The Village News

SERVING THE PEOPLE OF CABIN JOHN AND BEYOND | MARCH 2025 | VOLUME 59 | ISSUE 03

TOUR UNIQUE CABIN JOHN HOMES ON SATURDAY, MAY 3

by Marcy Harrison

For the first time since 2019, Cabin John residents will soon be able to visit some uniquely lovely homes and gardens in our community. This year's CJCA House Tour will be held on **Saturday, May 3, from 1-5 pm**, rain or shine. Nine Cabin John houses will be open for you to enjoy thanks to the generous cooperation of their owners. Don't miss this wonderful opportunity!

Tickets for this event are $25 per person and are limited to persons over the age of 12. Tickets can be purchased on the day of the tour as well as in advance–both online, starting in mid-April, and in person on April 30 and May 1. Detailed ticket sale times and locations will be listed in the April Village News. Each participant will be asked to sign a waiver form and will receive an entrance ticket, house descriptions, and a tour map. Proceeds from the tour will be donated to the Cabin John Citizens Association.

Please volunteer for a 2-hour shift as a **House Monitor**! We need 2 monitors in each house to check in each tour participant and to keep an eye out for safety and security. The ticket cost for monitors is discounted to $15. Contact the tour organizer, **Marcy Harrison**, at 301-908-8906 or marcyharrison@earthlink.net to volunteer.

See HOMES on pg. 2

NEIGHBORS MAKING HISTORY:

Friends of Moses Hall's Ongoing Work to Preserve Our Past

by Charlotte Troup Leighton

Friends of Moses Hall (FMH) is making great strides in its mission to safeguard and preserve the historic Morningstar Moses Cemetery and Hall site in Cabin John.

Over the past year, FMH has focused on advancing plans for grave stabilization, erosion control, improved site access, memorial and interpretive signage, research, and public education. These priorities require thoughtful stewardship and ongoing fundraising, and FMH continues to build its capacity for long-term sustainability.

See FRIENDS on pg. 11

CLARA BARTON ALUMNI AND FAMILIES INVITED TO CELEBRATION

50th Birthday Party and Auction on Saturday, March 29

by Deborah Duffy

see:
https://tinyurl.com/CBCC50years

Walk into a classroom at the Clara Barton Center for Children (CBCC), located in the old Clara Barton School, and you will be met with a flurry of activity and conversations. A group of pre-K children are connecting links to form a chain the length of the hallway. There is exuberant discussion about how many links they think it will take, and children are measuring friends to figure out how many "links" long they are. In the toddler classroom, the children are honing their social, language, cognitive, fine and gross motor skills, measuring out and mixing rice flour, water and other ingredients. They spoon and pour the "concoctions" from one vessel to another, making a mess and wondering at how the dry flour turns to mush. A few adventurous two-year olds plunge their hands into the goop as the scents of cinnamon and peppermint extract waft through the air. Outside, the three-year-old class is in the center's monarch butterfly garden, searching for signs of monarch caterpillars. There were no

See CBCC on pg. 3

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Neighborly News -- pg. 2
CJCA News -- pg. 3
Jewels of Cabin John - the Franklin Tree -- pg. 5
View From Minnie's Island - Which Island Is That? -- pg. 6
Public Works Corner -- pg. 7
Our Town -- A Fond Farewell to our UPS Driver -- pg. 8
Local History -- Club De Vignt -- pg. 12
Volunteer As a Firefighter with CJPVFD -- pg. 13
Photo Essay - Snowpeople! -- pg. 15
Community Calendar -- pg. 16

To receive updates throughout the month,
subscribe to the official CJCA listserv:
email "subscribe" to cjca-official-news+subscribe@googlegroups.com

Neighborly News

Send your news -- births, events, milestones, trips, new neighbors, etc. to vneditorial@gmail.com

Village News contributor **Sarah Craven** won first prize in the essay and short story category of Bethesda Urban Partnership's 2025 writing competition for her entry, "Golden Gifts." Winners will be reading at an awards ceremony on Friday, March 14 at 7 pm at The Bethesdan Hotel, 8120 Wisconsin Avenue. The event is open to the public. Congratulations, Sarah!

A reminder that the celebration of life for Cabin John original **Reed Martin** will be held on **March 29, 2025,** at 1:00 pm at Bethesda United Methodist Church, 8300 Old Georgetown Road, Bethesda. Musicians are invited to bring instruments for a jam session following the service. Light refreshments will be served. The service will be live-streamed as well. More information and live stream are available at: https://everloved.com/life-of/reed-martin/funeral/?flow=201

Marcy Harrison shares a "Thank you!" to the 20% of CJ households that have sent in updates and wishes to remind all to please submit any changes (or "no changes") to their household contact information for the **2025 Cabin John Neighborhood Directory** by **April 15**. Mail in the form everyone received in the 2025 Annual Dues Letter, or send an email to CJDirectory2020@gmail.com, or submit the form from the CJ website (go to https://bit.ly/3ChQdS2). The directory helps neighbors old and new stay connected, so please help the directory vounteers by updating your information now.

SPRING EGG HUNT - The Cabin John Spring Egg Hunt, a delightful 15-minute scramble by the youngest Cabin Johners for goody-filled eggs, will be held **Sunday, April 6, 2025, at 4:00 pm** at the Cabin John Local Park (aka field behind the Clara Barton Center). **All CJ kids elementary school age and younger** (accompanied by parents or responsible adults) are welcome to participate in the hunt. Families should gather on the basketball court and wait for instructions from the volunteers, who will let the young hunters down to the lower playground in age-group waves. Plan to stay and play at the park and maybe your children will meet some new neighborhood friends.

HOMES *Continued from pg. 1*

Tour participants may visit any or all of these homes:

- 6542 80th Street (**Peggy Porter**) - historic 1866 building with many original fixtures and fascinating antique furniture and collections
- 6619 81st Street (**Meryl Governski**) - home transformed into a light-filled, open plan home with many woodland views; featured in *Home and Design* magazine
- 6601 80th Place (**Pascal & Monica Pittman**) - lovely renovations, interesting interior surprises and exterior amenities
- 17 Carver Road (**Christina Eck & Jack Mandel**) - renovated original 1941 bungalow features Jack's beautiful stonework inside and out including a fireplace/pizza oven combo
- 7719 Tomlinson Avenue (**Kim Henderson**) - an original 1930 Sears kit stucco home with extensive renovations and expansions and lush exterior features
- 6428 79th Street (**Sean Ruppert & Jason Woodward**) - award-winning home designed with many lovely features and a separate "in-law" apartment; pool
- 8018 Riverside Drive (**Sue Mulroney & Adam Myers**) - the "yellow house" on the canal; expanded and modernized with retained historic features; unique pottery and dinosaur bone collections
- 7402 Arden Road (**Anthony & Kate Polise**) - possibly the newest home in CJ with unique interior natatorium
- 9 Froude Cir. (**Geetika Srivastava & Vishal Rana**) - mid-century modern design in the Gardens highlighting natural materials; features a Chihuly glass chandelier and other art.

