The Village News

SERVING THE PEOPLE OF CABIN JOHN AND BEYOND

October 2026 | VOLUME 60| ISSUE 9







(Left-right) The crowd enjoyed delicious food and festivities; state and local elected officials praised our Cabin John community spirit ; volunteers staffed the ticket table.

56TH ANNUAL CHICKEN & CRAB FEAST A DAY TO REMEMBER

by Pete Cousté

Perfect skies, mouth-watering food, rousing music and all-volunteer crews working like pros served more than 460 handmade meals at the annual Chicken and Crab Feast held on September 19 at the Clara Barton Neighborhood Recreation Center.

Nearly 80 Cabin John residents joined together to dole out some 1000 steamed Maryland blue crabs, 260 pounds of fresh chicken, 216 local ears of corn, five bushels of green beans, four bushels of collard greens, plus about 200 pounds of baked beans, potato salad and cole slaw.

Some of our elected officials joined in the fun. Maryland District 16 House Delegate Marc Korman, Delegate Sarah Wolek, and Delegate Teresa Woorman, as well as Democratic Nominee for District 1 Council Member Julie Yang, and County Executive Marc Elrich's Chief of Staff Debbie Spielberg all made appearances.

The 2026 feast may go down in history as one of the best. At least, that's how head chef Meredith McGuire put it. That was at the end of the 12+ hour day supervising a small but mighty crew that included CJCA Vice President Marcy Harrison once again.

Our 56th feast tapped three rookie crew chiefs the year. Shannon Stewart handled double duty as chief of vegetable prep on Friday, then on Saturday cooking in the kitchen and assisting with SSL volunteers. Chicken crew chiefs Mike Donnellan and Anastasia Pasmanik subbed for regular grillmaster Dan Mustico, who had to be out of town. Watch out Dan, Mike and Anastasia did a crisp and juicy job! Crab crew chiefs Josh and Christine Chambers and their crack crab team kept plump #1 large jimmies coming in hot for all the hungry crab pickers.

Returning crew chiefs included Jackie Hoglund, who supervised the drink crew that served up some 800 libations, soft and hard. Jeff and Anne Rothman managed our lemonade stand, again overseeing SSL volunteers who served 27 gallons of the summer classic. Ticketing co-chiefs Kathleen Wood Leverenz and Heather Tomlinson supervised all ticket, t-shirt and book sales. CJCA treasurer Gil Schwartz and spouse Bonnie Schwartz joined the ticket crew.

CJCA Secretary Leslie Meyers supervised volunteers on the serving line and Susan Roberts oversaw the baked goods sale with proceeds going to MacArthur Boulevard beautification.

Our house band, the Starlight Orchestra, sang for their supper with toe-tapping entertainment. They even featured a baritone sax solo by immediate past CJCA Co-President Scott Lewis who also served as set up and clean up chief.

See CHICKEN & CRAB on pg . 11

TRAFFIC AND PEDESTRIAN-BIKE SAFETY COMMITTEE

by Pete Cousté

The CJCA September meeting prompted a committee to form to look into traffic, pedestrian and bike safety in Cabin John. Guest speaker Elendil Heinrich of the Action Committee for Transit (ACT) provided the organization's perspective on traffic safety with regard to pedestrian and bike fatalities, distracted driving, speeding, signal crossings, traffic calming, bike lanes and enforcement.

Information presented included common advocacy approaches such as petitions, public testimony, safety walks with elected officials, community meetings, social media, and coordination with county, state, park, cycling, and environmental organizations.

A lively discussion broke out with community members regarding increasing vehicle traffic and unsafe conditions near Seven Locks Road, Persimmon Tree Road, and MacArthur Boulevard, including the need for data collection. Residents cited the need for more and better signage at crosswalks, stop signs and other measures. Some of ACT's recommendations included residents legally recording video evidence and organizing a walk through these areas with elected officials and Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) during peak traffic times.

See PEDESTRIAN on pg .11

Attention - Union Arch Bridge will close Saturday, November 7 - 7 am to 3 pm.

Due to annual inspection and minor repairs. Follow posted detours.

