July 2004

Village News

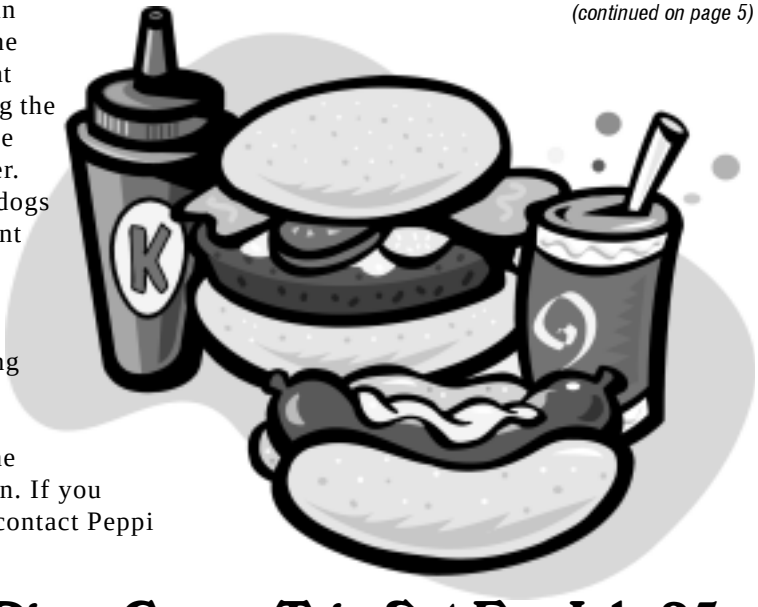
Volume 37 Issue 10 — Serving the people of Cabin John and beyond

July Activities For Cabin John Include Parade, History Cookout and Discounts at Six Flags

July promises to be a fun month with a number of opportunities for community get-togethers. First up is the July 4th Cabin John Parade. Assembly will begin at the Clara Barton Community Center at 11 am on July 4 for the walk along the bike path to the grassy area at the MacArthur Plaza Shopping Center. Everyone is welcome, including dogs and cats and other pets. The event is very casual. Residents are encouraged to bring flags and other patriotic or period garb if desired. Refreshments and reading of passages from important historical documents occur upon reaching the shopping center. The celebration wraps up around noon. If you want to help with refreshments, contact Peppi Bolger at 301-320-5191.

You'll also want to mark your calendars for Wednesday, July 21. That's when the Cabin

(continued on page 5)



Annual Potomac River Canoe Trip Set For July 25

CJCA is making arrangements to run the Cabin John's 6th Annual Canoe Trip on July 25 this year. The usual format is to start downstream from Old Angler's Inn around noon, and take out at Lock 10 in Cabin John around 5:30 pm. The trip is limited to Cabin John residents and friends. Fee is $10/head (max of $20/canoe). (There is a separate charge if you rent a canoe.) In the past, canoers have seen herons, ospreys, ducks, eagles, and deer. You can have lunch on an island in the river and sit under a waterfall on Virginia side in the late afternoon. Two whitewater stretches can be bypassed, if desired, but they are usually a lot of fun to try. Expert guides and instruction are provided. Canoe paddling instruction is strongly recommended for all and begins at the river's edge at 11 am. Expect to get wet during this trip.

You can bring your own canoe or rent one from Dave Smith (formerly Potomac Outdoors (301-258-1914 - Outerquest)). Call quickly if you need to rent a canoe as Dave has a limited number of canoes (about 20) available. Tell them to note on their sheet that you are with the Cabin John July 25 trip. Bring your own lunch/sodas/water/sun tan lotion. Dessert will be provided by CJCA.

If you are planning to participate, it is very, very important that you notify Burr Gray (burr.gray@alum.dartmouth.org, or 703-607-2740 (w)) by July 20 so that we can plan on how many guides to get and provide you in advance with other instruction. Please indicate the number of canoes and people (ages of any kids) and level of expertise, whether you have reserved the canoes with Dave, and leave a phone number. This event is sponsored by CJCA with grateful assistance from Dave Smith.