When you see the homeowners (listed above) in the neighborhood, please give them a shout out of thanks!

Put the date on your calendar and plan to be a part of this great community event! Spread the word, but, please, only to residents in our Cabin John community. ~*vn*

MacArthur Plaza
MacArthur Boulevard at Seven Locks Road

OFFICES AVAILABLE

Short-Term Rentals Available
Single Rooms to Large Suites
Floor Plans Available Online

KMI
COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE

Please call
Brad Klinedinst
301-655-7252

www.garrett-smith.com

CBCC *Continued from pg. 1*

sightings of the distinctly striped, black, white and yellow creatures on that day, but with magnifying glasses in hand, the children marvel at the many legs of the centipede that they unearthed from under the Buddha statue. Facilitating these activities are CBCC's highly experienced and enthusiastic staff, some who have been at the center for over 30 years! The center's Executive Director and long-time Cabin John resident, **Paula Curran** muses, "If there's one thing I've learned in my time at CBCC, it's that every moment is an opportunity for discovery, connection, and joy. These experiences are the foundation of growth, confidence, friendship, and lifelong learning. Watching this magic unfold daily is the greatest privilege."

If you live in Cabin John, it is very likely that you have an affiliation with CBCC, whether as a former or current student, family, teacher or as a friend. This year, CBCC is celebrating a huge milestone–its 50th anniversary of providing a second home to children in our community! When CBCC founders **Aimee Nover** and **Ann Segal** opened the center as a one-room kindergarten class in 1975, their goal was to provide quality childcare and education to the increasing number of dual-working parent families in the area. CBCC is still located in the same location and over the past 50 years, has expanded to 5 classrooms, all named after birds. The physical space may have changed some, with another refresh scheduled for this year, but CBCC's philosophy has not. Accredited by the Maryland State Department of Education and awarded Maryland's highest quality rating for childcare, CBCC has become a leader in early childhood education while maintaining Aimee and Ann's vision of providing a play-based, safe and nurturing environment, where every child is recognized for their unique abilities, and is provided opportunities to grow and flourish.

CBCC is grateful to be located in such a friendly neighborhood, where the children and teachers are often seen walking like little ducks to visit the lower playground, play ball in the field, hike and skip rocks at the creek or check out a new construction site. They are very appreciative for their closest neighbors, **Barry Jones** and his staff at the Clara Barton Neighborhood Recreation Center (CBNRC), for their endless support, and partnership in programs such as the intergenerational visits to the senior center, story time, and finding space for the children to be active in weekly yoga classes or during inclement weather.

To honor their golden anniversary, CBCC will be holding a birthday party and auction on **Saturday, March 29** at CBNRC. All current and former families, and alumni 21 and over are invited to join in. There will be food, drinks, fun, a silent auction, and a 50/50 raffle–the raffle winner will split the total which is now over $1,300, and growing, and you don't need to be present to win! Spread the word to CBCC alumni and **follow the event on our Facebook page, Clara Barton Center for Children**.

Space is limited so buy your tickets now to be a part of this significant moment in CBCC's history! Tickets for the party and 50/50 raffle are on sale at: https://tinyurl.com/CBCC50years.
Can't make it to the party? Please consider purchasing a 50/50 raffle ticket or making a tax-deductible donation at the link above to help CBCC usher in the next 50 years! *~VN*

Deborah Duffy is the Assistant Director at the Clara Barton Center for Children

CJCA News

by Scott Lewis

The February CJCA meeting was held on February 26. After a review of the January meeting minutes and a review of the upcoming Cabin John area events, two representatives of Tree Friends United, **Jonathan Nowick** and **Carl Gunther**, led a very informative conversation on their organization. Tree Friends United is a group of citizens centered in the Glen Echo, MD area who are concerned with the accelerating spread of invasive species overwhelming Montgomery County's parklands, roads, and neighborhoods. As volunteers, they assist the National Park Service (NPS), the county, and residents to remove invasive vines that are smothering trees and plants that are destroying native ecosystems. Montgomery County's Dept. of Transportation does not have funding or staff to remove invasives from our roadways. Moreover, NPS invasive management programs are tiny and cover huge areas. Consider that Montgomery Parks has 34,000 acres in 415 parks to manage and the NPS C&O Canal stretches 185 miles. NPS authorizes Tree Friends to lead groups and functions as a weed warrior certification program offering training on invasives identification. Interested in participating? Go to https://www.treefriendsunited.com/.

The next CJCA Meeting will be **Wednesday, March 26** at 7:30 pm at the Clara Barton Neighborhood Recreation Center and online at https://meet.google.com/qqc-eiaz-gms. **Julie Yang, District 3 Board Member for the Montgomery County Public School (MCPS) system** is slated to attend. She will lead a conversation on issues within MCPS and how she and MCPS are addressing them. For anyone in Cabin John with school age children, this will be an interesting and informative meeting.

DISTINCTIVE LANDSCAPES
INNOVATIVE | SUSTAINABLE | MAINTAINABLE
Exquisite Garden Design & Installation
Decks & Patios | Custom Fences | Arbors & Pergolas
Garden Walks & Walls | Water Features & Lighting
Planting & Maintenance
BEST of BETHESDA AWARD WINNER
WASHINGTONIAN AWARD WINNER
Mark Willcher Landscape Design & Build
Building Sustainable Gardens Since 1980
www.markwillcherco.com
Tel: 240-672-3191 | Email: info@markwillcherco.com

DID YOU KNOW?

Most lenders want to ensure the accepted offer a homebuyer compares favorably with similar properties recently sold in the area. As a result, there are four things a seller can do to avoid a problematic appraisal:

- Ensure that walls are clean and bright with a coat of fresh paint.
- Follow the $500 Rule. Homes appraise in increments of $500. Improvements under $500 are likely worth making.
- Provide home improvement documentation showing costs and dates.
- Do your own comparisons–look at similar homes.

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

Rachelle Cherol
AT LONG & FOSTER REAL ESTATE



Rachelle Cherol | REALTOR®
Licensed in Maryland and DC
C: (301) 379-5013
O: (301) 907-7600
Rachelle.Cherol@lnf.com
Bethesda Gateway Office
Long & Foster Real Estate, Inc.

