The Village News

SERVING THE PEOPLE OF CABIN JOHN

FEBRUARY 2023 | VOLUME 57 | ISSUE 2

Sewer Surprise at CJCA Meeting

By Scott Lewis

At the January CJCA meeting, what was meant to be a discussion on the sewer bypass work happening where the C&O Canal intersects with Cabin John Creek at the bottom of the path from the one-lane bridge morphed into a productive and interesting conversation on a number of topics related to the canal, the sewer system, and related topics.

A number of representatives from DC Water and from the National Park Service joined virtually—we are grateful for their time and the information they shared. The meeting also spawned follow-on activities, including sending invitations to both the WSSC and the NPS to attend an upcoming meeting.

The work being conducted now at the Cabin John Creek underpass and wooden footbridge over the canal is WSSC work (there was some confusion regarding which utility was responsible for this current work, as the WSSC sent the CJCA to DC Water). According to DC Water, WSSC is replacing metering-related equipment. This is where the Potomac Interceptor, the main sewer, and the sewer pipe coming down Cabin John Creek merge. We will get more information on this project and pass that along to the CJCA.

Perhaps the most interesting new information shared was regarding the sewer rehab project recently initiated in Cabin John and beyond. The Potomac Interceptor, which travels through Cabin John along the canal, is constructed of reinforced concrete pipe (RCP), ranging from 72 to 96 inches in diameter and terminates at the Blue Plains treatment plant. Known as the LZ09 and LZ03 Potomac Interceptor Pipe Rehabilitation, Montgomery County, MD and the District of Columbia Project, DC Water is being proactive and evaluating the state of these sewer lines and will develop a remediation strategy for the sewer pipe as necessary. Only after the state of the sewer pipes is known can a remediation plan be created, but DC Water notes that this project will extend the useful life of the RCP approximately 50 years. [Continued on pg. 3]

CJ Online Directory Is Live

By Marcy Harrison

If you are a Cabin John resident and have a valid email address in the directory database, you may set up a unique, password-protected account so that you can view the resident listings in the directory online from any computer or mobile device. Detailed instructions are available on the CJCA website (www.cabinjohn.org): Get Connected/CJ Directory.

As a reminder, if you do not want to share your contact information online, you can opt out entirely or partially. See the instructions on the website. If you have any questions or concerns contact Marcy Harrison, CJCA VP Communications/Directory administrator at cjdirectory2020@gmail.com or call 301-908-8906. ##

February CJCA Meeting 7:30 on 22nd

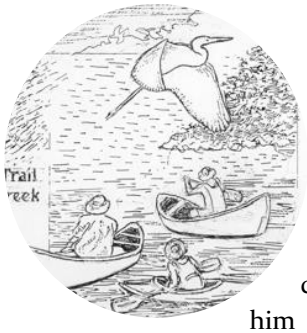
Please join us on Wednesday, **February 22 at 7:30 pm** for the CJCA Meeting at CBCC. Since this past fall, we have used GoogleMeet to allow Cabin Johnners to attend CJCA meetings remotely. For the Feb. meeting, the GoogleMeet code is: ycj-oxsi-knm

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

CJCA meeting **– Wednesday, Feb. 22, 7:30 pm**

Minnie's Island Clean-up **– Saturday, Feb. 25, 8:30am**

Bingo Night at CBCC **– Friday, Mar. 31, 7:00 pm**



Neighborly News

Tiara Vadiee of 79th St. shares a kudos: "I want to share appreciation for my neighbor **Mike Gidding** on 79th St. Every day, on his way to and from the community center, he brings with him a plastic bag, diligently scans the sidewalk of MacArthur, and collects every visible pieces of litter to discard. He helps keeps our community beautiful. His dutiful work doesn't go unnoticed."



After honing her skills on the Whitman hockey team, CJ native **Amy Arbetman** (foreground, no. 91) of 76th St. is now a junior at Macalester College and the co-captain of the women's hockey team.



Kathleen Black (foreground) of 75th St. shares a pic from the slopes in Steamboat Springs, CO, with a couple of former CJ young men now grown and flown – **Willis Russell**, formerly of 76th St. (back L), and **Liam Black**, formerly of 75th St. (back R)

The **Cabin John Ladies Coffee Group** meets Wednesdays from 10am – 12pm in the Senior Room of the CBCC. This group has been meeting in some fashion or another for more than 2 decades - newcomers are always welcome – just show up on a Wednesday.