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Neighborly News

by Barbara Martin

A National Geographic special, *Adopted From China*, starring **Haley and Mimi Lawrence,** 9-year-old twin daughters of **Betsy Lawrence,** will be shown on Saturday, June 26, at the Community Center, and you are invited to attend. The National Geographic film team traveled through China, photographing orphanages, children who wait to be adopted, and in the United States, families who have adopted children from China. Haley and Mimi speak in the film of their life and experiences as Chinese Americans. The event, sponsored by the DC Metro China Playgroup, is free and all are welcome to watch this cable TV show starring two of our own kids who live on Cabin Road. The potluck supper starts at 6:30; the film goes from 8 to 9 pm. You can call Betsy at 301-229-6706. The show will also air on MSNBC, Channel 61, on Sunday, June 20, at 8 pm and 11 pm.

Max Kepler, who graduates from Whitman this month, is one of 20 seniors selected for a NASA summer internship. The group will be housed at the University of Maryland and shuttled to NASA each day. Max has earned a technician's certificate and a producer's certificate through his volunteer work at the Montgomery County cable station. He will enter Rochester (NY) Institute of Technology in the fall. Max's parents are **Elaine Gardner** and **Ritch Kepler** of MacArthur Boulevard.

Pamela Zilly of 76th Street was one of 14 artists (out of 68 competitors) who were juried into the Torpedo Factory Artist's Association. Pam's fine art photographs, reflecting her 25 years as a free-lance photographer will be on exhibit from June 12-July 21 in Studio 17 at the Torpedo Art Center in Alexandria.

Another local artist is **David Fry**, who turns wood bowls and other items out of his home studio on 79th Place. David's solo show at Sansar Gallery (4805 Bethesda Avenue) opens with a reception on the evening of June 18 and runs through July 9. David hand-produces wood pieces and teaches the craft. Much of the raw material for his work, including box elder trees, comes from this area.

Patsy and John Mathews have moved permanently to Woodstock, Vermont. They lived in Cabin John for 25 years—on 75th Place, and for the last year in Cabin John Gardens. They send their best wishes to neighbors and friends "who live in the best community inside the Beltway."

Send news of present or former CJ residents to Barbara Martin. barbmartin@comcast.net 301-229-3482

Crab Feast, Anyone??

Well, it is not that time quite yet, but before we know it, September will be here and the annual CJ Crab Feast will be upon us!

For 10+ years, Nicki Wright and I have coordinated this wonderful community event and have thoroughly enjoyed it. We have met and worked with some great people through the years. But it is now time to pass the torch. We will be happy to serve as "consultants" this year—even show up for the whole day on the actual day of the feast. Before you say no, consider this: It's not that much work. Really! There is a very dedicated group of volunteers who help out each year which makes the coordination fairly easy.

So consider it, please. You would be making a valuable contribution to our lovely community and have fun too.

For more information, please call Lori Rieckelman at 301-320-6299 or email Rieckell@aol.com

Community Calendar

JUN

20 ..... Clara Barton Dramatic Presentation
Clara Barton House
1 & 3 pm

22 ..... Free Swim Starts
Palisades Pool
(see p. 4)

26 ..... "Adopted from China"
Clara Barton Center
(see this page)

JUL

4 ..... July 4th Parade
Clara Barton Center
11 am – noon (see p. 1)

21 ..... Cabin John Historical Presentation & Cookout, Clara Barton Center
5:30 – 8:30 pm (see p. 1)

22 ..... Six Flags Trip
Clara Barton Center
9 am – 4 pm (see p. 5)

25 ..... 6th Annual Canoe Trip
Old Anglers Inn
noon – 5:30 pm (see p. 1)

Silvan Poberaj: Kayaking Through Life

by Barbara Martin



© Tim Weedlun

Silvan Poberaj with one of his many kayaks.