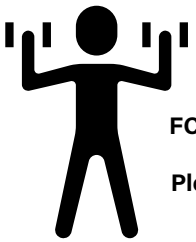
Leading Real Estate Companies of the World | Luxury Portfolio International | Long & Foster Real Estate | Christie's International Real Estate

Clara Barton Neighborhood Recreation Center

Fitness time!

We're bundled up now, but we'll soon be in swimwear again.
Get out your RecFit pass—or get one at the CBNRC office. (They're free!)
Use CBNRC's fully equipped weight room on your own schedule. When the gym and game room are open, drop in for pickleball, table tennis, and more.

Or join a class—
spring registration is open now!
Options include Yoga, Tai Chi, Zumba
Call or visit the CBNRC office for details.





FCBCC is looking for additional board members to help with events and support the center. Please contact Burr Gray (burrgray@aol.com) if you are interested in this worthy cause.

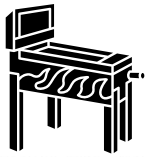
Movies, games, sports, snacks

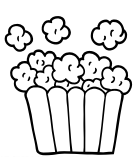
Club Friday

This month's event is
March 21, 7 - 9 pm

For Grades 3 to 6.

If not registered for the series, join in as a guest for $10.







7425 MacArthur Boulevard Cabin John | 240-777-4910
Open Mon–Thurs: 9 am–8 pm | Fri: 9 am-3 pm | Sat-Sun: Rentals Only

Ad funded by Friends of Clara Barton Community Center, www.FriendsCBCC.org

A RARE JEWEL OF CABIN JOHN:

The Franklin Tree and the Dedication of Forrest and Loraine Minor

by Sarah Craven

A few years ago, a local builder marketed a new home as the "Jewel of Cabin John." Whatever the merits of that grand edifice, the true jewels of our community seem more likely to be found in our interesting neighbors, shared interests, sometimes quirky history, and proximity to nature. This new column will highlight some of the true "Jewels of Cabin John"–trees and more–including the rare Franklin Tree of Cabin John.

Nestled in the heart of 81st Street, an extraordinary tree flourishes under the devoted care of longtime residents **Forrest and Loraine Minor**. This tree, known as the Franklin tree (*Franklinia alatamaha*), holds a unique distinction: it is extinct in the wild and survives only through cultivation. Thanks to the patience and horticultural skill of the Minors, this rare specimen has taken root and grown into a magnificent tree, gracing their property with fragrant white blossoms in the summer and brilliant red foliage in the fall.



The journey of this Franklin tree began as a humble cutting, gifted to Forrest and Loraine in 2005 by **Gordon Hagen**, a 81st Street neighbor with a green thumb. Recognizing the rarity and historical significance of the species, Forrest carefully nurtured the young plant, ensuring it had the ideal conditions to thrive. His dedication–meticulously watering, fertilizing, and protecting the sapling–paid off as the tree grew into a striking presence in their yard.

Many Cabin John residents have attempted to grow Franklin trees, but none has succeeded quite like the Minors. The species is notoriously difficult to cultivate, requiring well-drained, acidic soil and a delicate balance of moisture. Even in botanical gardens, successful propagation can be a challenge. The Franklin tree at the U.S. Botanical Gardens stands as a testament to this difficulty, as does a famous 100-year-old specimen at the Arnold Arboretum in Boston.

The Franklin tree's story is one of mystery and perseverance. Botanists John and William Bartram first identified it in 1765 along Georgia's Altamaha River. In 1785, they named its genus *Franklinia* in tribute to their close friend Benjamin Franklin, with the species name *F. alatamaha* referencing the majestic river where it was found. William Bartram later gathered seeds and successfully cultivated the tree in Philadelphia. However, despite various attempts, the species disappeared from the wild by the early 19th century. The reasons for its extinction remain uncertain, with possible explanations including fire, overcollection, or a fungal disease linked to cotton farming. Today, every known Franklin tree descends from the seeds the Bartrams originally preserved.

Forrest and Loraine Minor believe strongly in the importance of planting and preserving trees in Cabin John. They encourage their neighbors to take part in this effort and are willing to share cuttings from their rare Franklin tree with any resident who has the patience and skill to care for one. In their eyes, the Franklin tree serves as both a botanical treasure and a reminder of the delicate balance between nature and human stewardship.

The Minors' success is more than just a horticultural achievement; it is an inspiration to the jewels of our Cabin John community. Their dedication ensures that a piece of American botanical history continues to thrive right here in Cabin John. For those who are up to the challenge, a cutting from their tree could mark the beginning of another successful Franklin tree in the neighborhood. With care and commitment, perhaps the Minors' legacy will take root in many gardens, keeping the spirit of the Franklin tree alive for generations to come. ~*vn*



Extinct in the wild, Cabin John's Franklin tree on 81st Street, has been lovingly raised by Forrest (pictured) and Loraine Minor from a sapling to the beautiful specimen it is today.

Know of another "Jewel of Cabin John" –plant, animal, human or mineral– that might be featured in a future column? Send an email to lovecraven@gmail.com sharing your discovery.

"Neighborhoods along the canal are my specialty - I live there and love it!"



Patty Sieber
(240) 743-7194
Realtor Associate

Stuart & Maury REALTORS®

sieber.patty@gmail.com | stuartandmaury.com | (301) 654-3200

View From Minnie's Island

by Joe Saliunas

WHICH ISLAND IS THAT?

Joe Saliunas is certified as a Maryland Master Naturalist and is Vice-Chair of Minnie's Island Community Conservancy.

When walking from Lockhouse 8 to Minnie's Island, it is not unusual to get into conversations about Minnie's when folks ask "Is that the one with the cabin?" (Yes–it is one of three local islands with cabins), or "Is that the one with the rope and ferry?" (No–that's Sycamore Island). This article will briefly discuss the major islands in the Potomac from the American Legion Bridge down to Glen Echo Heights, including Plummers, Swainsons, Minnie's, Cedar, Cabin John, and Sycamore Islands (listed from upstream to downstream). There is a rich history associated with each of these local islands.

Plummers Island is located just downstream of the American Legion Bridge. You can walk to Plummers Island by following a trail that starts behind Lockhouse 11, but you can only cross the rocky channel to access the island when water levels are low. The twelve-acre island is called "the most thoroughly studied island in North America" by the Washington Biologists' Field Club, which owned the island from 1908 until it was transferred to the National Park Service. The island has the most biological diversity of all the local islands due to multiple habitats. The club maintains a small, locked cabin on the top of the island. A wealth of information about the club and Plummers Island can be found at https://wbfc.science. The website highlights the threat to Plummers Island posed by the potential expansion of the American Legion Bridge.

