



# Friends of Sligo Creek

Newsletter September 2017



*Ellen X. Silverberg photo*

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## **Volunteer for FOOSC at Takoma Park Folk Festival Sept 10**

Support Friends of Sligo Creek while enjoying fresh air and live music by volunteering for FoSC at the Takoma Park Folk Festival on Sunday, September 10, from 10:30 am to 6:30 pm, at the Takoma Park Middle School on Piney Branch Road.

You can help Sligo at the festival in two ways:

1. At our exhibit table, help set up the display, staff the table, chat with festival-goers about our work, or help break it down afterwards. We'll have two people on duty at all times, and we're looking for one- or two-hour shifts. To sign up (or ask questions), email Ann Hoffnar (annhoffnar@gmail.com).

2. Join the FoSC "Trash Team" that keeps the festival grounds clean. The team guides festival visitors to deposit trash in the correct bins for recycling, composting, and landfills. We also empty the bins to keep them from overflowing. FoSC is a longtime "Beneficiary Organization" for the festival, and so we receive a cash donation from the festival for providing these "trash team" volunteers. It's win-win for Sligo. To sign up for the trash team (or ask questions), email Jim Baird (bairdj64@gmail.com).



*Bins for recycling, composting, and land fill at the festival (Alan Bowser photo)*

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## Fall "Sweep the Creek" Sept 30-Oct 1

Our next "Sweep the Creek" takes place on Saturday, September 30, from 9 to 11 am, and on Sunday, October 1, from 1 to 3 pm.

We welcome individuals, groups, families, and students, who can receive service-learning credit for





*During last fall's Sweep, Michele Good helped excavate a vacuum cleaner from the creek.  
(Kassovic photo)*

their work (we provide the forms and signatures). Friends of Sligo Creek provides gloves, bags, water, and guidance on what kind of help is most needed in each section (such as invasive plants removal along with litter pickup). All you need to bring is your community spirit and a willingness to get a little wet and dirty!

If you want to bring a group or have questions, please contact the Sweep Coordinator ahead of time at [litter@fosc.org](mailto:litter@fosc.org).

Last fall's Sweep attracted 444 volunteers who collected 246 bags of trash and 87 bags of recycling (plus a few bags of invasive plants).

The cleanup covers Sligo Creek Park from the powerline corridor (below New Hampshire Avenue) to the headwaters near Channing Drive and Blueridge Avenue (above University Boulevard), as well as Takoma Woods (between Darwin and Oswego Avenues) and the entire lengths of Long Branch and Wheaton Branch.

To see which sections will be cleaned on Saturday and which on Sunday, along with meeting locations, visit the [Sweep](#) page on our website. We look forward to sharing the honor of stewardship with you during this fall's Sweep the Creek, and we thank you in advance for your partnership in this wonderful event.

-- Patton Stephens, Sweep Coordinator (email: [litter@fosc.org](mailto:litter@fosc.org))

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## Tour Sligo Meadow Sept. 13 with Carole Bergmann

Join plant ecologist Carole Bergmann of Montgomery Parks for an evening tour of late-blooming wildflowers in our new meadow-grassland on Wednesday, September 13, at 6:30 pm.

The meadow is located

between the creek and the parkway just south of the Beltway and across from the golf course. Parking is available at the golf course and in a small lot next to the soccer fields on the south side of the meadow.

Since 2016, after removing dense growths of porcelainberry and other non-native invasives, volunteers and Montgomery Parks staff planted nearly 1,000 seedlings representing seventeen species of native grasses, sedges, and wildflowers, all provided by the county-run Pope Farm Nursery.



*Carole Bergmann (far right) at first planting of new Sligo meadow in 2016, with Rochelle Bartolomei of Pope Farm Nursery (left) and a volunteer*



*New York ironweed in the new Sligo meadow  
(Wilpers photos)*

Those plants that may be blooming in mid-September include New York ironweed, calico aster, perfoliated boneset, wingstem, black-eyed susan, grass-leaf goldenrod, round-leaf boneset, rough-leaved goldenrod, gray goldenrod, cutleaf coneflower, plus the warm season grasses.

Carole will show us what aspects of the meadow are doing well, which need further work, and how FoSC can help with invasives management.

For further information, email [naturalhistory@fosc.org](mailto:naturalhistory@fosc.org).

