



# BOWIE SPOTLIGHT

The Official Newsletter of the City of Bowie

Phone: 301-262-6200

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

March 2015

## Looking Forward to Spring - Tree Mulching Tips

There are many kinds of mulch including woodchips, shredded hardwood bark mulch, pine bark mulch, pine needle straw, shredded leaves, and even regular straw...and most of them are fine for using around trees and shrubs. My personal favorites are the bark mulches for their nutritional value, weed control characteristics, moisture preservation, durability and overall aesthetic benefit to the landscape.

But there is one downside to the use of mulch, and that simply is the overuse of the material. As with many things in life, there can be too much of a good thing. While mulch is highly recommended for use on landscaped trees and shrubs, too much is detrimental in a big way. Too much mulch material causes plants to struggle for oxygen in their respective root zones, and it can also cause a matting effect that prevents adequate water from getting to the roots. These two conditions can cause roots to become shallow rather than grow to their proper depth as they struggle for oxygen and water, and this puts the plant at risk, especially during periods of drought. Thus, "volcano" mulching a plant where the mulch is heavily piled around the main stem(s) of a plant is bad for these reasons, in addition to possibly causing rot and/or disease on the stem (trunk) of the plant itself.



The bottom line regarding mulching is that "less is more". It is better for the plant to limit the volume of material used. When applying mulch, 2-3 inches is recommended and avoiding piling up against the stem/trunk is critically important. If you have more than 2-3 inches of mulch in place already, removing the excess is advised for plant health and beauty. Looking forward to see you around the City in Spring. Rick Kellner, Community Forester

## Maintenance of Sewer Laterals

As a homeowner you should know that despite the City's vigorous preventive maintenance procedures, sewer blockages and backups do occur. If you experience a sewer backup or signs of an impending blockage such as slow drain flow, slow flushing toilets, or gurgling noises from shower or tub drains, you should immediately contact a plumber. A plumber should be able to tell you the location of the blockage. Since 1990, the City's policy on the maintenance of sewer laterals has been as follows:

**For laterals in the back yard:** The homeowner is responsible for maintaining the lateral from the house to the sewer main. The homeowner's responsibility includes the lateral under the utility easement strip in the rear of the yard and the connection where the lateral meets the sewer main.

**For laterals in the front yard:** The homeowner

is responsible for maintaining the lateral from the house to the back edge of the curb. The homeowner's responsibility includes the lateral under the utility easement strip from the curb into the yard proper. The City is responsible for maintaining the lateral from the back edge of the curb to the sewer main under the street.

You should also protect your home and possessions from financial loss caused by sewer backups by contacting your insurance carrier and requesting that "Sewer Backup" coverage be added to your homeowner's policy. In October 2012 a law went into effect which requires all insurance companies that underwrite homeowner policies in Maryland must provide this sewer backup coverage option to their customers. The cost for this coverage is usually \$40 or less each year, but again you must specifically ask for it.

## Nominate An Outstanding Bowie Business

The City of Bowie and the Greater Bowie Chamber of Commerce are celebrating the Eighth Annual Business Recognition Awards program on **Wednesday, May 13, 2015**. The Awards program was created to recognize and celebrate those businesses in the Bowie community that exhibit exemplary efforts to provide outstanding services, products and facilities to all its customers.

Nominations are sought in the following categories: Business of the Year, Small Business, Green Business, Incubator Business, Community Service and Entrepreneur of the Year. Please submit nominations by **Friday, March 27, 2015**. Mail nomination to City of Bowie, Attention: John Henry King, Economic Development Director, 15901 Excalibur Road, Bowie, MD 20716 or fax to 301-809-2315 or email [jhking@cityofbowie.org](mailto:jhking@cityofbowie.org). Further details on the event breakfast are available from the Greater Bowie Chamber of Commerce at [www.bowiechamber.org](http://www.bowiechamber.org).

## Teen Mentoring Program

A mentor is an adult volunteer who spends time with a child in a supportive and friendly environment. If you are at least 21 years of age and reside in the Bowie area, you have the power to change your life and the life of a teen. The Bowie Youth and Family Services (BYFS) Teen Mentoring Program can help you do just that. For more information, contact Rhonda Simon, Volunteer Coordinator, at [mentor@cityofbowie.org](mailto:mentor@cityofbowie.org) or call BYFS at 301-809-3033.

**Volunteers Needed ...**For the following City Committees: Administrative Review Board, Arts Committee, Community Outreach Committee, Diversity Committee, Board of Elections, Environmental Advisory Committee, Ethics Commission, Information Technology Committee and the Board of Personnel Appeals. For more information, visit the City's website at [www.cityofbowie.org](http://www.cityofbowie.org) or call the City Clerk at 301-809-3029.