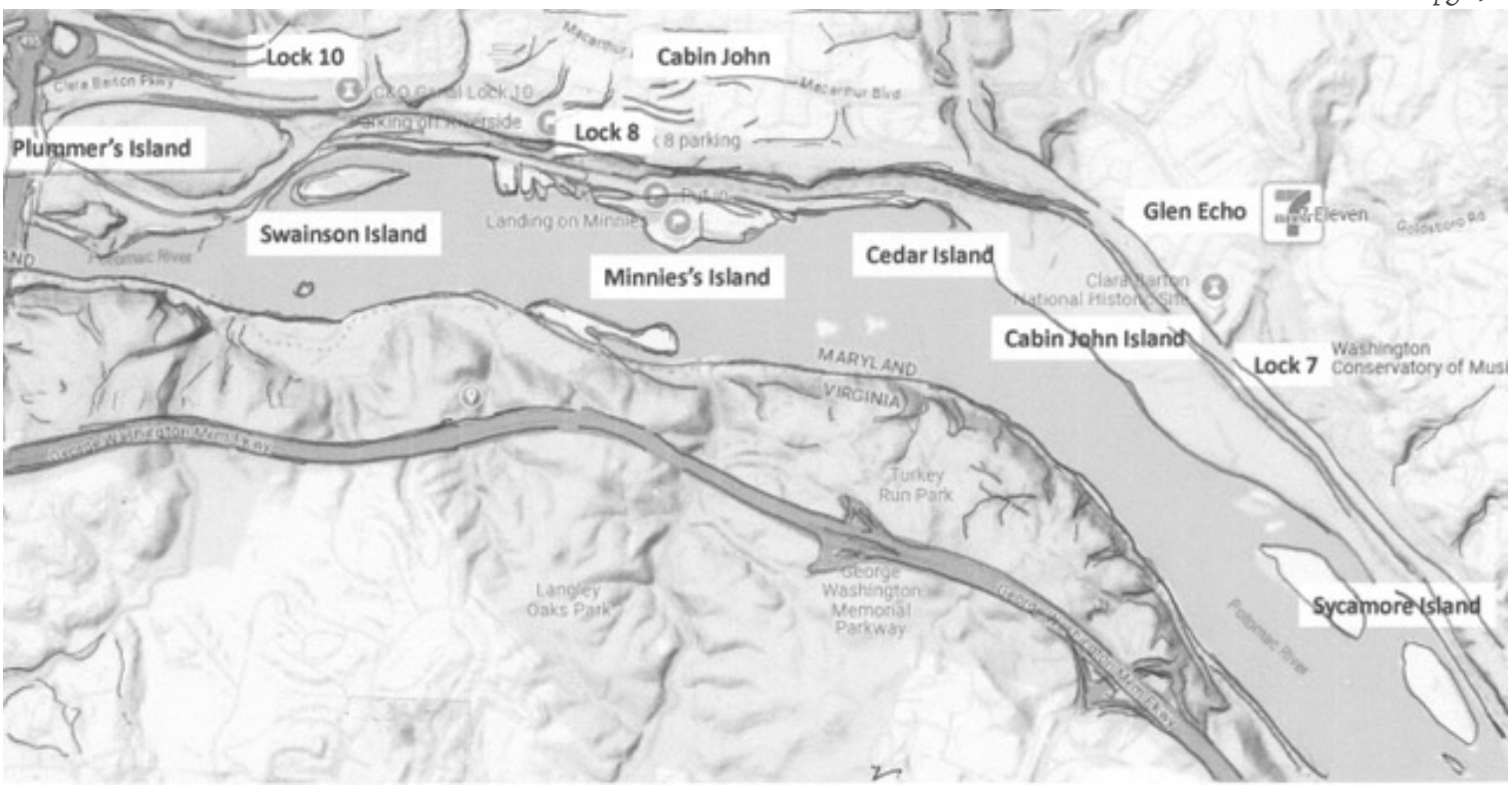
Swainson Island is a narrow island located just downstream of Lock 10 that can be accessed by walking when the water is low. Judith Welles' book, *Cabin John: Legends of an Uncommon Place* tells the story of Bill Swainson, a squatter on the island for over 30 years. He is described as "a very strong and fearless man and people didn't cross him. In fact, he threatened to shoot people who wandered down his road." Piers from a bridge to the island remain today.

Minnie's Island is located one hundred yards downriver from Lock 8. The eight-acre property, including one large island and several smaller islands, is owned by Minnie's Island Community Conservancy and is open to the public during daylight hours. Minnie's can be accessed by a watercraft, typically canoes or standup paddle boards. Minnie's has a cabin that is visible from the C&O Canal. Minnie's has served as a residence, nature retreat, or conservation property since 1904. For more information on Minnie's, visit our website at www.minniesisland.org. We also regularly post information on our Minnie's Island Community Conservancy Facebook page.

Cedar Island is located just upstream of the mouth of Cabin John Creek and can be accessed on foot when the river is low. I always assumed that this area was owned by the National Park Service as part of the C&O Canal National Historic Park, but it is in fact owned by Montgomery Parks. This twelve-acre area is "dedicated to environmental preservation and remains undeveloped." Careful searchers may be able to find remnants of structures that connected the Cabin John Bridge Hotel to the river on the island.

Cabin John Island is located just upstream of Lockhouse 7 and can be accessed via a foot trail from the C&O

See ISLAND on pg. 9



Public Works Corner

by Scott Lewis

The National Park Service (NPS) is initiating a Section 106 consultation for a proposed project on the Clara Barton Parkway. The scope of this undertaking includes rehabilitating or replacing the existing cantilever structure and adjacent retaining walls, as well as considering demolition of the associated Glen Echo Overpass.

NPS invites federal and state agencies, tribal governments, local governments, and other interested organizations to attend a meeting to learn about and discuss the proposed action. As required under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), the purpose of this meeting is to present the project details, solicit feedback, and engage in meaningful dialogue with identified consulting parties.