Minnie's Island Conservancy is holding a clean-up day on Saturday, February 25 from 8:30 am – 11:30 am, meeting at Lock 8. For more information and to sign-up: https://www.minniesisland.org/event-details/volunteer-day-minnies-clean-up-february

From **John Nowick**, a neighbor in the nearby community of Mohican Hills: "Hi, neighbors. We're fighting the spread of kudzu and other invasive vines in our area. In particular, we're focused on the massive vines strangling trees on National Park Service (NPS) land along Clara Barton Parkway and the southern side of MacArthur Boulevard from Brookmont to Cabin John. The big old trees smothered in vines are dying and the dead zones blanketed by invasives are expanding. The effort is fun and community-building. Join us! For information contact me at avanti7700@verizon.net"

Please share with us at vneditorial@gmail.com news of milestones, gatherings, births, deaths, new neighbors, and anything else related to Cabin Johners.

Trivia Night a Great Success

By Scott Lewis

Cabin Johners braved a somewhat wintery evening to join over 100 of their friends and neighbors to participate in the 2023 CJCA Trivia Night. Our trivia callers Penelope Weinberger and Erik Ewald did a fabulous job mixing question topics and difficulty.

After 6 rounds and a final question—where teams could put points at risk—this year's winner was the **Red Hot Trivia Peppers:**



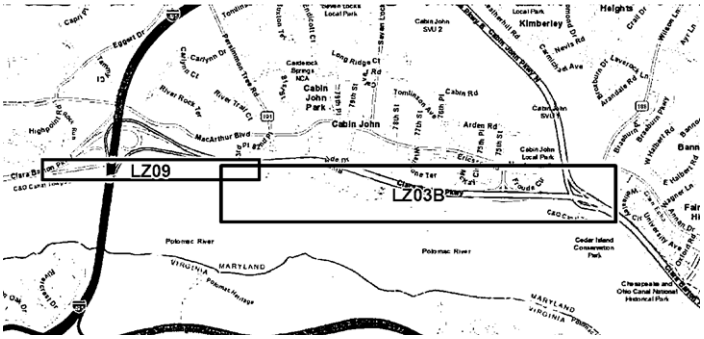
Pictured L-R: Jack Colavita, Julia Livshin, Delaney Corcoran, Ethan Ostrow, Stacey and Phil Corcoran, Mike Ellert-Beck and Amy Elsbree.

Huge thanks to the volunteers who made this event possible by showing up 2 hours early and staying until the last table was stored and trash bag taken out: Helen and Clive Harris, Alex Harris, Susan and Patrick Fitzgerald, Barbara Wilmarth, Jackie Hoglund, Theresa Burton, Florence Lehr, and Elliott Schoen.

Thank you all for coming out—see you in 2024!

##

[*Sewer Surprise* – continued from pg. 1]



This map illustrates the two zones that are part of this project (a third zone is along the DC/MD border). The project team includes DC Water and Sewer Authority (DC Water), NPS, and two design consultants, Greeley and Hansen and O'Brien & Gere. The project is following the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and unfortunately the public comment period closed in June 2022. Lastly, the work on the LZ09 has an anticipated construction start date of spring 2024 and a completion date of fall 2025. For the LZ03 B zone, we only know the anticipated construction start date is 2025.

Lastly, the NPS shared information on what is known as the Timber Wall. This is just outbound from mile 11 (and outside Cabin John but of interest to many CJers). Built many years ago, these timbers were stacked to create a wall to support the towpath and the canal itself. Naturally, over time, the timbers have decayed, threatening the integrity of the Timber Wall. The NPS is actively considering steps to address this issue but did not share many of these at the meeting. The CJCA will invite the NPS to an upcoming meeting to discuss this particular project and the canal in general. Stay tuned.

The well-attended meeting was aided by a number of CJCAers who shared their knowledge on the topics discussed. Of course all shared their opinions—this is, of course, the CJCA! ##

Real Estate Activity in Cabin John

NOV - DEC 2022 Courtesy Cabin John realtor Rachelle Cherol

ACTIVE UNDER CONTRACT
7630 Tomlinson Ave.#L-10 List Price $205,000
0BR, 1FB, 0GAR, 450SQ.FT.