Look at a map of the Adriatic Sea, an arm of the Mediterranean. Find the place where Italy adjoins the former Yugoslavia, east of Trieste. This is Slovenia, population 2 ½ million, where Silvan Poberaj grew up and became devoted to kayaking.

"The Soce River runs right through my town of Solkan, in the Soca Valley; it's the center of life. Growing up, I spent much of my time and energy on the river with my friends, kayaking and swimming. Summers are very comfortable there—80 to 90 degrees. Kayaking is very important in my home. Athletes from the local kayak club have international reputations. I started competitive kayaking when I was 12 years old."

"Solkan is the old part of Nova Gorica, a town of 25,000, built after World War II. Solkan has been there for over 1,000 years; writings from the year 1001 AD mention Solkan by the name it was then called, Castrum Silicanum. We are 20 minutes from the Adriatic Sea, and very close to the mountains—the Julian Alps. From an early age, I was hiking in the mountains with my father and older sister. In the winter when I couldn't be in the water, I would be skiing. Slovinia is a beautiful country; almost 80 per cent of the land is mountainous."

The region used to be famous for woodworking and for its furniture factories. Silvan's father was a woodworker. Now the area is best known for winemaking—"Some of the best wine in the country,"—and for tourism. Lipizza, the town where the Lipizzaner horses originated, is 30 minutes from Solkan.

Silvan pursued his award-winning sport throughout high school and college. "For 6 years, from 19 to 26, I was in the top 10 kayakers in the world. Because of training and competing, it took me all that time to finish college. I could manage that because in Slovenia, college is free. (So is medical care.) In 1982, I got my BS in physical education and coaching, from the university in Ljubljana, the capital city. Since 1948, Yugoslavia was not part of the Soviet bloc. It was very free; we had no travel restrictions and could go easily into Italy and western Europe."

Silvan did a post-graduate project focusing on the best methods of training instruction for

(continued on page 9)

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(continued on page
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CJCA News

by Burr Gray

The next meeting of the CJCA will be Sept. 28, 7:30 pm at the Clara Barton Community Center.

Summary of Results of CJCA Meeting of April 27, 2004. 1) Rev. Edgar Bankhead, Board Member Lou Varella, and Garland Conner, Sr. provided information on the status of the renovation efforts at the First Agape AME Zion Church. Plans have been crafted. A parking lot adjacent to the church is planned to reduce the hazard of crossing Seven Locks to get to the church. 2) The attendees voted to provide an official commemoration from CJCA celebrating the centennial celebration of Glen Echo. 3) Officers elected for the next year are: Burr Gray (Pres.), Larry Heflin (VP), Gary Barnhard (Sec.), and Bruce Wilmarth (Treas.). (And so the reign of terror continues, although the phrase "administration in transition" is being tossed around these days.)

June 6 Blood Drive Results – We had 57 people check in and were able to generate 40 pints of blood from that crowd. Larry Heflin, Neil Helm, and Rachel Cooper & Joanna Townsend (two Whitman students) staffed the check-in table. Karen Melchar and Burr Gray rounded up the usual suspects ahead of time for the blood donation, and Tom Green and Scott Lewis folded chairs and tables at the end to close out the event. The only real excitement during the day was when one of the donors jumped up excitedly from the nurses' interview station as a cicada crawled on her leg. Admittedly, there was a little screaming. In an effort to reassure the populace and restore calm, CJCA promises no cicadas (at least of this variety) for at least the next 17 years worth of blood drives. With this 40 pint result, the total from recent Cabin John blood drives has crossed the 400 pint level. Many thanks to our donors/participants. While other events organized by CJCA are fun and help with community identity and cohesion, the blood drives actually save lives. We hope that those folk who are eligible but do not usually attend will give some thought to signing up for the final drive of the year to be held on October 3, 2004.

