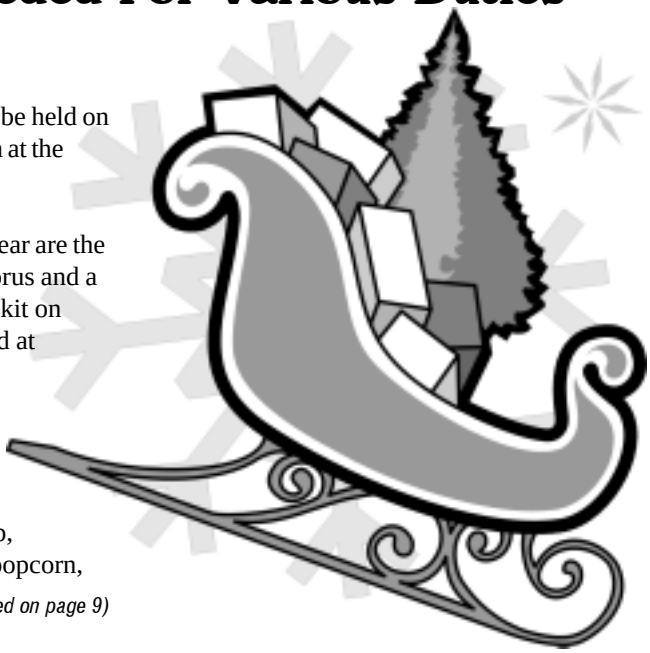
December 2004

# Village News

Volume 38 Issue 4 Serving the people of Cabin John and beyond

## Cabin John Holiday Party Set for December 12; Volunteers Are Needed For Various Duties

*by Burr Gray*



This year's Cabin John Holiday Party will be held on Sunday, December 12 from 4:30 to 6:30 pm at the Clara Barton Community Center and is co-sponsored by CJCA and the Clara Barton Community Center. Special features this year are the return performance of the Cabin John Chorus and a reprise of Al Twanmo's short very funny skit on the origin of Cabin John's name that he did at the Cabin John History night last summer. We need volunteers to run the party. Please contact Burr Gray (E-mail: burr.gray@alum.dartmouth.org or phone 703-607-2740 (w)) if you can help with one of the following things: decorations/set up, food pickup/setup, table & chairs setup, popcorn,

*(continued on page 9)*

## Cabin John Park Volunteer Fire Department Has Strong Connections to Local Community

*By Linda Ritzenberg*

Dateline 1930: No fire hydrants in Cabin John? Noting the absence of a ready source to fight fires, the 1938 "Ripley's Believe It Or Not" ran a feature—"The Fire Department Without Water." The text read, "Although a million gallons an hour flow past the front door, and Cabin John, MD maintains a fully equipped fire department, the village has no water supply. Yet, conduits supplying Washington, D.C. run directly in front of the firehouse."

Ripley's feature was written when our Cabin John Park Volunteer Fire Department occupied the classic red brick firehouse building on land donated by the Touhey family at the corner of MacArthur Boulevard and Seven Locks Road. Back then, a truck with a water tank and volunteers were essential to operating our fire department. Many Cabin Johners have volunteered for all sorts of duties at our community fire department over the past 74 years.

Cabin John residents Jane Hunter, Barbara Prather, and Mary Morgal are current members of the Ladies Auxiliary at the Cabin John Fire Department. Mary Morgal volunteered in 1953 and 51 years later still finds it "rewarding to help." Mary and her husband David live on 76th Street. You can find their home easily; just look for the handmade fire truck mailbox painted in distinctive Cabin John Fire Department's colors: white with blue striping.

Volunteering and community service runs in the Morgal family; both David and son David, Jr. are life member firefighters. David Morgal, Sr. acts as the Assistant Treasurer for the Cabin John Fire Department. Mary and David's two daughters,

*(continued on page 3)*

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# Neighborly News

*by Barbara Martin*

**Meredith Griggs** of 78th Street is a proud first-time grandma, thanks to daughter **Eliza Griggs**. Eliza and her husband live in Indianapolis with their baby girl, **Margaret Elizabeth.** Eliza grew up in Cabin John.

