December 2005

Village News

Volume 39 Issue 3 Serving the people of Cabin John and beyond

Recent Montgomery County Actions Affecting Development in Cabin John Neighborhoods

by Burr Gray

On October 27, 2005, the County Planning Board denied the request by the new owner/developer of 6517 78th St to subdivide the lot in two and create a so-called pipestem lot on the back lot. A pipestem lot looks like a pipe because it connects to the main road via a narrow strip of property (which becomes the house's driveway), with the main part of the pipestem lot being behind the lot located on the road. This type of development creates greater density of housing. The neighbors in this instance, along with CJCA, did not support such a subdivision due to environmental and other factors. The board appeared to base most of its denial of the request on the fact that the general neighborhood (about 30 homes in the two block area) contained only two existing pipestem lots, and thus adding a new pipestem lot would not have been consistent with the neighborhood's character. The Board's position might also have been affected by the concern over development generally and compliance with zoning requirements following the Clarksburg matter. It seems likely that the Planning Board's decision will be appealed by the owner/developer.

The second item of note is the so-called zoning text amendment (03-27) adopted by the County Council (by a vote of 8-1) on October 18, 2005 (effective October 12, 2005), which establishes a direct and understandable method and criteria for measuring the height of a house and removes perceived loopholes that would have allowed a home substantially above 35 feet in zones (R-60 and R-90, such as Cabin John) where 35 feet is the height limit. This amendment does not affect ongoing construction or building permit applications filed prior to Oct 12. A copy of the entire text can be obtained from the County Council's website. The Mohican Hills civic association, with support from CJCA and other civic associations, was instrumental in generating support for this amendment, which was proposed in the Council by Howard Dennis.

We all recognize that Cabin John is changing, with a number of new larger homes replacing older smaller ones. This is the inevitable result of the attraction and desirability that our neighborhood has. The CJCA effort regarding these recent County actions recognizes that change will occur but supports placing reasonable limits on the impact that such change can bring.

Cabin John Collects Over a Ton of Nuts & Seeds

by Judy Welles

Cabin John outdid itself again in the Potomac Conservancy's annual Growing Native tree seed collection. Thanks to many Cabin John residents, families and children, more than a ton of black walnuts and acorns—over 3,500 pounds—were collected and left in bags at the River Center at Lockhouse 8.

"The people of Cabin John really made a difference. Their amazing efforts resulted in the highest rate of individual collection of tree seeds in the Potomac watershed," said Colleen Langan, Growing Native coordinator. Although some organized groups, such as schools, also collected large amounts, Cabin John's collection represented the efforts of many separate individuals.

Seeds collected by Cabin John were taken to the Maryland state forestry department, where they will be nurtured into seedlings and returned to communities as seedlings in one to two years to be planted and grown into

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Neighborly News

by Barbara Martin

Doug Cable died in October. Doug was a trapshooting champion, accomplished golfer, and lover of bluegrass. Doug lived most of his life in Cabin John and had many lifelong CJ friends. Doug's mother is **Uva Cable** of Macarthur Boulevard. His daughters, **Darla Cable** and **Dawn Fyock**, and his sons, **Doug** and **Don Cable** live in Cabin John with their families.

Leland Heflin Lui and her husband **Jim** are the parents of a baby girl, **Anorah**, born last month. Leland grew up in Cabin John and now lives in Los Angeles. She is the daughter of **Diane Leatherman** and of **Larry Heflin**.

Two longtime CJ families are leaving us. **Myra** and **Barry Polsky** are moving from Wishbone Terrace to Williamsburg, Virginia.

Linda and **Frank Ritzenberg** have moved from Macarthur Boulevard to Virginia to be closer to Linda's work. Frank has been the excellent chair of our Crab Feast for the last 2 years.

Two women, who are surely among the most senior of our citizens, have relocated. **Olga Long**, who lived at 79th and Macarthur for almost 70 years, is now in an assisted living complex in Delaware. Here's her address: Green Meadows at Dover, Apt 42, 150 Saulsbury Road, Dover DE 19904.

And **Virginia Payne**, who lived on 83rd Street for nearly as long, is staying with her daughters in Mt. Airy and Odenton. Virginia was a faithful member of the senior activities at the Community Center.

Walt Whitman High School's fall musical is *West Side Story*. Several Cabin John young people are part of the production. These presentations are always of near-professional quality. Saturday night is the last performance. $10 at the door.

Some 50 large photos of wildlife and landscapes of Alaska and Wyoming, taken by **John Morrow**, a resident of our neighbor community, Glen Echo, will be displayed at the Glen Echo Town Hall November 18-19. On Saturday, the exhibit will be open from 11 am to 9 pm.

