The Village News

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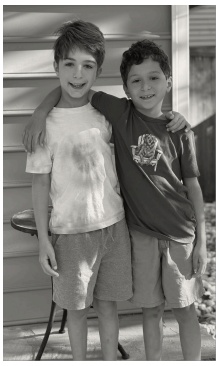
September 2025 | VOLUME 59 | ISSUE 08

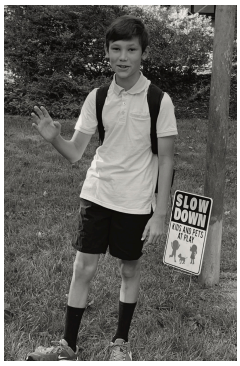
CABIN JOHN GOES BACK TO SCHOOL!



The crew at Cypress Grove Lane gets ready for a year at Pyle Middle School! L to R: Max Shih (6th), Altan Gulluoglu (8th), Saagar Pradhan (6th), Aras Gulluoglu (6th), Cristiano Andrade (8th), Alejandro Andrade (6th), Marcelo Andrade (7th).







L to R: Holly Ryan of Tomlinson Court will be a cardinal at Clara Barton Center for Children this year. Twins Leo and Jojo Guida are starting 4th grade this year while Nolan Thomasell starts his last year at Bannockburn.

We'll feature more back-to-school pics next issue -- send pics and short description to vneditorial@gmail.com

WINTER BIRDS WITH CLIVE HARRIS

by Clive Harris and Scott Lewis

The September CJCA meeting will feature a special presentation by **Clive Harris**, who will explore the fascinating variety of birds we can expect to see in the coming months. Attend the talk in person at the Clara Barton Neighborhood Recreation Center on **Wednesday, September 24 at 7:30 pm** or join online -- now using Zoom! Join at zoom.us. Click Meet and choose "join a meeting" then enter Meeting ID: 694 229 4360; Passcode: 672906.

See BIRDS next page

CABIN JOHNER COMPETES IN JAPAN

by Hugh Biggar

Finn Tomlinson of Tomlinson Terrace took his jumping skills to Japan this summer. The U.S. jump rope team collectively earned 29 medals in World Championships, coming in fifth in terms of medals earned, out of about 30 countries competing. Finn, along with three teammates, earned a third-place medal in a single rope team freestyle event in the International Open Tournament after qualifying in February.

The competition was held in Kawasaki, Japan July 26-August 3, and was organized by the International Jump Rope Union.

The U.S. team faced teams from Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, Japan, India, Belgium, France, Sweden, Denmark, South Africa, China, Spain, Kenya and elsewhere. Japan and Hong Kong were among the top competitors.

"I was in 'four style' with three of my friends and we had a clean, normal-looking routine, which is what we wanted, because we hit a lot of misses in the beginning of the practice season," Finn said. "I loved watching the Japanese and Chinese teams compete because you can see they have such a high work ethic and they put a lot of time and practice into their events," Finn added.



"The culture of jump rope is so chill and everybody is so nice. That's why I do it. And in Kawasaki, I traded my U.S. team jersey with an

See JUMPING on pg. 3

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

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Neighborly News

Send your news -- births, events, milestones, trips, new neighbors, etc. to vneditorial@gmail.com

Your Old Phone Can Be A Lifeline

Have an old smartphone (one that's able to connect to Wi-Fi) that you are no longer using? You may be able to put it to good use.

Thea Bryan of Tomlinson Avenue is a social worker who works with the homeless in Prince William County. She is looking for old phones that they can give to their clients. "One of the biggest issues we run into is clients not having access to a phone, making it difficult to reach them for services such as medical and mental health appointments, job searches and safety needs," says Thea.

Lifeline, a program administered jointly by the Federal Communications Commission and state agencies, no longer provides phones, according to Thea, but they do provide SIM cards. There also are free apps like TextNow and Google Voice that work with Wi-Fi.

Please contact Thea at thea.bryan@gmail.com or (828) 423-2679 to arrange for pickup. She is happy to provide credentials and share more about the work she does.

BIRDS *Continued from pg. 1*

Some of these species have traveled incredible distances on their seasonal migrations, while others are hardy locals that brighten our landscapes throughout the colder season. To bring their stories to life, Clive will share a selection of his own photographs, capturing both the beauty and the unique behaviors of these winter birds.