Thanks to Danny Harris who faithfully each year sees to the hanging of flags along MacArthur Boulevard in time for Memorial Day. The flags stay up through Flag Day and the Fourth of July. This is a labor of love for Danny—love for the community and for the nation. If you should see any attempted vandalism or removal of flags, please take responsibility for stopping it. Every year Danny has to replace flags that are stolen or damaged.

Palisades Pool Open to Cabin John Residents – Over the summer, starting June 22, Cabin John residents are admitted free of charge to the Palisades Pool on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11 am to 1 pm. Children aged 7 and under must be accompanied by a supervising adult. Children aged 8-14 who will be left by themselves at the pool will be asked to satisfy the swim test - swimming one length of the pool and treading water for one minute. Please sign in at the pool - some proof of residency (such as being listed in the Cabin John Community Directory, an ID with address, or mail received at a Cabin John address) may be required for admission. The Palisades Pool (229-9879) is located off Seven Locks Road between Carver Road and Cyprus Grove Lane. The Cabin John Free Swim was part of an agreement between the Cabin John community and the founders of the Palisades Pool to gain neighborhood approval of the zoning variance that permitted the pool to be constructed.



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Cicadas Bid Farewell Soon

The otherworldly buzzing isn't as loud any more and it's getting harder to find any discarded exoskeletons these days. Yes, the brief mating season of the 17-year cicada is winding down, not to come our way again until 2021. Though many will be glad to say goodbye to the clumsy, red-eyed insects, those looking for a souvenir of our once-in-a-generation visitors might be interested in the work of local photographer Pamela Zilly. The example above, entitled *Cicada #1,953,200,400,* and other poses are available as fine art reprints. For more information contact her at 301-229-6479.

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JULY EVENTS
cont. from page 1

John History Cookout/Entertainment will be held from 5:30 to 8:30 pm at the Clara Barton Community Center. CJCA will be organizing a very relaxed free evening cookout (hot dogs/ hamburgers/refreshments/beer) followed by an hour of slides, videos, skits, and other presentations on Cabin John's history. New historical panels will also be permanently hung inside the corridor of the Center. Please contact Burr Gray (703-607-2740 (w), burr.gray@alum.dartmouth.org) if you are interested in assisting with the historical presentation or in helping with other logistics of the evening.

"Cabin John Day" at Six Flags America Amusement Park will be July 22. Discounted tickets are $21/person and can be purchased from Modestine Snead, Community Center Director. A caravan of Cabin Johners will leave the Clara Barton Center at 9 am on July 22 and return around 4 pm. There is space for about 25 people in the vans that will be provided by the County, but you can always buy a ticket at the discounted rate for the day and drive yourself.



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Looking Back in Cabin John

by Andrew E. Rice

The Unusual Tale of the Clara Barton House

In last month's *Village News* this column recounted a bit of the history of our neighboring community, Glen Echo, which this year is celebrating its 100th anniversary as a town. Another story in the paper announced the forthcoming June 20 performance of "Clara Barton – Red Cross Angel," the story of the remarkable woman who founded the American Red Cross and who lived in Glen Echo from 1897 to 1912. Her house, where the performance will take place, is now the Clara Barton National Historic Site.

This year in fact marks the 30th anniversary of the enactment by Congress of legislation establishing the site. How this came about in 1974, more than 60 years after her death, is an unusual tale.

It starts in 1891, at a time when Edward and Edwin Baltzley were creating the short-lived National Chautauqua (today's Glen Echo Park) and the accompanying real estate development that became the town of Glen Echo. The brothers invited Miss Barton, then President of the American Red Cross, to head the Women's Executive Committee of the Chautauqua and offered her land and a house in Glen Echo. She accepted and the structure was duly built, although at first Miss Barton used it as a warehouse for Red Cross supplies.

In 1897 she transformed the building into both a house for herself and the Red Cross national headquarters. Seven years later, after an internal power struggle, she resigned as President, but she continued to live in Glen Echo until her death in 1912, when she left the house to Julian Hubbell, a long-time close associate in the Red Cross.