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10:30 a.m. Sunday Worship (with choir), Coffee Hour
Music, Children & Youth, Adult Ed, Outreach, Pastoral Care
Music at Redeemer
Friday, Feb 3, 7PM CLARINET NIGHT
Kassia Music and members of the Navy Band
Saturday, Feb 18, 7PM ORGAN CONCERT
Sam Scheff, organist

'Cat Man' and Other Tales From the Quarry

By Rachel Donnan

Nestled in the woods behind 81st Street are the remnants of Bucolston Quarry. A brief stroll along the path leads to the mossy outline of a shallow pond and ruins of a stone cottage, its graffiti-covered chimney still precariously standing. Some rusted metal bits, both large and small, litter the woods amongst decaying leaves. A stone bridge arches over the creek.



Stone bridge. Photo: R. Donnan

The trail running from the end of 80th Place into the woods is used mostly by dog walkers nowadays. However, to local Cabin John boys in the 1950s (and perhaps a few girls), the old abandoned quarry and woods were a place of endless adventures and exploration, model boat races in the creek, and even home to a storied recluse with countless cats.

Bucolston Quarry was owned by Hugh White, a federal government lawyer who resided on Main Street (now 81st Street). It operated from 1926 to 1943. The quarry supplied the stone for the Calvert Bridge in Washington, DC, as well as an underpass in Silver Spring.

Dennis Carter spent his primary school years in Cabin John and moved to the house his father and uncle built at the top of 81st Street in 1950. Now living in Texas, he recently reminisced about his adventures in the quarry and woods behind his house, which he, his brother, and friends roamed as kids.

The small building along the dirt road was the "weighing station" and opposite was an "obscure elliptical pond which was always covered with layers of leaves. This is where we used to come and get tadpoles." One night the weighing station caught fire, and Dennis remembers the fire trucks lined up along the dirt road below his house. His father "went down and helped put the fire out with my mother's broom. Needless to say, there wasn't much broom left when he returned."



The remains of the weighing house. Photo: R. Donnan

During one summer, Dennis and his brother built a dam in the creek and held toy boat races with other neighborhood children. They built cable cars from toy erector sets which traveled along a kite string rigged from his porch into the woods.

As with many childhood adventure stories, there was also the requisite mysterious figure in the woods who instilled fear into neighborhood kids. "We called him the 'Cat Man,'" says Dennis. "I only saw him once when he cut across our yard, probably on his way to hitchhike up Persimmon Tree Road. All I remember about him was that he wore a large brimmed floppy hat and had a long coat" and lived in the weighing station with many cats.

Cabin John resident Paul Mazzi grew up on 81st Street and has lived here his entire life (except for his 1966-1969 stint in the army) and "can't imagine living anywhere else."

Paul was friends with Dennis' older brother Fuzzy, and he too fondly recalls adventures in the woods. "The stone quarry was a most amazing place. For us young boys it was adventure on steroids."

He describes two large ponds created by the excavated stone that measured about 30 x 40 feet across and up to a few feet deep. The nearby creek and rainwater ensured the ponds were always full. "Snakes, salamanders, spiders, frogs, tadpoles—who could ask for anything better than that."

Paul also remembers the recluse residing in the woods, albeit slightly differently as the cat lady, called "Cat Man" by Cabin John kids. Cat Man lived with many felines "in a ramshackle

shack across from the weigh station. Everything was in a state of disrepair," says Paul, " and I saw the elderly lady only on rare occasions. We would sneak by the shack hoping not to be noticed and scolded."

As he and his friends became older, the canal and river became far more interesting spots to explore.

Evan Mater, who died in 2021, lived on 81st Street his entire life. Evan knew the old quarry well, and once led a small group of neighbors on a tour of the woods many years ago. He even found the remains of his old 1949 Plymouth that he'd crashed into the quarry as a young man, in an attempt to create some cinematic smash-up that ended in a fizzle as the car rolled down into the hole. Wander far enough into the woods and you can still find it. (Bob Peterson, a neighbor, wrote about this excursion for The Village News in 2008).