Whether you're an avid birder or simply curious about the natural world around you, this talk promises to be both informative and inspiring. *~vn*

Photos by Clive Harris



Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, a woodpecker that is a winter visitor to our area.



Yellow-rumped Warbler.



JUMPING *Continued from pg. 1*

athlete from Hong Kong for his shirt, and I got keychains and I made new friends. It's not a cutthroat atmosphere and we can both learn from each other."

Finn, a junior at McLean School, moved to Cabin John at age 9 and while he also liked basketball, jump roping captured his interest because it required the most creativity, discipline and teamwork. It also requires—and develops—a high level of fitness.

Whereas Worlds are held every two years, the national competition is held annually. This year it was held in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, in June. Many U.S. team players hope the World Championships will raise the profile of jump roping and help make it an Olympic event. "It's a great sport because you never stop learning," Finn said. *~vn*



This summer Finn Tomlinson's team competed in the single jump rope freestyle competition.



Medalists on the podium at the World Jump Rope Championships in Japan.

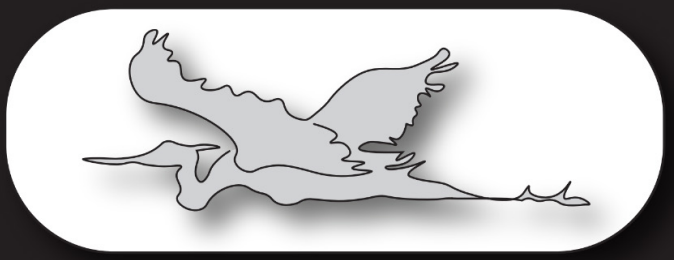
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-Muhammad Ali

Volunteers are the sole source of labor on Minnie's Island.
Our community has provided many helping hands, and the results are stunning.

Paddle out and see!

minniesisland.org

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DID YOU KNOW?

- Homeowners can now deduct up to $40,000 in State and Local Taxes (SALT) (previously $10,000). This applies to property taxes on your primary residence, a vacation home, and undeveloped land.
- In addition, the existing $750,000 mortgage interest deduction limit is now permanent, allowing homeowners to deduct interest paid on the first $750,000 of their mortgage debt. Higher limits ($1 million) remain in place for mortgages that closed before December 14, 2017.

"Living in Cabin John for over 30 years I'm invested in the success of selling homes here."

Rachelle Cherol
AT LONG & FOSTER REAL ESTATE



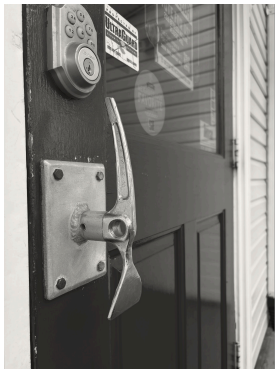
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Jewels of Cabin John

by Sarah Craven

WORK, SWEAT, AND COMMUNITY -- LEVEL GYM



The distinctive door handle at Level Fitness is one of the club's unique features.

If you've ever pushed open the front door at Level Gym, you've probably noticed the doorknob: an ice axe, a playful reminder of the building's former life as an outdoor adventure store. That small detail captures what makes Level so distinctive—it's not a generic fitness center, but a place shaped by history, community, and character.

Since 2002, Level has been where Cabin John comes to move, sweat, and connect. Its setting—two houses and a barn—gives it a home-like feel that regulars know well. Inside, you'll find neighbors in Kevin Scanlon's always-full foam-rolling class, riding a Peloton, stretching in the Pilates barn, or ending the day with Nooshen Amiri's candle-lit yoga.

What really defines Level, though, is its people. Trainers and instructors like Kevin, Rami, Mariela, Mary-Duke, Nicole, Andrea, Magda, Janet, Gina, Melissa, Niermala, Susan, and William aren't just professionals—they're familiar faces and friends who know how to push us, encourage us, and keep us coming back. For many of us, they've become an indispensable part of the rhythm of our daily life.

Level has also played an important role for Cabin John's younger generation. Many of our teenagers have gotten their first jobs behind the front desk, learning the value of showing up on time, greeting members with confidence, and learning how to fold towels (I can say from personal experience as the mom of two current and former Level staff that this is a great skill!). It's the kind of low-profile but formative first job experience that helps shape responsible adults.



