
- The Governor's budget slashes state funding for land conservation and parks by 75 percent. Last year it was 60% !!
- Bond funds are being used to provide most of the open space funding that is available. Bond funds must not become a permanent substitute for transfer tax revenue.
- In years past, there has not been either sunset or repayment provisions in legislation authorizing the diversion of open space revenues.

Tell your state legislators that this year's budget bill must include:

- Sunset language that sets a deadline establishing when the diversion of transfer tax revenue (to the budget deficit) and the substitution with bond funds must end, and when open space programs are fully funded by transfer tax revenue once again.
- Language calling for a full repayment of the transfer tax revenue that is diverted. Otherwise, the diversion of transfer taxes for a purpose other than open space is a violation of the public trust.
- Increased funding for land conservation and parks programs to match last year's funding level of \$76 million.

You can find the contact information for your elected officials at: <http://MLIS.state.md.us>

or call 301.970.5400 Maryland ECO System Action has a website (www.mdecosystem.org) with electronic messages to key delegates you can send.

ACT NOW! Budget deliberations are in progress in Annapolis.

The Partners for Open Space coalition supports the measures outlined above; for more information on the Partners and the effort to safeguard land conservation funding in Maryland, see www.conservemd.org/resources and scroll down to the Partners for Open Space heading.

Time to renew your FOMPP membership for 2004

And Invite your friends and neighbors to join or Give Gift Memberships!.

In order to maintain this unique refuge, the **Friends of Myrtle Point Park, Inc.** is organized to preserve and restore the wilderness areas, the waterfront and the surrounding waters. As a group, we support providing low impact, recreational opportunities such as trail walking, biking, bird watching, picnicking, primitive camping, fishing, swimming, boat anchorage, and possibly a ramp for launching canoes and kayaks.

By joining together, we wish to influence the future by increasing awareness of this magnificent resource, providing thoughtful proposals for uses of the park, raising money to improve the park in an environmentally sensitive manner, and providing physical help to accomplish and maintain the changes. Currently, with permission from the County, volunteers are clearing trails, leading walking tours, removing invasive vegetation, and studying and cataloguing the flora.

We welcome your support to protect this magnificent and rare resource for present and future generations.

APPLICATION FOR 2004 MEMBERSHIP

**Return to: Friends of Myrtle Point Park, Inc.
P.O. Box 1433 California, Maryland 20619-1433**

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

2004 Membership: _____ Individual(s) - \$10.00 ea.
with Donation: _____ (check to Friends of Myrtle Point Park)

Interests:

___ Historical/Archeological ___ Invasive Plant Removal ___ Education/Recreation

___ Trail Maintenance ___ Public Relations/Newsletter ___ Park Support/Visioning

___ Other: _____

Schedule of Events:

Monday 15 March 7:00 to 8:30 PM St. Mary's County Library - Leonardtown. Open FOMPP Board Meeting. All members welcome. Some Action Teams may meet also. Contact: Bill Burruss at 301-373-8305

Saturday 20 March 10 AM Spring Cleaning at MPP. Meet in the grass parking lot on the left as you enter the Park. Contact: Frank Fox at 301-884-8027 or ff725@yahoo.com

Saturday 20 March Noon Walks in the Park led by Bob Boxwell and Mary Piotrowski to look for signs of spring. Contact: Bob at 301-872-5889 or bobboxwell@hotmail.com

Saturday 20 March 2 PM Annual Meeting. Picnic area at MPP. All members welcome. Contact: Bill Burruss at 301-373-8305 or billymilkweed@starpower.net

Monday 19 April 7 PM Open FOMPP Board Meeting. (Place to be announced)

**Friends of Myrtle Point Park
P.O. Box 1433
California, MD 20619**