Evan also shared his memories of Cat Man living in the woods looking after many strays. Cat Man apparently never returned after the weighing station burned in the fire, though the cats wandered the woods for many years after.

That timelessness of childhood adventure and wonder continues in Cabin John. When we first moved here, my school-aged children loved to explore these woods too, poking around the old weighing station, building a dirt bike track, and searching for treasures with a metal detector. We never did come across any cats.

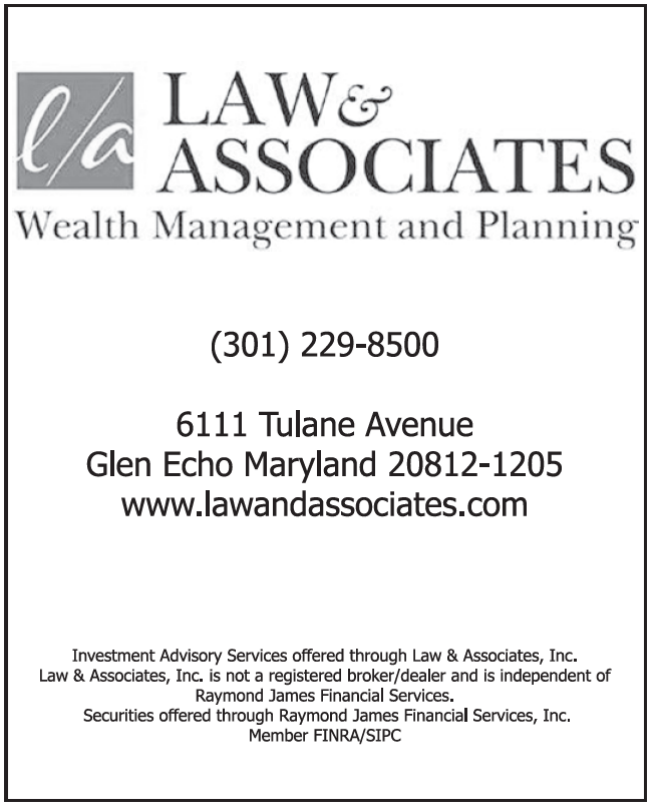
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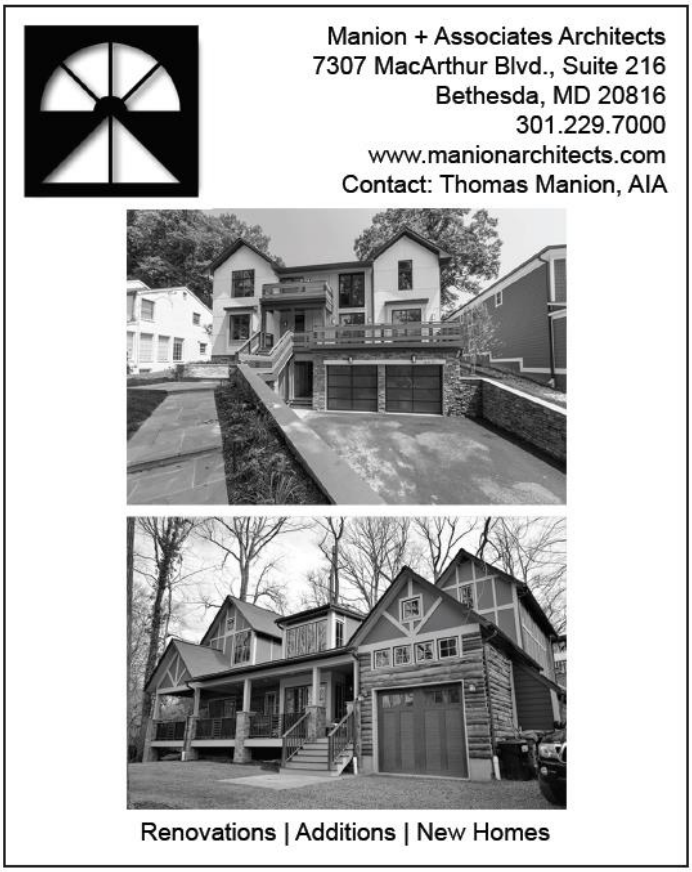
Cabin John Bingo Night is Back!