But for all it contributes to the health and wellbeing of our community, Level's future is far from certain. The property has been on the market for several years and has drawn interest from developers who see potential for residential use. Most recently, steps have been taken toward purchasing the site with plans to redevelop it into townhomes, despite its current commercial zoning. The current prospective buyer held an informal meeting with the community on May 29th (see the story in the June ***VN***), but has not yet held an official public meeting regarding the proposal.

While the Cabin John community hasn't yet had a formal chance to share its perspective, we hope there will be time to show what Level truly means to us. Yes, it's a gym, but it's also a gathering place that nurtures health, friendship, and the rhythm of daily life in Cabin John.

Losing Level would mean more than losing a gym—it would mean letting go of a wellness hub and a circle of health and healing practitioners who have become part of our lives. Keeping its doors open would be a gift to us all. Save Level Gym – a true Cabin John jewel. *~VN*

Know of another "Jewel of Cabin John" –plant, animal, human or mineral– that might be featured in a future column? Send an email to lovecraven@gmail.com sharing your discovery.

Clara Barton Neighborhood Recreation Center

For Youth

ART EXPRESSIONS (FREE!)
- Tuesdays 5:00pm-6:00pm
- Sept 23 - Nov 18
- Activity **#R03026-115**

MAGIC THE GATHERING CLUB (FREE!)
- Thursdays 5:00pm-6:00pm
- Sept 18 - Dec 11
- Activity **#R03026-116**

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- Oct 2, Oct 20, Nov 3, Jan 26, Feb 17, Mar 20, May 27
- Activity **#R03045**

For Ages 55+

TAI CHI Beginners 2 (FREE!)
2nd portion of CMC 37 form
- Wednesdays 11:30am-12:30pm
- Oct 22 – Nov 19
- Activity **#R03027-178**

TAI CHI Beginners 3 (FREE!)
3rd portion of CMC 37 form
- Mondays 10am-11am
- Oct 20 – Nov 17
- Activity **#R03027-179**

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Ad funded by Friends of Clara Barton Community Center, www.FriendsCBCC.org

View From Minnie's Island

by Joe Saliunas

LATE SUMMER MEANS PAW-PAWS!

Joe Saliunas is certified as a Maryland Master Naturalist and is Vice-Chair of Minnie's Island Community Conservancy.

I remember the chorus to a traditional song from my youth:

Picking up paw-paws, put em in your pocket (x3)
Way down yonder in the paw-paw patch

You can pick up fruits from our local paw-paw patches that are found along the canal and river, but they are usually too soft to put in your pocket.

The paw-paw (***Asimina triloba***) produces the largest edible fruit of any native plant in North America. Trees are most often found growing in the understory (in the shade of larger canopy trees) along floodplains, but they fruit best in full sun. Trees grow up to 35 feet in height and can have trunks up to 12 inches in diameter. The leaves can be up to 12 inches long. Paw-paws can be one of the most common understory trees, as their bark, leaves, and twigs have chemicals that are distasteful to deer and other grazers. An exception is that they are the host plant for zebra swallowtail caterpillars.

I am seeing significant quantities of paw-paw fruit on trees this year. Two years ago, I saw just a handful of fruits on Minnie's Island. Last year, I saw only two small fruits. This year I have seen fruit on many trees and all signs point to a good harvest. I expect that this year's production is due to good conditions during pollination in April and a wet June and July. Pollination is not easy for paw-paws, as trees require pollen from a genetically distinct tree in order to produce fruit. This cross-pollination is often difficult since many paw-paw patches contain just one individual plant that has runners creating cloned copies of the individual. Most fruits in our area mature from late August through September.

I encourage you to take a walk along the river and pick up some paw-paw fruits. Individuals are allowed to harvest paw-paw fruits from C&O Canal National Historic Park for personal consumption. According to the Superintendent's Compendium at https://www.nps.gov/choh/learn/management/superintendent-s-compendium.htm there is a daily limit of one-half gallon of fruit per person. I most often find them on the ground, and you need to be quick to pick them up before the insects and animals get to them. Not all trees have fruit, and I find the best way of locating them is from their musty, sweet smell. ~VN





Paw-paw flowers in April (above), transition to a mild, custardy fruit by August (right).

