April 2013

the Village News

Volume 46 Issue 7

Serving the people of Cabin John and beyond

Cabin John Creek Cleanup Set For April 20

by Burr Gray

The annual Cabin John Creek Cleanup will be held on Saturday, April 20 from 9:30 am til noon. We'll be meeting at the usual place—the playground/swing set next the Cabin John Bridge—to help with the spring tune-up of our beautiful creek.

Refreshments and gloves are provided. Wear clothes that you don't mind getting wet. Children ages 12 and under need to be accompanied by an adult. The cleanup will proceed unless it is really raining hard.

This event is being organized by the Friends of the Cabin John Creek (FOCJ) in coordination with CJCA. The point of contact for this event is Burr Gray—*burrgray@aol.com*, 703-607-2740 (w), 240-753-5918 (cell). —

Fun Times At Bingo Night

© Burr Gray

Above: A nice crowd turns out for the February 22 bingo event. Below: Among the players are Susan Roberts, left, and Susan Stewart. *See story on p. 4.*

© Burr Gray

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Spring Egg Hunt Returns March 24

The 15th Annual Cabin John Spring Egg Hunt returns on Sunday, March 24 at 4 pm. Adults and children should meet at the Cabin John playground (just below the tennis courts). See the flyer on page 5.

Bring a basket to collect eggs! Please RSVP to Ollie Soria at 301-229-4292 with the number of children you plan to bring with you. Plastic eggs with goodies will be provided. The event is co-sponsored with the Cabin John Citizens Association (CJCA). —

Neighborly News

by Barbara Martin

Jeanne and **Dennis Veraska's** new son was incorrectly identified in last month's column as Evan. He is **Kevin Robert Veraska**. The Robert is for Dennis' long-term mentor, former CJ resident Bob Burruss. Kevin was born in December and joins big brother **Jason**.

Another new CJ resident is **Elet Gabriel Krutoy**, born in January. Elet's parents are **Josh** and **Courtney Krutoy** who moved onto Tomlinson Avenue in October. Courtney is interested in joining a mommy-baby group, if there is one in town. Or maybe other new moms would be interested in forming one. Get in touch by using *courtellen@yahoo.com.*

Diane Lee of Riverside Drive is a grandmother--again. The new baby **Patrick Wyatt Lee** is named after his late grandfather, **Pat Lee** who died in 2011 and Diane's father, Wyatt. He is the fourth child born to **Joe Lee** and **Lara Wine**, who both grew up in Cabin John. Now living outside Philadelphia, Joe works in investing for an international bank and Lara is a pediatrician.

Longtime resident **Dorothy McCabe** passed away in January. Dorothy was 86.

Those of us who have used Bruce's Variety for decades were crushed when the Arlington Road store closed. But here's the good news: they are now located at 8011 Woodmont Avenue.

A neighborly suggestion: too often we see newspapers, delivered but not picked up, lying on lawns, just advertising that no one is home. Whether you are asked or not, if you see your neighbor's papers in front of their house, pick them up and move them to the porch or somewhere less visible.

Please call Barbara Martin at 301-229-3482 or email bbeckmartin@verizon.net with news of your family, former neighbors, or new residents. Also welcome would be suggestions of Cabin Johners to be interviewed for the Village News.

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Community Calendar

MAR

24 .....15th CJ Egg Hunt
CJ Playground
4 pm (see p. 1)

26 .....CJCA Meeting
Clara Barton Center
7:30 pm (see p. 4)

APR

20 ..... CJ Creek Cleanup
CJ Playground
9:30 am - noon (see p. 1)

Wild Tomato—Cabin John's Wildly Popular Eatery

by Ted Orme

Cabin Johners may have noticed how busy our little MacArthur Plaza has gotten over the past couple of years—particularly at lunch and dinner. A big reason is the latest tenant, the Wild Tomato, a family oriented neighborhood bistro that opened for business on January 14, 2011. It has been filled with loyal patrons ever since.

But this isn't a restaurant review. We'll leave that to pro critics and the many consumer reviews available online, most of which are very favorable—or, by now, you have probably already judged for yourself. Consider this a visit with Chef Damian Salvatore, 47, who, with his wife, Stephanie, own and operate the Wild Tomato. We think you will agree Damian's impressive chef's resume will never be mistaken for short order cooking.