By Burr Gray

Help us welcome Bingo back to Cabin John for the first time since 2020. Family Bingo Night will be held at the Clara Barton Community Center (CBCC) **Friday, March 31 from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.** This year's celebrity callers—MD House of Delegates members Marc Korman and Sara Love—have returned and will call great numbers. Admission and parking are free. Each five-dollar Bingo card you buy brings a better chance of taking home one of the many tempting prizes. Pizza slices and soft drinks available at bargain rates. Bingo Night is sponsored by the Friends of Clara Barton Community Center (www.friendscbcc.org) and the Montgomery County Recreation Department. Proceeds from the event help fund activities and programs at the Center. For more information call the CBCC office at 240-777-4910. The net proceeds (about $1000 this time) go to support the Center's program and activities. Most recently the FCBCC Senior account paid for t-shirts for the seniors that attend the various programs. We'll also be buying a color printer for the Center in the near future.

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By Eric Dinerstein

A Crane Fly in Winter

The great entomologist E. O. Wilson spoke for all scientists and naturalists who are passionate about insects when he said, "Every kid has a bug period. I never grew out of mine." What parents have not seen their kids become fascinated with ant farms? It's easy to understand how children remain enchanted by fireflies (actually a beetle, not a fly) or Monarch butterflies or Luna Moths. But you probably won't find many kids or adults who maintain a lifelong yen for the long-legged, ungainly-looking crane flies. That is a pity.

When one encounters a crane fly in the house, the first inclination is to swat this creature, which resembles a giant mosquito, before it has a chance to bite a family member. But that shameful act would be a case of mistaken identity. The crane fly has no mouthparts to speak of, and it doesn't live to suck blood. The only purpose it has in its sweet short life—typically one to two weeks after emerging from the larval stage—is to breed. Although it looks like a male mosquito on stilts, or a weird cross between a midge and a daddy long-legs spider, the crane fly is harmless to humans and a great boon to the ecology of the living world. And in winter, when most insects have died off or gone into a kind of hibernation, a group of crane flies known as winter crane flies can be seen flitting about on sunny days.

The name winter crane fly bears no false advertising; it is one of the few species of insect that is on the wing in the year's coldest season. Winter crane flies are slightly smaller than the crane fly most people see in their houses in the summer, the common crane fly. The crane flies obtain their name because they have the long-legged appearance of cranes and a beak like the sandhill or whooping cranes of the U.S. These crane flies also represent the order of the true flies, the Diptera. A tip for identification useful to bug lovers: the order of true flies, the Diptera—that includes horse flies, black flies, crane flies, midges, gnats, and mosquitoes—only have one pair of wings. All of the other "flies"—dragonflies and damselflies (order Odonata) or butterflies like our beloved Monarchs (order Lepidoptera)—have two pair of wings. So do bees, wasps, and yellow jackets—(order Hymenoptera). Moreover, if the species is a true fly the name fly will be a separate word, unlike dragonfly or butterfly which is incorporated in the same word.

