

# THE VILLAGE NEWS

Volume 31 No. 5

Serving the people of Cabin John and beyond

February 1998

## NEIGHBORLY NEWS January 1998

by Barbara Martin

**Mark Podoff** is a new resident in town. Mark lives in the Tomlinson condo building and is a project manager for a medical trade association. Mark grew up on Wilson Lane and graduated from Walt Whitman High School. He is a writer and is interested in doing articles for the Village News; now there's an offer!

More new neighbors are **Ken Specklet** and **Marlene Beckman**, at 6412 79th Street. Ken sells autos for Euromotor in Bethesda; Marlene is an attorney for the Justice Department.

**Mary Kay Young**, husband **Brainman Avery**, son **Sander** and daughter **Jordan** have moved into a new house on 76th Street. Mary Kay works for a trade association and Brainman is a self-employed architect. The family moved here from Evanston, Illinois.

**Heidi and Scott Lewis**, with their 9-month-old son **Riley**, are recently arrived from Darien, Connecticut, and live on MacArthur Boulevard in the house formerly owned by the Briefs. Heidi works in marketing for Epic Records; Scott is a consultant for an information technology firm.

**Gladys Smith** has died at age 104. Gladys and her husband, Charles "Reggie" Smith, lived for many years on 75th Street, across from the school. Mrs. Smith was an organizer of the Cabin John Citizens Association and was an officer in the Glen Echo-Cabin John (later Clara Barton) PTA, the Potomac Valley Homemakers Club, and the Eastern Star. The Smiths raised four children in Cabin John, all of whom have died.

Mrs. Smith was born in Washington and attended public schools there. During World War II, she worked as a telephone operator at the David Taylor Model Basin and retired from there in 1957.

Gerry Shaw remembers that Mrs. Smith was the first cafeteria worker at the elementary school, and that she organized a girls' sewing group. "One thing she taught us was to hem tea towels."

Mr. Smith was affectionately called "Bicycle Smith" because he fixed (free of charge) bikes for

any kid in town, supplying parts from his accumulation of old bikes and sometimes giving a reconditioned bike to a kid who needed one. He died in 1977.

Since 1979, Mrs. Smith had lived at the Ravenwood Lutheran Home in Hagerstown.

**Susan Teagle**, 37 Ericsson Road, loves to read but can't get out very often. If you have books or magazines you're finished with, Mrs. Teagle would enjoy them. Also the Senior Group at the Community Center likes to have books or magazines.

The Senior Group meets every Wednesday at the Center (call 301 229-0010 for details). On February 18 and 24, **Barbara Martin** will be leading a program, "Keeping Your Memories," guiding the group in recalling stories of their lives. Anyone, regardless of age, is most welcome.

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*There will be no Neighborly News column in March because I'll be away. But please send any news items to me at 6431 79th Street, and they will appear in the April column. Let me know about new babies, new residents, Cabin Johners who are relocating, marriages, deaths, honors, new jobs, retirements, and anything else of importance about your family and present or past neighbors.*

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## **Next CJCA Meeting - 7:30 p.m. January 27, 1998 at the Clara Barton Center:**

**Agenda:** (1) Reports on (a) success of December Holiday Party, and (b) efforts to turn 9 Carver Road from empty lot to playground, (2) Discussion of CJCA position concerning whether development on lots less than or equal to 5000 sq. ft. is appropriate, particularly regarding proposed development at 6425 83rd Place, (3) Protection of the small chapel (Rixley Chapel) located south of MacArthur Blvd, opposite Persimmon Tree Rd, and (4) Updating of the Cabin John Directory.

### **Also at the January CJCA meeting**

Elaine Tama will report on her participation at a conference on citizen efforts to control urban sprawl. The conference concerned a successful campaign by citizens in Portland to counteract business interests in city planning.

## Looking Backward in Cabin John

Andrew E. Rice

### The Cabin John Post Office

Recently I was glancing at the January 1988 issue of *The Village News* to refresh my memory of what was happening in Cabin John twenty years ago. Among the articles in that issue I found a story by Barbara Goodno about the Cabin John Post Office.

Since much has happened to the Post Office in recent years — and since in mid-March Postmaster LaVerne Baptist is planning a “Grand Opening” tied to the initiation of 24-hour lobby access — I thought a quick look at the office’s past history and present situation might be timely.

Cabin John became a separate Post Office around 1870 with Joseph Bobinger (of Cabin John Bridge Hotel fame) as Postmaster. In 1890 another well-established Cabin John family became involved when Dennis Touhey was named Postmaster, a position he held for 35 years, with the Post Office located in his general store (where the shopping center now stands).