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Neighborly News

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

Shanna Fricklas, John (Dino) D'Ausilio, and their 10-month old, Raiya, are excited to be new residents on 81st Street. Shanna is an attorney who works for a federal agency and Dino is a professional audio engineer and production coordinator. They have both lived all over the country, and are outdoorsy folks who enjoy biking, boating, skiing, and camping. In their driveway you will see Albert, their converted school bus-RV. They are looking forward to exploring the trails, laying down roots and getting to be a part of the wonderful tight-knit community here. **Jill Barefoot** joined them as a housemate in 2021. She is a Miami native who has taught preschool in MD and DC for the past 17 years. She loves her dogs (really most dogs), all things nature, and always has movies or shows to recommend.

Welcome to new neighbors, **Mera and Shawn Mir, and their children Misha and Emre,** who moved to Cypress Grove Lane in August. They formerly resided on MacArthur Boulevard in the Carderock area, but wanted more space and liked the friendly, neighborhood vibe of Cypress Grove Lane. They are looking for playmates–ages 4 and 8. You can find their contact information online in the Cabin John Neighborhood Directory.



In July, **Grace McGuire** of 81st Street graduated with an M.Phil in digital humanities at the University of Cambridge (UK). Grace is now living in London and working at a talent acquisition firm.

Local hero **Katie Ledecky**, the most decorated female Olympian and swimmer in history, trained at Palisades Pool for a week in late August/early September, often with her mother and brother. She was very gracious and accommodating to her admirers–she signed swim caps and took many selfies! In her 2024 memoir, ***Just Add Water: My Swimming Life***, she wrote about her upbringing in Bethesda and her swim team life at Palisades with fondness. She still holds the majority of pool records set as a Palisades Porpoise.
Once a Porpoise, always a Porpoise!

The Friends of Cabin John Creek (FoCJC) will hold the fourth annual **Cabin John Creek Challenge** on **Sunday, November 1 at 10:00 am.** The challenge involves a 10-mile hike from the start of the **Cabin John Creek trailhead** at Goya Drive to the mouth of Cabin John Creek, where it empties into the river.



Katie Ledecky with CJ residents on Cypress Grove Lane - (Left) the Bonetti family - all swimmers with the Palisades Porpoises: Tomás (12), Luis (13), Leonor (10), and Isabella (8). (Right) Katie with Santi (15).

The festivities begin with a brief ceremony, followed by the hike, which is expected to last 4-6 hours depending on the hikers' pace. Residents have the option of hiking any convenient portion of the trail. For example, hikers may start at Goya Drive and continue to the Sycamore Fire Ring at Locust Grove Nature Center, approximately one third of the total hike (3 miles), or start at Bradley Boulevard and hike to the Potomac River (5 miles). Shorter segments of just a mile or two miles are welcome as well. **More information and registration can be found at www.cabinjohncreek.org**

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REMEMBERING TED ORME



Longtime 81st Street resident Ted Orme died in May of chronic heart failure. Ted was born in 1941 in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. He grew up in Silver Spring, where he began elementary school and made friends for life. He could regale a room with his stories of neighborhood high jinks performed by this 1950s version of "Our Gang."

Ted Orme and Cathy Nikkel married in 1972 and settled in Cabin John a year later, where they raised son Toby and daughter Kathy.

In 1975, Ted became the Washington correspondent for ***Motor Trend*** covering NHTSA and related auto safety groups in Washington DC. He wrote freelance articles for the ***Washington Post, Washingtonian, Car and Driver, Sports Car Illustrated, Robb Report, Consumer's Digest*** and many other automotive trade publications. He also reviewed cars, covering all US automakers and Range Rover, Mercedes, Porsche VW, Peugeot, and Jaguar intros in Europe. Ted was one of the original founders of the Washington Automotive Press Association in 1985. He retired in 2022.

Ted was an avid fisherman who will be missed by his neighbors in Cabin John and his school buddies in Silver Spring.

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CJCA News

by Pete Cousté

NEW BOARD, CHICKEN & CRAB FEAST FINANCIAL SUCCESS OCTOBER MEETING: LOCKHOUSE 8





CJCA Meeting News

The Cabin John Citizens Association kicked off its September meeting with newly elected board members by introducing the team and mapping roles.

Vice President Marcy Harrison will continue to serve as *Village News* business manager and neighborhood directory coordinator. In addition, she will also serve as liaison to the MacArthur Boulevard beautification committee, new oral history committee, senior CJ residents and welcome new neighbors.

Treasurer Gil Schwartz returns to manage the books, review vendor and legal contracts, and handle parliamentarian duties.