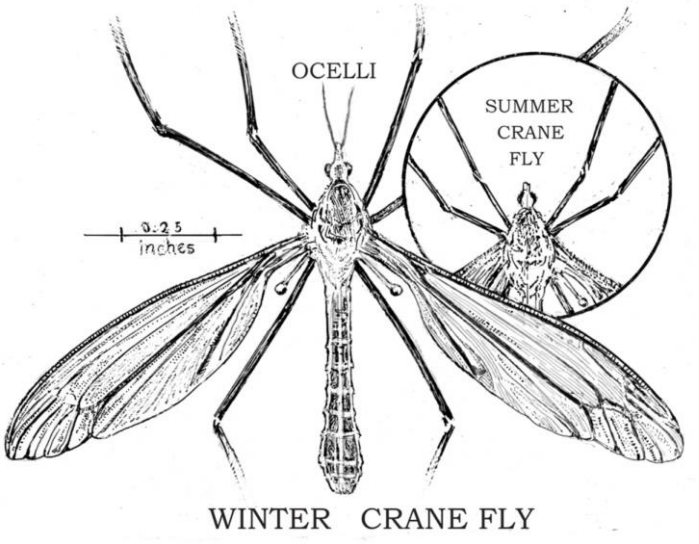


Illustration: Trudy Nicholson

But what makes the group we call crane flies so special in nature? The answer is their predominance in wild nature and their contribution to the food web. Some ecologists estimate that the greatest contributor to the biomass of living organisms in the Arctic tundra is not the brown bear, polar bear, caribou, or musk ox, but, per hectare, the larvae of the common crane fly. Sometimes called leatherjackets because of their tough outer coating, the larvae can stay in the ground in a damp area for 1-4 years until it reaches the adult stage and emerges to breed. But either as a larval grub in the ground or as an adult on the wing, the common crane fly is an attention grabber, emerging in great swarms. There to vacuum them up are the shorebirds—especially phalaropes and sandpipers of various kinds. In fact, it is estimated that the entire diet of some of these shorebirds is composed of crane fly larvae and adults and that the breeding of these shorebirds is timed to the emergence of the crane fly larvae as adults.

But let's return from the Arctic to a cold, but not freezing, February afternoon in Cabin John. There flying about some fallen logs are winter crane flies like giant winter mosquitoes, looking for mates. Which begs the question, why would an insect fly in winter? The best answer seems to be that for the winter crane fly, if you are only alive for a week or two as an adult, and your sole purpose is to breed, than seeing to your business in a predator-free period of the year and nothing to eat you might be a smart evolutionary adaptation. It has been working for them for 180 million years, so why change now?

When we see the summer crane fly or the winter crane fly, stop and admire this creature that has been around far longer than humans. It has figured out how to cope in this challenging world for millennia, even if its time on the stage as an individual is rather short. Don't hasten the demise of your crane fly with a broom; raise your broom in a salute. ##

PUBLIC WORKS CORNER

By Scott Lewis

There has been much activity this past month at the Cabin John Local Park field (Cabin John Local Park is located on our side of the one lane bridge). About 20 deciduous trees were planted along MacArthur Blvd. and the Clara Barton Neighborhood Recreation Center (CBNRC).

Perhaps one of our gardener/botanist CJ'ers can help identify the tree species.



##

Free Gym Passes for Montgomery County Residents

By Theresa Burton

2023 is shaping up to be a year with great (FREE) health options for Cabin John residents.

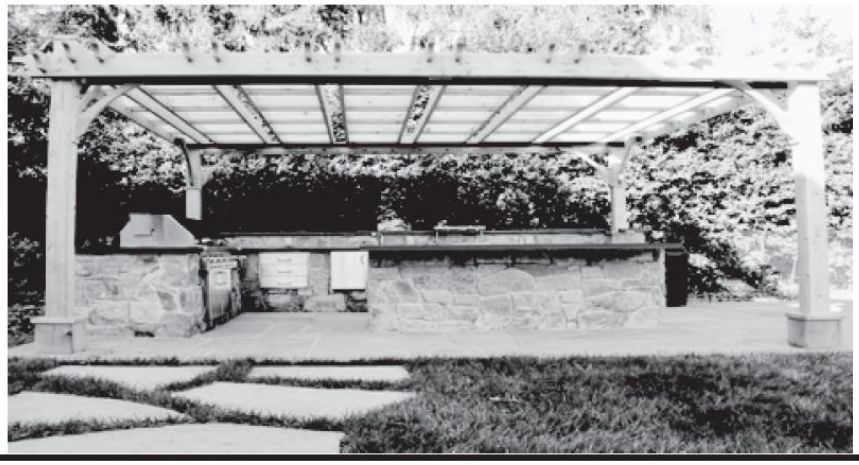
The Montgomery County Department of Recreation has announced that for the entire year, all Montgomery County residents 16 years and older are eligible for a free gym and fitness pass to any Montgomery County Recreation Center. The program began in January of 2023 and is scheduled to last throughout the year.

MOCO residents with valid ID's showing a Montgomery County residence can use the fitness rooms, open gyms and game rooms at any of the 22 Montgomery County Recreation Centers free of charge. The closest facilities include the Clara Barton Neighborhood Recreation Center in Cabin John, The Potomac Community Recreation Center in Potomac and the Wisconsin Place Community Recreation Center in Chevy Chase.

