

## **Volunteer Power Impacts Libertytown**

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Streams often pass through developed communities unnoticed. Few of us think about how our actions - the way we build, do business, landscape, or care for our cars, animals or yards - result in poor stream health. In Libertytown, neighbors have come together to take positive actions. Investing more than 260 hours of volunteer time, 15 children and 38 adults have changed the landscape for the better – beginning the process of restoring stream health.

### **Rain Gardens Rock**

Both kids and adults have helped build four rain gardens and plant a wide variety of native perennial plants that help soak up and filter polluted water, provide habitat for butterflies and birds, beauty for humans, and protection for streams. The garden at Liberty Elementary School receives run off from the parking lot at the front of the school building. Cub Scout Pack 1062 helped plant herbaceous plant this spring. Other neighbors added more plants during the fall. Still others helped plant Winterberry Holly, Silky Dogwood, Red Maples, and River Birch. Neighbors Earlene and Dan Duncan were an enormous help by bringing their hose to the school to water the new plants during long dry spells this first year. The garden is a credit to the school.

The homeowners at Liberty Village Cohousing Community were among the first responders when opportunities to sponsor rain gardens were offered. Homeowners in the community installed their initial garden in November 2005, designed and installed under the supervision of Bryan Seipp with Potomac Conservancy, and later secured the help of Jim Gallion with Wildlife Gardening Adventures and added two more rain gardens to their landscape, helping filter run off from their parking lot, walkways, and roofs.

### **Trees and Shrubs Make a Difference**

Native trees and shrubs planted near streams help slow down and soak up the rain, reducing and filtering pollution, absorbing sediment, slowing down run off, providing shade, and enhancing stream health. On Coppermine Branch behind St. Peter the Apostle Roman Catholic Church buildings, Boy Scout Troop 1062 planted more than 100 native sedges during September.

In October, church members and neighbors planted native shrubs including Elderberry, Serviceberry, Spice Bush, Red Bud, Arrowwood, and Red Osier Dogwood and native trees including River Birch, Black Willow, Swamp White Oak, Pin Oak, Hackberry, and Persimmon.

The fourth restoration site in Libertytown is Libertytown Community Park. Neighbors, Kelly Neff; Dan, Earlene and Kayla Duncan; and Jason Jenkins, Park Supervisor, along with several of his coworkers from Frederick County Parks and Recreation staff, joined for a Saturday planting event on October 21st. A grant from Treemendous Maryland helped increase the number of large native trees that could be planted.

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