

THE VILLAGE NEWS

Volume 30 No. 7

Serving the people of Cabin John and beyond

March 1997

Dear Village News,

This open letter to the citizens of Cabin John tells the story of a recent dispute my neighbors and I had with the county. It is intended as a warning to everyone in Cabin John about what is slowly happening to our neighborhood.

75th Place where I live is, like most streets in Cabin John, very small: 5 houses each side. Last year a neighbor who lived at the intersection of 75th with MacArthur (Mrs Brief) died and the property was sold to a developer. The developer wanted to build a second house, turning it into two lots. But the county Department of Transportation and the county Permitting Department, consulting their rule books, decided this made it a subdivision and, like all other subdivisions (c.f. Spring Valley, Fort Sumner, etc), gutters, curbs and sidewalks would have to be installed along the property: a few hundred feet of MacArthur Blvd. and the lower part of our little street, adjoining MacArthur.

Transportation and Permitting also discovered horrors!—that our little street was the wrong size, only 16-17 feet wide. Consulting their rule books again, these county bureaucrats found there was no such thing as a 17 foot road; it had to be 26 feet wide. So they decreed that one-fourth of 75th Place be widened by 10 feet, and the large shade trees there be chopped down.

These changes would pretty well have wrecked our street. They weren't wanted or needed, they even violated the Master Plan and a recent ruling by the Planning Commission. I led a fight by 75th Place residents: petitions, phone calls, appeals to the Citizens Association, you name it. I even wrote Doug Duncan (he's an acquaintance). We pointed out there were no sidewalks in Cabin John. We threatened a sit-down on the road. Nothing worked. Transportation and Permitting even declined to visit us to see first-hand how ludicrous their mandates were and how destructive to the rural quality of Cabin John. They didn't care.

At this point I decided to phone Doug Duncan, but he was unreachable. And I discovered my letter to him had ended up at the bottom of a pile of mail in someone's inbox. It would be long after our trees were chopped down and the sidewalks installed before the letter would even get a reading from one of Duncan's assistants.

Exasperated, I phoned Duncan's press secretary and (I'm an ABC Network news correspondent, seen on television) threatened to have my friend John Stossel do a

primetime expose on incompetent local government. Stossel is not a friend and ABC would never do such a small topic but, of course, it worked. Duncan phoned. At first, he said we should be happy to be paved over, that was progress. We came close to yelling. Then he called back and said Permitting would waive everything except curbs. I said that was unacceptable. Then he called back again and said Permitting had finally visited our street (making sure NOT to talk to any of us) and had decided to drop everything.

We won. The point is, however, that it took personal intervention with the county executive—and even then, that almost didn't work. And remember, this had to do with regulations that should have been routinely and easily waived.

“At a time when the community is under assault,... citizens have to be extraordinarily vigilant.”

Our neighborhood is changing, as Harry Rieckelman accurately pointed out in his open letter in the last “Village News.” The county, for instance, recently tried to install traffic lights on MacArthur at the Parkway entrance that would have turned Cabin John into a throughway for Virginia commuters. Now this. And it's not just insensitive bureaucrats that

threaten our neighborhood. What about greedy developers who more and more want to subdivide and erect Potomac-style mansions? And look at the plan now to turn the Wild Bird Center into a restaurant (or perhaps a store). The Golden Arches in Cabin John? MacArthur Boulevard as a strip mall? The landlord says he just wants to make more money. But for all our sakes, I hope the neighbors are hiring a lawyer (we should all chip in).

At a time when the community is under assault, and when even personal intervention with the man who runs the county barely works, citizens have to be extraordinarily vigilant.

Harry Rieckelman is right. Cabin John is changing, and not necessarily for the good. Without citizen participation, you won't want to live here in ten years.

Tuesday, 25 February, 1997
Jack Smith
6507 75th Place
Cabin John

CITIZENS ASSOCIATION MEETING
Tuesday, March 25

Looking Backward in Cabin John

This month's column continues with excerpts from the Cabin John "memory book" compiled by Elizabeth Kytte at the time of the 1976 national bicentennial celebration. Ms. Kytte interviewed some 20 "old-timers" in our community — people then in their 70's, 80's and 90's — and recorded their recollections of the "old days" in and around Cabin John.

— Andrew E. Rice

MRS. ISABELLE REDDEN: The Great Falls Tavern

Mrs. Redden was born in New York City and she first came to this general area when she was seven years old. She was spending the summer with her mother and stepfather at the Great Falls Tavern, which was operated by her aunt. When young Isabelle was about ten, her mother took over the management of the tavern.

