
THE VILLAGE NEWS

Volume 30 No. 4

Serving the people of Cabin John and beyond

November 1996

How Do You Spell Main Street?

Sign makers for our boulevard have exercised great creativity in lettering the street signs. Can you spot the unique lettering arrangement on each variation?



MACARTHUR BLVD



Mac Arthur Blvd.



MACARTHUR BLVD



MACARTHUR BLVD



MACARTHUR BLVD



Macarthur Blvd



MacArthur Blvd



McArthur Blvd

Cabin John Citizens Association Meeting
Tuesday evening, January 28, 1996
at the Clara Barton Community Center

Looking Backwards in Cabin John

"TIME WAS: A CABIN JOHN MEMORY BOOK"

(On the occasion of the Cabin John Bicentennial celebration in 1976, Elizabeth Kytle produced a remarkable volume. Called "Time Was: A Cabin John Memory Book", it consisted of interviews with 18 old-timers. Quoting them verbatim, she recorded the memories of people who had lived in the community for 60 or 70 years. Following are some extracts from the interview with Norman Touhey, the (then) 71-year old grandson of Dennis Touhey — who ran Cabin John's general store and post office from about 1890 to 1925 — talking about life in Cabin John around 1910.)

"The merchants in Potomac — there were two big grocery stores there — and a big flour mill up in Seneca, and my grandfather with his little store, all used the canal. At Seneca they'd put the flour on a boat, the boat would come [down] the canal, and they'd set the flour on the unloading dock for Cabin John and send word to the merchants. My grandfather used to get all his flour and corn meal and stuff there. Whoever tended the lock would send a kid to let him know it was there, and he'd hook up a horse and wagon and go on down there. And I'd go with him.

"He bought an automobile in 1911, a model T Ford roadster. For gasoline he got a 50-gallon drum and put it 50 feet back of the store — set it up in a little shed there. He had a spigot in the 50-gallon drum and he'd keep a gallon measuring cup there; and if you wanted gas you'd go out there and draw it and measure it and take the can around front and dump the gasoline in your tank. I think it was five cents a gallon.

"Soft drinks were three cents. They were all local; we didn't have Coca-Cola. They were Palmer soft drinks, and they were bottled right down on Wisconsin Avenue. A big pie, an eight-inch pie, sold for a nickel. Bread was a nickel. Out in the country, you didn't sell milk. All the people living in the country in those days had an old cow, clean up to depression time.

"In my kid days and clean up to the thirties, they used to cut ice off the river up there at Great Falls. Used to drive a wagon right out on the ice, cut the ice and throw it up in the wagon. They used an ice saw, something like a crosscut saw, only much broader. It cut 100-pound blocks."

(More excerpts from Time Was will appear in forthcoming issues of this paper.)

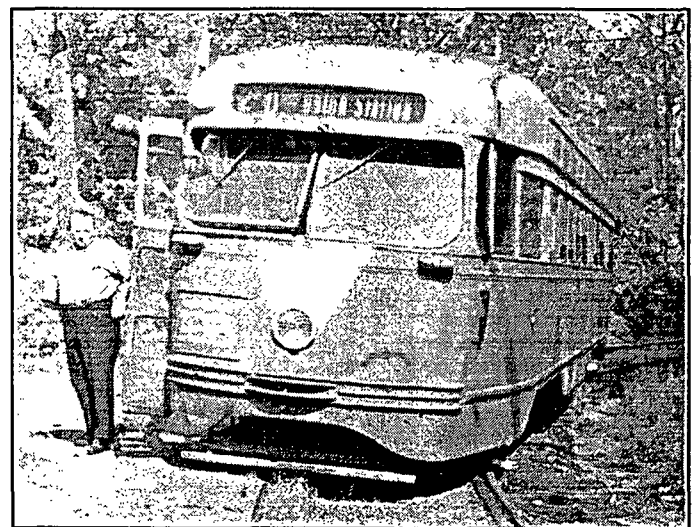
Community News

The Bannockburn PTA presents it's Annual **Holiday Marketplace**. This year's Marketplace will be held on Sunday, December 8th, from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. It will be held at the Bannockburn Community Clubhouse which is located at 6314 Bannockburn Dr.

