



FRIENDS OF PATUXENT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

www.friendsopatuxent.org

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Richard J. Dolesh – 2021*

Chair

Rich Dolesh has been a board member of the Friends of Patuxent for almost 25 years (holy cow! time to get rid of the old fossil soon!). He came to the Friends when he worked on the original fundraising for the National Wildlife Visitor Center as a staff member of the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission. Rich was the co-chair of the Wildlife Art Show for 11 years. He has had a personal and professional commitment to wildlife and conservation all of his life. In addition to his work for MNCPPC, MD Dept of Natural Resources, and most recently, National Recreation and Park Association, he has been a board member of the Park and Resources Conservation Foundation, a board member of the Patuxent Riverkeeper, a board member of the Black Swamp Creek Land Trust, chair of the Conservation Committee of the Maryland Ornithological Society, and a member or volunteer for a number of other natural and cultural history preservation groups.

Lowell Adams – 2020

Vice-Chair

Lowell grew up on a farm near Harrisonburg, Virginia, and developed an early interest in wildlife and the outdoors. He earned a BS degree in forestry and wildlife from Virginia Tech, and MS and PhD degrees in zoology from Ohio State University, specializing in wildlife biology.

Lowell began his professional career in 1976 as a wildlife biologist with the Urban Wildlife Research Center in Ellicott City, Maryland, where he worked for 20 years. In 1996, Lowell accepted a faculty appointment in the Natural Resources Management Program (now Department of Environmental Science and Technology) at the University of Maryland where he taught three courses in wildlife ecology and management. He also served as undergraduate advisor to Wildlife Ecology and Management students and as a member of the graduate faculty, retiring in 2011. From 1994 through 2008, he served on the governor-appointed Maryland Wildlife Advisory Commission and was vice chair of that commission for the last 12 of those years.

Lowell was elected to the Board of Directors of Friends of Patuxent in November 2016. He serves on its Board Development Committee and Chan Robbins Memorial Endowment Fund Committee. He served as Secretary of Friends of Patuxent from October 2018 to October 2019 and has served as Vice-Chair since then.

Lowell lives in Columbia, Maryland, with his wife Pat and has a grown son and two grandsons. In his spare time, Lowell enjoys traveling and playing old-time mountain music clawhammer style on his banjo.

**Sue Priftis – 2021
Secretary**

Sue Priftis joined the Friends of Patuxent Board of Directors in June 2019. After many years working inside an office, she now spends as much time as possible outside. Sue has truly enjoyed the opportunity since retirement to learn about plants and wildlife, to explore wonderful parks and gardens, and to get to know others with these interests. She began volunteering at Patuxent after completing the UME Master Gardeners course in Howard County in 2016, working with the team of gardeners on the Schoolyard Habitat pollinator garden on South Tract. She also participates in the Lichen Project to collect and identify lichens on the Refuge, serves on the Membership Committee of Friends of Patuxent, and has helped on special public events sponsored by the Friends. Sue has served as Secretary of Friends of Patuxent since October 2019.

Sue also works on other Master Gardener projects (Middle Patuxent Environmental Area Conservation Stewardship Project, Oella Community Garden) and serves as a Howard County Court-Appointed Special Advocate for children who have experienced abuse or neglect.

Sue retired from the federal government in 2014 after 36 years, working in budget, planning and performance measurement, and program evaluation for the Environmental Protection Agency and other agencies. She received a BA in Government from Smith College, Northampton, MA and a Master of Public Administration from George Washington University, Washington, D.C.

**Natalie Woomer – 2021
Treasurer**

Natalie retired in 2019 after working 33 years at the Municipal Employees Credit Union (MECU) of Baltimore, Maryland. Natalie served as Vice President of Accounting and Controller at MECU, and her department was responsible for preparing all of the financial reports, budgets, and Internal Revenue Service Forms 990 (forms providing financial information about a nonprofit organization). MECU is actively involved in community outreach and Natalie was an advisor to the outreach committee. She currently serves on the MECU Foundation's board of directors. Natalie served as Acting Treasurer for Friends of Patuxent from June 2019 to September 2019 and as Treasurer since September 2019.

Natalie loves the outdoors and has visited over 30 of the national parks in the U.S. She and her husband have hiked all over the U.S. and Europe. Working to save the environment and places of beauty are important to her.