## **Learn about Litter Control from Alice Ferguson Foundation Sept. 19**

Find out how the Washington area





*Hannah Seligmann will speak on September 19. (AFF photo)*

is dealing with trash in our streams through cleanups, regulations, and monitoring when Hannah Seligmann of the Alice Ferguson Foundation speaks on Tuesday, September 19, at the Silver Spring Civic Building.

The talk begins at 7:30, with refreshments and socializing at 7:15. Parking is free after 6:30 in the county parking garage on the side of Ellsworth opposite the Civic Building.

Hannah is the lead contact for the Annual Potomac River Watershed Cleanup and the foundation's volunteer and outreach coordinator.

clean up communities through the Annual Potomac Cleanup. This year more than 400,000 pounds of trash were removed from the watershed." She adds that "this momentum continues as communities work to prevent litter and remove existing trash. The experience promotes clean land, safe waters, and healthy lives for everyone in the watershed."

She notes that "Every April thousands of people volunteer to

Hannah will also help us understand the regulations on trash in the Anacostia watershed that were developed by the Maryland Department of the Environment and approved by the EPA in 2010. The regulations address the "Total Maximum Daily Load" (TMDL) for trash, a measure of how much trash must be removed from, or prevented from entering, our streams.

As Hannah notes, "Since 45 percent of the Anacostia watershed is residential, communities can have a tremendous impact on trash in our streams."

For more information about the talk, contact [president@fosc.org](mailto:president@fosc.org).



*One of our young volunteers at Sweep the Creek in spring 2017.*

# Georgia Avenue Church Installs Stormwater and Habitat Features

A major church property along Georgia Avenue, within the outer edge of the Sligo watershed, now has two large rain gardens and conservation landscaping, thanks to the tireless efforts of FoSC member Rob Horn. The latest planting took place on August 5, and the property now treats runoff from more than 22,000 square feet of pavement.

One of the gardens (at right) sits prominently at 8900 Georgia Avenue in front of Silver Spring United Methodist, five blocks north of Colesville Road. It was completed in partnership with Anacostia Riverkeeper.

Last year, Kit Gage of FoSC led a workshop at the church, and the landscape was certified as wildlife habitat by the National Wildlife Federation. It absorbs overflow rainwater from an 865-gallon cistern as well as runoff from a 10,000 square-foot parking lot. The church calls it their "Monet" garden.



*New rain garden at Silver Spring United Methodist Church on Georgia Avenue*



A second garden (at left) is being created with funds from the county RainScapes program and a mini-grant from the Chesapeake Bay Trust to cut a trench across another parking lot and install conservation planting. When completed, this garden will treat runoff from a 12,500 square-foot parking lot. The church calls this garden their "Van Gogh."

"I have developed the projects as examples of what multiple other congregations in the watershed could do for the Sligo

Rain garden at the Silver Spring church  
(church photos)

and the Bay," writes Rob, who  
is an engineer in his  
professional life.

Rob initiated this project after attending a workshop in 2015 led by the National Wildlife Federation's Sacred Grounds program. Its mission is to encourage people of all faiths to "connect to nature at their place of worship and to learn about the different ways their faith encourages them to be good environmental stewards." The church also worked with Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake.

In all, the rain gardens and conservation landscapes were planted with 13 trees, 26 shrubs, 181 wildflower seedlings, 58 grasses and sedges, and four ferns, representing 78 species of native plants.

For more information, contact [stormwater@fosc.org](mailto:stormwater@fosc.org).

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## Need to Reach Us?

President (Corinne Stephens): [president@fosc.org](mailto:president@fosc.org)

Invasive Plants (Jim Anderson): [invasives@fosc.org](mailto:invasives@fosc.org)

Litter (Patton Stephens): [litter@fosc.org](mailto:litter@fosc.org)

Advocacy (Kit Gage): [advocacy@fosc.org](mailto:advocacy@fosc.org)

Natural History (Bruce Sidwell): [naturalhistory@fosc.org](mailto:naturalhistory@fosc.org)

Stormwater (Elaine Lamirande): [stormwater@fosc.org](mailto:stormwater@fosc.org)

Water Quality (Pat Ratkowski): [waterquality@fosc.org](mailto:waterquality@fosc.org)

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*Friends of Sligo Creek is a nonprofit community organization dedicated to protecting, improving, and appreciating the ecological health of Sligo Creek Park and its surrounding watershed.*