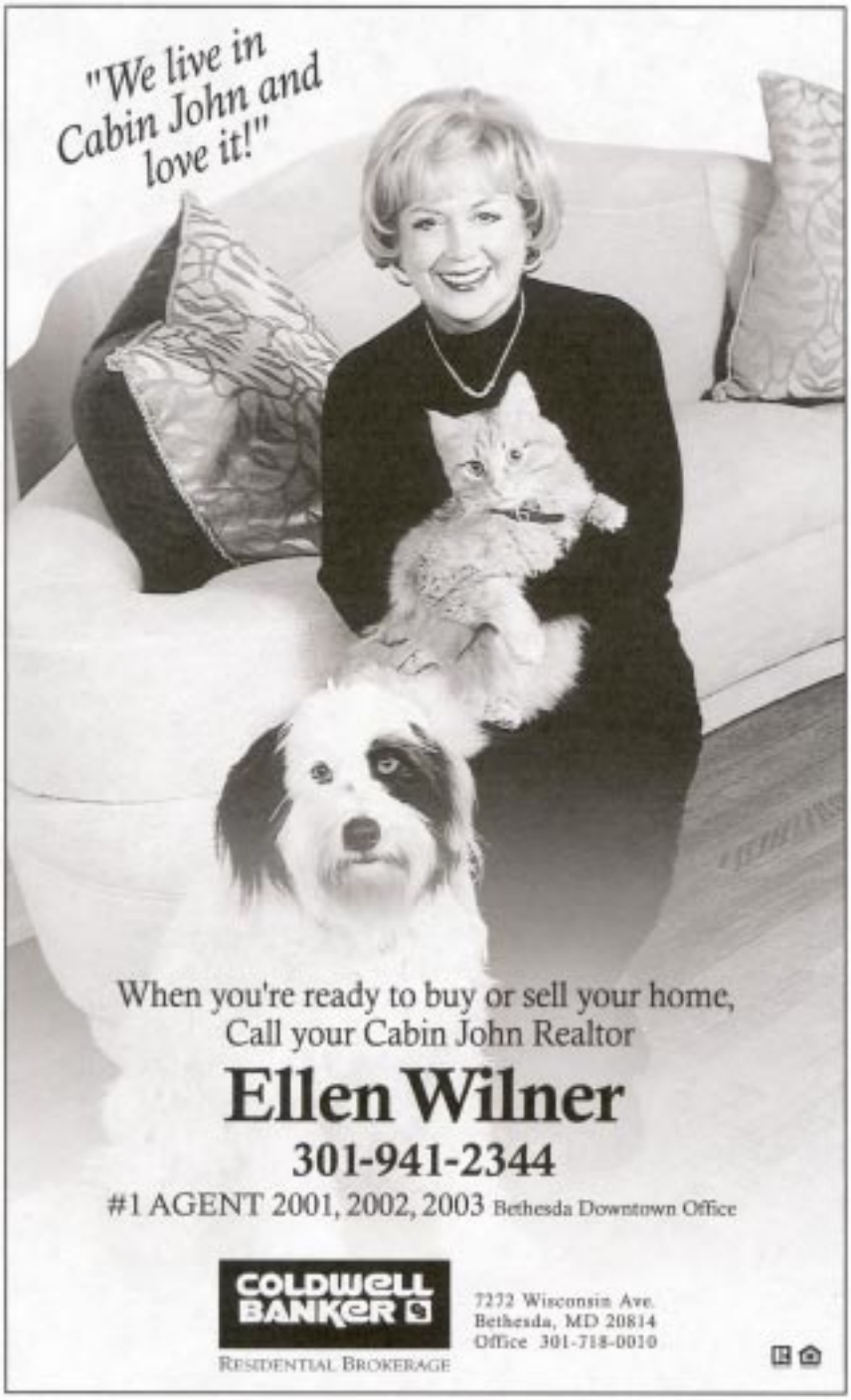
**Geraldine Shaw** died last month. She lived on Macarthur Boulevard and was a lifelong resident of our town. Mrs. Shaw was in one of the first classes at the Clara Barton School. Her daughter **Karen** and son **Steve** also attended Clara Barton. She was a member of Herman Presbyterian Church, the historic church on Persimmon Tree Lane.