Home Boy

The Salvatores live in Garrett Park, a close-knit older neighborhood much like Cabin John, with their three children Scott, 16; Kevin, 14; and Lily, 10. Stephanie grew up in New Jersey but Damian is a local boy, raised in Chevy Chase and schooled at BCC and the University of Maryland.

He credits his Swedish mother, Austa, with his love of food and cooking. "She was really a good cook," says Damian fondly. "She baked and cooked all day, every day, and made everything from scratch, even homemade chicken stock. She had a big influence on me."

© Ted Orme

Damian Salvatore in front of his restaurant.

Damian got his first restaurant job as a college kid washing dishes at the Dancing Crab on Wisconsin Ave., NW. It was a favorite hangout for Redskin

Continued on page 9

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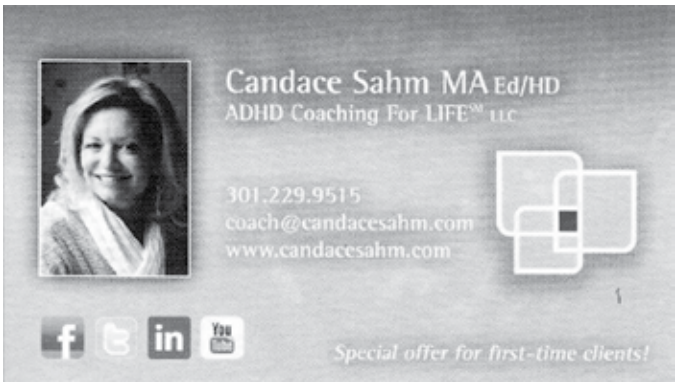

CJCA News

by Burr Gray

The next meeting of the CJCA will be Mar. 26 at 7:30 pm at the Clara Barton Community Center.

Next CJCA Meeting—1) presentation by the Friends of the Clara Barton Community Center (FCBCC) and discussion of possible donation, 2) brainstorming of CJCA summer event, and 3) benches at the bus stops.

Minutes from the Feb. 26, 2013 CJCA Meeting—No minutes as the meeting was cancelled.

Bingo Night—A most excellent evening was had at the annual Bingo Night in February sponsored by the Friends of the Clara Barton Community Center (FCBCC). The event once again showed that Cabin Johners and their friends are luckier than the average person because everyone was a winner. Just to recap briefly, there was a good-sized crowd that filled the Center. We had some guest callers—Matthew Velasco from the Gardens (Jackie Hoglund's nephew) and Arik Simpson, also a CJ resident—who were calling great numbers for a couple of games to give our main caller, CJ resident Norman Martin, a break. Since the County told us it was not appropriate to award wine as prizes (sheesh), we branched out with a variety of other items for the adults, including jewelry donated by Linda Morelli and items from the Bethesda Co-op. The kids' prizes as usual came from the Oriental Trading Co, that purveyor of dreams and the non-ordinary. Occasionally during the evening, a portion of the Oriental Trading Co stuff was passed out to those participants showing proper effort, which turned out to be pretty much everyone. You can see why not much cash profit is ever made at this event, since most of the income goes toward prizes. Ah, but there is great nontangible profit since everyone leaves the building at the end after the final game of Blackout Bingo and heads off into the night and their communities in great spirits. Folks assisting with the event included: FCBCC Board members—Rachelle Cherol, Lou Lombardo, Lori Rieckelman, Terry Fuller, Burr Gray, and Bruce Wilmarth. Non-board volunteers included Norman and Lisa Martin, Thomas Wilmarth (a most excellent writer of numbers on the blackboard), and all of the bingo players who helped at the end to set a record for takedown and cleanup. —

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Then and Now

by Judy Welles

Fun Times at the Cabin John Hotel

The Cabin John Bridge Hotel, which occupied the area just west of the Union Arch Bridge from the 1870s to 1930s, became known more for its gourmet restaurant, music and entertainment than as a place to stay. On the back of the hotel was a huge, octagonal orchestrion, imported from Germany with stained glass panels above bevel-edged windows. It was like a giant organ, imitating the sounds of many orchestral instruments. The music from the electric and air-powered band organ could be heard throughout the grounds and elsewhere down the road in Cabin John.

The hotel employed 17 bartenders and 40 waiters. The headwaiter, who spoke seven languages and remembered all the notable guests by name, trained his staff to impeccable service. The hotel became the gathering place of diplomats, cabinet members, congressmen and social leaders. Speaker Joe Cannon held all of his social functions there. Presidents Theodore Roosevelt, William Howard Taft, and Woodrow Wilson were among those who frequented the hotel for lunch.