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Poems For Passersby

Presented by Meredith Griggs

And Now It's September,
and the garden diminishes:
cucumber leaves rumpled
and rusty, zucchini felled by borers,
tomatoes sparse
on the vines. But out in the perennial
beds, there's one last
blast of color: ignitions of goldenrod, flamboyant
asters, spiraling mums, all those flashy spikes waving
in the wind, conducting summer's final notes.
The ornamental grasses have gone to seed, haloed
in the last light. Nights grow chilly, but the days
are still warm; I wear the sun like a shawl on my neck
and arms. Hundreds of blackbirds ribbon in, settle
in the trees, so many black leaves, then, just as suddenly,
they're gone. This is autumn's great Departure Gate,
and everyone, boarding passes in hand, waits
patiently in a long, long line.

---- Barbara Crooker



Ute Moeller crosses 78th Street with Momo to read a September poem, which was published by the Poetry Foundation online.

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6629 81st Street
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6 BR, 6 BA, 3,794 sq. ft.
3,794 sq. ft.

7509 Arden Road
List Price $999,000
3 BR, 2 BA, 0 GAR
1,478 sq. ft.

8033 Cypress Grove Lane
List Price $1,389,000
5 BR, 3/1 BA, 2 GAR
2,922 sq. ft.

ACTIVE UNDER CONTRACT

6533 79th Place
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6410 Wishbone Terrace
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1,855 sq. ft.

PENDING

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6487 Wishbone Terrace
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Our Town

by Annemarie Economou Gormley

THE ACCIDENTAL HOBBYIST

The first time I spotted Laura, she was measuring and cutting wood on her driveway. She enthusiastically waved and smiled broadly. Bill and I began routinely stopping by on our walks to see what she was working on, and to get a dose of her contagious exuberance.

Over the course of several months we witnessed her fabricating a coffee table with an intricate design on top. The inlaid wood of various hues created a flower and a gorgeous geometric design. This irregularly shaped hexagonal coffee table was designed to fit near her modular sofas so that each family member could reach their dinner plate with ease when they gathered for dinner around the television. Although it was created with functionality in mind, its beauty was equally remarkable. Not a nail or screw was used in the construction. It was a work of art.

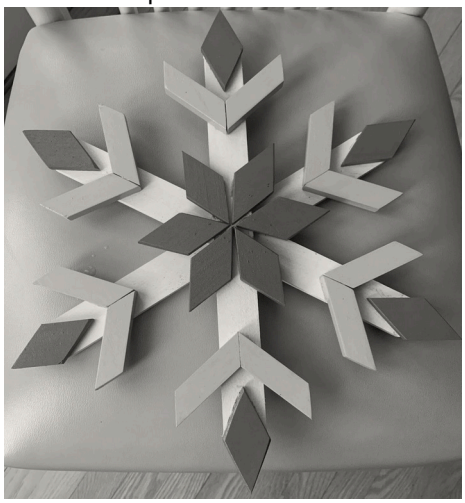


Breathtaking inlaid coffee table designed to accommodate the couches.

Laura Addiego grew up in Uruguay. In 2018, with her husband and two children, Laura moved from Chevy Chase to Long Ridge Court in Cabin John. During working hours, Laura is a civil engineer who loves the computer. She loves developing applications and troubleshooting technical issues. She is a gainfully employed IT person.

"What motivates me is computers. I love computers. I'll tell Pablo (her husband) I need five minutes more, but I end up working five hours more on the computer. When I am coding, I am sitting down. My work is very static. I need something to get me out of the house."

To get exercise, Laura walks everyday and runs on the treadmill after work. Laura also mows the lawn and does all the yard work, not because she enjoys it, but because it gets her out of the house and gives her a sense of satisfaction from seeing her yard meticulously mowed with straight lines. During Covid, in 2020, she removed more than 400 bamboo plants, one by one, including the roots, from her backyard. It was her outside endeavor to break up her time on the computer.



Decorative seasonal wall hanging.

Outside of her passion for computers, Laura loves photography. "I have a lot of equipment. I have tripods, monopods, umbrellas, and other equipment in a cardboard box in the basement. During Covid, I decided to organize the storage area. I saw the cardboard box and soon I wanted to build a tall, skinny, wooden box to hold my photography supplies."

See HOBBY on pg. 11

"Neighborhoods along the canal are my specialty - I live there and love it!"



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CJ DIRECTORY - LAST CHANCE

by Marcy Harrison

CJCA will publish an updated Neighborhood Directory this fall. If you have not yet added or updated your household contact information, please do so by September 30 at https://cabinjohn.org/index.php/cabin-john-directory/.

If you had a listing in the 2021 Directory and do not indicate otherwise, that listing will be repeated in the new Directory. If you have new neighbors, please encourage them to submit their contact information!