**Tim Marvel** died suddenly last month of a massive heart attack. You will remember Tim as the cheerful big guy who used to run the High's store in Glen Echo. Tim, his mother, **June**, and the Marvel family managed High's for 30 years. Tim drove down every day from Keedysville MD, near Boonsboro. Tim's wife, **Sue Marvel,** is the niece of **Sarah Hughes,** who lives on Russell Road. His two children are **Christy** and **T.J.**

**Fred Mopsik** has retired as editor of *Along the Towpath*, the very fine newsletter of the C&O Canal Association. Fred has done a top-notch job of producing this publication since 2000. He lives with his wife, **Judie**, on 79th Street. Fred and Judie are enthusiastic hikers, and participated in two of the Justice Douglas memorial hikes along the entire 185-mile towpath.

We are still trying to give away Oriental persimmons from our tree, and also banana trees that have to come in for the winter. The price is right—free.

*Please send news items to me at barbmartin@comcast.net or call 301-229-3482.*




## Community Calendar

DEC NOV

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

**12** ..... Cabin John Holiday Party
Clara Barton Center
4:30 - 6:30 pm (see p. 1)

**18-19** ..... Glen Echo Art Show
Glen Echo Town Hall
1-5 pm (see p. 6)

**FIRE DEPT.**
*cont. from page 1*

daughter-in-law, and four granddaughters all serve in the Ladies Auxiliary. The Ladies Auxiliary supports the fire department by preparing and serving refreshments during the annual Open House (usually the first Sunday in October) and organizing and running the Annual Portrait Fund Drive. Mary says, "Fall is our busiest time." The ladies also cook for the firefighters working the River Road firehouse tree lot at Christmastime and prepare meals during Montgomery County Meetings at the firehouse. "Where there's a need, it always seems to get done," Mary says.

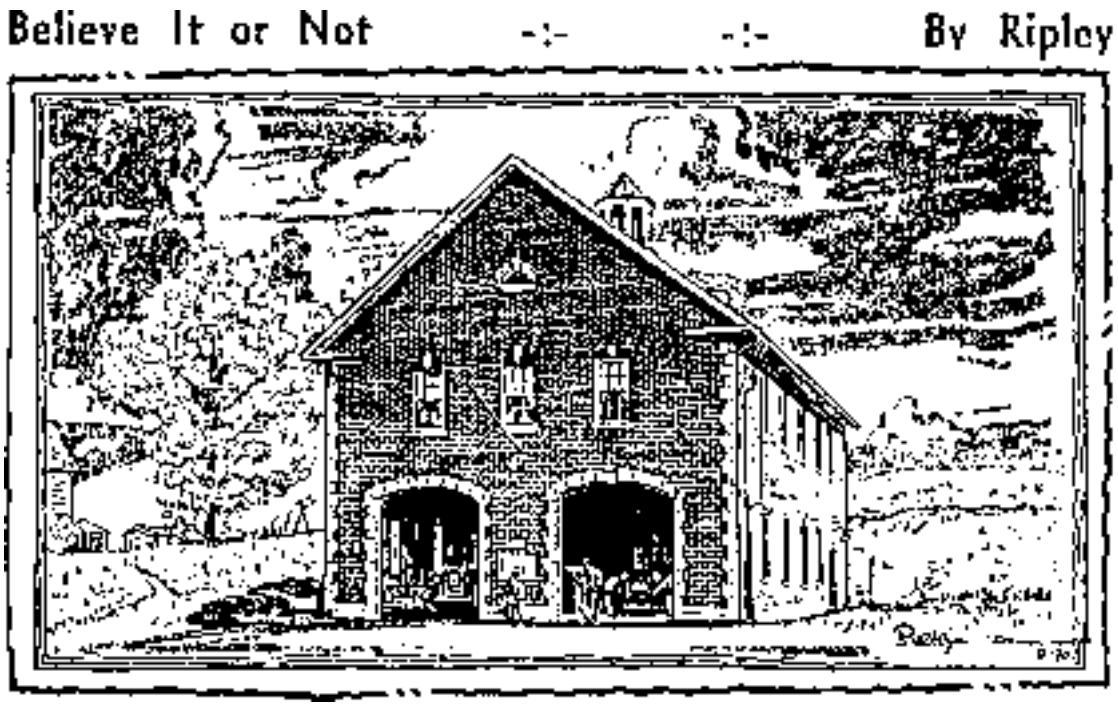



Illustration courtesy of James Seavey

*The Cabin John firehouse as it appeared in a 1938 Ripley's "Believe It or Not" feature.*