Our elite cadre of culinary genies will offer sumptuously delicious baked goods of all sorts! Buy them by the dozen, festively packaged for the holidays for family and friends.

Featured will be All Dolled Up, Family Ties, Cherries & Chocolate, North Poles, Laura Hummel Originals, Lori Feiss, Ellen Benson Jewelry, Barbara Quinn and the Bannockburn Bakers.

Questions? Call Claudia Bleecker at 229 5257 or Donna Roberts at 229-8606.



Photos right, top and bottom: the last trolley to Cabin John, October 10, 1959. Courtesy of Connie Rice

Come to the CABIN JOHN HOLIDAY PARTY

Sunday, December 15, 4:30 TO 6 P.M.

Santa Claus, who skipped making an advance visit to Cabin John last year, has agreed to stop by our town this year some time between 4:30 and 6 p.m. on Sunday, December 15, on the occasion of the traditional Cabin John Holiday Party.

While the party appeals particularly to families with small children, many other Cabin John residents always enjoy coming to this festival event. All are welcome. There will be singing of familiar holiday songs, simple crafts for children, story-telling, and refreshments for all. And, at some point, there will be the sound of sleigh bells and Santa will arrive, carrying a well-filled pack!

When you come to the party — which will be

held at the Clara Barton Community Center — you are asked to bring a plate of snacks, cookies, or other light holiday fare what can be enjoyed by all. (Drinks — namely, cider and hot chocolate — will be provided by the organizing committee.) And if you have short story that you'd like to tell or read which is relevant to Christmas, Hanukkah, or Kwanza, please call Andy Rice at 229-3503.

The party, which is under the auspices of the Cabin John Citizens Association, is being organized this year by Allen Alexander, Blythe and Diane Leatherman, Bob Norris, and Connie and Andy Rice.

See you on the 15th!

Give A Christmas Party for Others

We have all read about the mess in D.C. schools. This involves real children. I have kept an acquaintance I made in my last job with the Orphan Foundation. He was a special education teacher in the district. He was reared in foster care and now teaches at Kenilworth Elementary School and gives the special education students a party. This, according to their teacher, may well be the only Christmas they receive. I welcome any help anyone can give: offers of food, small gifts, someone to go with me. There will be about 20 children.

I am not doing this through the auspices of any organization, just as an individual. Feel free to give me a call at 229-7412 if you have any ideas of offers. Thank you. Diane Leatherman.

Landscape Design • Installation • Decks
Retaining Walls • Maintenance • Hauling • Gutters



HUGHES
LANDSCAPING


7810 WOODROW PLACE
CABIN JOHN, MARYLAND 20818

JOHN HUGHES
229-5111

INTEGRITY
"She is outstanding— intelligent, creative, diligent and personable. Ellen represented me with great tact in very delicate circumstances."
M. Campbell
Cabin John, MD

LEGENDARY SERVICE
"Experience, talent, charm, hard work, humor, success. Ellen was PERFECT!"
John Mouto
Potomac, MD

COMMITMENT
"Ellen has shown a willingness to hang in there, even when things got tough."
Paul Hersh
Washington, DC



ELLEN WILNER

Realtor
Licensed in Maryland,
Virginia and the District.
4825 Bethesda Ave.
Bethesda, Maryland 20814
OFFICE: 301-652-0400
DIRECT: 301-320-4774
TOLL FREE: 1-800-289-9584

RE/MAX
Realty Services

KEPLER FRAMING

Ritch Kepler, Certified by
Professional Picture Framers Association
Fifteen years serving metropolitan area
Quality workmanship, fast service, exceptional value

- * Conservation Framing * Object Framing *
- * Needlepoint and Embroidery *
- * Decorative Matting * Ovals, Circles *
- * Large Selection of Fine Graphics *

320-0248
Cabin John, Maryland
All major credit cards accepted

FIVE GENERATIONS OF DENELLS

By Barbara Martin

Five generations of Denells have called the Cabin John area home. Tommy Denell is right in the middle of that line. His grandfather, William Thomas Denell was the first generation; his grandson, Brian Thomas Denell, and granddaughter Kara are the fifth generation.