## Plant a Tree

Tree rebates of \$50 and \$100 are available on a first come, first served basis for City residents who would like to purchase up to two trees at Patuxent Nursery (2410 Crain Hwy, Bowie, MD). There are 10 species of trees eligible for rebates as well as reduced delivery/planting rates for program participants. For more information, see [www.cityofbowie.org/treerebate](http://www.cityofbowie.org/treerebate). Applications are available at the nursery.

## Arts and Education Scholarships

Applications are due **3/16**. For more information, contact Annette Esterheld at [aesterheld@cityofbowie.org](mailto:aesterheld@cityofbowie.org) or 301-575-5601.

## Malcolm "Skip" Popp Award

Want to honor a Bowie Scout or Scout leader for their community service work? Nominate them for the Popp Award by **3/27**. Visit [www.cityofbowie.org/popp](http://www.cityofbowie.org/popp) or call 301-809-3011.

## Parade

The City's **Memorial Day Parade** Committee is busy planning this year's parade, which will take place on **Saturday, May 23**, beginning at 11 a.m. There is still time to sign your organization up to participate in this fun and patriotic event! For information, go to [www.cityofbowie.org](http://www.cityofbowie.org), and put Memorial Day Parade in the search section or [mcorley@cityofbowie.org](mailto:mcorley@cityofbowie.org) or 301-809-3078.

**Water Quality Report** The 2014 City of Bowie Water Quality Report is now available. Please go to [www.cityofbowie.org/wqr](http://www.cityofbowie.org/wqr) to view it and learn more about the source and quality of your City of Bowie drinking water. If you would like a paper copy mailed to you, please call 301-809-3060.

## Active Adults 55+ ...

**Bowie Senior Center** 14900 Health Center Drive 301-809-2300

- Diabetes Self Management Workshop - Thursdays, 3/12-4/30, 9:30 a.m. - 12 p.m.
- BGE Savings Tips - Tuesday, 3/17, 12:30 p.m.
- Health Presentation: Obesity & Cancer - Thursday, 3/26, 10:30 a.m.
- Capital Reeds Performance - Thursday, 3/26, 6 p.m. Premiere reed trio!

## MUSEUMS

301-809-3089 or [museumevents@cityofbowie.org](mailto:museumevents@cityofbowie.org)

### SECOND TUESDAY LECTURE- RESTORATION OF THE OLD SENATE CHAMBER AT THE MARYLAND STATE HOUSE

Tuesday, 3/10  
7:30 p.m., Belair Mansion

### KIDS KABOOSE

Tuesday, 3/17  
10:30 a.m. - 12 p.m.  
Bowie Railroad Museum

### A DAY FOR THE LADIES

Saturday, 3/21  
9 a.m. - 4 p.m., Belair Mansion  
Spend a day in the 18th century. \$30/\$25 FOBE. Reservations required.

### KIDS' PASSPORT TO MARYLAND HISTORY PROGRAM

Saturday, 3/28  
11 a.m. - 3 p.m., Bowie Library  
Play games, churn butter, meet Revolutionary War soldiers.

### TODDLER TIME TRAVELERS

Monday, 3/30  
10 - 11 a.m., Belair Mansion  
Young time travelers ages 2 - 4 are invited for a trip to the past.

## CITY GYM

4100 Northview Drive  
301-809-2388

### SENIOR FIT PROGRAM

Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, 9 - 10 a.m. For information, call Sara McKechnie at 301-754-7895.

### WALKING PROGRAM

Weekdays, 8:30 - 10 a.m.

### RECREATIONAL VOLLEYBALL

Fridays, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

### PICKLEBALL

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

### SUMMER BASKETBALL CAMPS

We will offer a number of camps for youth of all ages. Watch here for more information.

### ROOM RENTALS

The Gym has rooms available for rent for parties or meetings. \$25 per hour.

### COMMUNITY RECREATION COMMITTEE

- Seeks a youth member for one-year term. High school aged Bowie resident. Contact the Gym for more information.

## ICE ARENA

3330 Northview Drive  
301-809-3090

### PUBLIC SESSIONS

Schedule can be viewed at [www.cityofbowie.org](http://www.cityofbowie.org).

### GROUP LESSONS

A four-week series of lessons will be held in April for those 18 months of age through adult. Call the Ice Arena for information.

### SUMMER CAMPS

Registration begins March 15. Camps will be held during the months of July and August. Half-day, full-day and specialty camps will be offered.

## CITY COUNCIL

Mayor G. Frederick Robinson  
Mayor Pro Tem Isaac Trouth  
Dennis Brady  
Henri Gardner  
James L. Marcos  
Diane M. Polangin  
Dufour Woolfley

### CITY MANAGER

David J. Deutsch  
301-809-3030