Do any of you remember the largest fire in Montgomery County history that went to a General Alarm? My family lived in a little house on Little Falls Creek and saw the awful sight. An oil storage facility was burning and flames reached up more than 100 feet during this historic November 1958 fire. It was Mary Morgal's brother, then a Cabin John resident and Cabin John volunteer firefighter, Robert W. "Bobby" Hook, who "voluntarily entered the flame area to turn off a valve between a pump house and a 450,000 gallon [oil] tank" that turned the tide, according to a news article at the time. Mary tells us "They sprayed him with foam and he walked through what looked like a wall of fire to cut off the valve." Robert W. Hook was honored in November 1958, for bravery in the line of duty.

Fire Rescue Chief James P. Seavey Sr. is Chief of today's Cabin John Park Volunteer Fire Department (CJPVFD). Chief Seavey with Deputy Chief Steve Miller run both the Fire Department's River Road Station #10 and Falls Road Station #30. The department moved into the River Road station in 1984, and the current Potomac station in 1970. Today's fire and rescue operations are larger than ever. Chief Seavey recalled that in 1978, these stations responded to approximately 800 calls for fire and rescue. In 2003, covering the communities of Cabin John, Potomac, and West Bethesda, fire and rescue responses totaled almost 4,300.

Chief Jim Seavey was raised in Glen Echo and worked at the MacArthur Boulevard Station right out of Walt Whitman High School while attending Montgomery Junior College. Chief

*(continued on page 10)*

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# CJCA News

*by Burr Gray*

*The next meeting of the CJCA will be Nov. 23, 7:30 pm at the Clara Barton Community Center.*

**Agenda for Next CJCA Meeting —** Open discussion of ways/projects to improve our community. All ideas considered with discussion, so bring them in.

**Summary of October 26, 2004 CJCA Meeting —** 1) Motion approved to support the construction of a sidewalk along the west side of Persimmon Tree Road from MacArthur Blvd to Avenel. The County is considering this proposal, which would provide greater safety to pedestrians and cyclists along that stretch of road. 2) Clara Barton Community Center (CBCC) Presentation – Billie Wilson of MO County gave a presentation and answered questions regarding the plans for activities and funding of the Community Center this year (FY 05).

***Activities*** - Billie passed out a list of activities with their attendance occurring at CBCC. The County is exploring an after-school homework program, but the meeting scheduled last month to discuss that possibility did not receive any attendance from the Cabin John community. (The Friends of CBCC group is working to schedule another meeting and make a concerted effort to determine if there is any real community interest in having such a program, which takes careful planning and obviously involves additional expense.)

***Old Agreement with Cabin John Community Re: Room Rentals*** - Barbara Martin provided the results of her research into the issue of whether an agreement existed between the County and the Cabin John community to not charge local Cabin John groups for use of the Center. While no specific written agreement has emerged, there is evidence in old issues of the November 1991 *Village News* and clear memories from reliable Cabin Johners that when the Cabin John Recreation Center burned down in the mid-1980's, the understanding between the parties was that CBCC would be renovated instead of rebuilding the Cabin John Rec Center, and because of that, the local Cabin John service groups would not be charged for use of CBCC. A motion was passed to have CJCA send a letter to the County asking them to comment on this issue and honor this agreement. Billie Wilson noted that activities that are co-sponsored by CBCC do not get charged room rental fees. (A listing of the rental fees appeared in the previous *Village News*.)

***Funding for FY 05*** – Billie Wilson noted that the Center will be getting approx. $10,000 less for part-time help this year than in FY 04. Herman Yeh, organizer of the so-called Potomac II Table Tennis Club, gave a presentation on the program and announced that last year's memberships had paid for the six ping pong tables that had been purchased from the Potomac Center for use at CBCC on Friday evenings and Saturday afternoons. Thus, a considerable amount of the membership dues this year (assuming a similar level of membership of approx. $2800) should be available for improvements at the Center. (If you are interested in joining the Table Tennis Club, please contact Herman at 301-299-3164 (h).)