Our Oriental persimmons are almost ripe. The Oriental variety are quite different from the small native ones. They are about the size and shape of tomatoes and taste—to me—like a blend of bananas and peaches. When ripe, they are a beautiful coral color and the fruit is the texture of pudding. Want some? Call us at 301-229-3482 and come over. Free, of course.

Be a good neighbor. When your yard sale is over, take down all the signs you posted. Technically, it's not legal to post signs without police permission, although we all do it. But let's not push our luck.

I'm very glad to receive news of CJ residents, past or present. But I need YOU to let me know: barbmartin@comcast.net or 301-229-3482.

Community Calendar

weekends til Nov 27 ..... Paint to Cure
Yellow Barn Gallery, Glen Echo Park
6 - 9 pm Fridays
12 - 8 pm Saturdays
12 - 5 pm Sundays (see p. 7)

NOV

19 ..... West Side Story
Walt Whitman High School
7:30 pm (see at left)

19 ..... Photography Exhibit
Glen Echo Town Hall
11 am - 9 pm (see at left)

20 ..... Save Darfur Coalition
Episcopal Church of the Redeemer
9:15 - 10:15 am (see p. 12)

22 ..... CJCA meeting
Clara Barton Center
7:30 pm (see p. 4)

27 ..... Founders Day
Gibson Grove AME Zion Church
11 am - 2 pm (see p. 4)

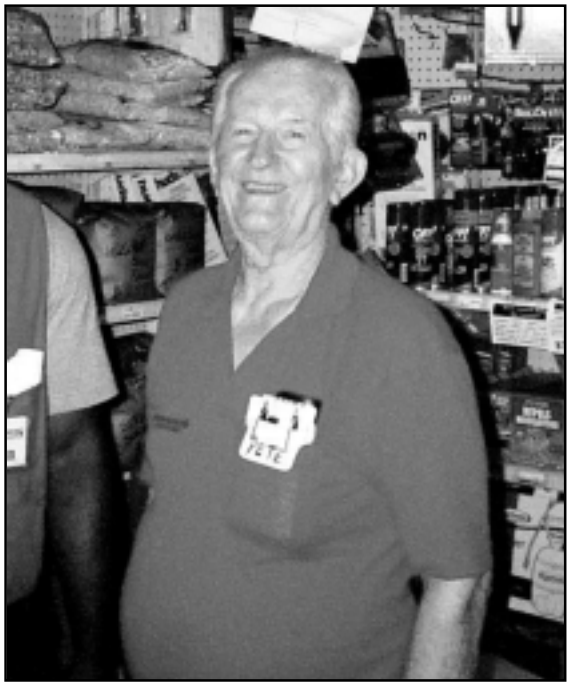
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11 ..... Cabin John Holiday Party
Clara Barton Center
4:30 - 6:30 pm

Pete Prather: Cabin Pete?

by Ginny Dean

The year that Pete Prather moved to Cabin John, Calvin Coolidge was president, Bugs Moran and six other gangsters were knocked off in the St. Valentine's Day Massacre, the first Academy Awards were handed out, Popeye made his debut in the comics, and Ernest Hemingway uncorked *A Farewell to Arms*. Since then, the 81-year-old resident has seen a lot of change, but never strayed far from home.



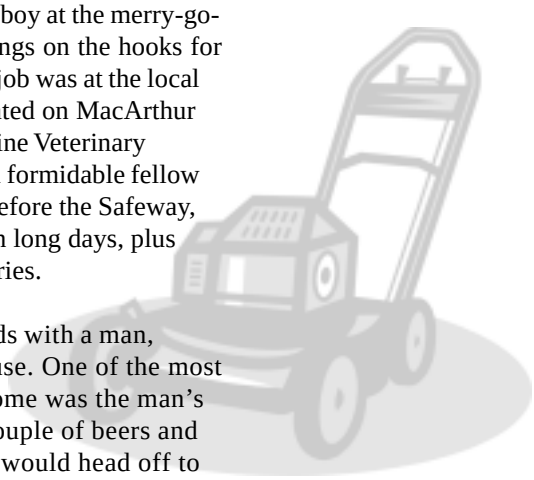
© Craig Smith

Pete Prather at Strosniders Hardware.

In 1924, Pete arrived somewhere in the middle (even he can't remember for sure) of what was to ultimately become the Prathers' 10 kids. Five boys, five girls who arrived two years apart, came as regularly as new members of the House of Representatives.