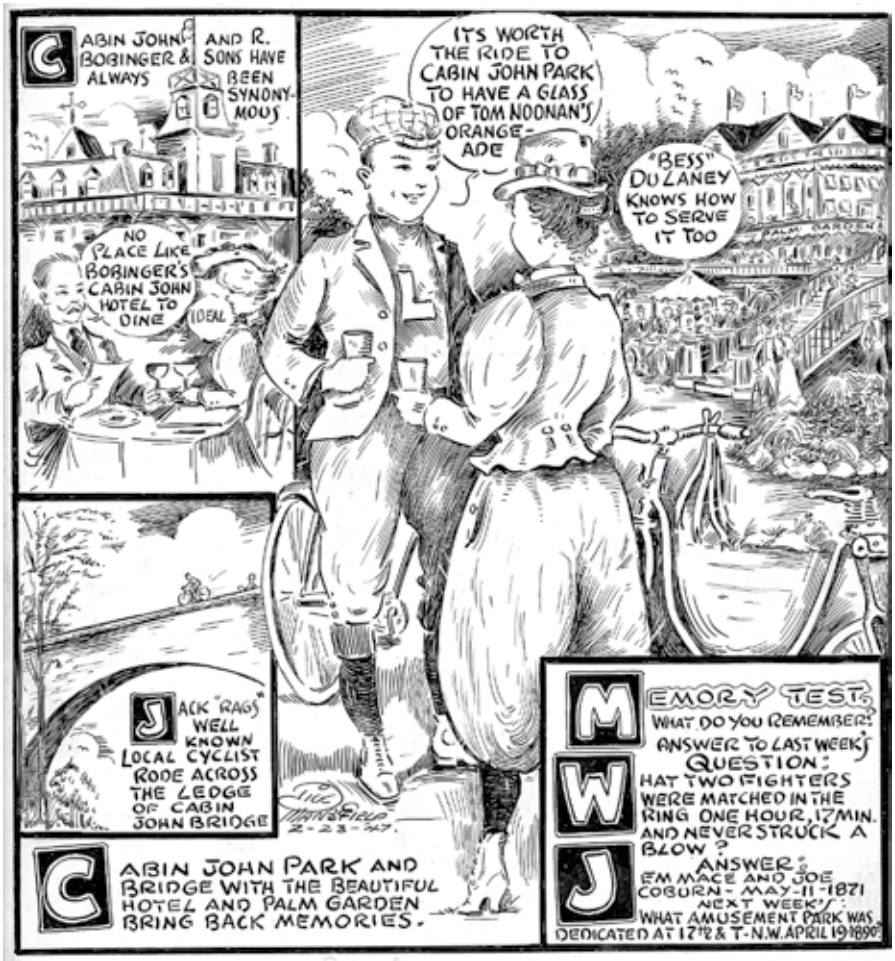
A bill for a dinner for 24 people in 1903 for such delicacies as Canape a la Russe, Oyster Cocktail, Potted Grouse in champagne sauerkraut, Potomac Bass a la Golbert, Sweetbread a la Eugene, and Asparagus Polonaise, came to a total of $110.85.

The Bobingers baked their own breads, operated their own laundry, and offered fine wines from their well-stocked cellar. In 1899, people were also able to telephone the hotel before they left town, calling 1002, and the food would be ready when they arrived. People could also carry out their dinner, on the china, as this was before paper plates and perhaps why occasionally some china and hollowware can be found on eBay!

The basement held the rathskeller, with slot machines, and a steady stream of customers came by horse, wagon, bicycle and foot, even before the trolley cars in 1896. The rathskeller had a rough reputation while, at the same time, the main restaurant served very high-class clientele, an interesting contrast.

There was even a scenic railway (early wooden roller coaster), a Denzel carousel, and a music theater. The *Washington Post* reported on July 23, 1900, "The handsome little summer theater erected on the bank of the Potomac at Cabin John Bridge was formally dedicated last night with a vaudeville programme which compared favorably with the winter offerings in local vaudeville houses. The new theater, christened the Palm Garden because of the scheme of interior decorations resembling a conservatory, has a seating capacity of about 1,200, and it was almost filled last night with an audience anxious to be amused."

The building was located in the rear of the hotel, across from the scenic railway, and overlooked the Potomac River.