William Thomas Denell, first of the five, grew up in Upper Marlboro, but ran away when he was still a youngster, and came to live with relatives, the Kenny family, on River Road. He helped to build Conduit Road and worked on the construction of Mohican Lodge in Glen Echo. When he went to work for the C&O Canal Company, taking care of the boats and the locks, he lived with his family in the lockhouse at Lock 7. Later he worked for the Capital Heating Plant in Georgetown, and moved into a house on Tulane in Glen Echo. Tommy remembers his grandfather as a good man: "I helped him in his garden; he always had a big garden. And I used to cut grass with him at the Potomac Methodist Cemetery." Tommy's grandparents and parents are buried in that cemetery on Falls Road.

The second Denell in the line was Tommy's father, William Theodore Denell. He was born in 1898 in the lockhouse, and grew up in Glen Echo where the family house was near Daley's store (later Otto's, then Trav's, now the Glen Echo Inn.) He went to the Glen Echo School on Wilson Lane (where Trinity Presbyterian Church is now), and Tommy still has one of his dad's report cards. As a youngster, his dad sold peanuts and popcorn at Glen Echo Amusement Park.

He worked for a furrier in the city—the one with the white bear in front of the store—and then for the Washington Railway streetcar line as a mechanic. The garage was in Georgetown, near M Street and Wisconsin Avenue. In 1931, he joined the police force in Bethesda and retired at age 58. The family lived for a while at 4570 Conduit Road (where Tommy was born) near the DC reservoir, then came back to Glen Echo, first to a house on Tulane, then to one on Oberlin. Tommy sometimes went fishing with his dad. "He just loved to fish, and he loved the Potomac River. He would sit on the riverbank all day in the rain and enjoy it. We had many good fish dinners. He was a good hunter, too. Squirrel potpie was often on our table."

Tommy, formally William Thomas Denell II, grew up in Glen Echo and went to the Glen Echo-Cabin John elementary school, which was later named Clara Barton School. Guy Jewell was the principal. At that school and then at Leland Junior High, Tommy's classmates included Sid Graham, Gerry Shaw, Carlton Money, the Worsham boys, and Mildred Bradshaw Brooks. A favorite spot for Tommy and his friends was their football field, the (then) vacant lot in the triangle made by 76th Street, Arden Road, and Tomlinson Avenue.

Tommy was one of six children. "My mother's family lived in Seat Pleasant, and she used to take us all there on the streetcar which we caught at Daley's store. It was quite a trip, but we did it often." Tommy's mother was born in Washington, in the 300 block of Maryland Avenue.

Tommy and his friends swam in the Canal and in the Potomac. "It was a great place to swim, very clean." He remembers the Great Flood of 1936. "It was like nothing before or since. Hurricane Agnes and the floods we had this year—they're no comparison to the '36 flood. The water almost covered the lockhouse. There was a woman, a physical education teacher at GW University, who

lived out on Meyer's Island. She got trapped by the floodwaters and climbed up in a tree with her dog. The Coast Guard couldn't get to her, so Bill Swainson who lived on an island up near

Lock 9, put his rowboat in the river and made it out to where she was and rescued her. He brought his boat in near Sycamore store. Later they got married."

"A lot of people had summer houses along the Canal. The land really belonged to the Park Service but they left the people alone. But when the '36 flood swept all those houses away, the Park Service wouldn't let anyone rebuild."

"Even as a young kid, I liked caddying at the Bannockburn Golf Course. I did it on weekends and during the summer, and whenever I could cut school. There was a truant officer, Mrs. Wilkenson, who used to come looking for me on the golf course. I liked being outdoors a lot better than being in school. When I was almost 16, I left school for good." Tommy worked as an electrician's helper, and then on a bread delivery truck for Holzberlein's Bakery. The truck was driven by Wilbur



The Denells in 1974, when Tommy retired from the police force.