Pete was born in West Virginia, but his father had journeyed north seeking work and found it in Cabin John. The growing Prather clan soon joined him here in 1929, when Pete was five, and moved to Cabin John Gardens 10 years later. He remembers the area's wide open spaces, summer cottages on the banks of the canal and the old hotel burning down. He played in the river and attended the Clara Barton School where the Community Center is now located, while a two-man police department kept their four eyes peeled for speeders.

For a while, Pete was the ring boy at the merry-go-round, depositing the brass rings on the hooks for agile riders to spear. His next job was at the local grocery store, which was located on MacArthur Boulevard roughly where Alpine Veterinary Hospital now sits and run by a formidable fellow named Judge Benson. Long before the Safeway, Giant, and Peapod, Pete put in long days, plus holidays, and delivered groceries.



It was there he became friends with a man, occasionally visiting his house. One of the most interesting features of the home was the man's daughter, Barbara. After a couple of beers and some conversation, the man would head off to bed, leaving Pete and Barbara to…well, you get the idea.

Pete and Barbara took the trolley car to Union Station, shopped at the Acme on Old Georgetown Road, went to Rita Hayworth movies, and eventually married, producing three girls and one boy, who eventually produced 10 grandchildren, who eventually produced a great-grandchild.

But before settling down, Pete went off to war. He was a rifleman in the Army and was stationed in Italy, where he felt like he walked the length and breadth of the country. "One leg is shorter than the other from climbing all those hills," he insists.

One fateful day in 1963, Pete took a job working for Walter Strosnider at his namesake hardware store. Strosniders was located then, as it is now, on Arlington Road off Bradley Boulevard, the only paved street in town. The store opened in 1950 and occupied the space where Bradley Food & Beverage now resides. It had about 10

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CJCA News

by Burr Gray

The next meeting of the CJCA will be Nov. 22, 7:30 pm at the Clara Barton Community Center.

Next CJCA Meeting—November 22, 2005. Agenda: 1) CJCA efforts/position on construction in Cabin John—builders & homeowners welcome—open dialogue along with presentation on two recent developments (denial of pipestem request and County Approval of zoning text amendment 03-27, described briefly on page 1), 2) replacement of bridge historical panels with sturdier versions, 3) upcoming Dec. 11 CJCA Holiday Party.

Minutes of CJCA meeting of October 25—1) Gibson Grove A.M.E. Zion Church – Reverend Bankhead and his wife Judi gave a presentation on the status of restoration of the Gibson Grove Church (located on Seven Locks Rd.) as well as some history of the church and its founder, Sarah Gibson. The congregation is planning to go ahead with rebuilding and restoration (including some expansion) of the church, possibly commencing this spring. The estimated cost of $1.5 million is somewhat intimidating, but the church has faith and is moving ahead. The church is also in discussion with the state to see if the state would be willing to do some regrading to help make the property more usable, particularly in light of the fact that the state made it less useable when putting in the Beltway many years ago. A motion was passed to have CJCA send a letter to the state in support of the church's request and efforts. There is also a local filmmaker interested in doing a documentary on the renovation/revitalization of the church. The church is having a Founders Day on Nov. 27 (11 am– 2 pm) to be hosted at the Adat Shalom synagogue located at 7727 Persimmon Tree Lane (go up Persimmon Tree Road and take a right at the stop sign just after crossing over the Beltway). Cabin John residents are encouraged to attend. If you have a skill or craft that you think would be useful to the church when the reconstruction process actually begins, and are willing to help with the effort, please make sure that CJ resident Angela Coppola (229-2557) has your contact info. (CJCA will be keeping a list of residents who will pitch in to help with either labor or supplies when the time comes.)

2) Wireless Cabin John – CJ resident Steve Cash gave a short presentation on the possibility of setting up a system in Cabin John that would allow all homeowners access to the internet in a wireless fashion. This is done by either having a boosting of the relevant signal from a single high spot (such as the water tower) or by installing so-called "repeaters" in various homes. A couple of other local communities have done so (downtown Silver Spring and Dupont Circle), although none of those areas are almost entirely residential. The advantage is considerable savings to individual homes (which now pay an average of $30 – $40/mo for high speed internet access). There are a variety of issues to research before any concrete proposal is discussed by CJCA, such as 1) password protected or not, 2) what if the project goes ahead but a lot of people don't pay, 3) privacy issues, 4) reliability of the provider, etc. Steve will continue to research the issues, obtain feedback from the community as a whole, and then provide a specific proposal to be voted on at a future CJCA meeting.

3) Donation of $250 to Friends of Allison – Deb Duffy proposed, and the attendees voted to approve, a donation of $250 in Clare Schmidt's name to the Friends of Allison. That group paid for the bone marrow registration program at the last CJ blood drive. The actual costs of the registration, which netted 35 new potential donors to the list, were four/five times greater than the CJCA donation.