A 1947 cartoon by Richard Mansfield nostalgically looks back at the Cabin John Bridge Hotel.

© The Washington Post

"The new theater is a very cozy and artistic affair," another *Washington Post* article observed. "The main entrance is brilliantly illuminated with electric lights and is decorated prettily with palms. Inside, the walls are painted in imitation of a conservatory, painted palms blending nicely with real palms ranged along the walls. The proscenium arch is broad and graceful…There is no balcony, but the main auditorium will comfortably hold over 1,200 people."

The plan was to have Saturday evening vaudeville and daily matinees for women and children at 4 pm. However, managers of the theater appeared in court two months after the opening on charges they had violated the Sabbath by giving vaudeville matinees on Sunday. After that, mentions of the theater appeared in news reports for several years and then suddenly stopped.

William and his wife Mary ran the hotel until 1914 when he leased it to others to operate. He also leased some of the property to a large amusement company. In 1920, an amusement park opened on the grounds with a carousel, coaster rides, picnic area, dancing pavilion, and other attractions.

William was one of the first in the area to show motion pictures at his small amusement park, but business started to decline. The restrictions imposed by local prohibition laws and later by enforcement of Blue Laws cut deeply into the business. Modern attractions such as country clubs and a new amusement park with rides at Glen Echo began to draw customers away.

William died in 1926, and that year his widow padlocked the building, with everything in it including a hotel register with the signatures of ambassadors, politicians and presidents. She also set up a snack stand at the end of the trolley line on the opposite side of the Union Arch Bridge. Her sons, William and Harry Bobinger, began a taxi service to take people from the trolley to their homes across the bridge in Cabin John. They charged a quarter to Persimmon Tree Road.

On April 4, 1931, the uninsured hotel burned to the ground, still full of its furniture and antiques, silver, china, and glass. Former Cabin John resident Jerry Shaw was 11 years old when her mother woke her in the middle of the night to see the fire from the window. "The flames were wild-looking, even though we were blocks away. It had been in terrible shape for years and much of it had collapsed," she recalled years later.

Gone but not forgotten, the Cabin John Hotel had fame that lived on past World War II. In 1947, Washington Post cartoonist Richard Mansfield depicted the hotel, its dining and Palm Garden in a cartoon labeled "Those Were the Happy Days."

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Carbon Filters Fighting Sewer Smell

We got news recently from the DC Water and Sewer Authority (DC WASA) that the carbon filters at Old Anglers and Fletcher's Boathouse are now "running under continuous operational demonstration," which means they should be eliminating those smelly odors from the Potomac Interceptor underground sanitary sewer that runs alongside the Canal. The sewer runs from Virginia up around Dulles Airport, crosses under the Potomac, and then runs along the Maryland side all the way down to the Blue Plains treatment facility. The two other final locations with carbon filters (Beltway and Little Falls Dam) are supposed to kick in during the March/April timeframe.

This progress/culmination in working to eliminate the sewer odors so that people can better enjoy the canal is the result of a long (12-15 years) sustained effort by the Potomac Conservancy (who filed a law suit in the 90's), CJCA, and other civic associations. CJ resident Mac Thornton, with help from other Cabin Johners, led the charge. Many thanks, Mac.

—Burr Gray, CJCA - President

Holy Week & Easter at
REDEEMER

+ **Palm Sunday** — March 24
Blessing of Palms, Procession & Holy Eucharist 8:00 a.m.
Blessing of Palms, Procession & Choral Eucharist 10:30 a.m.

+ **Maundy Thursday** — March 28
Simple Supper 6:00 p.m.
Choral Eucharist with Washing of Feet 7:30 p.m.

+ **Good Friday** — March 29
Stations of the Cross 12:00 noon
The Solemn Liturgy 7:30 p.m.

+ **Easter Eve** — March 30
The Great Vigil of Easter 8:30 p.m.

+ **Easter Sunday** — March 31
The Holy Eucharist 8:00 a.m.
Festal Eucharist of the Resurrection 10:30 a.m.
Hot Cross Buns & Easter Egg Hunt 12:00 noon

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SALVATORE
cont. from page 3

greats Sonny Jergensen and Sam Huff, who came over regularly after doing their game day radio broadcast from the station right behind the restaurant. "It was like a rock show every weekend. I loved it and stuck with the job," he recalls with a big grin.