Carper, who later had a grocery store where the Wild Bird Center is now. And then I worked for Bell Laundry. Mr. Sipes, a Cabin John man, worked there too. I was a spotter. There was no air conditioning and no ventilation but I didn't know the difference.

When he was 19, Tommy joined the Chevy Chase fire department. "I had been a volunteer at the Glen Echo firehouse for 2 years before that. You were supposed to be 18 to be a volunteer, but I lied about my age; I really wanted to be a fireman."

His twentieth year was an important one for Tommy. He had a lot of friends in Glen Echo, and when one of them asked him if he would like to double date, Tommy agreed, having noticed the very pretty girl who stopped by the Post Office every day to pick up her mail. Her name was Naomi Dawson; she had come from Kansas to Washington to work for the Government as a secretary at the Pentagon, and was living with the Arnold family (friends of friends back in Kansas) in Glen Echo.

In less than a year, Naomi and Tommy were married—on February 17, 1943. "I had to lend him the \$2 for the license," Naomi remembers. World War II called Tommy into the Army, where he served with an artillery unit. When he was discharged, he went back to the Fire Department for a while, then in 1947 joined the Montgomery County police force. "My salary was \$2,100. I was at the Bethesda station. Each station only had four or five officers in those days. There wasn't that much crime to take care of.

Tommy was in the inactive reserve, and although he was married with a child, he was called back into service during the Korean War. "The telegram was sent to my father's address. It came late at night and told me to report to Ft. Belvoir at 8 a.m. the next day. My father called Naomi and told her to wake me up right away." Tommy was expecting to go to Korea, but instead was assigned to Ft. Lee in Hopewell, Virginia, and served there 1 year as an M.P. before being discharged.

For 7 years, the Denells lived on Froude Circle in the Gardens, but now they had four children and needed more room. In 1956, they found the house they wanted on Arden Road. "We liked the neighborhood and the yard was big. But the house wasn't; we added a back section to get enough room." They bought the house for \$13,500 and spent another \$5,000 for the addition. The lot is 316' deep and slopes back to a small creek. "It's only a creek when there's a hard rain." The long hill in their backyard is ideal for sledding, and every winter, kids—their own and neighborhood kids and now grandchildren—enjoy their privateslope.

After his second discharge, Tommy returned to the Bethesda station and over the years received regular promotions. In 1965, he went to the Silver Spring station as Captain. After 6 years there, he returned to Bethesda as

station Captain, and then served as a Field Commander, working out of the County Office Building in Rockville. He retired in 1974. "The whole time Tommy was on the force," Naomi says, "he never talked to me about his work. He left his job at the station. What I found out, I got from listening to the other officers talking together. He was the policeman at work, but the husband and father at home." Reflecting on his career in the police force, Tommy says, "They were pretty good years. People had a lot of respect for policemen in those days."

Naomi and Tommy have three daughters and a son. Patti lives in Burtonsville; Betsy is in Chester, Virginia; Janet lives in Richlands, North Carolina; and Billy—the fourth generation male—lives in Cabin John.

Billy is William Grant Denell. He is a lifelong Cabin Johner. Naomi remembers his boyhood: "Billy was always outside, and if anybody was working on anything he would be right there. That boy would leave the house in the morning and get so interested in what was going on, he wouldn't even think about lunch. I didn't worry about him, though; he didn't stray too far from home."

Billy is a graduate of Clara Barton, Pyle, and Wait Whitman. He worked for a construction company for 20 years and now is doing general construction on his own. He and his wife, Dawn Dixon Denell, lived in the Gardens, then on Tomlinson Avenue, and a few years ago bought and remodeled the former Osbourne house on 75th Place. As a boy, Billy had been good friends with Mr. Osbourne who told him, "Someday I'm going to sell you this house, Billy." And sure enough, that's what happened. Tommy helped with the remodeling. "Mostly I was the gofer."

Each of Naomi and Tommy's offspring have two children, bringing the total to eight grandchildren. Billy's kids make the fifth generation of Cabin John-Glen Echo Denells. Kara, 15, is at Whitman and Brian, 13, is at Pyle.