"The hotel was owned by the Chesapeake Canal Company; my mother rented it from them. The hotel had a well house and a milk house, a wash house, an ice house, and an outhouse. It was in the horse-and-buggy days, of course, and we had a big stable for the horses, ours and the guests. The milk house had a concrete floor, and places where you could put butter you'd churned and crocks of milk. Water — ice cold when it came from the well — would be flowing all around the crocks.

"The ice was cut from the canal. I watched them dozens of times doing it. You hired men by the day for this, and they'd cut pieces a foot and a half to two feet thick — and they could be thicker, depending on the winter.

"My mother managed the hotel, the restaurant, all of this. She and my stepfather were workers, and nothing went to waste. We had hogs, and they were fed everything people left on their plates. . . . That wasn't all they were fed, of course.

"People stayed overnight, and for longer periods of time at the hotel, but not in the winter. It was too cold for that. The hotel was open only in the summer, but we stayed all winter.

"I enjoyed living at the hotel. But it was hard. It was hard because it was so cold. We had no heat in the hotel, and we'd have to cross two porches and go up some stairs to get from the dining room, that we mostly lived in, to the bedrooms. The rooms were freezing cold, but we had plenty of covers. We had all-hair mattresses, then feather beds on top of them. You just sink down into a feather bed and you're warm as toast.

"My mother was a good cook, and she did all the cooking. I learned to cook from my mother. She started teaching me when I was quite young, and I enjoyed that. She never had any cook books.

"Here was my mother's regular menu: First of all, she had hot biscuits and soup. Vegetable soup mostly, but she'd put a big piece of beef in it. Then she'd serve half a

bass and boiled potatoes with parsley and butter on. Then she'd serve the salad, generally lettuce-and-tomato or cole slaw. After that she'd serve half a fried chicken and stewed corn or some vegetable that was in season. After that there would be ice cream or pie. This was the regular dinner, and it was \$1.25."

JOHN A JESSUP: Strange Proposition from a Developer

(In 1959 the Bogley Company came forward with a plan to develop a high-rise-shopping-center complex in Cabin John. On July 26 of that year, The Washington Post carried a story reporting that the Bogley plan "could ultimately wipe out all of the existing riverside Montgomery County community and take over additional undeveloped acreage.")

Mr. Jessup recalls, "The company interviewed many citizens of Cabin John with respect to their interest in selling their individual properties to the company. Of course, opinion was divided." (This is an extravagantly delicate way of putting it. In fact, the situation became so tense that in some cases longstanding friendships were broken on the rock of the Bogley proposal.)

Mr. Jessup continues, "The Citizens Association, at the request of the realty company, called a special meeting. Interest in the matter was so intense that the regular meeting place, the Cabin John Recreation Center, very evidently would not hold the crowd, and the volunteer fire department generously offered the use of the fire house auditorium. The auditorium was packed.

"Mr. Lebling, representing the Bogley Company, presented his proposal which, in brief, was to purchase the homes of all residents of the Cabin John area and convert the entire area into a community of high-rise apartments, shopping center, and townhouses. At the special meeting, citizens asked questions, expressed opinions, discussed, argued, and at the end of a long and active meeting a vote was taken."

This is the gentle way Mr. Jessup described the meeting. Others remember a noisy meeting at which voices were raised, fingers shaken, and accusations flung about quite freely — a favorite accusation being "You're keeping me from making a fortune!"

Where the "fortune" came in, Mr. Jessup is at a loss to say. "My recollection is that the offers made by the real estate company were not exceptionally high.

"To get back to meeting at which Mr. Lebling presented his proposal, as I said, a vote was taken. It was not necessary to have a tally vote. A show of hands vote was very clearly at least seventy-five percent against the company.

"The Association thanked the company's representatives for presentation of their case, and it was announced that there would be a social hour to which they were invited. A considerable number of women of the Association came up the stairs bringing cakes and soft drinks, and the

"A RIVER RUNS THROUGH IT" ...or by it, in the case of the Potomac River by Cabin John.
by David Murphy

But what about the other streams of Cabin John? Yes, there is Cabin John Creek and the C&O Canal, but we're not done yet. There's Crooked Creek, Griffith Park, Quarry Run, Mountain Spring Branch and a half dozen spring heads that we know of so far.

We have a draft map of the watersheds of Cabin John and have been adding the historical names as we find them. The master map will be on display at the next Cabin John Community Association meeting with an open invitation to any of you to identify springs and other water features that you find we have overlooked. Also, if you have any concerns about drainage problems or poor condition of some of our natural water resources, please come and make sure that they are noted on the map.

