The Village News

SERVING THE PEOPLE OF CABIN JOHN | AUGUST 2024 | VOLUME 58 | ISSUE 07

Fourth of July Parade and Celebration Draws a Crowd

Another fabulous July 4th Cabin John Community Celebration is in the history books. The day dawned appropriately sunny and hot, but cold watermelon, doughnuts, refreshing sprinkler play, and a chance to interact with local civic leaders were enough to entice a big crowd of adults, kids, and furry friends to parade in honor of America's 248th birthday. See *Fourth of July Parade* in pg. 8.



CJCA News: An Exciting Year Ahead

By Scott and Heidi Lewis

We are fortunate to have a packed calendar for the coming CJCA Program Year. We start with our Annual Chicken and Crab Feast on September 14, from 2-6 pm, at the Clara Barton Neighborhood Recreation Center (CBNRC).

You will find additional highlights from our year ahead on page 3. See *Exciting Year Ahead* on pg. 3.

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Come Enjoy The 54th Annual Cabin John Chicken & Crab Feast, Saturday, September 14th, 2 - 6 PM

By Heidi Lewis

Delicious, steamed crabs, tasty grilled chicken with a secret recipe rub, yummy fresh vegetables cooked to perfection, homemade baked beans and more will be served up by CJ neighbors while the Starlight Orchestra serenades the crowd. See *Crab Feast* on pg. 6.



2023 CRAB COOKS - Pete Couste (chief), Chris Couste, Michelle Couste, Barry Hubscher, Josh Chambers, Billy Rieger, David Williams, Jennifer Williams. (Photo by Rick Hatch)

MacArthur Boulevard Beautification Efforts

By Susan Roberts

Our group of volunteers hopes that everyone will continue to enjoy the plantings along MacArthur Boulevard! It involves a lot of work from a handful of volunteers who plant, prune, weed, water, and mulch on a regular basis. We are especially grateful to **Uva Cable** and **Jayne Bassett**, homeowners along the path who have donated their water and hoses for us to use during the droughts. We would also like to acknowledge **Richard Hopkins** for maintaining and watering a large section of plantings in front of his house. **Alpine Veterinary Hospital** has also been helping to keep plants alive by watering the section in front of their office.

See *Beautification Efforts* on pg. 2.

PUBLIC WORKS CORNER

Drought Watch

By Scott Lewis

After a wet start to 2024, rain shut off abruptly this summer as temperatures soared to record highs. As the ground dried out rapidly, a "flash" drought overtook the D.C. area and other parts of the Mid-Atlantic and Southeast. In fact, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration declared that local precipitation levels are nearly four inches below normal over the last 60 days.

Accordingly, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments issued a Drought Watch on Monday, July 29 after a stretch of record-setting hot days that created unusually dry conditions in our area. Those who use the river or walk the canal will note the low flow on the Potomac River.

Water-saving measures include taking five-minute showers; turning the faucet off when brushing your teeth; waiting to wash dishes and laundry until you have full loads; reducing lawn, plants and shrubs watering; sweeping sidewalks and driveways instead of hosing; and fixing any plumbing leaks–especially toilets and faucets.

These recommendations are voluntary at this point given that we are in a state of Drought Watch. The highest level of concern, a Drought Emergency, would trigger mandatory conservation. A Drought Emergency is issued when there is a 50 percent probability the region would not be able to meet water supply demands over the following month. By the way, the water supply infrastructure for Cabin John and the Metro DC area is well-equipped to handle drought and the supplying reservoirs are full. Thank you for conserving.



Beautification Efforts Continued From Pg. 1

Carrying water to the planted areas is extremely labor intensive so we very much appreciate being able to access water closer to the gardens. Without this assistance from good neighbors, we would have already lost many plants. If you live nearby and would like to assist with watering during droughts, please let me know at **susanroberts487@gmail.com**.

We ask pet owners who walk along the path to kindly prevent their dogs from using our gardens as their bathroom! All our volunteers have had the unpleasant experience of finding dog waste and having gloves and clothing contaminated with the lingering odors. **Urine kills plants and has already caused damage to the plantings along the path. PLEASE** do not allow your dogs to use our gardens as their bathroom. There is a wooded area across from the gardens along much of the path that dogs can use instead. Thank you for your consideration!