When he retired in 1925, the Cabin John Citizens Association took the occasion to appeal to the Post Office Department for better mail service. Mail was then being received once every morning by a rural route carrier out of the Bethesda Post Office, who then picked up outgoing mail and took it back to Bethesda, but only after completing his full route. That meant that anything deposited at the Cabin John Post Office after mid-morning, when the carrier departed, didn’t reach the Bethesda Post Office until late the following day — and then it still had to be sent on to the Washington City Post Office for processing.

The Citizens Association suggested a faster system. Apparently a regular mailman, working out of the Georgetown Post Office, delivered mail twice a day along Conduit Road (now MacArthur Boulevard) to within a mile of Cabin John. Why couldn’t he just continue on with mail for the Cabin John Post Office? asked the Association. He could then pick up the outgoing mail and get it into Washington the same day it was posted.

The records do not reveal what happened to this request. But today mail is dispatched from our Post Office three times a day, once at 6 a.m. (but this dispatch consists only of mail deposited in the mailbox outside the P.O. door), with two full dispatches at 1

p.m. and 5 p.m., headed for the Suburban General Mail Facility in Gaithersburg.

Our present Postmaster, LaVerne Baptist, a 31-year veteran of the Postal Service, took over the position in 1989. According to the 1988 *Village News* story, in that year there were about 630 daily deliveries in Cabin John (two carrier routes plus P.O. boxes). Today there are 704 carrier deliveries alone, plus 800 boxes in the P.O. lobby (although only about half of these are currently rented).

Route deliveries start by 11 a.m. and are normally finished by 3:30 p.m. And the carriers are grateful when each of us keeps our mailboxes clear of overgrown bushes or of cars parked in a way that makes access difficult.

The Post Office staff consists of 8 people, plus the Postmaster: 3 carriers (one full-time, 2 part-time) and 5 clerks (2 full-time and 3 part-time). There are also two relief clerks, each of whom comes in one day a week.

Asked when was the busiest season at the Post Office (other than the holiday season), Ms. Baptist said it was income tax time! Around Valentines Day, it is customary for classes of pre-schoolers to visit the P.O. to learn about mailing their cards. Three such class tours are already scheduled for this February.

Details of the March “Grand Opening” are promised for the next issue of *The Village News*.

Dr. Steven E. Clark  
Chiropractor



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The Clara Barton Senior Program meets on Wednesdays from 10: 00 am till 2: 00 pm. Activities include exercise, speakers, trips.

**Weight Room.** We have 2 new stationary bicycles. Our fees are very reasonable.

**The Teen Center** meets Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday for drop-in and educational tutoring from 3:00 - 6:00 pm.

Call 229-0010 for information on any of the programs.

**At Glen Echo Park...**

Paintings by Whitman High School junior, Ivone Kim will be exhibited at the Yellow Barn Gallery on Saturday and Sunday, January 24th and 25th:

**WHAT IS THE FUTURE FOR GLEN ECHO PARK?**

The National Park Service will hold a public meeting on Tuesday, February 3, 1998 at 7:00 pm right here in Cabin John at the Clara Barton Center. The meeting is to allow public comment on the future management of Glen Echo Park. According to Superintendent Audrey Calhoun, "we need to plan for the future and examine how to manage Glen Echo Park in a way to make it self-sustaining." Possibilities range from "No Action" (meaning fewer services) to management by a private entity.



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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

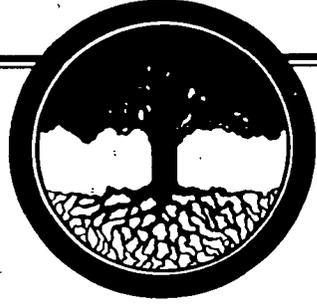
**Friday Morning:** 10:00 Community prayer and Bible study

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**CJCA Minutes**

CJCA November 25, 1997  
Meeting Minutes

1. Glen Echo Park - Audrey Calhoun, Superintendent of GW Memorial Parkway, described the process of evolution of the Glen Echo facility. The Park needs to find a way to become more self-supporting while at the same time protect the Potomac Palisades and existing historical structures. Diane Leatherman (229-7412) is the CJCA contact for this issue.

2. 9 Carver Road Property - Ed Clark (424-4420) presented his proposal for turning the empty lot at 9 Carver Road into a local playground appropriate for small children. The property connects Carver Road with 79th St. The proposal has support of the local neighborhood and CJCA voted to send a letter to Montgomery County requesting that they consider purchasing the property for park purposes.

3. Anti-mansionization Legislation - A work group has been formed by the County to develop a more balanced approach to addressing the "mansionization" problem. The first meeting was scheduled for December 16th. It is likely to be at least 4 months before any revised legislation is ready for formal review. CJCA Contact - Tina Rouse (229-6537)

4. Construction at 6425 83rd Place - Construction of a home had begun but was halted when the County became aware that the lot size was only 3800 sq ft approx., smaller than the minimum 5000 sq ft lot size required by the relevant Zoning Ordinance. A hearing is scheduled for February 25, 1998 at 9:30 a.m. at the Board of Appeals for

Montgomery County, 100 Maryland Ave, Rockville. Formal action by CJCA on this issue was postponed to the January meeting.