4) Final Results of Cabin John Gardens Efforts to House a Hurricane Katrina family – Despite real efforts and a tremendous generosity of spirit, the Cabin John Gardens residents were not able to get a family interested in taking advantage of the offer to temporarily house a New Orleans family that had lost their home. Other members of the CJ community provided commitments of money and resources as well, allowing the concept to be a real possibility. Now that this particular option has not materialized, CJCA will discuss other possibilities, such as identifying a similar citizen's association group down in New Orleans area and assisting them with their efforts to renew the identity and history of their community.

Dues Notice—Please pay your dues for the '05-'06 year if you haven't already. (We are running substantially behind last year's dues-paying level, but that was probably partly because everyone liked getting the directory, eh?) We included an envelope in a previous issue of the *Village News*, but if you've tossed that envelope, you can send

(continued on page 11)

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A Light in the Darkness



by Steve France

When I have read or watched *The Fellowship of the Ring*, (part one of the J.R.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* trilogy) I've always identified with the beautiful, natural, homey life of the Shire (the land of the hobbits in their cozy hobbit homes). Cabin John has more than a bit of the Shire in its natural beauty and down-home sweetness. Of course, the peaceful Shire is set against a backdrop of rising darkness and violence in the greater world around it, a darkness that finally begins to seep into the Shire but that calls forth unexpected hobbit strength.

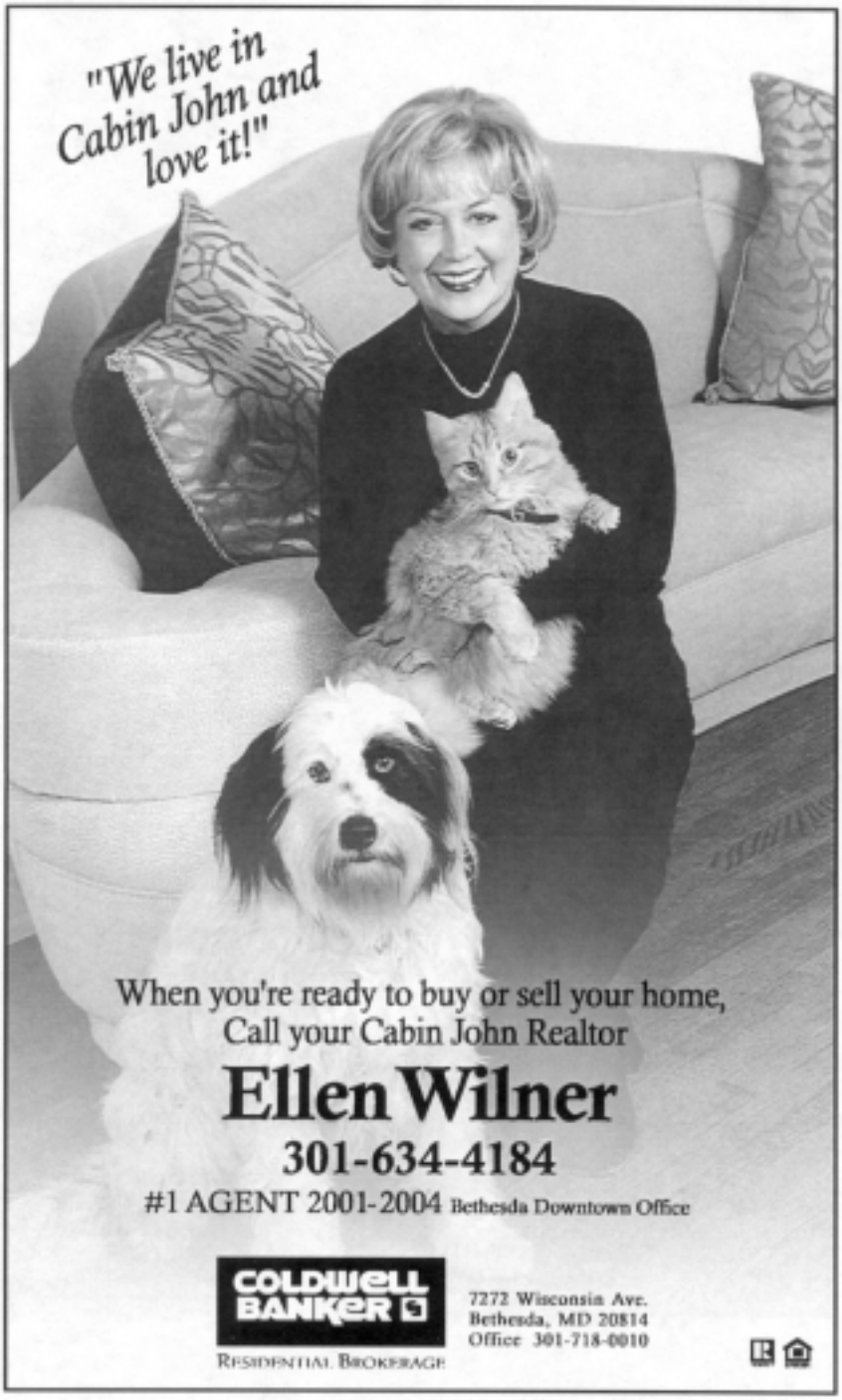
The feeling in the community house of the Cabin John Gardens at 8½ Webb on a recent Sunday evening had a touch of Tolkien in it. Gathered together as the sun settled down over the Potomac were 10 people. Two of them came from far away places—the Phillipines and Rwanda. They came to share their experiences of darkness and light, of being tortured in their home countries, surviving and moving on to become part of a "community of healing" known as the Torture Abolition and Survivors Support Coalition International (TASSC; *www.tassc.org*).