Once we have found all that we can, we will be providing a copy to Montgomery County with some indication that there may be funds or opportunities to give our natural areas a little help. And, wouldn't you like to know that you have two addresses? One your street address, by which the post office knows you, and the other, your stream address, by which the environment knows you?



Dear friends and neighbors of Cabin John,

On February 24th our dog Seamus died after struggling for some time with a terrible disease. Eric and I greatly miss our beloved friend and family member.

Seamus loved Cabin John. We have spread his ashes on his favorite places (and trees) along the tow path and in the Potomac river, so part of him will always be here, as well as in our hearts.

Our thanks go to everyone who inquired after his health and all who delighted in him as we did, and a special thanks to Tom Hoge and Jill and Dave Reeves, who provided much needed help.

Annie Brunholz and Eric Dinerstein

**The Whitman High School Presents
"Damn Yankees"**

The Whitman Drama Department is pleased to announce *Damn Yankees* as its spring musical. This popular production includes a cameo appearance by Whitman principal, Dr. Jerome Marco and Athletic Director Jim Douglas. May 1, 2 and 3 at 7:30 p.m. in the Whitman Auditorium. To purchase tickets, which are \$6 call 301 320 6600.

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RICHARD KLICH: NOT YOUR ORDINARY DENTIST

Rick Klich grew up in Duquesne, Pennsylvania, in the Steel Valley near Pittsburgh. "It was a blue-collar neighborhood, ethnically mixed—Irish, Italian, Jewish, Slovak. All four of my grandparents were from eastern Czechoslovakia. My father worked in a steel-rolling mill all his life. My grandfathers worked in the mills, too, before union, before any safety devices."

His mother didn't work until the legendary 1957 steel strike that lasted more than 200 days. She worked at Gimbel's Department Store over his father's objections. Rick went to a parochial boys' school, run by Franciscans. "Those men knew about the world; many of them were ex-gang members who had joined the order late in life." Rick was on the track and basketball teams, was captain of the football team, valedictorian, and student body president.

He was considering what he wanted to do in his life. "I was determined to finish college although I would be the first in my family to do that, and almost none of my friends were going. Families in Duquesne had no money for college. Boys played sports and hoped to become good enough for a scholarship; it was their only chance to escape the mills." (Although Rick was the first in his family to complete college, his example was followed by his younger sister and several cousins.) Rick was in a Saturday art program run by Carnegie Mellon Institute. Carnegie offered him a full 4-year scholarship. But art was not where his heart lay. "I wanted to get into science, and I enjoyed working with my hands. I thought dentistry would be the best combination of both."

Because of his high school record of academics, sports, and outside accomplishments, Rick was offered scholarships from dozens of colleges. "But I had always had the dream of going to an Ivy League school, and Ivy League schools did not give scholarships."

His parents didn't pressure him to accept Carnegie's offer, nor any of the other schools' offers. "They couldn't help me with money but they encouraged me to do what I wanted most. They always told my sister and me that we had the ability to do whatever we set our sights on."

Rick enrolled in the University of Pennsylvania's premed program, financing his education through grants-in-aid, loans, and summers of working. Since high school, he had been working during vacations at US Steel. In between years at U Penn, he worked as a laborer in the mills, as a grave digger, and as a surgical attendant. During graduate years at U Penn's dental school, he earned tuition by installing swimming pools.

After finishing his surgical residency at the Veterans Administration Hospital in Pittsburgh, he came to Washington to join the practice of a former professor. The offices were in the Watergate, and Rick stayed in that practice for 8 years. During these years, he also taught at Georgetown Dental School and the University of Pennsylvania. He left in 1982 to start his own practice.

In 1976, a friend persuaded him to go on a blind date with a law student. "For both Adriana and me, it was hate at first sight. But we managed to get past our first impressions. That was in April. Two weeks later we were engaged, and in December we were married." Adriana was born in Mexico City, but had lived many years in Washington where her father, a career diplomat, was with the Embassy of Cuba.

The Kliches lived in an apartment on Columbia Road, then bought a house in Silver Spring. Their favorite recreation was walking on the C&O Canal towpath. "We fell in love with Cabin John and decided it was the only place to live near Washington. We could tell it was a friendly place, with no 'status' problems." They bought their house on 76th Street and moved in at Christmastime 1986. A month later, 3-year-old daughter Aryn got a new baby sister, Avryl.

