



READWOOD

DuFief Homes Association Newsletter Spring 2024

Tree Tops - President's Message by Fred Mingo, HOA Board President September 2024

Dear Community,

Please mark your calendars for our upcoming DuFief HOA fall picnic scheduled for Sunday October 6th at our community pond. The rain date is Sunday October 13th. We are planning food, beverages, festivities, entertainment and the opportunity to meet your fellow neighbors and community volunteers. That said, please let us know if you can volunteer to assist with this event by emailing board@dufief.org.

Volunteers Needed!

Our DuFief HOA is an all-volunteer operation. There are nine total elected Board members, all elected to a three-year period. That means every year three new Board members are elected. Serving as a Board member is a great opportunity to help your community! There are several committees including our Architectural Review Committee (ARC), Welcoming Committee, Environmental Committee and Nominating Committee. Please feel free to reach out to either me directly at fmingo12@gmail.com or the Board collectively at board@dufief.org if you have any questions and or want to discuss the many benefits of becoming a DuFief community volunteer.

Finally, the monthly DuFief HOA Board meetings are always the second Monday evening of the month at 7:30PM. All homeowners are afforded the opportunity to raise concerns to the Board, so please feel free to join our monthly Zoom meeting. Details are available through your AppFolio portal calendar, emailed out to your AppFolio portal email address(es) or at our <https://dufief.org/> website.

Dufief Green Team

All Dufief residents are welcome to join the Green Team, whether it be for one project or many. Sign up by sending an email to dufiefgreenteam@gmail.com.

Bird Walks: The Green Team is holding two Bird Walks along the Muddy Branch Greenway this Fall. The dates are Wednesday, September 18 and Saturday, October 5, both beginning at 8 a.m. at the pond playground. Please sign up by sending an email to dufiefgreenteam@gmail.com. Group size for each walk is limited to 15. Bring binoculars or mention in your email if you don't have any. We'll try to bring extras.

This Fall, Leave the Leaves!

Why spend money, time and energy removing all the leaves from your yard! Consider letting your leaves stay on your property this fall and winter. Nature will thank you! Fallen leaves provide food and shelter for many species of wildlife during the winter, including moths and butterflies, lightning bugs, chipmunks, and even box turtles.

This doesn't mean letting lawns and driveways stay thickly covered with leaves, but rather raking them under trees and shrubs, onto flower and vegetable beds, or to the periphery of your property. If you run out of areas to place them, start a compost pile, using one of the county's free compost bins available at [these](#) locations including the Kentlands Whole Foods.

More information on why leaving the leaves is so important is [here](#) and [here](#).

Japanese Barberry Is a “Non-native Invasive” Ripe for Removal

For decades, the Japanese barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*) has been one of the most popular ornamental plants in Maryland. Introduced into America in the 1870's, landscapers and homeowners alike value its colorful foliage and bright red berries. It grows in both shade and sun, it is easy to care for, and deer don't touch it. We see it planted widely throughout DuFief.



Berberis thunbergii
Maryland.
red
care for,
throughout

However, Japanese barberry has turned into an aggressive invasive species all over the Mid-Atlantic, escaping from front yards into the forest when birds disperse its berries and spread it. Once in the woods, it causes significant ecological damage, forming dense thickets that outcompete native vegetation and altering soil pH and nitrogen levels that disrupt the ecosystems where it grows. Research shows that it has an adverse effect on the forest ecosystem food web by pushing out the natives.

Perhaps most serious is the fact that its proliferation is correlated with the spread of Lyme disease, as its dense foliage is a perfect environment for the ticks that spread it. One study showed that areas infested with Japanese barberry can have as many as nine times the number of ticks as areas without it.



Here in DuFief, Japanese barberry has invaded our neighboring Muddy Branch Park. Now widespread, it is especially notable at the Pebble Hill Drive entrance into the park, where it dominates the slope. In Montgomery County, Japanese barberry is considered a Priority 2 “non-native invasive,” and we hope to begin to remove the plant from the park through our Weed Warrior efforts, but it will be a big job and will take

some time.

So please do not plant new Japanese barberry in your yards – while it will be prohibited under the new Invasive Species Act passed by the legislature this year, you may still see it on sale through 2025. And if you already have it, please consider removing it – there are many great native plants that can serve as an alternative to Japanese barberry, such as Winterberry Holly (*Ilex verticillata*), Inkberry (*Ilex glabra*), Red Chokeberry (*Aronia arbutifolia*), New Jersey tea (*Ceanothus americanus*) and others. [Here](#) is an article with additional images to assist with its identification. And please contact the Green Team (dufiefgreenteam@gmail.com) if you'd like more information.

Recent Activities

Tour of Brookside Garden for Dufief Green Team

On June 22nd, twelve Green Team members were treated to a tour of Brookside Gardens led by Dufief resident Steve Walter who works there. Steve showed us his favorite trees and shrubs and described their features and best use in the landscape. Much enjoyed by all! Thank you, Steve!



Green Team members at Brookside Gardens

Invasive weed removal

Green Team volunteers of all ages met at DuFief Pond on Saturday morning, July 28, to combat non-native invasive species that have proliferated in our common area. We successfully removed hundreds of wineberry and multiflora rose plants around the playground and on the path nearby, and we identified some healthy native plants that we hope will expand there, including spicebush, native grape, and greenbrier. Our thanks to all who came out! We'll be organizing more weed warrior days in the future, and in the spring, we will have at least one session focusing on garlic mustard.