New **Vice President Carrie Stokes** will coordinate the new safety committee and outreach to nearby communities; she will also serve as liaison for environmental and Potomac interceptor issues and events.

New **Secretary Leslie Meyers** will supervise meeting records and liaise to the land use committee, candidate outreach and events.

As the association's new **president**, I'll steer the ship and focus on community communications engagement, community concerns, and government outreach, while supervising the *Village News*, the listserv, website and the advocacy/government relations committee.

Chicken and Crab Feast Recap

The Chicken and Crab Feast took in roughly $14,000 in gross revenue, outpacing last year's take by about $3,000. The final profit numbers are still being tallied as the last bills come in.

Diana Carter has volunteered to serve as the **Chicken and Crab Feast Coordinator for** the 57th annual event in 2027. This year she shadowed the process to prepare for role.

Longtime kitchen crew co-chiefs **Meredith McGuire** and **Kathleen Black** are stepping down after years of volunteering. The Chicken and Crab Feast will need some new volunteers in the kitchen to cook the vegetables next September. Contact **cjcapresidents@gmail.com** for further details.

Finally, the next **CJCA Meeting is October 21.** our guest speaker from the C&O Canal Trust will tell all about Lockhouse 8 that recently re-opened in our backyard.

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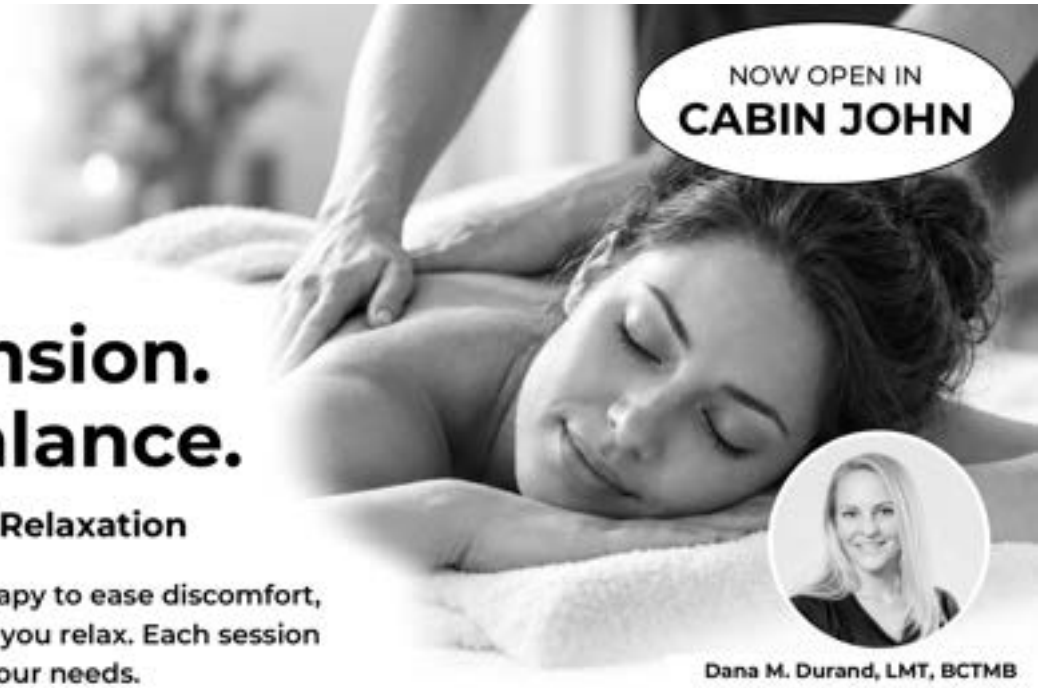

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View From Minnie's Island

by Joe Saliunas

COLLABORATION & ADVOCACY

Minnie's Island Community Conservancy's (MICC) experience addressing the impacts of the recent DC Water sewage spill can best be summarized by two words: collaboration and advocacy. As a small, all-volunteer organization, we knew that we did not have the resources to successfully engage with DC Water and the various state and local government entities involved in the clean-up.

Collaboration the first week was ad hoc. A small group of individuals from Cabin John, Potomac Riverkeepers, MICC and others would visit the spill site daily to document impacts and engage with the press. Within a month, directly impacted local organizations, including MICC, the Sycamore Island Club, and the Canoe Cruisers Association started to collaborate in sending formal requests for water and sediment testing to DC Water, state, and local governments. As the scope and impacts of the spill became better understood, a coalition of over a dozen local, regional, and national stakeholders was formed, called the Coalition for Long-term, Environmental Accountability and Restoration or CLEAR Potomac. The Potomac Conservancy facilitated coalition activities, including weekly coordination meetings.