And then in the midst of their happiness—new home, two fine daughters, growing practice—tragedy struck. Adriana and Rick were in their car half a block from their house, behind a car waiting to turn onto MacArthur Boulevard, when a teenager barreling along at high speed crashed into the back of their car. The insurance information and identification he gave Rick turned out to be false, and the driver was never found.

Adriana was shaken up but not hurt. Rick at first just felt stiff, but within 10 days he was unable to stand. After 3 months in traction, a year and a half of different treatments, traditional and alternative, he was told by his neurosurgeon to find another profession. He sold his practice.

The director of an early-childhood development program (in which Aryn and Avryl had taken part) asked Rick to help with a research project trying to make brain-injured kids well. Rick collected data for that program for 2 years. Then he worked for Aetna Healthcare evaluating specialty claims, before being promoted to National Dental Director for managed dental care.

In 1992, Rick formed his own company, developing quality assurance criteria for dental offices, and helping the dental industry standardize guidelines. "I love my work. I have freedom to set my own hours and spend more time with my family. I always wanted to be a father; it's the most important part of my life."

Rick has strong emotional ties to the homeland of his grandparents. Ten years ago he visited the four villages in Czechoslovakia that had been home for each of his grandparents. With a Slovak friend who had defected during the Olympics, he tried to establish a cosmetic dental clinic in Czechoslovakia, bringing western dental and medical technology to that country's chief of medicine, and arranging a dental exchange program between Boston University and Czechoslovakia. This was before the iron curtain was lifted; wherever Rick and his colleague went, they were closely watched by KGB, with guard dogs and machine guns. Later he introduced innovative technology to help with severe environmental problems left by the

Soviet Union.

Today Rick manages his business from home, coaches basketball for the CYO team at St. Bartholemew's, takes care of his back, and enjoys life.

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HELP WANTED: Part-time admin. Asst. for Cabin John office. 20 hrs per week - flex schedule. 202 387 7575. \$10 per hour.

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PLAYGROUP: Toddlers 18 months - 2 1/2 years and Moms invited to join our playgroup. Call Alysa 229-1091.

ADMIN ASSIST/OFFICE MGR needed for growing computer sales and consulting business in Cabin John home office. Duties include maintaining files, accounts payable and receivable, handling invoices, quotes and correspondence. Flexible hours and potential for growth and expansion of duties. Call 301 229 8012 or e-mail: barnhard@barnhard.com

LOOKING TO HOUSESIT June to Sept. can care one child. Married son in area. Good with pets, plants. Excellent locals' references. Even exchange. Mirabel Lefkowitz 919 933 3454. Chapel Hill, NC

WANTED: Shopsmith table saw/lathe or parts thereto. Or, if you have one, give me a call to let me know there are other enthusiasts (or victims) in the neighborhood. Dave Murphy, 229 5794.

NEEDED: "Homework Work Station" (that's the politically correct term for a desk) for 6th grader who needs a dedicated place for homework - a desk top of about 24"X48" or larger, but not an office size monster. Dave Murphy 229 5794.

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Minutes of CJCA Meeting - February 25, 1997 (edited for the Newsletter)

1. The meeting was called to order by Burr Gray (Vice President) at approximately 7:40 p.m. Approximately 11 people (list attached) were present.

2. Discussion of the expansion proposed at the Wild Bird Center took up the majority of the time. Residents reviewed the 1990 correspondence between the property owner and MD-National Capital Park and Planning (MD-NCPPC) in which MD-NCPPC indicated that limited additional expansion was possible. MD-NCPPC noted that although the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Master Plan language recommended limiting any new construction to existing building "footprints", the term "footprints" was interpreted to include the 1000 sq. ft additions proposed to both the Wild Bird Center and the other structure on the property in 1990. The MD-NCPPC indicated that conceivably, it was possible to knock down both existing structures and build one new building that would have the total size of both of the old buildings plus the proposed additions.

3. A motion was made and passed to have CJCA send a letter to MD-NCPPC and the Department of Environmental Protection explaining that the application provided by MD-NCPPC appeared inconsistent with the Bethesda Chevy Chase Master Plan and requesting that a new review be done of the construction permit.

4. Burr Gray described the effort being planned by the Alice Ferguson Foundation in early April to clean up

the Potomac and its watershed. The effort is part of Earth Month. There are more than 70 locations along the Potomac where cleanup activity is going to occur. A motion was made and passed to organize a Cabin John Creek cleanup. Burr Gray (703-614-6230 (w), 320-2918 (h) agreed to be the point of contact to organize Cabin John residents for a cleanup on April 26 (which is later than the general Potomac cleanup due to scheduling conflicts). The plan is to meet at 9:00 a.m. on April 26th (Saturday) at the parking lot next to the tennis courts just before Union Arch Bridge (one lane bridge). Gloves and trash bags will be provided. Trash collected will be picked up by Park authorities.