Local Talent: We will again include a section in the directory where neighbors can share the services they provide, e.g. artists, health and wellness services, musicians, notary public. If you want to be included in the Local Talent list (the listing is free) and have not already done so, please submit a short description of your talent along with your name, phone, email address and and website address, if applicable, to CJDirectory2020@gmail.com. If you had a Local Talent listing in the 2021 Directory but have not replied to the confirmation email request sent from CJDirectory2020@gmail.com on August 30, your listing will not appear in the 2025 Directory.

Questions? Contact **Marcy Harrison at CJDirectory2020@email.com.**



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HOBBY *Continued from pg. 8*



Tiered plant stand.



Multi-functional step stools or plant stands.

The reasons people indulge in a hobby are varied. Some folks desire a healthy escape, a mental break or a means of improving physical fitness. Others may crave a creative way to express themselves, love the challenge of learning a new skill, or desire social connections. Laura's woodworking endeavors appear to have developed organically out of a necessity. She needed a wooden box.

Before attempting to make a wooden storage box for her photography equipment, Laura practiced woodworking skills with simple wood projects, such as using hand tools to make picture frames. To make the wooden box, she knew she would need a table, a table saw, and a stand for the table saw. She started watching YouTube videos and learned how to make a table. Soon she was making wooden planters for her yard, such as a wheelbarrow and a tricycle. She made a large plant stand for a friend recuperating from cancer; a watch, wallet and cell phone charging station for her daughter; Adirondack chairs, foot rests, and side tables; a plant stand customized to fit in a nook in her kitchen; Halloween and Christmas decorations; wooden wall art that incorporates a potted plant; and an hors d'oeuvres tray with a holder for a wine bottle and glasses for a wedding gift.

"And it's been six years since I started the hobby and I still haven't built the box for my photography supplies. But eventually I will get to that." If you walk around Cabin John and spot Laura on her driveway, chances are she will be wearing a respirator mask, standing by a sawdust collector and using a power tool. But, she's never too busy to wave hello and explain her latest project. ~vn

If you have a story to share with "Our Town", please contact me at Annemarie.gormley23@gmail.com.



Wheelbarrow and tricycle outdoor plant holders.



Laura woodworking in her driveway with some of her equipment.

CJCA News

by Scott Lewis

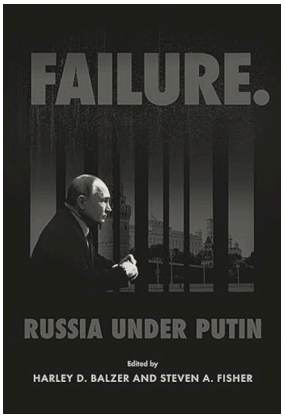
The CJCA Officers have planned a busy and exciting fall for our community. In addition to the Annual Crab Feast earlier this month, our first meeting of the year will feature our local and well-known bird expert Clive Harris.

First, our events:

- **Turkey Trot** will be held on Thanksgiving Day, November 27, at 10:00am at Cabin John Local Park (the field behind CBNRC).
- **Holiday Party** will be held on Sunday, December 14 from 5:00-7:00pm at the CBNRC

And our meetings:
Winter Birds with 75th Street's **Clive Harris** - CJCA Meeting at CBRNC on **Wednesday September 24** at 7:30pm (*see* story page 1).

Harley Balzer, MacArthur Blvd resident, will lead a discussion on his recently published book *Failure: Russia Under Putin* - CJCA Meeting at CBRNC on **Wednesday October 22** at 7:30pm.



Failure examines the significant failures Russia has faced under Vladimir Putin's leadership and presents an important counterpoint to a broad range of studies emphasizing Russia's resurrection, status as a persistent power, or successful military reform. Harvey Balzer is a Professor at Georgetown University and a leading expert on Russian politics, society, and history. His research and teaching focus on the evolution of post-Soviet states, democratization, and comparative political systems. Widely published and frequently sought after for his insights, he has advised policymakers and contributed to international discussions on Russia's role in global affairs.

Discussion with **Evan Glass,** Montgomery County Councilman - CJCA Meeting at CBRNC on **Wednesday November 19** at 7:30pm.

Evan Glass is passionate about making the county a more inclusive, sustainable, and connected place—whether through expanding affordable housing, improving public transportation, or advancing environmental initiatives. Before entering public service, Evan spent 12 years as a journalist with CNN and later led Gandhi Brigade Youth Media, helping young people find their voices through storytelling. Today, he lives in Silver Spring with his husband, Jason, and their two rescue beagles—always keeping one eye on community progress and the other on the neighborhood dog park.