From the beginning of his ownership Dr. Hubbell wanted to honor Miss Barton by preserving her house as she had lived in it, as well as building a museum that would tell the story of her accomplishments. But the organization that he founded – the Clara Barton Memorial Association – was plagued with financial difficulties. And then Mabelle Rawson Hirons appeared on the scene. Mrs. Hirons was a spiritualist who claimed to have talked with Miss Barton's spirit during a séance. Somehow she convinced Dr. Hubbell that Miss Barton wanted him to transfer the property to her. When he did so, she promptly threw him out.

During the Hirons years, the house deteriorated. She sold some of the furnishings and rented out rooms to boarders of "questionable reputations" (the phrase comes from the National Park Service to which I am indebted for much of the information in this column). Meanwhile Dr. Hubbell became convinced that he had been duped and eventually filed suit to reclaim the property. After long litigation, he finally recovered the house and moved back to it in 1926.

After his death in 1929, the house became the property of his twin nieces, Rena and Lena Hubbell. They worked to restore the house, in the process discovering a remarkable cache of Miss Barton's diaries, letters and photographs that had been sealed away. These papers were donated to the Library of Congress and constitute an important part of the library's Clara Barton Manuscripts Collection of 62,000 items.

The Hubbell sisters sold the house in 1942 to an old friend, Josephine Franks Noyes, who, with her four sisters, carried forward the restoration effort. They continued to take in boarders, using the rental income to repurchase some of the original furnishings that has been sold by Mrs. Hirons. Encouraged by the Franks sisters, a new group was formed – Friends of Clara Barton – which raised enough money to purchase the property from them in 1963 for $35,000.

The new organization began offering tours of the house, but its goal was to secure national recognition. A first step was taken in 1965 with the building's designation as a National Historic Landmark. Finally in 1974 its permanent preservation was achieved when Congress acted to create the Clara Barton National Historic Site.

The house looks today essentially as it did when it was both Clara Barton's home and the National Red Cross headquarters. We in Cabin John are fortunate to live so close to this fascinating glimpse at American history. If you haven't seen it, it's well worth a visit!

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Courtesy of Clara Barton National Historic Site

Clara Barton's home in Glen Echo, Maryland in 1897.

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POBERAJ
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kayaking. From 1982-86, he taught physical education in elementary and high schools, while doing volunteer coaching for the Yugoslavian national kayak team. His championship record and his volunteer coaching made him a natural choice to become, in 1986, the fulltime, head coach for the Yugoslavian Olympic kayaking team. "We did a lot of traveling to competitions in Europe and Canada. Whitewater Slalom has been very strong in Europe for a long time.

In 1991, Slovinia declared independence, and Yugoslavia dissolved into several countries. Silvan became the coach for the Slovenia Olympic kayaking team. Then in 1993, he applied for a position with the United States Canoe and Kayak team and got it. After 3 years as an assistant coach, he became the head coach, a post he holds today.

In 1993, when the Poberaj family came to the United States, Silvan and his wife, Nevenka had been married for 10 years and had two sons, Nejc (pronounced "Nights") and Jure (say "Yura"). When they moved to this country, Jure was struggling with English. "In Slovenia, we start studying English in the 6th grade, so it's a familiar language, but in the home we speak Slovenian. We still do, so both of our sons are fluent in both languages." In addition, like most Slovenians, Silvan speaks Italian, Croatian, and can "get along" in Russian and German.

When they came to this area, the Poberajs rented first in Gaithersburg, then in Brookmont (a big kayaking/canoeing community, popular for its nearness to the training area near Lock 6). They moved to Cabin John in 1997, buying the house on 81st Street that was formerly Grace Mazzi's home.

Nevenka works as a dental assistant. Jure is a junior at Walt Whitman, and plays the saxophone. Nejc graduated from Whitman and is now at the University of Maryland. Both sons are active in competitive kayaking. At 16, Jure is ranked 6th nationally in the junior category. Nejc, 20, is ranked 6th in the senior category.