It's free for residents to use the weights and workout machines (treadmills, ellipticals, free weights and weight machines) in the Fitness Centers. They are also eligible to use the Open Gyms, which in some centers includes basketball courts and indoor walking tracks, and access to any "drop in" pickle ball and badminton games. There are ping pong and pool tables available in the Game Rooms in many cases.

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Most Montgomery County Recreation Centers are open Monday through Friday at 9am and stay open as late as 8PM or 9pm. Several have weekend hours. MOCO residents are encouraged to show up anytime the centers are open with no time limitations on their workout. Any scheduled classes that are not marked "drop in" are not included in this free pass, but can be purchased for a nominal fee.

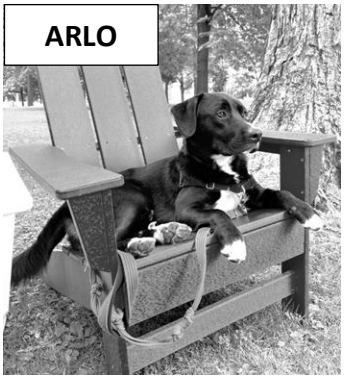
For a list of locations, hours and services, go to: https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/rec/facilities/recreationcenters/ ##

Pets of Cabin John

By Sarah Craven

Meet Arlo and Jasmine, beloved members of the Pyle-Freeman family of Macarthur Boulevard. These two dog pals can often be seen walking down Macarthur Blvd. or playing in the Cabin John Creek. Jasmine, age 9, arrived in Cabin John from Alabama. She had a rough beginning as a routine X-ray at the veterinarian revealed that she had several B.B. gun pellets in her rump. Jasmine is generally very zen and loves to lie in the sun during the day and gaze at the moon in the evening. But she can be nervous and bark when other dogs approach her, due to her past trauma. Younger pup Arlo is a mix of beagle, lab, and who knows what. Like POTUS, Arlo hails from Delaware. He is the family extrovert and wears all emotions on his paws. He is very vocal—sometimes too vocal when he is so excited in the first blocks of his walks. Arlo loves to swim in the creek and has several neighborhood doggy best friends. ##


JASMINE


ARLO

LISAN MARTIN THERAPY



Lisan Martin, a psychotherapist with over 30 years of experience, provides counseling to individuals, couples, and families. A Cabin John resident, Lisan sees clients virtually and also at her offices in Cabin John and Tenleytown, DC.
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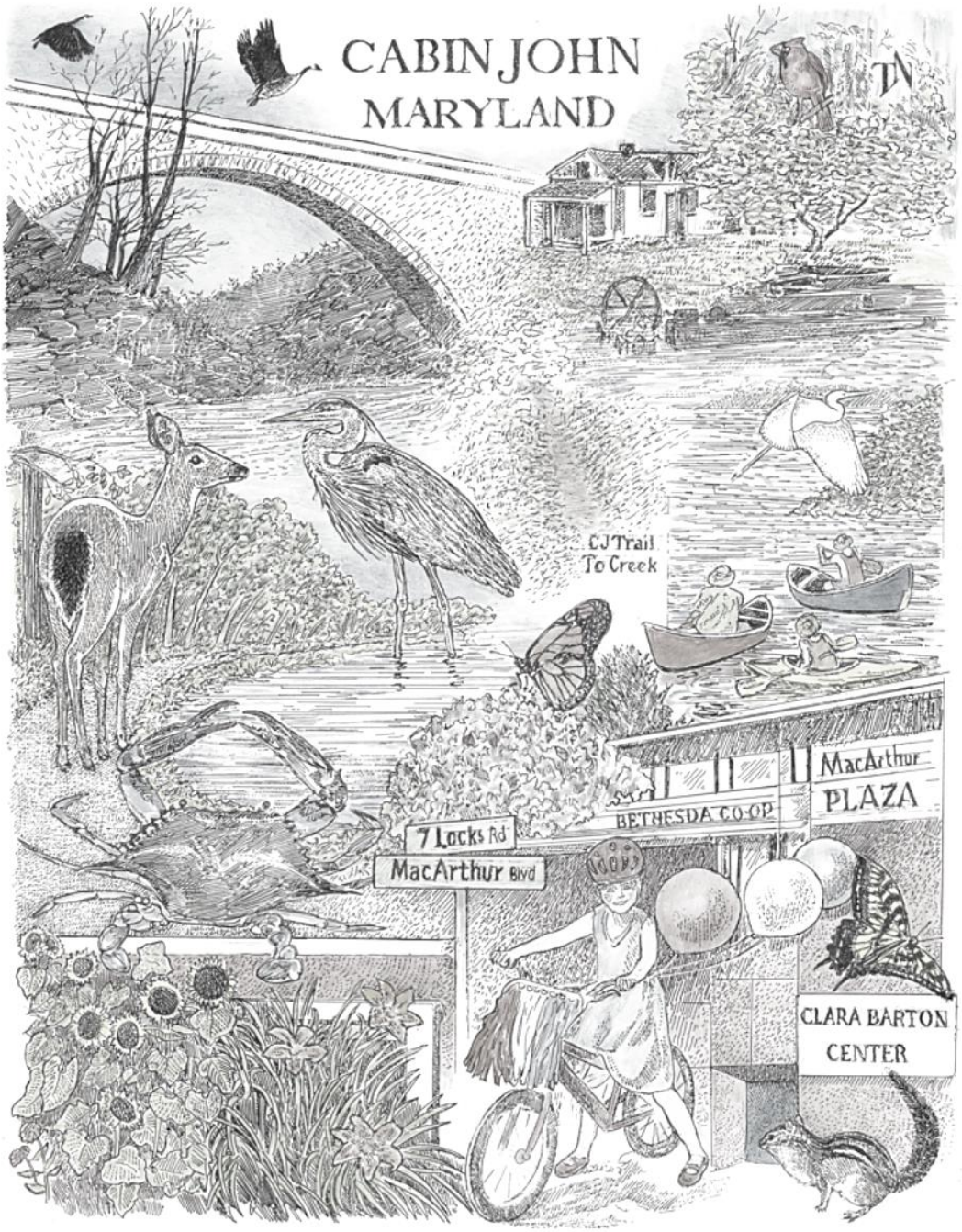
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TO ORDER: email cjcapresidents@gmail.com; prints will also be available for purchase at CJCA meetings & events.