Illustration by Trudy Nicholson



Exciting Year Ahead continued from pg. 1

- Our three **Blood Drives**, all on Sundays–**October 6, February 2, and May 4 starting at 10:00 am**.
- CJ's very own **Judy Welles** will be giving a History Talk on **Friday, November 8 at 6:00 pm.**
- Our ever-popular **Thanksgiving Day Turkey Trot** will be on **November 28 at 10:00 am** (on Thanksgiving, of course).
- Our annual **Holiday Party** will be **Sunday, December 15** starting at **5:00 pm**.
- The incomparable **CJCA Trivia Night–Saturday, January 25** starting at **6:30 pm**.
- We will have a go at the **Bike Clinic** again given its popularity. **Saturday, April 5 at 10:00 am.**
- Our **Spring Egg Hunt** will be **Sunday, April 6 at 4:00 pm** (one week prior to MCPS spring break).
- Our **Wednesday night CJCA Meetings–September 25**, **October 23**, **January 22**, **February 26**, **March 26**, **April 23** and **May 28**.
- **Cabin John Home & Garden Tour**–June date TBD.

To be considered and scheduled

We need a volunteer to lead:

- **Cabin John History Walk**

Here's a rundown by month:

*(All events take place at **CBNRC** unless otherwise noted.)*

2024

SEPTEMBER

14 — 54th Annual CJ Chicken & Crab Feast, 2-6 pm
25 — CJCA meeting, 7:30 pm

OCTOBER

6 — CJ Blood Drive, 10 am to 3 pm
23 — CJCA meeting, 7:30 pm

NOVEMBER

8 — History Talk with Judy Welles, 6 pm
28 — CJ Thanksgiving Day Turkey Trot, 10 am

DECEMBER

15 — CJ Holiday Party - 5-7 pm

As always, thank you to our many volunteers who make all this happen!!

2025

JANUARY

22 — CJCA meeting, 7:30 pm
25 — Trivia Night, 6:30 to 10:30 pm

FEBRUARY

2 — CJ Blood Drive, 10 am to 3 pm
26 — CJCA meeting, 7:30 pm

MARCH

26 — CJCA meeting, 7:30 pm

APRIL

5 — Bike Clinic, 10 am
6 — Spring Egg Hunt, 4 pm, CBNRC Playground & Field
23 — CJCA meeting, 7:30 pm

MAY

4 — CJ Blood Drive, 10 am to 3 pm
28 — CJCA Meeting, 7:30 pm

JULY

4 — July Fourth Parade, MacArthur Blvd to CBNRC

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www.manionarchitects.com
Contact: Thomas Manion, AIA





Renovations | Additions | New Homes

MINNIE'S ISLAND INAUGURAL ISLE-FEST DELIGHTS DESPITE 100 DEGREE DAY

By Heidi Lewis

Enjoy these scenes from Minnie's Island Community Conservancy's very successful inaugural Isle-Fest for the Cabin John community held on June 22, 2024. Board members and volunteers of the 100% volunteer-led organization ferried visitors across in canoes, gave plant identification talks and walks around the island, gave history talks in the restored cabin, grilled hot dogs, presented live music, and generally made everyone feel welcome to sit in the shade and enjoy some island breezes on a very hot June day. To find out more about their vision to engage the community in making the Island an inviting, accessible, and safe environment for nature-based recreation, social connection, education, conservation, and scientific research, visit their website at **https://www.minniesisland.org**.





Photo credits: Shelly McKenzie, Juliet Rodman, Jack Mandel, and Heidi Lewis.

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THANK YOU, Cabin John!

Minnie's Island Community Conservancy's Isle-Fest was a huge success. Thanks to the CJCA and all those who helped, attended and enjoyed a special day with our community.

AN ISLAND TREASURE WORTH SAVING








Clara Barton Neighborhood Recreation Center

Upcoming Fall Classes

DEFINITION BODY SCULPTING: A full body workout including warm-up, weightlifting moves (choose your own weights), and adaptable options for all body types. Balance, flexibility, and aerobic training are also included. Come join us! Join us virtually, in person, or a combination of both.

- **R05016_101** (Tues and Thurs from Sept 17 to Dec 12) $230
- **R05016_102** (Tues only from Sept 17 to Dec 10) $120
- **R05016_103** (Thurs only from Sep 19 to Dec 12) $120

TKA YOUTH KARATE All Levels: Develop confidence, fitness, mental focus, and self-discipline in a fun and safe environment learning martial arts with instructors from Tompkins Karate Association. Class offers instruction in Tang Soo Do Korean karate and jujitsu. Promotional exams, camps, and competitions are available. No new beginners after week 3.

- **R05066_111** (Wednesdays from Sept 11 to Dec 11) $117

TAI CHI: Join our Tai Chi classes to experience the ancient Chinese martial art that promotes relaxation, health, and inner peace.

- **R05112_105** (Mondays from Sept 9 to December 9) $130

GOATS ON WHEELS BEGINNER SKATEBOARDING:
Learn basic skateboarding fundamentals with Coach Rick.
First time being offered at Clara Barton.