It didn't take long for Damian to graduate from chief dish and bottle washer to running the Dancing Crab kitchen. And it was a great place to break into the business. Dancing Crab owner Tony Cibel was patriarch of the Oceanside Management Family of restaurants, which also include Nick's Riverside Grille, Kaufmanns Tavern, Cabanas, The Rockfish and Tony and Joe's Seafood Place at Washington Harbor in Georgetown.

Impressed with this hard working kid, Cibel asked Damian to run the kitchen at Tony and Joe's. As fate would have it, Stephanie was a server and, after a couple of years of courting, became Mrs. Salvatore.

From Good to Great

After almost 10 years at Tony and Joe's and Cibel's Pasta Place in Washington Harbor, Damian decided to make a good chef's resume better and he enrolled in L'Academie de Cuisine in Bethesda. The culinary school was founded in 1976 by famed French chef Francois Dionot, whose passion was to bring great food and superior cooking to American kitchens. Damian wanted to do the same.

Stephanie, who had moved up to general manager at Tony & Joe's, was the breadwinner while Damian was in culinary school. Upon graduation, however, and with this highly respected credential in fine food, Damian quickly found his way to the kitchens of another famous French chef, the late Jean-Louis Palladin, who operated two restaurants under his name at the Watergate Hotel in Washington, D.C.

From there Damian moved on to the acclaimed Kinkead's, An American Brasserie, a two-story, 220-seat restaurant just four blocks from The White House on Pennsylvania Avenue, NW.

He also ran the kitchens at Georgetown Club and Tahoga in Georgetown.

White Table Cloth Owners

By now son Scott was born and Damian and Stephanie had the itch to open a restaurant of their own—"a white tablecloth establishment like Kinkaid's and Jean-Louis with more formal service and more modern, contemporary cuisine," he explains.

They got that opportunity in 1998 when former Redskin George Stark's Head Hog Barbeque closed and the Salvatores took over the space at 7003 Wisconsin Ave. in the heart of Bethesda.

"We renovated with a loan from my uncle and the gift money from our wedding," Stephanie adds. "We opened the doors with only $43 left in the bank. We took a deep breath and jumped. Thankfully it worked out."

Persimmon quickly became one of the Bethesda area's most popular and highly acclaimed restaurants. It has been voted "Best Overall Restaurant" three times by *Bethesda Magazine*'s readers in the "Best of Bethesda" readers' poll. Last year the Salvatores signed a new lease and, prompted by the runaway success of the Wild Tomato, renovated Persimmon and revamped the menu to include more "bistro" type fare at lower prices.

A Neighborly Place

"We were looking for a spot where we could open a regular place you could come to and not spend a fortune; where you could get good food, have a beer and not have it bust the bank," says Damian. "Stephanie's sister, Juliet Rodman, lives in Cabin John and she made us aware of the neighborhood. When this space became available we loved it and took it."

And Cabin John is obviously glad they did, as the frequent lines to be seated testify. The Wild Tomato does not take reservations. So, with cozy seating for 45 plus a 6-seat bar and 16 patio-style seats outside, weather permitting, waits are the norm at meal times.

Continued on page 13

Nature's Rarities Found Around the World and in Cabin John

by Eric Dinerstein

Cabin John has long attracted its share of artists-in-residence. Most work long hours indoors at their craft, so encountering such talented neighbors outdoors is often a matter of coincidence.

Recently, I was looking for an illustrator for a book I wrote entitled *The Kingdom of Rarities*, a popular science and adventure travel book about rare wildlife. By luck, I ran into a local artist, Trudy Nicholson, and her husband, Mike, who have lived in our neighborhood for the past 45 years. Like many Cabin John friendships and collaborations, we owe its instigation to our dogs; they greeted one another during a walk along the Cabin John Creek trail and we followed suit.