NPS will host a virtual public meeting on **Wednesday, March 19, 2025, at 6:30 pm** using GoToWebinar. The meeting will last approximately 90 minutes and there will be an opportunity to submit questions. Interested parties can visit https://parkplanning.nps.gov/projectHome.cfm?projectID=113868 for more information.

photos and diagram by NPS



Photo: Cantilever structure from southbound Clara Barton Parkway

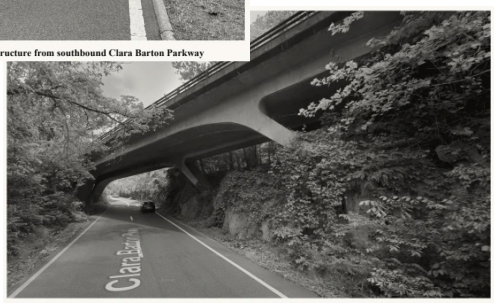
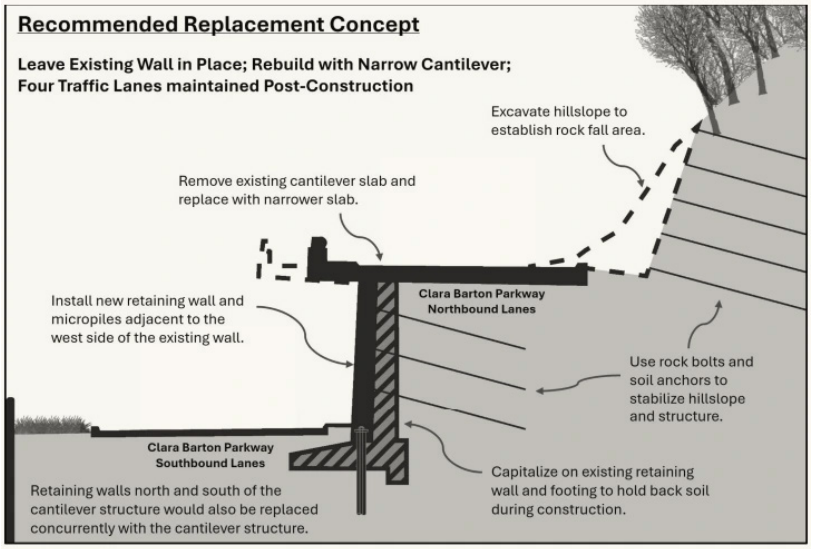


Photo: Glen Echo Overpass from northbound Clara Barton Parkway (Source: Google Street View)







Our Town

by Annemarie Economou Gormley

A FOND FAREWELL



Our UPS driver Lawrence Morris on one of his last delivery runs in the Cabin John area.

Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote, "the only way to have a friend is to be one." Most people agree that friendship involves a reciprocal relationship; both people adding value to each other's lives. In this quaint town of Cabin John, most consider the UPS delivery man to be their friend. Maybe it started with a simple wave, then a returned wave, and over time, a friendship developed. Or maybe it started with a casual hello, a smile in turn, and later a conversation on the driveway. **Lawrence Morris** has been delivering packages and fostering friendships in Cabin John since 2005.

When I heard that the man in the brown truck, Lawrence Morris, was switching routes in March, I told my neighbors about his imminent departure, and they were clearly dispirited.

"Oh no; we love Lawrence," responded Daphne Federing.

"He is kind, friendly, good with dogs–great with deliveries," gushed Judith Welles.

Dawn Fyock replied, "This is so sad!!! He is the BEST!!!"

"He always talked to everyone at the Clara Barton Community Center! The teachers always offered him treats from the kitchen, and the kids always said 'Hi!' to him. I hope his next route appreciates him like Cabin John and the Clara Barton Center for Children did," added Liz Clark.

"He was always someone you wanted to see. Over time, I got a sense of his route. If I was heading to the food co-op or the post office, and I thought I might see him, I looked forward to having a chance to say hello," said Eric Federing.

Lawrence has always lived in Maryland. He was born in Laurel, and moved to the Severna Park area when he was eight. He started working for UPS in 1994 as a part-time worker. In 2002, he became a full time driver, covering routes for other delivery persons who had a day off. In January 2005, he received his own route in Cabin John.

From the beginning, Lawrence loved the social interactions he had with his recipients.

"I don't do social media, so having social interactions while on the job is important to me," explained Lawrence. "I look forward to seeing all the residents, but there are several that I really enjoy having long conversations with because we have the same interests."

Lawrence started fishing as a child. Growing up near Pasadena, Maryland, gave him access to lakes, rivers and the Chesapeake Bay. In 2017, he started participating in fishing competitions here in Maryland on the Potomac, and down in Woodbridge, Virginia. If a resident loves fishing, they probably have discussed it with Lawrence.

Working in Cabin John for two decades has made Lawrence feel like part of the community. He not only knows all the residents by name, he can tell you their address and what time they get home from work! He knows if their dog barks at him or greets him with a wagging tail. He knows who walks their dog when, and which dogs hang their heads out of their car windows, barking at him and pedestrians.

"Lawrence makes everyone's days brighter, with his sunny personality and his interesting fishing stories. He also has an uncanny ability to predict what's in the packages he is delivering. We think he has X-ray vision. We will miss him dearly," wrote Paula Curran and Deborah Duffy of the Clara Barton Center for Children.

During the really difficult times in Lawrence's life, coming to work has been a welcome distraction. During 2009 and 2010, Lawrence frequently visited his mom in Winchester, Virginia, as she dealt with leukemia. As time passed and he experienced anticipatory grief and later bereavement, the friendly warmth he received while making deliveries enabled him to successfully cope.

"During difficult times in my personal life, wanting to talk to everyone on my route gave me the drive to want to come to work."

Not many people know that in 2011, a fire that began in Lawrence's neighbor's house spread to Lawrence's home and he lost everything. Fortunately, someone got his dogs out of the burning house.

"My house and the contents were all gone. All the sentimental items I received from my mother's home were gone. I was left with one possession, my UPS uniform."

Lawrence has experienced many trials and tribulations in his personal life, including the loss of his mother, his home and all belongings, but he resoundingly claims that making his deliveries in Cabin John has brought him joy and contentment. The folks of this community have surrounded Lawrence with a family-like warmth, and provided him with a reason to keep on truckin' for just over twenty years.

See FAREWELL on pg. 9

ISLAND *Continued from pg. 6*

Canal that starts just above where Minnehaha Branch (the creek that flows through Glen Echo Park) enters the Potomac. The island is owned by the National Park Service. This is the largest of our local islands and has an extensive "social trail" system that can offer solitude for hikers. Explorers can find the remains of stone chimneys from cabins that were on the island. Cabin John Island is home to an extensive display of spring wildflowers that are easily viewed from the trails. Weed Warriors, trained by the National Park Service, control the non-native plants on the island. Several acres on the island were severely damaged by the windstorm that struck our area in the summer of 2023.