Since Tommy's retirement, he and Naomi have lived a more relaxed life. In 1988, they bought a motor home and they take two or three trips a year in it. "We go every year to Kansas, and we've been to Florida. Of course, we visit our daughters and their families." They go on day trips—to Winchester, Hagerstown, wherever their fancy takes them.

Naomi is a member of North Chevy Chase Christian Church, and Tommy enjoys the activities of the County Police Association.

They have been married 54 years.

For their 50th anniversary, their family gave them a surprise party at the Glen Echo Town Hall. "About 50 yards from where we met."

Among its many outstanding features, our town can claim 100 years of Denells.

The Village News is published monthly except in July and December and is sent free to every household in Cabin John. Others may subscribe for \$5 per year. Send news, advertisements, letters, and subscriptions to:

The Village News
PO Box 164
Cabin John, MD 20818

The next deadline is 10 AM, Monday, January 13 for the issue mailing January 18.

People who make the Village News possible:
Barbara and Ger Quinn, Jerry Rhodes, Barbara and Reed Martin, Gary Nofrey
Contributors: Andy Rice, Bur Gray

The Glen Echo Baptist Church

Vassar Circle, Glen Echo, MD

Jesus Christ is our Lord, Saviour and God. He still performs miracles at the Glen Echo Baptist Church. A born again Fellowship. 229-4430.

Sunday Morning: Prayer 8:00, Family Sunday School 9:30, Worship and Praise, 11:00.
All are invited!!

Sunday Evening: 6:00 Why we believe the Jewish Bible, 7:00 Praise, Testimonies, Worship, Singing.

Wednesday Evening: 7:00 Prayer, Testimonies, Bible questions

Friday Morning: 10:00 Community prayer and Bible study

Collecting food and clothing for the homeless and needy.



ALPINE VETERINARY HOSPITAL

Full Service Animal Hospital
Mon-Fri 7:30 am - 7:00 pm
Sat 8:00 am - 3 pm

7732 MacArthur Boulevard
Cabin John, MD 20818
301/229-2400

REMINDER:

THE VILLAGE NEWS IS NOT PUBLISHED IN DECEMBER. THE DEADLINE FOR THE JANUARY ISSUE IS 10 AM, SATURDAY, JANUARY 18.

CLASSIFIED ADS

MATH TUTOR: All levels. In your home or mine. Certified. Teaching experience in middle school, high school, and college. Afternoons or evenings available. Call Nancy Shaw at 320-6342.

DISCOVER THE OCEAN during "off season." Enjoy the uninhibited beaches and bird migrations. Partake of excellent fishing, wildlife and adventures. Treat yourself to a weekend or a week in our lovely Chincoteague home. Specially furnished to period, this lovely fisherman's cottage sleeps 4. Children need supervision. Weekend rates - Fri. & Sat. & Sun. \$120.00 Weekly rates - 310.00. Very flexible check in and check out times. For more information call Gale or Tonette Beckwith at 229-8650.

GARAGE OR CARPORT WANTED in Cabin John to store antique vehicle. Will clean out. Close to Clara Barton School preferred. Call Ger Quinn 229-8030

SUNFISH (sailboat) Hull only. \$100. 229-3482

LIGHTWEIGHT UTILITY TRAILER \$500 229-3482

To place an ad in the Village News classifieds send your ad before the first Saturday of the month to the address in the box above. The cost is 25 cents per word. If you have questions, call Jerry Rhodes at 320-5219.

Discover the Difference experience makes!!

Why take a chance on inexperience?

Choosing the wrong agent can cost you more than sleepless nights, it can cost you lots of \$\$\$.

For the biggest return on your housing investment, hire the best.

My sound advice and attention to detail can help you get the most for your house.



Barbara Abeille

(301) 320-5391 Home
(202) 362-5800 Ofc.
(301) 303-5199 Voice Mail

When you need results . . .

P A R D O E
REAL ESTATE, INC.

SUMMARY OF CJCA MEETING MINUTES - OCTOBER 22, 1996

Development Issues

CJCA agreed to send a letter to supporting a request by the residents of 75th Place that sidewalks and gutters not be required on road portion of the property on 75th Place that is being subdivided into two parcels. Montgomery County had deemed the property a "subdivision" and thus subject to the sidewalk and gutter requirements.