L to r: Antonio Carrillo, Kevin McGrattan, Roger Rasnake, Sana and Adhav Kumar, Moira Davenport and Vin Kotraiah

Pollinator Gardens at Rt. 28 entrance

The perennials are blooming nicely, especially those on the sunny side. Check them out! A list of the plants is at dufiefgreenteam.org. The Green Team is working with the HOA Board to plan further plantings for the remainder of the easement area for this fall or next spring. Details to come.

Mosquito Trap Giveaway

Ten mosquito traps consisting of buckets, mosquito dunks and instructions were given away during the Dufief picnic in June. We will do this again next year. These simple traps are a very effective targeted control, unlike pesticide spraying of an entire yard that kills all insect life. See <https://dufief.org/green-team/> for more information.

To join the Dufief Green Team, contact us at Dufiefgreenteam@gmail.com. We welcome your participation, whether for one activity or many, as well as your ideas. For all updates on our activities, go to <https://dufief.org/green-team/>.

Noteworthy News



Readwood Submissions

The Readwood is published quarterly. We welcome your articles, requests, and thoughts to be added to any future newsletters. Please be sure to submit your articles to Readwoodeditor@gmail.com by the following dates to be included in the next newsletter.

August 23, 2024 (delayed)

November 22, 2024

A gentle reminder: Dufief neighbors love dogs but not all dogs agree.



For the DuFief Community's architectural guidelines for renovations, repairs and additions in accordance with maintaining the California Contemporary design Miller and Smith created in 1973.

Please go to www.dufief.org/architectural-review for an application before doing work on the exterior of your home.

Neighbors Helping Neighbors



****This is your space to offer or ask for services from DuFief neighbors. Do you babysit, petsit, tutor, do yard maintenance, troubleshoot technology issues, or need recommendations or assistance? If you would like to list a service or a request in our next Readwood, please send an email to Readwoodeditor@gmail.com.

Hello neighbors! My name is Tracy Weatherford and I own an at-home baking business called Tracy's Treats. I make custom-order cakes, cupcakes, cookies, and more! All fresh ingredients and no preservatives. I have pictures on Facebook and Instagram and can be reached via email or text to place orders or answer questions. I love baking and making people happy with delicious treats! 240-994-0783, tracystreatsmaryland@gmail.com

Are you interested in adding plants native to Maryland to your garden to attract pollinators and beneficial insects? The Dufief Green Team is available to help you get started. We can discuss the selection of plants for sun or shade, dry area or wet, and which are more deer resistant than others. Or if you would just like to exchange ideas about ecological gardening practices, get in touch with us at Dufiefgreenteam@gmail.com.

Casual Tutoring available for grades 1-7 and ADHD Executive Function Coaching for grades 4-12. Do you find yourself stretched too thin at times and can't help your child with their schoolwork or don't understand the curriculum? I am a veteran MCPS teacher, an experienced tutor, and an ADHD coach who can assist with your needs. I work on an as needed basis with flexible scheduling. Please contact me at yrtutor1@gmail.com for more information. Sandi Shapiro

The MONTGOMERY COUNTY COMMISSION ON COMMON OWNERSHIP COMMUNITIES

Montgomery County recognizes that a substantial proportion of all its citizens now live in condominium and homeowner associations, and in housing cooperatives, generally called "common ownership communities." In order to better serve the special needs of these communities, to act as their advocate, and to maintain and improve the quality of life in these communities, the County created the Commission on Common Ownership Communities. The Commission operates under the authority of Chapter 10B of the County Code.

The Commission has 3 basic duties:

Education: The Commission provides free information to both members and to governing bodies about their rights and duties under Maryland law, as well as advice on how to properly operate the association and to avoid complaints. Among other tools, it offers a "Manual and Resource Guide" for boards of directors, and detailed information on architectural control, assessments, and meetings. It publishes a newsletter summarizing recent developments affecting common ownership communities. Commissioners will also speak to communities and their boards on request and welcome invitations to do so.

Legislation: The Commission advocates for common ownership communities concerning proposed laws and regulations at the local and State level.

Dispute Resolution: The Commission can hear and resolve certain disputes between members of the communities and their governing bodies, and its decisions are legally binding on the parties. Copies and easy-to-read summaries of its decisions are posted on its website and reviewed in its newsletter.

The Commission is composed of 15 volunteers who are appointed for 3-year terms. Eight members must be residents of common ownership communities and the other seven must be professionals who work with the communities, such as property managers, lawyers, developers and realtors. Every Fall, the County publishes a request for applicants to the Commission to replace those whose terms are due to expire.

For more information on the Commission and its services, visit its website at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ccoc. If you have questions, CCOC prefers to be contacted by email. at: CCOC@montgomerycountymd.gov. To receive information by email about CCOC news and events, sign up for them by going to www.montgomerycountymd.gov and following these links: 1. "I Want To;" 2. "Register, reserve, enroll;" 3. "eSubscription;" 4. "Create an Account;" 5. "Consumer Protection;" 6. "CCOC."