Sycamore Island is located between Locks 6 and 7 and is accessed via a ferry attached to a wire rope system. The ferry landing can be accessed from MacArthur Boulevard from a trail opposite the Sycamore Store. Sycamore Island has been owned by the Sycamore Island Club since 1889. Island access is limited to club members and their guests. The club and the island have a rich history that is well documented by many articles on the club's website at www.sycamoreisland.org. The island has a cabin that includes facilities for a full-time caretaker, picnic areas, a swimming platform, and canoe storage. Membership in the club is in high demand and is determined by a lottery held every two years.

As we approach spring, it's a great time to do some exploring on these local islands! ~VN





Minnie's Island
Community Conservancy

Our staff and volunteers have made enormous progress this past year making the island and cabin more safe, comfortable and accessible than ever before.
We will continue meeting our goal of sharing this treasure with as many folks as possible.

Spring thru Fall Schedule

-Eagle Scout projects
-Chesapeake Bay Trust Grant tree planting
-Nature painting seminars
-Isle-Fest open house, June 7th
-Musical concerts at Lockehouse 8
-Tours of the island for first time visitors
-Bird monitoring and archaeology
-SSL student volunteer hours fulfillment
-3rd Saturday each month volunteer work days

Please visit our website and join our mailing list to get updates

minniesisland.org

FAREWELL *Continued from pg. 8*

Lawrence is a humble, low-key man. "I have always tried to do the job the best way I can," states Lawrence.

During Covid, when most people stayed home, clicking away on their computers, ordering what they wanted delivered to their home, Lawrence was diligently delivering, in a timely manner, a large quantity of packages, keeping the packages safe and dry. An average work day now requires 150 delivery stops. On the day we spoke, he had made 170 stops, which means he delivered at least 200 packages.

Lawrence has always picked up the packages he delivers in Laurel, but now the packages for the Cabin John route will be in Gaithersburg. Traveling to Gaithersburg would increase Lawrence's commute to 1.5 hours, making his work day exceedingly long. A route opened up closer to his home, so Lawrence made the difficult decision to switch routes.

"I always thought I would retire from Cabin John. This is my community. The residents of Cabin John have become my family. Two-thirds of my career has been in Cabin John. Now I have to adjust to a new route."

Having been a letter carrier for a brief time in my twenties, I tried to console Lawrence with a positive thought.

"At least you won't have to learn the route using a map like we did in the old days."

"That's true," he chuckled, "technology will make things easier this time around."

On a personal note, I will miss the joy he spreads. Lawrence has the ability to share anecdotes that make you laugh. This week, when Bill and I ran into him when we were out for a walk, he had an amusing story to share with us. He said, "A friend of mine at work this morning told me we are supposed to get 48 inches of snow this week!" Lawrence's smile stretched across his face as he shook his head in comical disbelief. "I told him he must have heard a forecast for somewhere in Alaska. A little bit later, a woman on my route told me to expect a dusting of snow on Wednesday. I suppose the truth is somewhere in between," he said with a chuckle.

This is a bittersweet time for Lawrence. He knows he made a good decision switching to a route closer to home, but it is difficult leaving the beautiful Cabin John community. The Cabin John community wishes him the best of luck on his new route and hope he feels in his heart our love and gratitude. His last day on the job in our neighborhood was February 24. Lawrence plans to return to visit friends and spend time with his wife, Ashley, biking along the C&O Canal. ~VN

REAL ESTATE ACTIVITY IN CABIN JOHN

ACTIVE
6517 79th Street
List Price $2,999,000
6 BR, 6/1 BA, 2 GAR,
6,055 sq.ft.

6514 76th Street
List Price $3,599,000
6 BR, 5/5 BA, 2 GAR,
4,471 sq.ft.

COMING SOON
6629 81st Street
List Price $2,175,000
6 BR, 6 BA, 2 GAR
3,584 sq.ft.

PENDING
6418 83rd Place
List Price $1,350,000
4 BR, 3/1 BA, 1 GAR
2,279 sq. ft.

8018 Cypres Grove Lane
List Price $1,275,000
5 BR, 3/1 BA, 2 GAR
2,004 sq. ft.

Courtesy of Cabin John Realtor Rachelle Cherol

Mo-Co LOCAL

Wild tomato
7945 MacArthur Blvd. / Cabin John, MD
301.229.0680 www.wildtomatorestaurant.com

SAL'S Italian Kitchen
7945 MacArthur Blvd. /Cabin John, MD
240.802.2370 www.salsitaliankitchen.net





ala | DC BETHESDA
LEVANTINE EXPERIENCE

MICHELIN 2022
MICHELIN 2023

www.ala-dc.com

unique food | rare drinks | loving hospitality

4948 Fairmont Ave, Bethesda, MD 20814
1320 19th St NW, Washington, DC 20036

FRIENDS *Continued from pg. 1*

Following the passing of FMH's beloved founding president, **Diane E. Baxter**, archaeologist **Alexandra Jones, PhD, RPA** was elected as FMH's new president. Additionally, **Christopher Waynes** and **Shannon Steward**, a lifelong Cabin John resident, both descendants of Morningstar Tabernacle No. 88, have joined the board of directors, strengthening the organization's ties to the community.

Recent Highlights:

- FMH has developed a five-year strategic plan, outlining key initiatives such as phased restoration, long-term preservation, and community engagement.
- FMH worked with consulting engineers to complete a preliminary concept design and topographical survey to explore improved site access. This will guide upcoming discussions with county permitting officials.
- FMH has produced a short educational documentary, *Help Us to Help Each Other, Lord: The Story of Morningstar Tabernacle No. 88 in Cabin John, Maryland*, written and directed by L. Paige Whitley. The film highlights the history and legacy of Morningstar No. 88, and the role benevolent societies played in supporting Black communities, especially during segregation. It will premiere at FMH's exclusive **Juneteenth season kickoff fundraiser** on **June 3, 2025, at Round House Theatre**—mark your calendar!

None of this progress would be possible without the incredible support of our community. FMH extends heartfelt thanks to its partners, volunteers, and donors. A special shout-out goes to **Sweetbay Landscaping, LLC**, owned by longtime Cabin Johner **Craig Ludwig**, who generously donated his team's time and resources to clear a massive tree stump and debris from the cemetery. Huge thanks to Shannon Steward for introducing us to Craig and the Sweetbay team!