DID YOU KNOW?

If you are thinking of selling your home, here are a few reasons now is a good time to sell:

1. Appreciation - In the last few years, home values have increased by more than 20%, creating a significant profit for homeowners when selling.
2. Motivated Buyers - Spring and Summer are generally considered "Peak Seasons" for real estate, but buyers looking now are serious and ready to buy.
3. Reduced Competition - Inventory is already tight and even more restricted in the winter months, so sellers face less competition.

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

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Clara Barton Community Center

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Events and Activities

Get your free Mo Co Recreation Pass for free access to CBCC facilities!

WEIGHT ROOM, open whenever the Center is open
PICKLEBALL Mon, Wed, and Fri from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm
TABLE TENNIS Mon and Thurs from 5:00 to 8:00 pm, Tues 6:00 to 8:00 pm
BADMINTON Mon 3:00 to 5:00 pm, Fri 1:30 to 3:00 pm

Bingo Bonanza

- **Bring a friend and play for free!**
- **Food and drink to enjoy**
- **Monday, Feb 27, noon to 1:00 pm**

MOVIE LINEUP *snack provided*

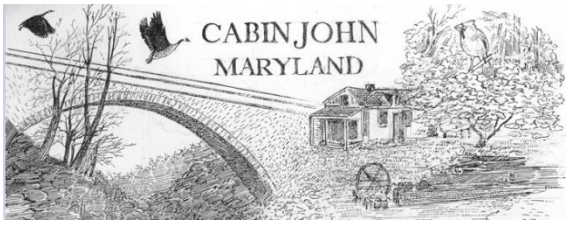
- **Wed, Mar 1 at noon: Jurassic World**
- **Mon, Mar 13 at noon: The Tomorrow War**

SAVE THE DATE! MARCH 31, 7:00 – 9:00 pm

Cabin John Bingo Night

Celebrity callers * Fabulous prizes * Winners of all ages

7426 MacArthur Blvd., Cabin John | 240–777–4910
OPEN: Mon - Thurs 9 am – 8 pm Fri 9 am–3 pm Sat-Sun - rentals only
Closed Feb. 20, 2023



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You can contact *The Village News* by mail at Village News, P.O. Box 31, Cabin John, MD 20818.

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