***County Improvements/Purchases at CBCC in FY 05*** – the County does not have plans to make any substantial improvements to the Center in the next year. (One option that might be pursued is to submit a request to the County to improve the visibility of the manager's office so that someone sitting in the office will be able to monitor folk going in and out of the Center. One of the concerns expressed by the attendees at the meeting is that there does not appear to be adequate monitoring of the traffic in and out of the Center and a lacking in some cases of oversight of some Center activities.)

**CJ Directory Change —** Add the following - Page 84, Schwartz, Rhonda & Steve Wermiel 263-0771. Page 93, Wermiel, Steve and Rhonda Schwartz 263-0771.

**Dance the Night Away Again —** On February 26, 2005 (8–11 pm), the Deanna Bogart Band is returning to the Clara Barton Community Center to play some great music and blow the winter blues away! This is a wonderful opportunity to do some serious dancing, mingling, and partying close to home, while at the same time supporting the local Community Center. People really had a great time at this event last year and last year it sold out ahead of time, so think about getting your tickets in advance.


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Net proceeds from the sale of tickets will be used to support our local Community Center. A listing of how some of the monies raised last year were spent was included in last month's *Village News*.

Tickets in general are $25/person, but once again we need fifty individuals to pay $50 a ticket in order to cover most of the basic costs of the evening with the rest going to help the Community Center. Our $50 ticket purchasers will be forever known as Members of the Mosh Pit and great respect (and some other goodies) will be accorded them. You must be 21 or over to purchase tickets. The festivities will be from 8 until 11 pm, desserts and munchies are included in the ticket price, and a cash bar will be available for beer, wine and soda/water. Please contact Trudi Bick at (301) 229-5929 or trudibick@comcast.net for tickets. Checks should be made payable to "Friends of Clara Barton Community Center" or "Friends of CBCC". Feel free to make a donation even if you can't attend the festivities.

This event is being organized by the Friends of the Clara Barton Community Center, who are interested in dancing, hearing good music, and the continued success of activities and programs held at the Clara Barton Community Center. If you are interested in helping out with this event (decorations, setup, stage set-up, food serving, cleanup, etc), please contact Lori Rieckelman at (301) 320-6299 or rieckell@aol.com.

**Exercise Courses at Community Center —** Come join your neighbors and friends for the winter mini-session of fitness classes starting November 2, 2004 in the Social Hall of the Clara Barton Community Center. Here are the wonderful classes you have to choose from:

*Definitions Low Impact Aerobics* (Class #117838): You can get your heart rate up and enjoy the best of low impact aerobics with a safe, choreography-based, fun and creative one-hour class. The teaching level is beginner to intermediate. The class includes a warm-up, cardioportion, resistance and abdominal work and a long stretch all to dynamic and energizing music. Be prepared to enjoy yourself and work out at the same time! This class meets Monday and Friday mornings from 9:15-10:15 am from November 2 through December 23. Teacher is AFAA certified. $34.

*Definitions Strength Training*: Gain body strength, flexibility and endurance using free weights. This

*(continued on page 10)*

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## Mark Your Calendars for Gala Glen Echo Art Show Set for December 18-19



An unusual art exhibit has been scheduled for December in the Glen Echo Town Hall which will feature paintings of the town of Glen Echo and the Clara Barton house. The event is one of a series of events scheduled in 2004 to celebrate the town's centennial. The Town of Glen Echo was chartered in 1904.

The paintings will be by the art teachers, artists and students affiliated with the Yellow Barn studio in Glen Echo Park, and other artists, and will be for sale as well as on display. All proceeds will go directly to the artists.

Paintings by the Yellow Barn's celebrated instructors Walt Bartman, W. Michael Bartman III, Bonnie Lundy, Eric Butters, and others will be included. Other local artists who have painted Glen Echo town scenes are also invited to enter the show. Application information is available by contacting Jim Anderson at jimbo.ander@verizon.net and 301-229-3748.

Paintings will be on view and for sale the afternoons of Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 18 and 19, from 1 to 5 pm. We hope many Cabin John residents will attend.

This will be a unique opportunity to acquire an original work of art documenting sites in the area.