We're grateful to be on this journey with you—our neighbors, partners, and supporters. Stay tuned for more ways to get involved! Learn more about our work at: friendsofmoseshall.org



The team from Sweetbay Landscaping, owned by CJ resident Craig Ludwig, recently donated time and resources to grounds maintenance at the Morningstar Moses Cemetery site. Photo courtesy of the author. ~VN



Manion + Associates Architects
7307 MacArthur Blvd., Suite 216
Bethesda, MD 20816
301.229.7000
www.manionarchitects.com
Contact: Thomas Manion, AIA





Renovations | Additions | New Homes



Local History

by Rachel Donnan

CLUB DE VINGT: A TASTE OF NEW YORK NIGHTLIFE IN CABIN JOHN

The summer of 1918 saw the height of DC society at the Cabin John Bridge Hotel. Thanks to the Club de Vingt, established by Washington's society ladies, the declining hotel was once again the place to be.

When the Club de Vingt, an upscale New York City nightclub, arrived in Cabin John, its popularity gave local country clubs a run for their money.



One of the elegant dining rooms of the Cabin John Bridge Hotel. Courtesy Richard Cook Collection.

The original Club de Vingt started in 1916 in the former Vanderbilt stables on Madison Avenue and 52nd Street in New York, and featured tea dances and performances. An offshoot of the club was imported to the Washington Club two years later, helped along by several New York socialites who had relocated to the nation's capital during the war.

According to local newspapers, the Club de Vingt took over "the old hotel at Cabin John Bridge, refurbished it a bit, put in little tables, shaded candles, quaint lanterns, and all the paraphernalia to make it attractive." The club offered tea, dinner and supper daily, "with a cold buffet luncheon on Sunday."

It was open to the public but special rooms and shady piazzas were reserved for club members only. Live music for dancing was performed by the Club de Vingt Orchestra, which traveled down from New York to play at the hotel. (The orchestra's scratchy singles can be found online at the Discography of American Historical Recordings).

The July 28, 1918 *New York Sun* newspaper noted that "All the New Yorkers of the new war set here, and a number from other places, who like to be as New Yorky as possible, are interested in it, and its dinners and teas, and especially its supper dances, have been very popular for several months past. Now that it has taken over the old hotel at Cabin John Bridge—a lovely situation on the Conduit Road and overlooking the Potomac—it is making all sorts of a hit."

The hotel hosted a number of "pleasant little dinner parties" for club guests, including President Wilson's daughter, Margaret, and his cousin, Helen. One Saturday evening most of the young people at the Chevy Chase Club "looked the situation over, pronounced the entertainment dull and departed in a body for the Club de Vingt" proclaimed the society pages of local papers.

The "Free Milk for France" group held a philanthropic fundraiser at the hotel to send powdered milk to France in the midst of a shortage there. For the themed party, the hotel grounds were illuminated by Japanese lanterns and club members wore traditional Japanese clothing, while the country's ambassador was among the notable guests.

The famous Japanese dancer Michio Itow performed the "Noh"-inspired drama, "At The Hawk's Well." which was adapted by William Butler Yeats especially for the dancer. Itow was a pioneer of American modern dance, and his performance at the Cabin John Bridge Hotel was only the second outdoor one in the entire country.

The Cabin John Bridge Hotel was founded by Rosa and Joseph Bobinger. Rosa's husband, Joseph, worked as a stone mason on the Union Arch Bridge, while she sold drinks, food and her famous chicken dish to the workers from her small stand. Demand for Rosa's cooking led the couple to purchase 100 acres of land on the west side of the bridge in 1870 to build a hotel and restaurant.

Their business grew from a small German-influenced tavern to an elaborate Victorian folly with over forty rooms filled with the finest furnishings, cavernous banquet halls, intimate dining rooms, an orchestrion, and formal gardens. Society "reveled in the hotel's charm and setting," savored its rich European furniture, farm to table food, and rolling grounds. During its heyday in the late 1800s and early 1900s, the Cabin John Bridge Hotel was an elegant oasis frequented by congressmen, senators, diplomats and even a few presidents.

The Bobinger's son, William, and his wife, continued to run the hotel until 1914, when they leased it out. Over the years the hotel's popularity slowly waned due to local option laws and gambling violations, and competition from nearby country clubs and Glen Echo. In 1931, a suspicious fire destroyed the hotel. The brick gas house, next to the local park tennis courts, is all that remains of the hotel today.

The short-lived Club de Vingt ushered in a grand, albeit brief, revival of the earlier splendor of the Cabin John Bridge Hotel.



Exterior of the Cabin John Bridge Hotel, which drew New York socialites to Cabin John. Courtesy Richard Cook Collection.

~vn

CABIN JOHN PARK VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT SEEKS VOLUNTEERS FROM THE COMMUNITY

by Erik Gaull

The Cabin John Park Volunteer Fire Department (CJPVFD) is calling on passionate individuals to join our ranks and make a difference in the community. Whether you're interested in serving as a firefighter, emergency medical services (EMS) provider, or in a support role, the CJPVFD offers a unique opportunity to serve your neighbors and contribute to public safety while enjoying valuable personal and professional benefits.

Serving with the Cabin John Park Volunteer Fire Department isn't just about answering emergency calls, it's about becoming an integral part of a dedicated team that makes a tangible difference in people's lives every day. As a volunteer firefighter or EMS provider, you'll gain hands-on experience, receive professional training, and build lasting bonds with others who share your commitment to service. Volunteers are essential to the success of the department, and you'll be a crucial part of a team that has served the Cabin John community since 1930.

Volunteering with us means becoming part of a close-knit team that works together to respond to emergencies, solve problems, and support each other in both our professional and personal lives.

As a volunteer firefighter or EMS provider, you'll have a direct impact on the safety and well-being of your neighbors in Cabin John and throughout Montgomery County. Every call to which you respond is an opportunity to save lives, protect property, and improve the community. Your work will have immediate, tangible results.

Training- All frontline CJPVFD members must become emergency medical technicians (EMTs). As a CJPVFD member, you'll receive training through the Montgomery County Public Safety Training Academy that includes everything from EMT to rescue and fire suppression techniques (if you're interested in being a firefighter). Training is provided at no cost to you and is designed to prepare you for real-world situations in both EMS and firefighting roles. In addition, we offer ongoing educational opportunities to help you advance in your skills and certifications.



Volunteers commit to working a minimum of one 12-hour shift per week (from 7 pm to 7 am or a weekend day shift 7am to 7pm) and occasional special events (e.g., Potomac Day). We recognize that people's schedules and personal lives sometimes conflict with our service requirements. CJPVFD members have "vacation days" that excuse them from their duty nights, and members frequently provide coverage for each other when people are unable to do a duty night.

Uniforms and Equipment- CJPVFD and Montgomery County provide all volunteers with station uniforms (except footwear) and protective equipment.