**Cabin John Holiday Party**

The Holiday Party held on December 14th was attended by over 160 adults and children and featured delicious food, live music, interesting crafts for the kids, intriguing story telling, inspirational singing, an entertaining visit by Santa, and a raffle of various items donated by the community merchants (who also contributed most of the food as well). The event was sponsored by both the Cabin John Citizens Association and the Clara Barton Community Center. The following people and businesses helped to make it one of the best holiday parties ever: Advertising Flyer - Reed Martin, Setup - Reed Martin, Liz Clark, Burr & Liz Gray, Bruce & Barb Wilmarth, Lisa Creadick, Lee and Michael Hunter, Members of Girl Scout Troop # 2 - Jillian Horwitz and Jessie Scott (who also helped throughout the party), Music - Vera Dolezal, Susan Roberts, Cyrus & Sheila Nemati, and Alexander Weglicht, Food - Bethesda Coop, Pizza Hut, Maryland Federal Bank, Glen

Echo Sub Shop, Marketplace on the Boulevard, and Cabin John residents (with assistance from Pepi Bolger), Popcorn - Bob Epstein, Crafts - Donna Roberts, Liz Clark, Linda Jones, Kathy Hunter, and members of Girl Scout Troop #2 - Kathryn Roberts and Leah Oleszewski, Story Telling - Peter Vogt, Caroling - Barbara Martin, Susan Roberts and musicians, Kids Gifts - Santa Claus (via Cabin John Fire Dept.), young kids toys selected by Diane Leatherman, and funded by Clara Barton Center for Children, older kids toys provided by the Cabin John Post Office, Raffle - run by Bruce Wilmarth, tickets sold by Catherine Wilmarth and Lindley Gray, items donated by Alpine Animal Hospital, Glen Echo Hardware, Inn at Glen Echo, Fire House Cleaners, Wild Bird Center, Cabin John Community Center, Elegant Needle, Maryland Federal Bank, and Eleanor Balaban, Christmas Tree - donated by Mark Willcher & Co, and selected and transported by Reed Martin, Videotaping - Philip Sipkov, Cleanup - Ruth and John Rabner, Ray and Kay Kemp, the Wilmarth family and others. (Special thanks goes to Andy Rice for renewing the Holiday Party tradition in 1996.

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### Interview with a man in a manhole

A few weeks ago *The Village News* dispatched a reporter to get the inside scoop on construction beneath MacArthur Blvd. near the Tomb of the Unknown Plumber at Glen Echo.

VN: Hey, down there

Man: Huh, what?

VN: Uh, what are you doing down there?

Man: Oh, uh we're reinforcing the manholes along here.

VN: Is that all, it looks like a lot more than that?

Man: Oh, well we're also relining the aqueduct too.

VN: How do you reline the aqueduct? Is it like relining the water mains?

Man: No, uh uh. We uh—you see that thing over there, it's pumping concrete in that hose and some guys are spraying the inside of the pipe.

VN: It must be hard working down there.

Man: Actually it's not too bad. It's a lot warmer down here than it is up there.

VN: But aren't they all bent over crawling through there?

Man: No, nuh uh. The aqueduct is ten feet in diameter. There's plenty room to move around. Sometimes we have to work in smaller pipes, but this is fairly comfortable.

VN: How thick is the coating you're putting on?

Man: Oh, it's uh, about two and a half or three inches thick.

VN: You putting steel in it too?

Man: Oh yeah. Lots of rebar.

VN: How far are you going?

Man: Oh, just from up there to down there a ways.

VN: Well, thanks. See you.

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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 February 14 for the issue mailing February 19.

People who make the Village News possible:  
Barbara and Ger Quinn, Barbara and Reed Martin  
Contributors: Burr Gray, Andy Rice, Lorraine Minor and Barbara Martin

#### **SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY**

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\$10/family, \$7/individual yearly membership.

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Check here if you would like a copy of the 1995 Cabin John Phone Directory.  
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## Some Environmental Tips from Blythe Leatherman



Have you ever seen or met an environmentalist? Tote bags, recycled paper and sprouts is what it takes, right? Wrong! You don't have to be another Rachel Carson to save the environment.

You there - The Chesapeake Bay needs YOUR help. Now, wouldn't it feel good to be an environmental addict without really doing any more than your share? A one-two-three step guide will give you everything you need to start cleaning up our world (or maybe a small portion of it).

1: (Carefully) take your bucket of Tide, Clorox, Downy Soft and those other Bay-toxicating cleaners and dump them into the nearest landfill.