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## Mother Nature Thwarts Nut Collectors

Well, there were no nuts or acorns or black walnuts to collect at this year's Growing Native event held on Oct. 23. Seriously. This was a very strange year. After having two banner years when the crops were abundant, and CJCA paid cash on the barrelhead for black walnuts, but this year there was nothing. The thinking on the street is that the combination of a wet spring and those pesky cicadas (who nibbled the ends of tree branches) resulted in minimal output by the trees. John Gelb and Tom Rojas were standing by to help neighbors identify their trees and nuts, but their services were not put to the test. We do want to be organized next year though, and hopefully the nuts and acorns will be back, so please let John (229-5851, jgelb@erols.com) know if you have any of the following trees in your yard and would be willing to let volunteers do some collecting next fall. Our goal is to have a map of Cabin John that identifies the trees of interest listed below: Black Walnuts, Atlantic White Cedar, Bald Cypress, Black Oak, Chestnut Oak, Chinkapin Oak, Green Ash, Hazelnut, Northern Red Oak, Overcup Oak, Paw Paw, Persimmon, Pin Oak, Sassafras, Southern Red Oak, Swamp Chestnut Oak, Swamp White Oak, Water Oak, White Ash, White Oak, and Willow Oak.

*— Burr Gray*



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## Looking Back in Cabin John

*by Andrew E. Rice*

# Memories of the Cabin John Bridge Hotel

Most Cabin John residents know that where Cabin John Gardens now flourishes there once stood the magnificent Cabin John Bridge Hotel. Famed for its plantings, illumination, and music, as well as its food (Maryland Fried Chicken), the hotel was a popular rendezvous for more than four decades in the latter part of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th.

Recently I was looking at some old files and came across a newspaper article from the October 6, 1929 edition of the Washington Star newspaper. The hotel had already been closed, but the structure still stood (it burned down mysteriously about two years later), and Virginia Burbank, author of the article, captured some nostalgic memories about the hotel in its heyday.

She began by quoting an ad that had appeared in the Star on July 5, 1876: "CABIN JOHN BRIDGE HOTEL, situated at Cabin John Bridge, about 7 miles from Washington, can be reached by a delightful drive over a splendid road. It is adjacent to the Potomac River, where there is the finest bass fishing. The House is cool and airy, some distance above the level of the river. A fine ballroom is at the disposal of guests, and picnic parties will find fishing tackle for their use at reasonable rates. The bar is stocked with the choicest liquors, at city prices. Boarders may be accommodated by the day, week, or month at reasonable rates."

Burbank continues by telling how the hotel had developed from a refreshment stand for workers constructing the Union Arch into a 40-room building with a unique design of cupolas, observation towers and upper-floor verandas reached by outside stairways. In the basement, she adds, "there is a maze of underground passages connecting numerous rooms in which varieties of choice liquor were stored in the old days. These passages were so numerous that a stranger could easily become lost here."

Turning from the hotel itself, the article waxes rhapsodic about the surrounding grounds. "From the rear of the hotel, stretching down to the Potomac River and along Cabin John Creek, is the old park, consisting of 15 acres, the natural setting of which is unsurpassed for beauty in this section of the country...The park contains some very valuable evergreens, beautiful lindens, magnolias, symmetrical maples, pin oaks and other native trees. The gravel walks throughout the park are bordered with dense shrubbery, including some rare imported specimens."

"One may easily see that, in the palmy days of the hotel, these gardens were beautifully landscaped and well kept. In the spring the lilacs, deutzia, syringa, Japanese quince, bridal wreath, weigela, forsythia and other shrubs, together with the native wild flowers, made this park a riot of color and fragrance...."

Of particular interest, she notes, were the summer houses dotted through the park, one of them used also as a bandstand. She talked with a John Harper who told her "About 30 or 35 years ago Mr. Bobinger asked me to build some summer houses for him, so I put up those — drew the designs and did the work myself. The natural cedar lasts a long time and the buildings should still be in pretty good condition; but work of this sort is rare now, because of the scarcity of cedar."

If you and I had been living here 100 years ago, we undoubtedly would have seen the early morning horseback riders who stopped at the hotel for breakfast or the parties who came by carriage in the afternoons and evenings for a bass dinner. Cabin John has a lot of history to look back on.



**HOLIDAY PARTY**
*cont. from page 1*

kids crafts, Santa's gifts to kids, contacting local merchants to get raffle items, Christmas tree pickup/setup, and cleanup.