The coalition, working together or as individual members, achieved the following results:

- Convinced DC Water to increase the number of locations and duration for water testing;
- Coordinated with Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) to conduct sediment testing and understand the results;
- Provided detailed comments on DC Water's draft remediation plan, almost all of which were included in MDE's comments on the plan;
- Engaged with state representatives, including State Senator Sarah Love and State Delegate Marc Korman;
- Coordinated with MDE and DC Water on conduct of public meetings;
- Supported federal efforts to obtain funding for rehabilitation of the Potomac Interceptor.

On September 24, MICC board members hosted members of CLEAR Potomac on Minnie's Island for an opportunity to celebrate our successful collaboration and advocacy in protecting the Potomac. Members of CLEAR represented on the island included American Rivers, Cabin John Citizens Association, Canal Trust, Canoe Cruisers Association, Casey Trees, Minnie's Island Community Conservancy, Montgomery County Department of Health, Potomac Conservancy, Potomac Riverkeepers, Potomac Whitewater Racing Center, and the Sycamore Island Club. At the event, Hedrick Belin, president of Potomac Conservancy, noted that celebrating success through events such as the gathering was an essential and often overlooked element of successful advocacy.

If you are interested in a complete description of Minnie's experience with the spill, check out our recent blog: https://www.minniesisland.org/post/in-the-path-of-disaster-minnie-s-island-and-the-sewer-line-break-of-2026. The blog addresses our direct experiences (such as dealing with the snowcrete and a two-week deep freeze), collaboration and advocacy, water and sediment testing, impacts to the island, and lessons learned. It's a good 12-minute read.

As we enter the colder weather months, we want to remind anyone who visits the island to utilize extreme caution due to the risks of cold water.



CLEAR Potomac recently celebrated its work with a visit to Minnie's Island
Bottom row, left to right: Rob Bragan, Tim Bragan, Carolyn Finney, Kelly Collins-Choi, Arden Shaer, Hugh Hilliard, Joe Saliunas, Carrie Stokes, Katie Blackman, Dallas Harrison, Dan Richardson, Jack Mandel, Sean O'Donnell. Top row: Hedrick Belin, Grace Hassler, Neil Shaut, Rob Shaut.

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

Poems For Passersby

Presented by Meredith Griggs

Mozart, for Example
by Mary Oliver

All the quick notes
Mozart didn't have time to use
before he entered the cloud-boat

are falling now from the beaks
of the finches
that have gathered from the joyous summer

into the hard winter
and, like Mozart, they speak of nothing
but light and delight,

though it is true, the heavy blades of the world
are still pounding underneath.

And this is what you can do too, maybe,
if you live simply and with a lyrical heart
in the cumbered neighborhoods or even,
as Mozart sometimes managed to, in a palace,

offering tune after tune after tune,
making some hard-hearted prince
prudent and kind, just by being happy.

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Local History

By Rachel Donnan

THE 1983 BUICK CATALOG AND CABIN JOHN

When you say you live in Cabin John, one of the first things people curiously ask about is “where did your town get a name like that?”.

In 1983, the automobile company Buick asked the same question. It produced a glossy 75-page car catalog that highlighted several small cities and towns with “interesting, intriguing and colorful” names for its national marketing campaign. Cabin John was one of the seven towns “discovered” by Buick for this publication.

“These places really do exist. And each place has a different story to tell, weaving people and past events together to explain its distinctive name,” explains the introduction, set against a photo of a quintessential farm landscape with amber fields.

Cabin John featured in both the national sales literature and a smaller brochure. (The other locales were Half Moon Bay, CA; Great Neck, NY; Bad Axe, MI; Outer Banks, NC; Kennebunk, ME; and Little Rock, AR). In the national catalog, each section focused on one of the towns, with local images of landmarks and homes—and always the newest Buick—accompanied by a short yarn about each town’s unique origin story. It aimed to present a snapshot of American originality and tradition, in both place and cars.

The Cabin John section includes an image of the original Cabin John Fire Department and several brick homes. Interestingly, other photos show the Cabin John Mall on Tuckerman Lane and the nearby Cabin John Park railroad station and kids train—not Cabin John.