Along with these survivors (not "victims"), came Alice Zachman, who was raised on a farm in Minnesota but has spent the last 25 years working for peace and human rights. She now coordinates Friends of TASSC, which reaches out to alert the community to the spreading epidemic of torture in the world and to show us that it cannot defeat the love of people for each other. Survivors break out of the conspiracy of fear and silence that urges them to retreat into their shells or at least not to darken others' lives with the truth. They reach out for understanding, but also to instill faith, hope and love in others—to help heal us of the fear that violence is stronger than we are, or that we need to allow torture as the price we pay for our security.

The conversation was a little awkward at first, but soon our shared sense of compasssion began to warm our hearts. Connections were made, seeds took root, the shadow of torture gave way to a deeper light that promised not to fade.

Now, the survivors and a few new friends are working together to expand the circle of light in small ways and not so small ways. More gatherings are planned. For more information, call Steve France (240.498.2502) or Alice Zachman (202.529.2991). —

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Paint to Cure Event at Glen Echo's Yellow Barn Gallery

by Nancy Scribner

The Yellow Barn Gallery at Glen Echo Park will hold its first benefit, named "Paint to Cure," to support the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, a national organization renowned for their annual "Race for the Cure." The Gallery plans to offer the sale of paintings of more than 100 member artists on weekends through November 27 at Glen Echo Park. Each artist has made a contribution to the Breast Cancer Foundation for the privilege of hanging a painting in the show.

In 2004, Robyn Bartman, the wife and business partner of Walter Bartman, founder of the Yellow Barn, was diagnosed with breast cancer, enduring several surgeries and chemotherapy, and finally a bilateral mastectomy in 2005. The event is intended to raise awareness and provide donations through artist participation in support of breast cancer victims and their challenges. Statistics today show 1 out of every 8 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer in their lifetime. With donations and support, the ongoing research and treatment in the past five years has dramatically improved survival rates for your sisters, wives, mothers, daughters, and friends. Join our Paint to Cure benefit to help beat the odds.

Some of the finest works of the Yellow Barn artists, including those by Walter Bartman, Yellow Barn Director, Walter Bartman III, Assistant Director, and other local art professionals will be on display and for sale.

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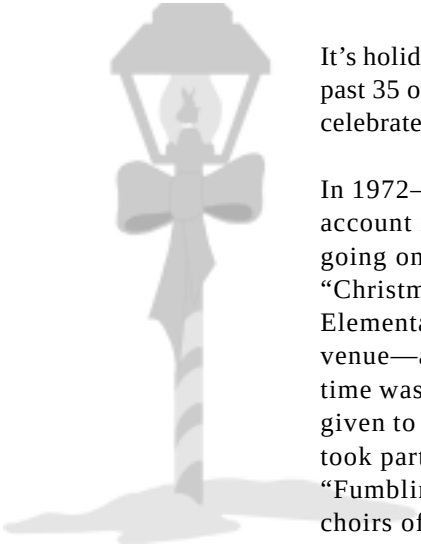
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Looking Back in Cabin John

by Andrew E. Rice

The Holiday Spirit in Our Town



It's holiday time again! Looking back over the past 35 or 40 years, how have we in Cabin John celebrated as a community?

