



NEWS RELEASE

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**PURCELLVILLE PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD HOSTS
FIRST MONTHLY NATURE WALK**

PURCELLVILLE, Va., January 29, 2018 — On Sunday, January 28, area residents gathered at the Chapman DeMary Trail for the first monthly nature walk hosted by the Purcellville Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. This first walk was guided by Kyle Dingus, one of the NOVA Area foresters with the Virginia Department of Forestry. He will lead the April, July, and October walks as well. See photos on the Purcellville Parks and Recreation Facebook page.

During the walk, Kyle, who earned his degree in forestry from Virginia Tech, told hikers that: “the Virginia Piedmont, where the Chapman DeMary Trail is located, is an ecological crossroads. The northernmost range of southern species and the southernmost range of northern species meet here along with species of the mountains and coastal plains. This crossroads provides a diverse and unique species composition that is reflected in the native flora and fauna of the region. It’s common to see species associations that represent plants for thousands of miles in 3 cardinal directions.”

As Kyle led hikers on the path, he shared information about trees, how they help water quality, and how trees sometimes grow in odd shapes as they try to get to the sun. He pointed out trees and shrubs that make up the main canopy, the intermediate canopy, and the understory. Using a small tree that has been choked by a vine and the “S” shaped patterns created by the Emerald Ash Borer, he showed the damage invasive plants and insects can do. He explained that the Chapman DeMary Trail serves as an important wildlife corridor, providing food and shelter for many migrating animals as well as those that make their homes here all year. When asked about lumps on some of the trees, he explained that trees are self-pruning. If a branch isn’t doing its job, the tree will stop sending nutrients to it so it eventually falls off, causing a lump. He shared information about how trees are beneficial throughout their lives, even after they have died and are decaying on the ground, noting that it is critical to leave trees that have fallen where they are to provide nutrients and habitat for wildlife to thrive. He pointed out trees growing on the banks of the creek, “hugging” the creek, and helping keep the bank in place, telling us that it was the best example of why we need trees near water.

Mark your calendar to join the Purcellville Parks and Recreation Advisory Board for the next walk on Sunday, February 25 from 1 to 3 p.m. and come discover more of nature’s secrets! Each nature walk will be led by a local expert on the last Sunday of each month. The Chapman DeMary Trail is considered to be the last stand of old-growth forest in Town. Though it is privately owned, the Town of Purcellville holds the conservation easement for the 10-acre area,

and it is open to the public from dawn to dusk for environmental education and recreation. The Chapman DeMary Trail is located behind the building at 205 East Hirst Road in Purcellville.

The walks are rain or shine. Bring your family. Learn more and RSVP on the Events and Activities page of the Town of Purcellville's website at www.PurcellvilleVa.gov.

The Town of Purcellville, Virginia

Purcellville is an award-winning town of over 9,000 residents located in Loudoun County, approximately 40 miles west of Washington, DC. Having received the prestigious Siemens Sustainability Award for Small Communities, Purcellville continues to be honored for its green initiatives with most recently being the Tree City USA recipient for the 10th year. The Town was reaffirmed as a AAA rated community by S&P Global Ratings, the highest credit rating possible, and is recognized as one of the safest towns in Virginia. Once a stop along the W&OD rail line, Purcellville has maintained its historic old-town feel through the restoration and maintenance of its many downtown structures, reflecting the Victorian architecture popular during the early 1900s. Today, Purcellville is the economic hub of western Loudoun County and a popular weekend destination for antiques, entertainment, farmer's markets, wineries, breweries, distilleries and restaurants. More info at www.purcellvilleva.gov.

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