This 1983 Buick ad featured Cabin John as a town with an "interesting and colorful name."

The sidebar reads: “Mystery surrounds the origin of the name Cabin John. One theory attributes the name to a legendary hermit who dwelled in a cabin overhanging the cliff near the present Cabin John Bridge. Some say he was a hunter and lived primarily off the land. Others have him as a musician who wiled away the days playing the violin and singing melancholy songs. Still others make him into an escaped pirate.”

It notes the name may have come from an old inn that once stood in the area called John’s Cabin. (This theory may have conflated the legend of the hermit/pirate’s cabin in the woods with the Cabin John Hotel, or even the famous “Legend of the Female Stranger.” The snippet concludes with a reference to historic 1715 land records that “show the creek that runs through town as Captain Johns Run or Captain Johns Branch. And so it would seem that Cabin John is a corrupt spelling of Captain John.”

The photo of the Cabin John Park Volunteer Fire Department on MacArthur Boulevard shows a Buick Regal parked in front of the arched garage doors of the familiar brick building, with several people, including some firefighters in uniform.

The fire department was one of Cabin John’s earliest and most prominent undertakings. It was built by the volunteer labor of Cabin John residents and completed in 1932. The upstairs hall provided space for community gatherings, and the wail of the siren was part of the soundtrack of Cabin John over the years. The firehouse was sold in 1984 and the department moved to River Road. In some ways, this advertisement captured the waning days of a local historical landmark and community life.

While most of the curiously named cities and towns highlighted by the Buick catalog are well known, Cabin John continues to retain its small town charm and mystery. “And like the towns and cities featured here we’ve built our name on originality.” Much like Cabin John itself.

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2. Home inspection report, which is full of useful details about your home, its systems, and appliances. This report is a great resource for future maintenance or upgrades.
3. Insurance policies–keep records for your homeowner's insurance, umbrella policies, and additional coverage such as home warranties.
4. Appliance and system documentation–many appliances and home systems now have manuals online, but it's still useful to keep paper copies if you have them.
5. Improvement and repair records–whether you're upgrading a bathroom or fixing your water heater, keep all sales contracts, permits and receipts. These records show how you have cared for your home if you decide to sell, and they're helpful if problems come up later.

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Our Town

by Annemarie Economou Gormley

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION CAN KEEP YOU YOUNG – A PROFILE OF LONGTIME CJ RESIDENT LOIS HARRIS



Bill and I pass Lois and Joe Harris' home every time we go for a walk. If Joe is out doing lawn work or taking a brisk walk, he always makes us laugh with a funny one-liner. We see Lois less often, but when we do, her warm smile and questions reveal a woman with a caring heart. Recently, Lois invited me to go with her one morning "to walk the mall" and in the afternoon, "to attend a weekly quilting gathering," so I seized the opportunity to spend more time getting to know her.

Carrie Deloris, aka Lois, moved to Cabin John in 1988 and quickly befriended Mrs. Blakely Burke, her neighbor. One day, while playing tennis, Mrs. Burke asked Lois if she would like to walk. Lois decided to give it a try. The ladies began meeting at 6:30 am most weekdays, walking down Seven Locks Road from the pool entrance to River Road. Sadly, Blakely Burke died in 2004 but thankfully Lois' husband was willing to take over. During COVID, they began walking indoors at Montgomery Mall, so that is where I went with them one hot morning. There were many walkers traveling the mall corridors and I have to admit, the air conditioning is what sold me on the experience.

Lois and Joe have been participating in the Baltimore Longitudinal Study on Aging for decades. It is the longest-running scientific study of human aging in the US, created by the National Institute on Aging, part of the National Institutes of Health. Participants are studied for three days every 1-4 years, depending on their age. The study aims to identify genetic, physical, behavioral and environmental factors that affect aging. Thanks to volunteers like Lois and Joe, the lives of people worldwide have improved.

Lois was born and raised in Mount Vernon, Alabama, a small town in Mobile County. Lois always knew she wanted to teach. "I had a high school teacher, Evelyn Henderson. I always thought she was so cute; a very good teacher and easy to talk to. Always available. If you said you didn't understand something, she'd make sure that she met with you. I said, 'I want to be like her.' My two older sisters became teachers too."