Financial and Personal Benefits for Volunteers- Serving with CJPVFD also comes with numerous benefits that make volunteering a rewarding experience beyond just the satisfaction of helping others.:

- *Length of Service Awards Program (LOSAP)***-** All CJPVFD members can participate in Montgomery County's Length of Service Awards Program (LOSAP), which rewards volunteers for their years of service. CJPVFD members become eligible for monthly LOSAP payments for their lifetime based on their age and after having accumulated a certain number of years of active service.
- *Other Financial Benefits***-** Active volunteers are eligible for tax incentives, including a state income tax credit of up to $7,000 per year (after three years of service) and a $2,500 deduction on Montgomery County property tax for resident homeowners. Additionally, CJPVFD members can receive an annual cash stipend from Montgomery County based on their level of activity. Members are also eligible to receive up to $1,830 in tuition assistance for certificate or degree programs (funds are available on a first-come, first-served basis until exhausted). The Maryland State Firefighters Association (MSFA) offers scholarships for which CJPVFD members are eligible.
- *Wellness Benefits***-** CJPVFD members are required to have an annual physical examination, which is provided free of charge by Montgomery County. Any CJPVFD member who has served the Department for the previous six months may be eligible for reimbursement if the Montgomery County Fire-Rescue Occupational Medical Service advises them to see an outside specialist. Both of the CJPVFD stations have fitness equipment available for members to use 24 hours a day.
- *Insurance Coverage***-** CJPVFD volunteers are covered by comprehensive insurance policies for any injuries or accidents that occur while on duty.

How to Join

If you're ready to make a meaningful impact on your community, CJPVFD is waiting for you. To apply or learn more, visit our website (www.cjpvfd.org/volunteer) or send us an email at membership@cjpvfd.org. Whether you're looking to become a firefighter, an EMT, or just want to support the department in another way, we'll guide you through the process and provide the training and resources you need.

Join the Cabin John Park Volunteer Fire Department today and become part of something that truly matters. Your service can save lives—and offer rewards that last a lifetime! ~VN

Bethesda Coop

Shop the Best in Fine Food & Wine
Local Brews Fresh Bread & Produce



Great Gifts Cards Candy
Great Community Going on 50!
ALL ARE WELCOME Open 8-8, 7 days a week
www.bethesdacoop.org 301 320-2530



Home is
where the heart is.
From home repairs to renovations, we mind every detail.

ANTHONY WILDER
ARCHITECTURE | INTERIORS | CONSTRUCTION
ANTHONYWILDER.COM 301.907.0100

Highfill Custom Woodworks LLC

Transform your home with Custom Built-ins



MHIC# 136069

301-767-6596
www.highfillcustomwoodworks.com

SNOWPEOPLE!



These fine fellows made an appearance on the baseball field near the Union Arch Bridge after February's snowstorm. Their elaborate faces and whimsical positioning inspired Cabin Johner ***Cathie Nelsen*** *to snap some shots.*

See something unusual? Touching? Funny? Take a photo and submit it to us for publication at VNEditorial@gmail.com.









Poems For Passersby

Presented by Meredith Griggs

Aftershocks

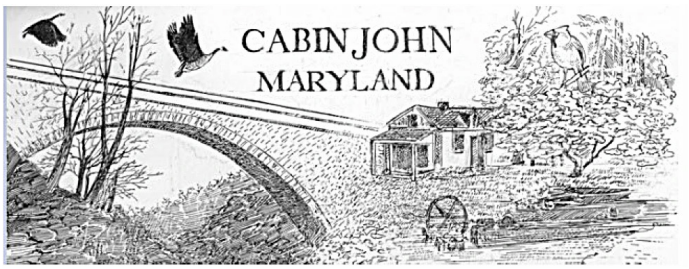
by A.E. Stallings

We are not in the same place after all.
The only evidence of the disaster,
Mapping out across the bedroom wall,
Tiny cracks still fissuring the plaster–
A new cartography for us to master,
In whose legend we read where we are bound:
Terra infirma, a stranger land, and vaster.
Or have we always stood on shaky ground?
The moment keeps on happening: a sound.
The floor beneath us swings, a pendulum
That clocks the heart, the heart so tightly wound,
We fall mute, as when two lovers come
To the brink of the apology, and halt,
Each standing on the wrong side of the fault.



Longtime Cabin John resident Steve France, of Ericsson Road, studies a post-Valentine's Day poem by Philip Larkin. Steve also admires the work of A. E. Stallings, poet, translator from the Greek, and a MacArthur Fellow, among her other awards.

New poems are displayed weekly on upper 78th Street.



The Village News is a monthly newsletter published since 1967 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. Reach CJCA leadership at cjcapresidents@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; **Heidi Lewis**, layout designer (interim - looking for help! email cjcapresidents@gmail.com); and **Marcy Harrison**, business manager.

Regular contributors: Sarah Craven, Rachel Donnan, Annemarie Economou Gormley, Burr Gray, Meredith Griggs, Heidi Lewis, Scott Lewis, Charlotte Troup Leighton, Joe Saliunas, and Susan Shipp. Illustrations by Trudy Nicholson.

NEXT ISSUE DEADLINE:
5 pm, March 25, 2025
CJCA, P.O. Box 31, Cabin John, MD 20818

NEW TO CABIN JOHN? EMAIL US TO RECEIVE A WELCOME KIT:

cjcapresidents@gmail.com

Classified Ads

COMPUTER SERVICES
DC/PC Computer Support offers friendly, personalized computer and electronic services to area residents. In person, remote and telephone support are available. To schedule an appointment or learn more about our services, email support@dc-pc.com or call Jim at 202.841.0873.

LICKS & LEASHES PET CARE
DEPENDABLE, RELIABLE, TRUSTWORTHY We provide: Daily walks, Daycare, Boarding, In Home Pet Sitting. We pick up and drop off for both our Daycare and Boarding services. Check us out: www.licksandleashes.net
Owner: Lauren Nicholas, 808-286-6556 Thank you for giving us the opportunity to meet you and your furry family. We look forward to working with you!

Classified ads are 30¢/word. Please email ads to vnbusinessmanager@gmail.com

Community Calendar

MARCH	*All events at Clara Barton Neighborhood Rec Center unless otherwise noted*
26	CJCA Meeting, 7:30 pm Topic: J. Yang, Dept. of Ed.
29	Clara Barton Center for Children 50th Anniv. Party
APRIL	
6	Spring Egg Hunt - 4 pm
23	CJCA Meeting, 7:30 pm,

SAVE THE DATE May 3 - House Tour
June 7 - Minnie's Island Isle-Fest