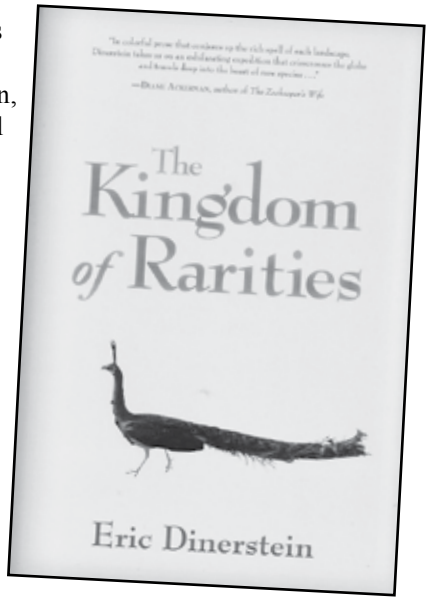
© Trudy Nicholson

Greater One-Horned Rhino

A central theme of my book (on sale over the internet) is the commonness of rarity in nature, even if few people and even many scientists remain unaware that most species on Earth are rare. Sweep a tropical rainforest with a butterfly net or census wildflowers along Cabin John Creek and you find the same result: a few superabundant species and then a lengthy list of species represented by just a few individuals. In fact, more than 90% of the individual organisms on Earth represent only about 25% of all species—nature's rats, robins, and roaches. The remaining 75% are drawn from the ranks of the rare, the subject of my book.

We can think of rare species as those that have a very narrow range, like some birds of paradise in New Guinea, or that occur at very low densities, like a tiger, jaguar, or mountain lion. In the book, I explore different forms of rarity: species that have always been rare and the reasons for it, and species once common but made rare by human activities.

Many are what biologists call "quest species"—species that haunt your existence and that you must see before you die. Trudy's drawings in the book illustrate such quest rarities: the maned wolves and giant anteaters from Brazil; jaguars and Andean-cock-of-the-rock from Peru; golden-mantled tree kangaroos from New Guinea; black-necked cranes and golden langur monkeys from Bhutan; honeycreepers from Hawaii. The book, then, is a zoological travelogue written in a popular style for the non-scientist to explain rarity in simple terms and what we need to do save such species before they become extinct.



Our collaboration continues; this issue inaugurates a new short feature on the wild nature of Cabin John that we can see over the year—rare and common—brought to life by Trudy's illustrations. —

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6409 83rd Pl	$825,000	4	2	1	3	3	0
6432 83rd Pl	$879,000	4	3	1	3	1	2
6509 Seven Locks Rd	$939,500	4	3	0	3	1	0
7914 Long Ridge Ct	$1,190,000	5	3	1	3	2	2
6506 79th Pl	$1,389,000	6	5	1	3	2	2
6510 75th Pl	$1,490,000	5	4	1	3	1	3
UNDER CONTRACT:							
13 McKay Cir	$389,000	2	1	0	1	0	0
7 Carver Rd	$524,999	4	2	1	2	0	0
6452 Wishbone Ter	$699,000	3	3	1	3	2	2
6483 Wishbone Ter	$699,000	4	3	1	3	1	2
6532 79th St	$719,000	3	3	0	3	1	0
6529 79th Pl	$1,275,000	6	4	1	4	2	2
SOLD:							
9 Froude Cir	$415,000	1	1	0	1	1	0

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SALVATORE
cont. from page 9

The simple decor consists of bright and friendly oversized framed portraits of various veggies by local artist John Hallstead. The uncomplicated menu is designed to please young and old. Burgers, mac & cheese, a wicked plate piled high with nachos and seven kinds of pizza will please most kids—and adults. But there's also a nice selection of starters, salads, stuffed sandwiches ("We sell a ton of fish tacos," Damian notes) and "Big Plates" that reflect his training and skill.

Damian is quick to credit the restaurant's success to his staff. "Our General Manager Megan Darnall has done a phenomenal job overseeing the operation. Our cooks, bartenders, servers and Front of House Managers Matt and Tammy, formerly of Addie's, are awesome. The whole concept doesn't work if you don't have the right kind of people," he adds. "We don't have uniforms here. Our only uniform is a black apron. We want people to be comfortable. We don't want to be stuffy. You can tell by the way we present the product."

The "product" has drawn "some real regular people here five nights a week," according to Damian. "We have made many new friends. Some come from outside but most right from the neighborhood, which was really what we looking for. We were not looking for a high profile place. We wanted to serve the Cabin John community."

And so he has. —❧

Job Openings at Clara Barton Center

The Clara Barton Community Center is looking to fill two positions of Clerical Assistant. The hours for each slot would be Mondays and Wednesdays from 4-9 pm and Tuesdays 4-8 pm.