CJCA agreed to send a letter to the County Planning Commission Appeals Board opposing the "special exception" sought by the veterinary clinic up MacArthur Blvd. near Old Anglers Inn. The clinic is currently operated as a limited enterprise under the "home exception" rule but wishes to become a full fledged animal clinic. The "special exception" request was initially denied at an October 1996 meeting of the Planning Commission based on the additional noise and traffic that would be caused by expansion of the clinic's capacity.

CJCA agreed to send a letter to the Appeals Board in opposition to the assisted care facility proposed for construction at the intersection of Falls Rd and MacArthur Blvd across from the entrance to Great Falls Park. The proposed facility would be home for approximately 75 persons (with an additional 44 full time employees).

CJCA agreed to send a letter to the MD Dept. of Environmental Protection requesting that the stormwater management requirement not be waived for a group of 9 homes proposed for construction at Endicott & Tomlinson Ave. Certain Cabin John residents living downstream of the proposed development are already adversely affected during heavy rains by the stream into which the runoff will flow. The upstream development and lack of stormwater management to date has caused the stream to increasingly overflow its banks.

Possible Formation of Umbrella Citizens' Group

CJCA members will explore the possibility of resurrecting the Potomac Valley League that served for a while as an umbrella organization for the various citizen groups along the Maryland portion of the Potomac River. The League served to present the consensus of the various citizen associations to regulatory and other entities.

Clara Barton Teen Center

The Clara Barton Teen Center will generally be open from 3:00 6:00 p.m. T, W and Th. A dance for high school students is scheduled for November 6, 1996. A DJ is to be scheduled some time in December for an event for junior high students.

CJCA Funding Proposals

CJCA is soliciting comment from the community regarding possible projects and groups for the CJCA to support financially. A list of the various categories is included in this edition and CJCA hopes that residents will mail the poll back with any specific suggestions as well. This information will provide CJCA with useful information in making its funding decisions.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Please note and rank in importance which of the following areas that you think CJCA should support. Feel free to add any additional general or specific suggestions:

- ___ CJ beautification (planting trees, cleaning up streams, etc.)
- ___ CJ neighborhood institutions for youth and elderly (Clara Barton Community Center, daycare facilities)
- ___ Specific educational/tutoring support for CJ residents
- ___ Recreational opportunities for CJ youth, CJ area
- ___ C&O Canal restoration effort
- ___ other

Please submit this questionnaire even if you do not plan to send in the following membership/dues notice

CABIN JOHN CITIZENS ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP

Send in your membership dues to: CJCA, P.O. Box 31, Cabin John, MD. 20818. Still only \$7.00 for an individual membership and \$10.00 for the family. An absolute bargain!

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____

Thanks for renewing your membership or joining for the first time.



Enjoy wildlife at your window

- Feeders
- Birdbaths
- Seed
- Nest Boxes
- Gifts
- Free Birdwalks

\$2.00 Off
any 40 lb. bag of Wild Bird Center Premium seed



Wild Bird Center
7687 MacArthur Blvd. • Cabin John
229-3141



LANDSCAPING

*in harmony with your
taste & budget*

Washingtonian Award Winner
Unusual Design • Wood Decks •
Brick & Stone Patios • Railroad
Ties • Waterfalls & Pools •
Unique & Beautiful Plantings

Mark Willcher & Co.
(301) 320-2040

MD 13305

DC 726



**LONG &
FOSTER®**
REALTORS®

Let's Talk!

Eleanor Balaban

229-7990

Neighborhood Services

HAULING

Reasonable, Yard/garage items. Lawn cutting and hedge trimming. Prefer small jobs. Call Ed, 229-1195.

CAR REPAIRS

Call Fred. Expert experienced auto diagnosis and repair. 301 417 9770. Also open Saturday.

How would you like
your business listed?

Bulk Rate
U.S. Postage Paid
Cabin John, MD
20818
Permit 4210