- **R05363_106** (Wednesdays from 4pm-5pm) $25
- **R05363_107** (Wednesdays from 5pm-6pm) $25

CLUB FRIDAY

- **R03002_101** (October 2024 to May 2025)

SENIOR PROGRAM 55+
Mondays and Wednesdays from 10 am-2 pm
New programs in fall:

- **Origami** every 1st and 4th Monday from 11 am-12:30 pm
- **Printmaking Art Class** every 2nd Monday from 11 am-1 pm

Note: CBNRC Closed August 31-September 2, Labor Day Holiday

7425 MacArthur Boulevard Cabin John | 240-777-4910

Open Mon–Thurs: 9 am–8 pm | Fri: 9 am-3 pm | Sat-Sun: Rentals Only

Crab Feast continued from pg. 1

The food and fun start at 2 pm. The 15-piece jazz and swing band gets underway shortly thereafter. The fun continues until 6 pm. The crab feast is the largest community event of the year and typically brings together some 600 Cabin Johners and friends. It is also an important fundraiser for the Cabin John Citizens' Association.

Games and activities for kids will be run by the staff of the Clara Barton Neighborhood Recreation Center (CBNRC).

The Crab Feast Director this year is none other than CJ's famed crab master **Pete Couste**! With his New Orleans roots and his years of experience selecting and preparing the crab feast's main event–Maryland blue crabs–he's going to make sure the good times roll at the 2024 Chicken & Crab Feast.



Photo by Rick Hatch

But Pete and his crew chiefs NEED LOTS OF HELP!

Volunteers Needed!

It takes over **150 people** to plan, prep, serve, and clean up the Crab Feast every year. Ask anyone who has worked the Crab Feast and they will confirm that it is really fun volunteering for an hour or two. You'll never regret getting to know your neighbors a little better and getting that warm feeling from knowing you've done your part.

To volunteer, sign up at https://tinyurl.com/CJCAcrabfeast



Volunteers needed for 2-hour shifts these days and times:

Friday:

- Veggie Prep 3-7 pm

Saturday:

- Table/chairs setup 10 am-2 pm
- Table cleaning/resetting 2-6 pm
- Chicken grill crew 11 am-5 pm
- Kitchen crew 11 am-5 pm
- Ticket sales table 12:30 pm-6:30 pm
- Serving line 1:45 pm-6:15 pm
- Clean up crew 5:30 pm-7 pm

Plus, lots of other jobs for volunteers 10 am-7 pm

SSL hours approved–Middle and high school students can earn up to four hours of SSL credit.

Buy Your Tickets Now–

Buying tickets in advance saves you money and helps us plan quantities.

2024 tickets and prices:

Chicken + 3 sides……	$18 advance, $20 at door
3 Crabs + 3 sides - ***OR*** - 6 Crabs (no sides) ……	$20 advance, $25 at door
Sides only (5 sides) …….	$18 advance, $20 at door

How to Buy:

Online at CJCA's CheddarUp site (must buy by 5pm Friday, September 13) **https://2024-cjca-chicken-and-crab-feast.cheddarup.com**

In-person sales (checks, cash, credit card) - CJCA volunteers will set up a table to sell advance tickets - come by to purchase your advance tickets:

- **Wednesday, September 11, 10 am-11 am**, CBNRC Senior Room
- **Thursday, September 12, 6 pm-7 pm**, Sidewalk near CJ Post Office
- **Friday, September 13, 4 pm-6 pm**, CBNRC back blacktop

You can, of course, buy tickets at the door on Saturday but will pay the higher "at door" price.

Questions or comments on Crab Feast?

Email **cjcapresidents@gmail.com**

DID YOU KNOW?

Whenever you apply for a loan, lenders will look at several factors to assess your financial health, such as employment history, credit score, and debt-to-income (DTI) ratio. Your DTI is simply the amount of monthly debt you owe divided by your total monthly income.

Total monthly debt payments include things like auto loans, student loans, personal loans, and credit cards.

- A "good" DTI is generally anything below 43% though some lenders may want yours to fall below 36%.
- A high DTI can be a red flag that signals that you'll struggle to manage additional household debt, which can elevate your risk in the eyes of lenders.

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Fourth Of July Parade Continued From Pg. 1

Cabin John is fortunate to have close ties with our local government representatives, and **Sara Love**, our Maryland State Senator, and **Andrew Friedson**, our Montgomery County Councilmember (and current president of the council), led our parade as we walked and rode down MacArthur Boulevard. The bicycles were colorfully and creatively decorated thanks to everyone's ingenious use of the CJCA-provided supplies. A big thanks to **Loretta Devery Ingalls** for organizing the bike decorating and parade, and to **Sean Ruppert** for allowing us to use his yard as an assembly point.