Applicants must be 21 and older. The wage is $11.14/hr. For more information, please contact the Center Director Modestine Snead - Department of Recreation, Clara Barton Neighborhood Recreation Center, 7425 MacArthur Boulevard, Cabin John, Maryland 20818 - 240-777-4910 (work) —❧

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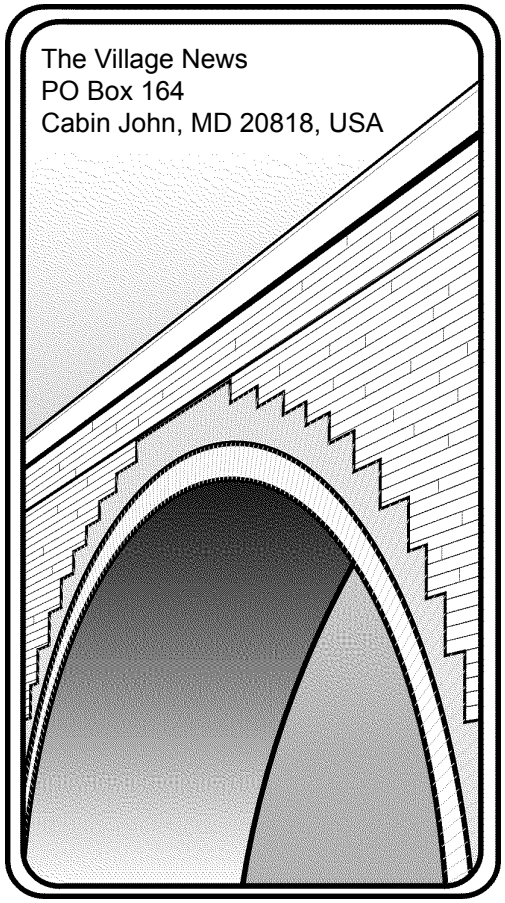

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PERSONAL ASSISTANT: Mother experienced in child and elder care, gardening, house cleaning, house painting, etc. Has car. Resume, references available. Kendra Taylor, 301-606-3203, *kmayfloyd@gmail.com*.

CLEANING CREW. The wonderful lady who cleans for me and quite a few CJ neighbors has some openings. She comes with a crew of three young women and they are fast, thorough, and totally honest. They bring their own equipment and supplies. She is Christina Hernandez, 240-338-1600 Barbara Martin 301-229-3482.

FULL SERVICE PET CARE. Your pet deserves some fun: don't board your pet; that's boring! Offering daily walks, bathing, overnight stays at my home or yours - fenced-in yard means lots of playtime. I'll pick-up and return your pet if you desire. Your pet will thank you! Many neighborhood references available. Lisa Charles 301-326-3260.

LANDELL'S BARBERSHOP HAS MOVED! We have completed our move to 10030 Falls Road in Potomac and I want to thank Cabin John for the support they showed my Barbershop. There are no words to express how much appreciation we feel for those that supported us and the whole Cabin John community. Our new location is a yellow commercial house with parking and the entrance in the rear. We now open at 10 am instead of 9 am. Call 240-481-5399 for appointments with me (Landell), Joseph, Kelvyn or Ingrid. We accept all major Credit Cards. Landell Hernandez, *www.landellh.com*.

DEFINE YOURSELF: Join the ongoing strength and fitness class at Concord St. Andrews! Space is still available. For more information contact *carolynevans728@gmail.com.*

COMPUTER SERVICES—DC/PC Computer Support offers friendly, personalized computer services to local residents. Services include maintenance, repairs, upgrades, tune-ups, new pc setups, virus and spyware removal, networking and training. Appointments are available mornings, afternoons and evenings. Telephone and e-mail support is also available. To schedule an appointment or learn more about our services email *support@dc-pc.com* or call Jim at 202-841-0873.

To place an ad in the Village News classifieds, send us your ad and payment of $0.25 per word by the deadline. If you have questions, call Lorraine Minor at (301) 229-3515.

THE VILLAGE NEWS is published monthly except in July and December and is sent free to all 800+ homes in Cabin John. Others may subscribe for $10 per year. Send news, ads, letters, and subscriptions to: The Village News PO Box 164 Cabin John, MD 20818 [or *cjvillagenews@hotmail.com*]

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Volunteers who make the *Village News* possible: Mike Miller and Tim Weedlun–editors, Lorraine Minor–business manager.

Regular Contributors: Burr Gray, Judy Welles, Barbara Martin.

Ads: 301-229-3515 or *flminor@patriot.net* or mail to *Village News* at above address

Neighborly News: 301-229-3482 or *bbeckmartin@verizon.net*

Features/News: 301-320-1164 or *cjvillagenews@hotmail.com*