There will be two charitable causes making an appearance at the Holiday Party seeking your donations of hotel toiletries and children's toys. Oona Stieglitz is once again organizing an effort to collect unopened hotel toiletries (shampoos, sewing kits, etc) for distribution to homeless women's shelters. Surely the well-traveled Cabin John community has many of these items cluttering their cabintets. Bring some to the holiday party and put them in a decorated box that Oona will leave inside the large hall at the community center. Last year, this effort collected over 40 pounds of stuff!

We will also continue with the effort that Maria Whiteaker started two years ago of collecting clothing/toys/food to help the Childrens' Law Center (www.childrenslawcenter.org) in DC. The Children's Law Center is a nonprofit organization that provides free legal services to children, their families, and foster and kinship caregivers in the District of Columbia. They are looking for new or gently used winter clothes, toys & games, and non-perishable food items. So please bring something to help that effort. The Childrens' Law Center was very appreciative of Cabin John's help last year and we hope to repeat the success.

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**FIRE DEPT.**
*cont. from page 3*

Seavey's son James Seavey, Jr. and Deputy Chief Steve Miller's daughter have both joined the CJVFD team as firefighters.

Cabin John Fire Department operates under a "mutual aid" pact with neighboring counties to assist and respond, but their priority is the citizens of our local communities. Our fire rescue teams now run many services out of Station #10 and Station # 30 including fire suppression, smoke evacuation, emergency medical, advanced life support and water rescue.

Montgomery County firefighters must undergo rigorous formal training in all aspects of fire fighting. All firefighters must also be certified EMTs (Emergency Medical Technicians). Those volunteers choosing to do so, can be certified solely as EMTs and respond in Cabin John Fire Department ambulance and medic units.

Deputy Chief Steve Miller is Montgomery County's designated team leader of the "RRATS": River Rescue and Tactical Services Team. The RRATS are based in Cabin John and are responsible for rescue and recovery operations on the Potomac River and C&O Canal from the DC Line to Seneca. Water operations teams can utilize airboats, inflatable boats, Jon Boats, and boat support units. Chief Seavey says, "The River is now a year-round recreation area due to outdoor technical clothing and we've entered a new phase in service with water rescues. We can run 4 to 5 rescues a day out of Wide Water at Old Anglers." Chief says, "During winter the river and canal can be frozen. When the water is very low, we need an air boat for rescue operations. The bottom of these air boats have an inch and half polymer coating and you can drive them right over the low water and rocks. Our nationally-known Cabin John team had at least 50 saves in our area of the Potomac River and saved over 225 people caught in Hurricane Isabel's storm surge up in the Baltimore Harbor area and Chesapeake Bay during the Summer of 2004." Chief says, "They have won the coveted Higgins-Langley award twice."

Proud service by members of the fire department binds today's members to the founders of the CJPVFD in 1930. Chief Seavey says, "The priority of Stations #10 and #30 are the citizens of our community. We may be up on River Road, but we're the *Cabin John* Park Volunteer Fire Department!"

**CJCA NEWS**
*cont. from page 5*

class includes 5 minutes of warm-up, 40 minutes of strength training, 5 minutes of abdominal work and a 10-minute cool down with stretching. Please bring a mat/towel and light hand weights to class. The teaching level is beginner to intermediate. This class is offered: Tuesday and Thursday - 9:15-10:15 am (Class #117711); and Tuesday and Thursday - 7-8 pm (Class #117712). Both of these classes run from December 2 through December 23. $34.

To register on-line for any of these classes go to the Montgomery County MD Government website then to Culture and Leisure, click on RecWeb Recreation Registration. Follow the directions to set up an account and to register. Please call the Customer Service desk during business hours at (240) 777-6840 if you have any trouble with the on-line registration process. You can also register by picking up a Recreation Department book at any Montgomery County Rec Center. The registration form is included in the book and you can mail or fax it to the Recreation Department at the address listed.

If you have any questions please contact Juliet Rodman at beyondfit123@aol.com or 301.229.2390, or Judy Brooks at judy@brookes.com or 301.263.0388. Feel free to contact Juliet Rodman if you would like to try out any of these classes before you register. Thanks and we hope to see you at the Clara Barton Community Center.