5. Susan Roberts noted that the Clara Barton Center piano needs some repair. Reed Martin has agreed to do the tuning but there are some repairs that need to be done. A motion was made and passed and agreed to by Susan that she would get an estimate of the cost of such repairs and present that information at the next CJCA meeting along with a suggestion for a donation from CJCA in support of those repairs.

6. Susan Roberts noted that the next meeting of the Citizens for the Abatement of Aircraft Noise (CAAN) is to be held on March 19, 1997 in Arlington, VA.

7. A motion was made and passed that CJCA recognize the terrific job done by Harry Rieckelman over the past two years as president of CJCA.

8. Andy Rice made a suggestion that speakers be obtained for some of the future meetings. It was thought that this might attract more persons to the monthly CJCA meeting and would expand the issues discussed at such meetings beyond the local Cabin John matters.

9. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:20 p.m.

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NEIGHBORLY NEWS

Craig Ludwig was recently married. He and Sara are living in Rockville. Craig has started his own business of landscaping and lawn care.

Lucy Coleman has moved into the house on Woodrow Place that Ralph Springmann built 60 years ago and lived in the rest of his life. Lucy grew up in Brookmont and attended Clara Barton School. She works for GSA.

Tammy and John Hughes are the proud parents of 6-month-old Wyatt.

Theresa Jalandra died in February. Theresa had lived on Macarthur Boulevard for more than 30 years. She loved dogs and adopted many dogs from the animal shelter.

Gloria McKinney and her husband are moving from Carver Road. Gloria is the daughter of Margaret Coleman.

Lena Rose, resident of Carver Road for many years is moving to Prince Georges County to make her home with her daughter and son-in-law.

Leland Heflin Liu was married in Hawaii. She lives with her husband in Los Angeles and is studying for her mechanic's certificate.

Heidi Heflin Guvman and her husband welcomed a baby boy to join his big brother. Heidi does neo-natal education at South Bay Hospital in Los Angeles.

Charles "Nick" Hunter, brother of Pete Hunter, died in February. Nick lived for many years on Seven Locks Road before moving to Mt. Airy 6 years ago.

Jill and David Reeves are building a house in Comus, and expect to move in April.

Whitman senior **Kevin Burke** is rated as the 16th best diver in the nation. For the fourth straight year, he won the award of best male diver in the DC metro area. Kevin is the son of Blakely and Dennis Burke.

Tina and Doug Fishman of the Gardens have a new baby girl.

Peggy Sue Williams and her husband have bought the home on Tomlinson Avenue where Peggy Sue grew up.

Carol Popp has died. Carol lived for many years on Ericsson Road.

Julie Schlafman Goldstein has a new baby boy. Julie grew up in Cabin John, and now works in computer graphics in Tarrytown, NY. Her baby makes

Linda and Tevy Schlafman grandparents, and **Frances Wolowitz** a great grandmother.

Sookie Kunst and her family have moved to Seattle where Sookie has a new job. They plan to return to Cabin John in a couple of years.

John Hedgecock is a new neighbor on Ericsson Road.

Steve and Marie France have bought a house in the Gardens. Steve is the brother of Cathie Nelsen.

Ashley Manion, our young Cabin John poet, has had a poem published in the National Library of Poetry's volume, "Best Poems of the '90's."

In the last 2 months, **Mario Tama**, **Reed Martin**, **Gene Wright**, and **Ritch Kepler** have all had surgery and can now compare scars.

This column will appear each month. If you have news about your family, your neighbors, or former Cabin John residents, please call Barbara Martin at 229-3482

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

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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, Maryland 20818

The next deadline is 10 AM Saturday April 12 for the issue mailing April 17.

People who make the Village News possible: Barbara and Ger Quinn, Jerry Rhodes, Barbara and Reed Martin.

Contributors: Burr Gray, Jack Smith

JOIN YOUR NEIGHBORS
APRIL 26 1997 9:00 A.M.

HELP CLEAN UP
THE POTOMAC

MEET AT THE TENNIS
COURTS NEAR THE UNION
ARCH BRIDGE.

(SEE ITEM #4 IN THE CJCA MINUTES, THIS ISSUE.)



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