

Montpelier HOA Butterfly Garden (October 2021)

Overview by Green Team Member Gloria Hynes (gloriahynes@verizon.net)

Our board of directors was approached by Mike Hunninghake and Brady Alexis Espinola from the University of Maryland to pick a project that would support environmental values / decrease contamination of the Chesapeake Bay. We of the "Green Team" chose building a butterfly garden which would educate the community about pollinators. The board set \$1800.00 as a start for the garden.

Pick the best site:

A 50' X 40' area facing one of the main through streets was chosen. It provided sun with some shade and was very visible to the community. The area was marked out in the shape of a butterfly, edged in brick with the body of the butterfly covered with black mulch and flagstone, the upper wings of the shape were planted with 24 inch high paniculata hydrangea, the two lower wings with 24 inch high butterfly bushes. The rest of the body was planted with white and pink echinacea, asclepius tuberosa lined the body of the butterfly. Later fall mums were added.

A place to sit:

One of the team built a double Adirondack chair painted purple with white butterflies. Another member of the community gave money to dedicate the site to her husband who had passed away, A plaque was put on the chair. To connect the theme of the garden to the memory of the deceased the inscription on the plaque is: "We, like the butterfly are transformed as we are embraced by the arms of God."

Educate the children:

Two classes were presented to children and adults that were interactive with the children using puppets and climbing through tunnels pretending to be butterflies. Pictures of the children and their parents were printed in the community news letter which reached 700 residences.

Results:

Five different kinds of butterflies including the monarch butterfly are frequent visitors. It is not unusual to see neighbors sitting on the chair, reading or just enjoying the beauty of nature.

Expenses:

Plants: \$850.00

Labor: \$1150.00

Time: At least 500 hours.