Lindsey Baker – 2020

Lindsey Baker joined the Board of Directors of the Friends of Patuxent in February 2019. She has been a fan of Patuxent Research Refuge since her first hike at the North Tract shortly after moving to Laurel in 2008. Since then, she has taken many hikes and attended many programs with her dogs, friends, and family on the two tracts which she considers her extended backyard.

Lindsey's academic background includes a BA in history from Goucher College and a Masters in History and Museum Studies from the University of Delaware.

Her professional background includes time focusing on the role of small museums and community via her stint for almost a decade as the Executive Director of the Laurel Historical Society. In 2018 she became the Executive Director of the Patapsco Heritage Greenway, a non-profit focused on preserving, protecting, and restoring the environment, history, and culture of the Patapsco River Valley. Within that role she has had the opportunity to grow beyond her history roots into a deeper understanding of environmental stewardship issues.

Lindsey has served on many boards, mostly with a museum focus, and currently sits on the Small Museum Association and Maryland Museum Association boards, in addition to Friends of Patuxent. She enjoys time spent outside with her daughter, gardening, playing soccer, and owns a small business with her husband.

Kenneth Cohen – 2021

I am a retired lawyer and a recent transplant (2014) to Prince George's County. During my early years in practice as a Federal Prosecutor for the Western District of New York I enforced the Migratory Bird Treaty Act with both corporate and individual prosecutions. I have been a bird watcher for over 50 years, primarily in the United States, and maintain life, state, and country lists as well as a yearly list. I have been an active participant in Christmas counts and other bird censuses for over 25 years. During the early 90s I taught an adult education ornithology class at the Buffalo Museum of Science and also led overnight field trips along both the north and south shores of Lake Erie. I have been a member of the Buffalo Ornithological Society and the Audubon Society for over 40 years. I am currently the president of the Prince George's County Audubon Society and on the board of the Patuxent Bird Club and the Maryland State Audubon Society.

Courtney Koivisto – 2020

Courtney Koivisto joined the Friends of Patuxent Board of Directors in March 2019. She first visited the Patuxent Research Refuge in 2016 and loved seeing such a wealth of nature in Prince George's County. Inspired by that first visit, she has returned many times to hike the refuge and explore the Visitor Center.

Courtney received a BA in fine art from Shippensburg University and more recently earned her MA in museum studies from Johns Hopkins University. She has volunteered at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History in their education collections department, and in 2017, Courtney began volunteering as a collections aide at Montpelier Mansion in Laurel. Professionally, she is Vice President of Marketing at NAI Michael. In her free time, Courtney enjoys hiking, camping, painting, and spending time with her family. She is a lifelong lover of nature and wants to help give back to places like Patuxent.

Catharine Kuehne – 2021

Cathy Kuehne joined the Friends of Patuxent Board of Directors in June 2019. She graduated from Smith College with a degree in Astronomy and the Johns Hopkins University with a Masters in Engineering. Cathy was a member of the Principal Professional Staff at the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory, serving as the Program Manager for Targeting Systems.

Previously Cathy served on the Boards of the Baltimore Weavers Guild, the Columbia Figure Skating Club (daughter's sport), and the Columbia Orchestra. She became Treasure of all 3 of those non-profit organizations.

Upon retirement in 2015, Cathy became a Howard County Master Gardener and volunteered with the Patuxent Research Refuge, first working in the Native Plant Garden and subsequently joining the Friends Membership Committee.

As an avid gardener, Cathy maintains gardens at her home in Columbia and cabin in West Virginia, and is constantly reworking and expanding them with native plants. She also volunteers at the Middle Patuxent Environmental Area, and the Oella Community Garden. As a great fan of national parks, she and her husband have hiked many amazing trails in parks from Acadia to Denali.