Come out and join your neighbors for community, education, inspiration, and civic engagement at one or all of these CJCA events.

WE REALLY NEED A LAYOUT/DESIGN VOLUNTEER AT *The Village News*



We know people love reading *The Village News*, and the volunteers that write, edit, manage the ads and finances, and put together the layout of the newsletter each month. The *VN* team enjoys working together and bringing you the important neighborhood updates, human interest stories, photo spreads and more.

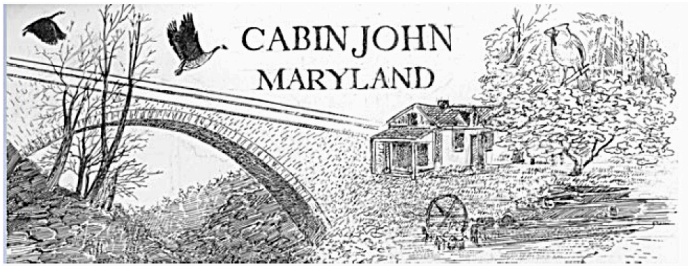
We've been operating with an interim layout designer doing double duty at CJCA for nearly a year now and we really, really need to find a person or two who could take over the layout of the newsletter.

If you want to find out more and/or think you could lend a hand, please contact **vneditorial@gmail.com**.

NEW TO CABIN JOHN? EMAIL US TO RECEIVE A WELCOME KIT:
cjcapresidents@gmail.com


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The Village News is a monthly newsletter published since 1967 by the Cabin John Citizens Association. Ten issues are published a year and mailed free to every household in Cabin John. Others may subscribe for $12 per year. Send news, articles, and letters to: VNeditorial@gmail.com. Send advertising inquiries and subscription requests to: VNbusinessmanager@gmail.com. Reach CJCA leadership at cjcapresidents@gmail.com. You can contact *The Village News* by mail at Village News, P.O. Box 31, Cabin John, MD 20818.

Volunteers who make *The Village News* possible:
Shelly McKenzie, editor; **Heidi Lewis**, layout designer (interim); and **Marcy Harrison**, business manager.

Regular contributors: Sarah Craven, Rachel Donnan, Annemarie Economou Gormley, Burr Gray, Meredith Griggs, Heidi Lewis, Scott Lewis, Charlotte Troup Leighton, Joe Saliunas, and Susan Shipp. Illustrations by Trudy Nicholson.

NEXT ISSUE DEADLINE:
5 pm, September 25, 2025
CJCA, P.O. Box 31, Cabin John, MD 20818

To receive updates throughout the month,
subscribe to the official CJCA listserv:
email "subscribe" to
cjca-official-news+subscribe@googlegroups.com

Classified Ads

COMPUTER SERVICES
DC/PC Computer Support offers friendly, personalized computer and electronic services to area residents. In person, remote and telephone support are available. To schedule an appointment or learn more about our services, email support@dc-pc.com or call Jim at 202.841.0873.

LICKS & LEASHES PET CARE
DEPENDABLE, RELIABLE, TRUSTWORTHY We provide: Daily walks, Daycare, Boarding, In Home Pet Sitting. We pick up and drop off for both our Daycare and Boarding services.
Check us out: www.licksandleashes.net
Owner: Lauren Nicholas, 808-286-6556
Thank you for giving us the opportunity to meet you and your furry family. We look forward to working with you!

HANDYMAN AVAILABLE
Your Friendly Neighborhood Handyman - CJ Resident, Bruce Lamb. Willing to fix whatever breaks in your home. Free estimates. Power washing available. Text 240-372-8790.

Classified ads are 30¢/word. Please email ads to vnbusinessmanager@gmail.com

Community Calendar

SEPT	*All events at Clara Barton Neighborhood Rec Center unless otherwise noted*
24	7:30pm CJCA Mtg - Clive Harris
OCT	
5	10:00am - 3:00pm Blood Drive
22	7:30pm CJCA Mtg - Harley Balzer
NOV	
19	7:30pm CJCA Mtg - Evan Glass
27	10:00am TURKEY TROT!! Field behind CBNRC

SAVE THE DATE

- Dec 14 -- Cabin John Holiday Party 5:00pm - 7:00pm