In 1972—the first year in which I found an account in *The Village News*—there was a lot going on at what was then called the "Christmas party." The Clara Barton Elementary School auditorium was the venue—as it still is today—but the starting time was 7:30 pm and special recognition was given to the three-generation families who took part. An instrumental group called the "Fumblin' Five" entertained and the combined choirs of three churches (the Gibson Grove AME Zion Church, Cabin John Methodist Church, and Glen Echo Baptist Church) sang Christmas carols. Of course, Santa appeared also. The Clara Barton PTA coordinated arrangements, and contributions of food and drink (as well as decorations and publicity) were made by several other organizations (Homemakers, Scouts, etc.).

By 1974, sponsorship had shifted to the Citizens Association who kept the same pattern, but added a new feature. For me, it was the high point of the evening: the performance of Christmas music (mostly clanging gongs and jingling bells, as I recall) by the 4-year-old school. In 1974 the auditorium still had a stage at its south end and the boys and girls sang from there.

As the years went by, the features of the party as we know it today became increasingly familiar: tree decorating, arts and crafts, storytelling, carol singing, maybe an instrumental solo, Santa, etc., with the most important change being a shift from an evening (7 to 9) event to a late afternoon one. It also became more ecumenical, with its name changed about 1983 to the Cabin John Holiday Party and with recognition of Hannukah and Kwanzaa.

In 1985, with renovation of the Clara Barton building under way, the party's site shifted for several years to the parish hall of United Methodist Church. These parties stand out for me particularly since more than once I had the privilege of donning the Santa Claus costume (not too easy in the cramped confines of the bathroom!) and emerging with my sack to hand out little presents to the children.

And then, in 1994, this unexpected headline appeared in *The Village News*: "Holiday Party Cancelled." "We are sorry to report," said the news story, "that no one stepped forward to support the Holiday Party." The cancellation vividly illustrated the fact that, from the very beginning, volunteers have been the workers—as well as the leadership—for each party.

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What had happened? Was the local volunteer spirit dead?

Not so. Spurred by this dramatic turn of events, the community rallied, and by the following year the party was back on the tracks. New support from the merchants of Cabin John was obtained, and Santa began arriving on the Cabin John Volunteer Fire Department fire truck. A tradition had been re-established!

So, if you haven't been to a party recently (or even if you have), why not come this year? Maybe we should adopt the theme of the 1972 party and promote this as a three-generation event. After all, holiday time is family time!



A Snapshot From the Olden Days



In 1977, these Cabin John boys relaxed at the Good'n'Quick (now the Captain's Market) when it was owned by Bill Castle. From left: John Rabner, Gary Senger, Andy Clark, Wayne Cissel, John Hughes twirling the basketball, Benny Bays, Buddy (George) Kuster. Where are they now? John Rabner owns and operates First Choice Painting and Home Improvements in CJ; Gary Senger has a commercial cleaning company in Norfolk VA; Andy Clark is a podiatrist in Toledo OH; Wayne Cissel and his wife have a temporary employment service; and John Hughes owns a landscaping business in Silver Spring. If you know where Benny Bays and Buddy Kuster are now, the *Village News* would like to hear.



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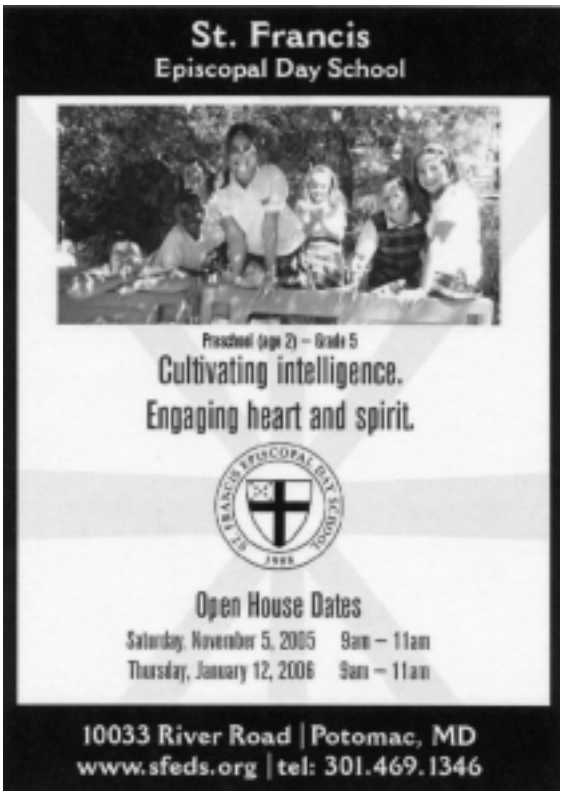
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PRATHER
cont. from page 3

employees. What made the day so noteworthy was the fact that Pete Prather walked in as an employee that day and continued to do so for the next 42 years. He became the Cal Ripken of hardware.