Silvan travels with the Olympic team 120-150 days a year. He will leave June 19 for Athens, site of the 2004 Summer Olympics. The team will train there for 5 weeks before the competitions begin on August 13. The United States has teams in four categories: single kayaking for men, single kayaking for women, single canoeing for men, and double canoeing for men. Silvan is responsible for all four teams, although he focuses personally on the kayaking, with assistant coaches leading the canoe teams. This will be his fourth Olympic Games as a coach.

Transporting equipment can be complicated. "We fly our kayaks and canoes. Only a few airlines will take them."

In addition to coaching the official Olympic team, Silvan works with local junior (to age 18) and senior kayakers.

Nevenka's family lives in Slovenia, as do Silvan's mother and sister, a lawyer. "When I'm traveling for the competitions, I stop to visit if I can." The whole family has been back three times since moving to the United States.

Although Silvan's salary is paid by the USA Canoe/ Kayak Team, the competitors are not paid and must find their own means of supporting themselves and their traveling and equipment. The United States Olympic Committee pays for the trip to the Olympics and helps with expenses for a few of the athletes. For the local athletes, the Bethesda Center of Excellence provides some help. "Sometimes parents help, and the athletes work whenever they can fit it into their training and competing. The US Olympic Committee has an agreement with Home Depot, whereby Home Depot allows the athletes to work on a flexible schedule that adjusts to their sports activities." All Olympic competitors must be US citizens. Silvan and his family are in the process of becoming citizens.

(continued next page)

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POBERAJ
cont. from page 9

And after the Olympics? "We take a vacation in September, and then start preparing for 2008, when we'll be going to Beijing for the next time."

All four Poberajs are skiers. "We ski in Europe and in the US, too. I like to go kayaking, sometimes with the boys, sometimes by myself. There are fine places to kayak in Maryland and West Virginia. I enjoy working around the house and in the yard, but my wife is the chief gardener."

"We are very happy in Cabin John. We have fine neighbors and I often bicycle to the training sites at Lock 6 or across from Anglers Inn. The boys do well in school. We've become quite Americanized, although we do speak Slovinian at home and my wife often prepares traditional meals. We're a part of both cultures."



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The next deadline is 10 am Wednesday Aug. 18 for the issue mailing Aug. 26.

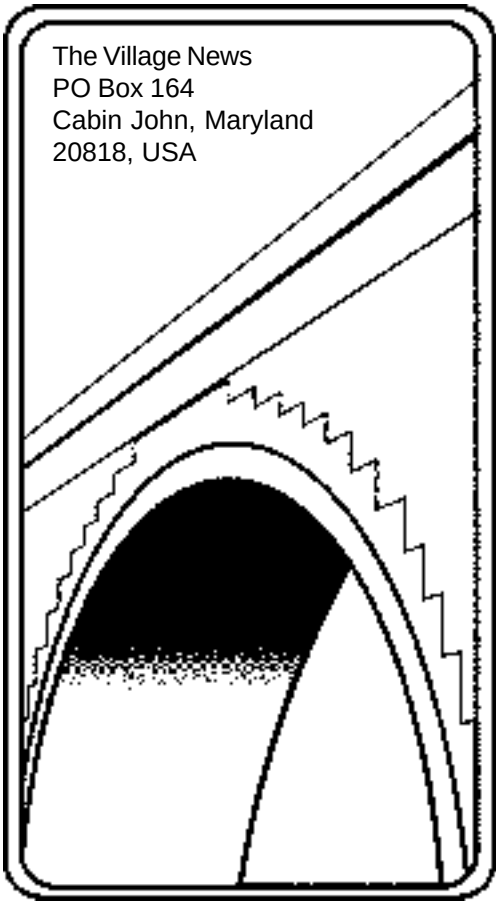
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