Matthew Perry – 2021

Matthew Perry has been a Board Member for Friends of Patuxent since early 2016. He has had a long-time interest in Patuxent and in promoting the refuge and research to the public. Matt hails from Rhode Island where he grew up with five older sisters. He attended local schools and then the University of Rhode Island, graduating in 1963 with a BS in wildlife management and forestry. He then served as an officer in the U.S. Navy during the mid-1960s and participated in two amphibious landings of troops in Vietnam. Following military service, he worked for the RI Fish and Game for two years before attending graduate school at Virginia Tech, where he received an MS degree in wildlife management, with his thesis on the impact of free-running dogs on deer. He started his federal career on a refuge in Florida, before moving to Patuxent in 1971 to take a position as a wildlife research biologist. While at Patuxent he received a PhD from the University of Maryland in avian nutrition and physiology with his dissertation on canvasbacks. He retired from Patuxent Wildlife Research Center in 2011 after 45 years of federal service, with 40 of them at Patuxent. He stays active as an emeritus scientist with research and writing activities. Matt edited a book on the history of Patuxent and is very active with all aspects of Patuxent history. In addition to the Friends Board, he served on the Board of the FWS Retirees Association and is a member of the Heritage Committee of the FWS. Matt leads ecotourism trips around the world and actively promotes conservation organizations. Matt lives in Mitchellville with his wife, and is the father of three boys and grandfather of three boys and two girls.

Clarence ‘Sparky’ Sparks – 2020

Sparky, a Maryland resident in Anne Arundel County since 1981, is also a retired Air Force Senior noncommissioned officer, and is a federal employee with the National Security Agency. Originally from Columbus, Ohio, he entered the Air Force in 1972, with several assignments to Europe and Maryland during his 24-year career. He and his wife made Maryland their new home when he retired in 1996. Sparky has been an active volunteer with the USFWS Patuxent Research Refuge since 1993, and a member of the board of directors of Friends of Patuxent since 2003. He served as Secretary of Friends of Patuxent from 2007-2018. Sparky has been an avid fan in the local *Lepidoptera*, mainly butterflies of Maryland. He worked with and assisted Richard H. (Dick) Smith in various studies in the National Park Service around the Washington D.C. metro area and parkways bordering the Patuxent Research Refuge. Sparky also worked with the USFWS Annapolis, Maryland office on BG&E right-of-way habitat studies in the western area of Anne Arundel County.

Sparky Sparks was selected as the 2015 Volunteer of the Year by a panel of volunteers. Sparky has been a dedicated Patuxent Research Refuge volunteer for more than 20 years. Throughout the years, he helped establish the North Tract trail system, built gates, participated in biological surveys, helped with native plant landscaping/gardening, staffed the front desk, supported special events and more. He was instrumental in the success of the renowned Patuxent Wildlife Art Show and Sale, a major fundraiser for the Refuge sponsored by the Friends of Patuxent. He has organized, led and coordinated the NABA butterfly count each summer as well as conducted butterfly programs. Sparky chairs the Friends committee that organizes and hosts the annual Pollinators Festival at North Tract.

Marcia Watson – 2020

Marcia Watson joined the Board of Directors of the Friends of Patuxent in February 2019. Marcia has been keenly interested in the outdoors from the time she was a little girl, a trait that she attributes to time spent with her father, who was an avid outdoorsman and who took his little girl out hunting with him, since he didn't have a son. Marcia decided to study animal behavior in college, and earned a B.A. in Psychology, with an emphasis on neuroscience, and a Ph.D. in Biological Sciences, with a specialization in environmental physiology, both from the University of Delaware.

Beginning her career as a faculty member in the Department of Biological Sciences at the University of Delaware, Marcia taught physiology courses and conducted research exploring the signals and processes that animals use to coordinate their life cycles with seasonal changes such as day-length and temperature. She then moved on to become an academic administrator at the University of Delaware and later, at the University of Maryland University College, where she served as Vice Provost for Academic Affairs. Marcia is now retired and is using the skills she learned in her professional life as a full-time volunteer, focusing on birds and their habitats in Maryland.

Marcia is President of the Patuxent Bird Club, the local chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society (MOS). She has been on the MOS Board of Directors on and off since 1994, and has served on various MOS committees. Marcia is currently editor and webmaster for MOS's *MD/DC Birding Guide*, an online resource to help birders find the best places to bird in Maryland and DC, a project which gives her a good excuse to visit all the places she loves.

Marcia also conducts annual monitoring of breeding birds in support of Audubon's Important Bird Areas program and is the compiler for the Jug Bay Christmas Bird Count.

She lives with her husband Gene Scarpulla in Bowie, MD; Gene is an associate in the USGS Native Bee Inventory and Monitoring Program at Patuxent Wildlife Research Center.

***Year refers to 2-year term expiration at October board meeting.
Officer terms are for 1 year and expire at the October board meeting. Revised 7/2/2019.**