### *Final Call for Cabin John Citizen Association Dues*

If you haven't yet sent in your dues for the 04-05 fiscal year, please do so soon. This will be our last reminder for this year. We have had an outstanding dues-paying effort on the part of Cabin Johners, and we will provide a summary of that in the next *Village News*. The dues are $15/person or family and can be sent to the Cabin John Citizens Association, P.O. Box 31, Cabin John, MD 20818. Remember that these dues, as well as gifts to CJCA, are not tax deductible.

Name _____

Address _____

E-mail _____

# Neighborhood Services

**CABIN JOHN DOG WALKS & PET SITTING:** Pet sitting for all your pets and midday walks for your dogs. To keep your pets safe, happy and healthy please call (301) 257-1076.

**CABIN JOHN AMERICAN-CHINESE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH** 7703 MacArthur Boulevard. Mixed cultural and traditional background, American and Chinese united in worshiping and serving God together. Residents of Cabin John and surrounding areas: you are warmly invited to share with us. Come and experience the Blessings!!!! English service 10 am, Chinese service 11:15 am on Sundays. Fellowship groups meet on Fridays at 8 pm for youth, young professionals, families and children. Call church office [Rev. Hii] at 301-229-8233.

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## What does the kingdom of heaven look like?

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"Jesus loves the little children,
All the children of the world..."



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301-229-3383
Worship 10:00 Sunday Sch. 10:15



## Glen Echo Baptist Church

*Serving Cabin John families since 1939*

*Dr. Ed Curtis, Th.D., Pastor*

**Bringing God's Truth to Life**

Sunday School .....9:30 am
Sunday Services.....11:00 am
Wednesday Activities .....7:00 pm
Mid-Week Bible Study.... Vassar Circle

# Classifieds




ALPINE VETERINARY HOSPITAL

Full Service Animal Hospital

**Mon-Fri 7:30 am - 7:00 pm**

**Sat 8:00 am - 2:00 pm**

7732 MacArthur Boulevard
Cabin John, MD 20818

**301/229-2400**


**WATERCOLOR CLASSES:** Small, friendly classes for adults. All levels, including complete beginners. Held in teacher's Victorian home in Garrett Park. Martha Seigel, MFA, The American University. 23 years experience. Call 301-946-5388.

**ABSTRACT PAINTINGS** by Cabin John resident JoAnn Clayton Townsend and Glen Echo resident Pauline Siple will be shown at the River Road Unitarian Church, 6301 River Road, January 3-31. A reception will be held January 16 from 3 to 5 pm. CJ and GE residents are cordially invited. RRUC: 301-229-0400.

**WITH THE HOLIDAYS COMING**, consider the gift of a HomePortrait by Cabin John resident, Robin Lewis. Call 301-229-1623.

*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.*


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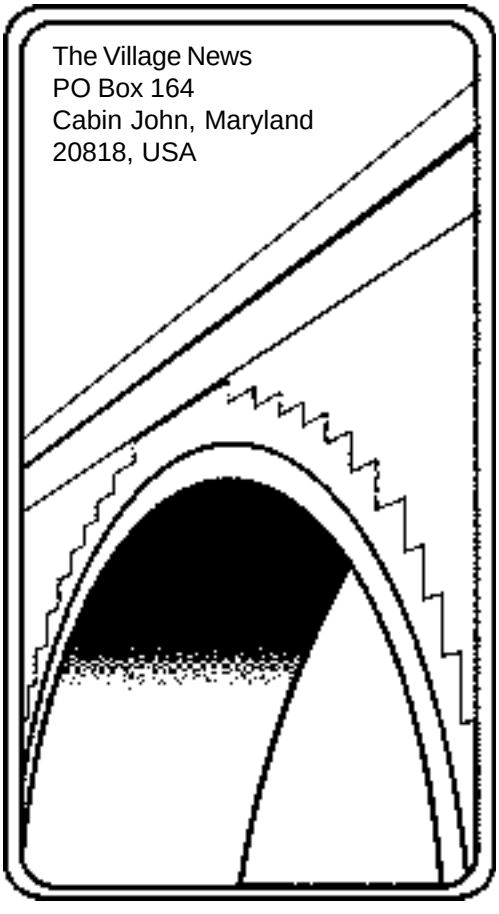
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