Pete did a stint in every department Strosniders had to offer, beginning in the electrical section and moving on to housewares, hardware, plumbing, you name it—and becoming something of an expert in each. But when he planted himself in the garden department, Pete took root.

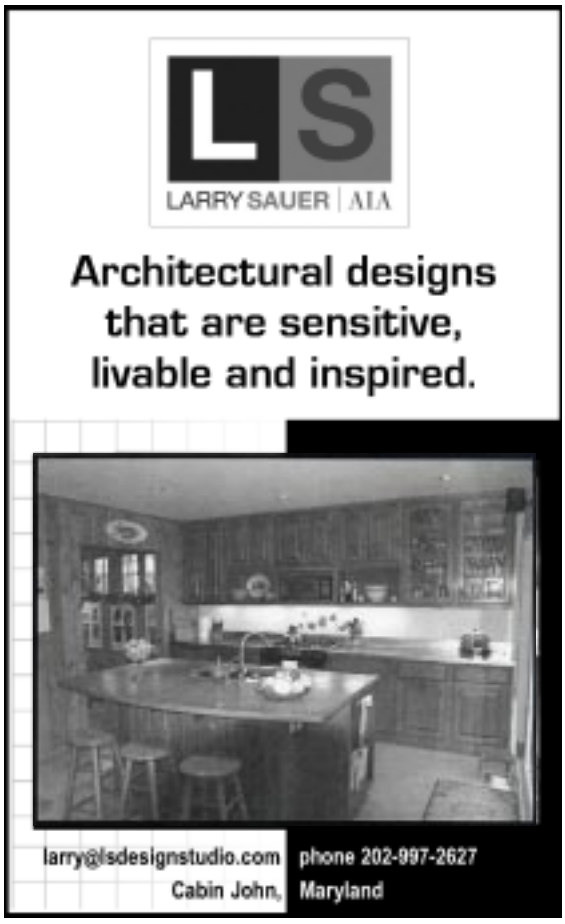
His time on his feet in the Army proved to be relevant training. "Every job I've had I've been on my feet," he says. "Sitting-down jobs wear you out."

Just before he retired a couple of months ago, Pete Prather still wasn't sitting and he wasn't showing any signs of wearing out. He'd haul bags of fertilizer the size and weight of a well-fed five-year-old and come up with solutions to gardening challenges without having to give them a moment's thought. He could recite the store's inventory and what every compound and contraption could do like a sportscaster rattling off batting averages, and he had a work ethic the likes of which you don't see much anymore.

"I tell the customers what I know. I don't try to sell them something they don't need or won't do the job." Anyone who has ever had to flee from an overly aggressive salesman or field a telemarketing call when the lamb chops are burning or the dog has just eaten the philodendron would love Pete's user-friendly philosophy. Give 'em what they need and only what they need.

Pete's the strong, silent type who brushes off compliments like lint off a sweater. But the farewell that Strosniders staged for him, their longest tenured employee, must have gotten even this sturdy soul choked up. He and Barbara sold their place in Cabin John Gardens, packed up their belongings and their little dog, JJ, and headed down the road to Palm Coast, Florida.

Before he left, he seemed a little uncertain about what he would do without Strosniders to go to every morning. But of one thing there is no doubt. Pete Prather will find a way of being productive, of providing exceptional customer service, and of making a home in his new community. Godspeed. —



GROWING NATIVE
cont. from page 1

streamside forests. Trees keep streams cleaner because their roots act as sponges, absorbing pollutants before they wash off the land. They also reduce soil erosion.

Growing Native is coordinated by the Potomac Conservancy on behalf of the Potomac Watershed Partnership that includes Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, Pennsylvania and the District of Columbia. Since 1993, the Potomac Conservancy (*www.potomac.org*) has been protecting the health, beauty, and enjoyment of the Potomac River and its tributaries.

"The health of our waterways is largely determined by how we treat their adjacent lands," says Matthew Logan, President of the Potomac Conservancy. "By restoring streamside lands into healthy forests, Growing Native supports one of the most effective measures we can take to protect the waters on which we all rely for our health and enjoyment."

Since 2001, when the Growing Native program began, 19,000 volunteers have collected enough seeds to generate nearly four million trees. Once planted along streams across the region, these trees will help restore as many as 34,000 acres.



The overflowing collection bin at Lockhouse 8.

CJCA NEWS
cont. from page 4

the check for $15/household to CJCA, P.O. Box 31, Cabin John, MD 20818. Dues and gifts to CJCA are not tax deductible.