Upon arrival at the Clara Barton Neighborhood Recreation Center, everyone was offered drinks, watermelon, and doughnuts, prepared and served by **Marcy Harrison**. Senator Love and Council President Friedson each gave remarks, and **Larry Heflin** treated us to a dramatic reading of portions of the Declaration of Independence. **Burr Gray** served as Master of Ceremonies.

Through it all, as we enjoyed the weather, our friends, kids laughing and playing, we celebrated how fortunate we are to live in America where every citizen plays a role in self-governance. Thank you to all those who attended and participated!








***Top row, from left**: Sara Love making remarks with Andrew Friedson; Burr Gray with the American flag; and Larry Heflin reads the Declaration of Independence. **Second row**: Early arrivals: Linda Smith, Larry Heflin, and Heidi Lewis; Donuts! Hmmm…decisions, decisions… and Alexis Danis enjoys the festivities. (Photo credits: Grey Emmons, Marcy Harrison, and Heidi Lewis).*







Visitors of all ages displayed their patriotism on July 4th at the annual parade.

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In the Shallows of the Potomac

By Eric Dinerstein

On a languid afternoon in July, a pastime to have won the approval of Thoreau would be to stretch out on the banks of the Potomac, journal in hand, waiting for deep thoughts to arise or a wading bird to land nearby. Or if a philosopher considered deep thought too taxing, perhaps best not to contemplate anything at all, just gaze across to Virginia's shore or up at the intense blue sky. The cicadas' loud racket made a riverside nap now impossible. Better to admire the tiger swallowtail flapping by, a concentration of black and yellow reticulations. And then a great blue heron lifts off from its hunting pond, on the way to another favorite spot. But cast an eye long enough and a new face appears in nature. What is this bluish-white flowering plant growing in a large mat along the banks? Could it be an aquatic orchid? But since when do orchids grow in water?

It was about twenty years ago as I sat like a poor-man's Thoreau on a summer's day that I made this discovery. One of the strangest experiences in nature is to come upon a plant family from the tropics you know well in all its diversity and not realize that there are representatives right in your own Maryland neighborhood. I knew the ground-dwelling orchids in our area, but this plant had me stumped until I counted the petals in its irregular flower and saw the telltale bracts beneath the corolla. Could this be an Acanth? Later I learned about the Carolina wild petunia, but what was this little gem? I consulted some local plant lists and to my surprise discovered that I had spotted an American willow weed, a member of the genus *Justicia*: some of the most beautiful flowering plants in the world. The Acanthaceae (Acanths for short) are a group of about 2,500 species and can be found from lush rainforests in Costa Rica, Brazil, and Indonesia to the deserts of Namibia. We may know them as cultivated petunias, or to those ornamental lovers, as the vivid yellow and red flowers and bracts of *Pachystachys.* But there it was, covering the shallows of quiet side pools in the Potomac, *Justicia americana*, our diminutive American water willow. I suppose it was named water willow because, like willows, it is native to the water's edge and the leaves are somewhat willow-shaped.

American water willow grows as far west as Texas, and from New England, reaching up to northern Ontario and Quebec, and down to Florida. The reason the water willow grows in clumps is that it spreads from underground stems and can, in the right conditions of water, nutrients, and sunlight, form massive mats covering as much as 1,000 square feet, though I have never seen any colonies that enormous around Cabin John.

It's a lovely plant to get to know on a hot summer day with nothing better to do. Go look for it. And take your notebook in case the meaning of life strikes you while you sit watching colonies of water willow undulate in the riffles.



Illustration by Trudy Nicholson

Do You Have Cabin John History to Share?

By Rachel Donnan



We moved to Cabin John almost ten years ago from London, where every time we stepped out our front door we were walking through history. Though Cabin John is not quite on par with that, our small community is steeped in local history—through its legends of John of the Cabin and buried treasures, to the historic structures we see each day. The One Lane Bridge, Gibson Grove, tales of the old hotel and older original homes are all part of Cabin John's unique story.

The Cabin John History Committee would like to add images of historical pieces from residents' personal collections to our digital archive. If you have any Cabin John documents, ephemera, memorabilia or even stories that you are happy to share, please let us know! I have some old postcards, trolley tickets and even a handful of 1936 Daisy Air Rifle paper targets that were found in our walls while doing minor work. Perhaps you have a menu or teacup from the Cabin John Hotel, old pictures/signs, something interesting you uncovered during renovations or even something found in the basement of an older home.

