



## FRIENDS OF PATUXENT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

[www.friendsofpatuxent.org](http://www.friendsofpatuxent.org)

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### **Richard J. Dolesh** **Chair**

Rich has been a volunteer at Patuxent for nearly three decades and a board member of the Friends since the Friends began. He worked to support the proposal for the construction of the National Wildlife Visitor Center and served as the co-chair of the long-running and successful Patuxent Wildlife Art Show for its first 10 years.

Rich has had a personal and professional dedication to conservation during his nearly five-decade career beginning in 1972 at the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission, to the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, and since 2002 at the National Recreation and Park Association. Rich is a member and former chair of the Conservation Committee of the Maryland Ornithological Society and serves on the boards of the Patuxent Riverkeeper, the Black Swamp Creek Land Trust, and the Park and Resources Conservation Foundation.

Rich writes extensively about conservation and nature and has written articles in *National Geographic Magazine*, *The Washington Post* and *Parks and Recreation Magazine*. He was recently awarded the Cornelius Amory Pugsley Medal by the American Academy of Park and Recreation Administration in national recognition of his service to parks and conservation.

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### **Lowell Adams** **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 was a pioneer in the new field of urban wildlife ecology, conservation, and management. His book, *Urban Wildlife Habitats: A Landscape Perspective*, was published by the University of Minnesota Press in 1994. 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, Lowell served on the Maryland Wildlife Advisory Commission and was Vice Chair of that commission for the last 12 of those years. For over 15 years, Lowell has been active in the Maryland-Rio de Janeiro Partnership of Partners of the Americas, serving as Board Member, Secretary, Treasurer, and President of the Maryland Chapter. Maryland-Rio Partners consists of volunteers working together to improve the lives of people in the states of Maryland (USA) and Rio de Janeiro (Brazil).

Lowell was elected to the Board of Directors of Friends of Patuxent in November 2016. He serves on its Board Development Committee, Finance Committee, and the Dr. Chandler S. Robbins Memorial Endowment 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 the natural world, traveling, and playing old-time mountain music clawhammer style on his four banjos.

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### **Debbie Phillips** **Secretary**

Debbie has volunteered at the Patuxent Research Refuge for ten years, accruing at least thirteen hundred hours of service focused on otter and wolf lessons, outreach, major events, pollinator festivals, two summer sessions of day camp (including microscope lessons), tram tours, boy scout lessons (including trail tour), and plant mounting parties. She assembled a backboard of the the animal exhibits for a National Wildlife Visitor Center display and has written three articles for the Friends of Patuxent newsletter. Debbie designed a docent tour of the Visitor Center that she hopes to make operational soon.

Debbie's interest in nature started as a child when she went camping with her family at sites in New York State and Ontario. As an adult she toured Denali in Alaska and visited and photographed the Museum of the North (University of Alaska at Fairbanks). In Hawaii, she climbed Diamond Head.

Debbie has a BS degree from Daemen College in Amherst, New York where she co-majored in Elementary Education and Biology. Her MS degree was in Curriculum & Instruction from McDaniel College in Westminster, Maryland. Debbie taught elementary science for seven years at the Howard B. Owens Science Center in Greenbelt and a year of Earth Science for Montgomery County. Other assignments included a year of Grade 1 teaching at Deerfield Run, and substitute teaching at Eisenhower Middle School and Eleanor Roosevelt High School, all in Prince George's County. Debbie worked nine years at the Bowie Borders in book sales and as Education Coordinator.

While her professional career was on hold, spending thirteen years raising three children, Debbie volunteered as Car Seat Coordinator (KISS, kids in Safety Seats) for Laurel Beltsville Hospital. For eight years, she judged the Prince George's County Science Bowl. Debbie increased her knowledge of nature as a member of the Patuxent Book Club, facilitated by Diana Ogilvie of the Patuxent Research Refuge. For 30 years Debbie was active with the Montpelier Mansion as a docent and Board Member, including president. She is a member of Montpelier

Ladies Club and lives in Montpelier with her husband Robert. They have three grandchildren. Debbie was elected to the Friends of Patuxent Board of Directors in October 2021.

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**Stephanie Kaufman**  
**Treasurer**

Stephanie developed her love for the outdoors as a child, in the National Parks on family camping trips in a VW camper. She enjoys gardening, camping, hiking, and biking. Bit by bit, Stephanie is transforming her backyard into a habitat for native plants, insects, and birds. As a beginner birder and frequent visitor to the Patuxent Research Refuge, she is awed by the abundance and diversity of wildlife so close to home.

Stephanie participated in the 2020 Montgomery County Master Gardener training program, but due to the current pandemic, all volunteer activities have been curtailed. Volunteering has long been an important part of her life. Stephanie was chair of the volunteer committee for the Takoma Park Folk Festival, membership chair of the Folklore Society of Greater Washington, and held many positions on the PTA of her children's schools. She also enjoys hosting concerts in her home and hopes to resume doing so when the pandemic is over. Stephanie spent the majority of her career in Federal budgeting (plus a 7-year stint as a teacher in Montgomery County Public Schools). She retired in September 2019 after 30 years of service in the Federal Government, including two years in the Peace Corps. Her career spanned working in four federal agencies, including the Office of Management and Budget, Department of Transportation, and Department of Agriculture. At retirement, Stephanie was the budget director of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation.