Note of some upcoming events and current programs—1) The CJCA Holiday Party is scheduled for Sunday, December 11 from 4:30 – 6:30 pm, and 2) the fall season of the Homework Club for elementary school children continues; it meets Tuesdays and Thursdays after school at the Community Center (contact Modestine Snead – 301-229-0010 for more info). We now have 11 children in the program.

Friends of Clara Barton Community Center (FCBCC)—We had one local resident join up but are still looking for some more volunteers that would be willing to help organize some events at the Community Center over the next year, such as a Bingo Night, or a Family Fun Night. Please contact Lori Rieckelman (301-320-6299) if you can help with these projects. FCBCC is also looking for two or three CJ/Bannockburn residents to join the FCBCC Board. The Board meets about 5 times/year and helps plan and support programs and events at the Community Center.

New parking spaces—On October 24, 2005, the Mont. County Dept. of Permitting Services approved the request by the MacArthur Plaza Shopping Center to add 11 new parking spaces to the parking lot just downhill of the Bethesda Co-op and to add one parking space in front of where the old BB&T Bank (now the new film-to-CD store) was located. This was a proposal that was thoroughly researched and supported, although not without some opposition, by CJCA. There was also an agreement signed between CJCA and the Shopping Center providing that CJCA's support for the proposal was contingent on certain commitments by the Shopping Center owners. Mike Garret indicated that the planning for the expansion will take place this fall, with the actual addition of the spaces to occur next spring.

Classifieds

Alicia's
"Stretch & Tone" Yoga
Weekday mornings at two locations
Carderock Swim & Tennis Club
- Episcopal Church of the Redeemer
Join Any Time!
First five-week session free
Certified instructor, Yoga Alliance registered
301–770–7994; alexercise@comcast.net



Andrea Caplan, B.A., C.M.T.
multimodal bodywork
Cabin John Silver Spring
301-346-5716
www.thebodypolitic.net

SAVE DARFUR COALITION will speak to the latest situation and what can be done to protect the lives of two million people in the Darfur region of Sudan. Host: Episcopal Church of the Redeemer, 6201 Dunrobbin Dr. at MacArthur Blvd. Time: November 20 9:15-10:15 am. All welcome to this free event. 301-229-3770.

TWO CANOES for sale - $50 and $75, includes paddles and life vests. Call 301-229-2568.

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

THE VILLAGE NEWS is published monthly except in July and December and is sent free to all 800+ homes in Cabin John. Others may subscribe for $5 per year. Send news, ads, letters, and subscriptions to: The Village News PO Box 164 Cabin John, MD 20818 [or heidiblewis@earthlink.net]

The next deadline is 10 am, Wednesday, Jan. 11, for the issue mailing Jan. 19.

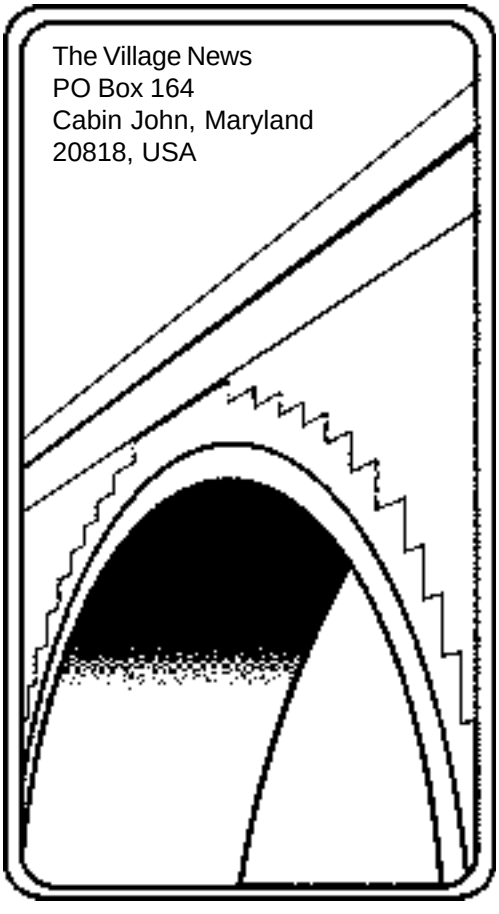
Volunteers who make the Village News possible: Heidi Brown Lewis–editor, Barbara and Reed Martin–distribution & proofreading, Lorraine Minor–business manager, Tim Weedlun–layout editor.

Regular Contributors: Burr Gray, Andy Rice, Barbara Martin.

Ads: 301-229-3515 or mail to *Village News* at above address

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