We hope to add photographs of any pieces to our digital photo archive (not the memorabilia itself). We'd also welcome photos of Cabin John houses, particularly the older original ones and any interesting or quirky details, as well as some of the more unique houses that dot the streets.

Please send an email to **rachdonnan@gmail.com** if you have anything related to Cabin John history you'd like to chat about or share.



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Poems for Passersby

presented by Meredith Griggs

This poem appeared in the *New York Times Magazine*, selected by poet Rita Dove, who said about it "The young man delivering pizzas…has learned to relish the quiet kindnesses of community."

Full-Time Driver

By Marcus Jackson

I took every hour they offered, delivering
lukewarm pizzas by means of an '86
LeSabre, the back tires almost bald.
Managers rarely yelled or wore me out
about moving too slow. When we blundered
orders, most customers understood.
My brother worked there too. He was beautiful.
I should've kissed him, one good forehead kiss
while such a gesture might've mattered.
Women, shoeless in their *doorways*, gave me
resigned smiles as they paid. Undergraduate
smokers proposed hits of their burning herb.
The richest part was when business
would ebb, and I'd coast the summer streets.
The air felt like a cool fruit. The engine block
churned a sure tune. The rearview caught
moments of low moons. Time was a tame lake
my hand skimmed from the front of a canoe.



Out for a walk with their mom, Natalie Royal Selzer, Frankie and Sadie stop by Poems for Passersby on upper 78th Street.

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Real Estate Activity in Cabin John

August 2024

Courtesy of Cabin John Realtor Rachelle Cherol

ACTIVE

6629 81st Street
List Price $2,495,000
6 BR, 6 BA, 2 GAR, 3,584 sq. ft.

8216 Caraway Street
List Price $2,950,000
5 BR, 6/1BA, 3 GAR, 5,969 sq. ft.

6517 79th Street
List Price $3,490,000
6 BR, 6/1 BA, 2 GAR, 6,055 sq. ft.

7630 Tomlinson Avenue # 28
List Price $350,000
1 BR, 1BA, 0 GAR, 648 sq.ft.

PENDING

6433 79th Street
List Price $3,000,000
6 BR, 5/1 BA, 0 GAR, 5,252 sq. ft.

7835 Archbold Terrace
List Price $745,000
3 BR, 2/1BA, 0 GAR, 1,218 sq. ft.

6628 81st Street
List Price $3,549,000
5 BR, 5/2 BA, 2 GAR, 4,815 sq. ft.

CLOSED

7630 Tomlinson Avenue #L-15
Closed Price $374,000
2 BR, 1 BA, 0 GAR, 763 sq. ft.

8 McKay Circle
Closed Price $1,299,000
4 BR, 3 BA, 0 GAR, 2,382 sq. ft.

7628 Tomlinson Avenue
Closed Price $1,975,000
6 BR, 5/1 BA, 2 GAR, 3,442 sq. ft.

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HANDYMAN AVAILABLE

Your Friendly Neighborhood Handyman - CJ Resident, **Bruce Lamb**. Willing to fix whatever breaks in your home. Free estimates. Power washing available.
Text **240-372-8790**.

LOOKING TO RENT

Long time CJ resident and single dad with daughter in wheelchair looking for house to rent or share in Cabin John. Contact **Skip** at skipbrownphoto@gmail.com or call 301-351-2021.

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The Village News is a monthly newsletter published by the Cabin John Citizens Association. Ten issues are published a year and mailed free to every household in Cabin John. Others may subscribe for $12 per year. Send news, articles, and letters to: VNeditorial@gmail.com. Send advertising inquiries and subscription requests to: VNbusinessmanager@gmail.com. You can contact *The Village News* by mail at Village News, P.O. Box 31, Cabin John, MD 20818.

Volunteers who make *The Village News* possible: **Shelly McKenzie**, editor; **Joan Roskosh**, layout; **Marcy Harrison**, business manager.

Regular contributors: Sarah Cahill, Sarah Craven, Eric Dinerstein, Burr Gray, Charlotte Troup-Leighton, Heidi Lewis, Scott Lewis, and Susan Shipp.

Illustrations: Trudy Nicholson

NEXT ISSUE DEADLINE:
5 pm, September 25, 2024
CJCA, P.O. Box 31, Cabin John, MD 20818

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Unless otherwise noted, all events take place at
CLARA BARTON NEIGHBORHOOD RECREATION CENTER

September 14
Crab Feast
2:00 pm – 6:00 pm

September 25
CJCA Meeting
7:30 pm

October 6
CJ Blood Drive
10:00 am-3:00 pm

October 23
CJCA Meeting
7:30 pm