Stephanie has a BA in French from the State University of New York at Albany, a Masters in International Business from the University of South Carolina, and a Masters in Secondary Education from George Washington University. She was elected to the Board of Directors of Friends of Patuxent in October 2020.

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**Karen Atwood**

Karen's love of "wild things" grew out of childhood days exploring rural areas, parks and wildlife refuges in Texas, Virginia and Maryland with family. Nowadays she especially enjoys birding, butterflying, kayaking and native-plant gardening, as well as sharing the outdoors with others. Karen first came to Patuxent for the 2017 Holiday Bazaar. In fall, 2018, she began volunteering on South Tract for the Friends' Wildlife Images Bookstore and Nature Shop, and for the refuge, providing customer and visitor services, editing and proofreading services, newsletter articles, event candid photography, and preliminary teamwork on a Phenology Walk. Further aspirations include exploring web-store potentials for Patuxent, sourcing more bilingual natural-history education materials, volunteer recruitment, pollinator habitat gardening, and other public education and outreach support for refuge missions.

Karen earned an M.Ed. in Speech/Language Pathology from the University of Virginia, and B.A.s in Anthropology and French from Wellesley College in Massachusetts. Her professional background in Speech Pathology included providing services in schools and healthcare/rehab facilities in Virginia and Pennsylvania. Subsequent coursework in Inland Wetlands Ecology (PA) and Ecological Relationships (WY) opened new paths. Later she worked for several environmental organizations, including the former Mid-Atlantic Regional

Office of the National Audubon Society (NAS) in Pennsylvania, handling newsletter writing/editing and proofreading, intern and volunteer coordination, candid event photography and press contacts. She also researched and developed fact sheets on nutrient management and water-quality issues for the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay's former Harrisburg, PA, office. A long-time volunteer with Appalachian Audubon Society in south-central PA, Karen has served the chapter in diverse capacities, including six years as newsletter editor and two years as chair of Education and Scholarships. She also periodically volunteers with Wildwood (Lake) Park in Dauphin County, PA. Karen and her husband Christopher have a daughter and son-in-law, and one "grand-doggie". She was elected to the Friends of Patuxent Board of Directors in October 2021.

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## **Liz Humes**

Liz grew up in Pennsylvania with strong ties to the natural world and its inhabitants. Her Quaker upbringing instilled a commitment to community building, and advocacy for the environment. For many years Liz ran an art school, gallery, and frame shop called *Sundog* in Highland, Maryland. She was co-founder of *Highland Day*, an annual town celebration that was continued by the community for over 20 years. From 2016-2018 Liz was Assistant to the Deputy Director of the USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center. In 2018 she started Remeadow Inc., a nonprofit organization with a mission to empower people to support sustainable habitat and biodiversity by providing them with access to relevant evidence-based research.

Liz is currently a small business consultant. She holds a BA from Guilford College, North Carolina, and a Leadership Certificate from Maryland Coalition of Families, Columbia, Maryland. She is a member of the Board of Howard County, Maryland's Bee City, and volunteers at Patuxent's USGS Native Bee Inventory and Monitoring Lab.

Liz is an active Friends of Patuxent member and was elected to the Board of Directors of Friends of Patuxent in July 2020.

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## **Courtney Koivisto**

Courtney Koivisto was elected to 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.

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## **Helen Lowe Metzman**

As a DC native growing up with the Northwest Branch just beyond her backyard, Helen's first love was nature. That passion never left and to this day, she can still be found exploring a skunk cabbage patch or traipsing through the marshes, forests and savannas of the Patuxent Research Refuge in search of unique flora and fauna.

Helen's interest in natural history eventually led her to the University of Vermont, where she studied Wildlife Biology and Environmental Education. After working as a naturalist for the Vermont Department of Recreation and Parks, Cape Cod Outdoor Education Center and the Audubon Naturalist Society, Helen studied art and intertwined graphics and nature education. While raising her two children, she freelanced as an illustrator, continued to teach environmental education, and worked for the Howard County Natural Resources Division. Helen pursued a Master's in Botanical Medicine from the Maryland University of Integrative Health (Tai Sophia), and for over fifteen years, she was the director of the James A. Duke Green Farmacy Garden, a medicinal plant education garden located in Fulton, Maryland. Helen continues to work as a freelance artist focusing on nature and recently completed a mural in the children's Discovery Room at the Robinson Nature Center. In 2017, she became a volunteer at the Bee Inventory and Monitoring Lab, where she photographed native plants, and in 2019, Helen joined Bill Harm's Patuxent Botanical Foray and Herbarium Team. Currently, Helen is a member of the Howard County Bee City and also serves as the Vice President on the board of United Plant Savers - a native medicinal plant conservation organization. She was elected to the Friends of Patuxent Board of Directors in October 2021.

Helen lives in Clarksville, Maryland with her husband, Eric, where she is surrounded by plants that attract a diversity of local fauna and flora that keep her in continued awe of the natural world.

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## **Clarence 'Sparky' Sparks**

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 of 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 has been a dedicated Patuxent Research Refuge volunteer for more than 20 years. He was selected as the 2015 Volunteer of the Year. 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 Pollinator Festival at North Tract.

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## **Marcia Watson**

Marcia Watson was elected to 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 the Eastern Ecological Science Center at Patuxent Research Refuge.

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