2: Pick up some washing soda, Borax, and/or lemon juice on your next trip to the A.grocery, B.

health food store (pat yourself on the back if you chose B).

3: Please, please, tell all your friends and neighbors and relatives, etc., to follow these easy instructions and you will be doing the Bay a favor.

So, whether you are 4, 20, 35 or 106, please listen and respond by not using those expensive, self-centered 'leading brands' but one of the greatly helping products listed above. Pick something up NOW - that's for all the procrastinators out there - and YOU can help save the Chesapeake Bay.

A note from Blyth's mom — Do not throw-out your detergent, just use less than the box calls for, which is always more than needed—and mix it with washing soda or Borax, which are less harmful and definitely boost cleaning power. When choosing your washing detergent, choose one that is phosphate-free, uses fewer additives, such as dyes, and is as concentrated as possible. Then use less of the concentrate.

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## **Franklin Carpenter 1924-1997**

Another long-time resident of Cabin John passed away on December 24, 1997. Franklin E. Carpenter Sr., of 6527 78th Street, died of a brain hemorrhage at Suburban Hospital, after a 16 year battle with myofibrosis. He was diagnosed with the disease in 1981 and was given only 5 years to live.

However, with Jean, his loving wife of 45 years, and a strong will to overcome the odds, he managed to see his grandchildren grow to the ages of twenty, seventeen and fourteen and even helped raise his 2 1/2 year old great grandchild whom he referred to as "Poopsie."

Born in Hagerstown MD in 1924, his family moved to Washington D.C. where he and his two sisters were raised. He never completed his final year at McKinley High School, but instead, chose to work as a steamfitter helper for W.C. Comell, installing heating systems for hospitals. One year into this trade, he was inducted into the Army in March of '43. After 3 months of boot camp, he trained as a mechanic and spent most of the rest of his service career in the European Theater of Operation. He was discharged in October 1945 as Tech Sergeant - Chief Mechanic and landed a job as service manager for Williams and Baker Nash/Rambler on "M" street in Georgetown. During this time he was living in the 4500 block of Canal Road. The chimney of the residence in which he lived is still standing in the woods three quarters of a mile below Arizona Avenue, between Canal Road and the Potomac River. The house and property were owned by the Park Service and was torn down around 1950.

He met and married Jean Caniford, from Martinsburg, West Virginia, in October of 1952, and their only child, Frank Jr., was born in June of 1953 while they were living in Brookmont. After being moved out of a house at 6908 MacArthur Blvd. which was owned by the Park Service and eventually demolished, they decided to purchase a home in Cabin John in 1955.

One of Frank's first goals was to build a one-car garage so he could earn extra money to pay off the house. The garage was built and the house was paid off by 1957, which was also the time that he went to work for Highland Garage in Ashton, Maryland. His previous job from 1953 to 1957 was delivering baked goods for the Holmes bakery in the Veirs Mill Village area of Rockville. By 1960 he left the Highland Garage and went to work for the DC Water Department.

Having this area and the Potomac River in his blood, he and his wife purchased a summer cottage along the banks of the Seneca Creek in 1963.

However, all was lost in 1972 to flood waters after a week of torrential rains and heavy run-off from construction in the Upper Montgomery County region.

His love for the water was not lost however, and in 1974, he purchased his final home away from home in the Shoreham Beach community of Mayo, along the middle to upper Chesapeake Bay area. He had purchased a mahogany speedboat that was damaged in the Seneca flood and had completely restored it to original condition prior to this purchase, so the renovation project to this Shoreham Beach house was not an obstacle for him. And so three years later with a lot of hard work and support from all of his family members and members of the community, he and his family and friends could sit back to enjoy the life of the bay.

He became well known to all in the Shoreham Beach community as "The Fisherman", because of his willingness to share his catches with people in the community, and there were many large catches. He also became so fond of the wild ducks, that he fed them daily and even had cars stopping and looking in amazement when they would see ducks on his shoulders and in his arms, during his feeding times.

He had the ability and talent to do anything he chose, from building the one car garage in Cabin John, to designing and building a chipper and log splitter and even a rotisserie which he drove off of his homemade cement mixer. He built the rotisserie for the annual beef roast he and his wife had together with family and friends. He felt strongly about the union of family and friends, especially in these later years. Whether he was in Cabin John or Shoreham Beach he was always tinkering with lawnmowers, cars, or any other mechanical things you could think of for neighbors, friends, and family members. Frank was a caring and giving man who loved his family and friends and always tried to lend a helping hand in anyway he knew how. His wise thoughts and advice touched all who came in contact with him. Frank will be missed by all who knew him, but memories will keep him in our hearts always.

*Frank Carpenter Jr.*



*Let's Talk!*

**Eleanor Balaban**

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