"My cousin, who worked at Michigan State, lined up a job for me with the city of Lansing. There were a lot of federal programs at the time. They had a program called the Model Cities Program. They were trying to update the inner city. Trying to get the residents better educated and more healthy. The job was to coordinate the GED program. This was during President Lyndon B. Johnson's era. I did that job for two years." When daughters Cristen and Jocelyn were in second and first grade, Joe and Lois arrived in Cabin John where she made a career with MCPS. She retired in 2014.

After mall walking, Lois and I went to Northminster Presbyterian Church for a quilting meeting. The ladies who gather there are from various churches throughout DC and Maryland. As soon as I arrived, I was given many choices of work stations. I offered to iron "sewn together squares" on that day. The following week I opted to do tagging, which is to sew "Handmade by Northminster Church" fabric labels onto quilts. The ladies played soft music and quietly worked for hours at their stations. Only after the work was done, did they briefly socialize before heading home. The quilts made by these women are donated to the Hospital for Sick Children in DC.

Whether Lois is volunteering for the aging study, making quilts for charity, greeting her neighbors with a warm smile, walking the mall with Joe, or visiting her family, she is doing so with a gentle, compassionate, giving heart.



(Upper left) Lois with her quilting club at Northminster Presbyterian Church.

(Right) Lois irons quilted pieces that will be assembled to donate to sick children.



CHICKEN & CRAB from pg. 1

More than local 20 students pitched in while earning SSL hours. CJCA Vice President Carrie Stokes and CJCA immediate past Co-President Heidi Lewis supervised the task of recruiting, assigning and corralling the student volunteers.



The CJCA and assembled diners offered Heidi and Scott Lewis ***(pictured right)*** a hearty thank you and a memento of the Union Arch Bridge in honor of their four years of dedicated service to the community.

Special thanks go to our own CBNRC staff, led by manager Barry Jones, for providing children's activities.

Additionally, two newly designed Chicken & Crab Feast t-shirts were unveiled for sale. More are available online for $25. Scan this QR code to buy yours, or email requests to **CJCApresidents@gmail.com**.









The Starlight Orchestra provided entertainment for diners; volunteers worked hard to steam crabs and grill chicken.

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY, from pg. 1

Resident Dara Cable pointed out that an organized walkthrough with elected officials and MCDOT in Cabin John about traffic patterns and safety took place in early 2020. The county counted more than 13,000 cars over 12 hours at the intersection of Clara Barton Access Road and MacArthur Boulevard. The Covid pandemic ensued immediately after, stalling efforts to bring attention to the intersection.

Community participants agreed to form a safety committee, with coordination through CJCA VP Carrie Stokes. Elendil Heinrich offered ACT's support. Darla Cable, Annie Allen and several others have since joined the committee. If you are interested in getting involved email **cjcapresidents@gmail.com**.

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List Price $1,775,000
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0 GAR
2,950 sq. ft.

ACTIVE

7406 Woodrow Place
List Price
$3,495,000
6 BR, 4/1 BA,
2 GAR
5,100 sq. ft.

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6481 Wishbone Terrace
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4 BD, 3/1 BA,
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2,055 sq. ft.

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8025 Riverside Drive
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Volunteers who make *The Village News* possible:
Shelly McKenzie, editor; **Joanne Carl**, layout designer; and **Marcy Harrison**, business manager.
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NEXT ISSUE DEADLINE:
5pm, October 25, 2026
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

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Our daycare and boarding are provided in my home, offering a comfortable, home-style environment rather than a large facility, so pets can settle in and receive attentive care throughout their stay. We also offer convenient pick-up and drop-off for daycare and boarding.
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Call 240-271-5591, 240-271-6671, 301-229-1579

Community Calendar

OCT	*All events at Clara Barton Neighborhood Recreation Center unless otherwise noted*
21	CJCA Meeting 7:30 pm C&O Canal Trust - Lockhouse 8
25	Haunted House - 4-6 pm Sponsored by FoCBCC
NOV	
18	CJCA Meeting 7:30 pm
25	Annual CJ Turkey Trot - 10 am CJ Park, S.O.M.E. canned food drive
DEC	
18	Annual Craft Show- 1-5 pm Sponsored by FoCBCC
25	CJ Holiday Party w/Santa - 5-7 pm

The Village News will next appear in November, when thoughts of friends and family gathering and helping those less fortunate come to mind. Enjoy the splendor of fall in Cabin John !

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