

# The Caper



Our 51<sup>st</sup> Year

Cape St. Claire Improvement Association, Inc. Community Newsletter

February 2006

**Cape Email News List:** An email to get you up to date of the latest news and happenings from around the Cape, not just the Improvement Association, but all the other great community groups as well. See **Page 3** for more information and instructions on how to join! Also on the Web at: <http://www.cscia.org>

## President's Perspective

Well, here it is: my last President's Perspective. It's been a quick year. I know it's nearly a cliché, but it's been an honor to serve as your President this year. While I still have a year left on my current term on the Board of Governors, I don't intend to run for President again in the coming year. So, by the time you read this, the torch should have been passed to a new President.

Speaking of new things, have you seen the Cape's website lately? If you haven't, you should take a look. Frank Newman has been quietly helping/running the website for the last year and recently redesigned the entire site. You can see it at <http://www.cscia.org/>. In addition to giving the site a long-overdue face-lift, he's added *The Caper* online, ensured the Association's documents are available (minutes, *Bylaws*, forms, etc) and answered questions and requests coming in from email. He's done a good job and I'm grateful for his willingness to take this on.

While you're on the website, you might want to take note of the email addresses for the Board of Governors. The Cape assigns email addresses by committee. So, you don't need to know who is now responsible for Beaches and Parks, Piers, or the Clubhouse, all you need to know

is you can reach them at :

[parks@cscia.org](mailto:parks@cscia.org), or  
[piers@cscia.org](mailto:piers@cscia.org), or  
[clubhouse@cscia.org](mailto:clubhouse@cscia.org), etc.

You can also refer people to the website to show them where you live. There's a great on-line tour of the Cape with photos of houses, the main beach, the piers, the shopping center—enough to let someone know what it is like in Cape St. Claire.

I don't know about you, but I often find myself talking about our community. I'm probably one of Cape St. Claire's biggest cheerleaders. I talk to people at work, around the county, anyone who will listen about how great it is to live here. Inevitably, during these conversations, I'm asked the big question—you know, the one that is asked with that "you poor thing, what have you got yourself into" tone—why do you volunteer to serve on your board?

The reason, as corny as it sounds, is that I love this community. It reminds me of the small town in Oregon where I grew up. I never imagined when I joined the Navy to see the world that it would take me to a community on the Chesapeake Bay I would come to call home. But, from the first time I visited here, I knew this was the place.

There's just so much to like about this community. Sure, we have some great amenities—the beaches, the parks, community marinas and a clubhouse all add to the value of living here. But

there's something more. It's running into neighbors at Graul's and dining with friends at Broadneck Grill. The Strawberry Festival held every June and the friendly Friday Night sailboat races on the Magothy contribute to the Rockwell painting feel to Cape St. Claire. As someone once said to me, "It's like our own version of Mayberry."

Too many homeowners' associations have contributed to the negative stereotype—nosy neighbors writing each other up over the wrong color trash bags and picking at whether a house is painted the right shade of brown. I'm proud that the CSCIA has stayed above such petty frays. Sure, we have our rules, and we have our building code, but you'll note that there's nothing in there about what color you can paint your house, or what time of day it's permissible to put out your trash. This, too, is why I

*(Continued on page 3)*

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**The deadline for articles and ads is the 12<sup>th</sup> of the month.**

*The Caper* is published monthly and sent bulk rate to all residents of Cape St. Claire, all nonresident lot owners, local government officials and advertisers. Copies are also available in CSCIA Office, Broadneck Library and local stores.

#### **POLICY FOR ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS**

All article submissions for *The Caper* must be received by the Editor by the 12<sup>th</sup> of the prior month. Submissions should preferably be e-mailed in Microsoft Word format to:

**CaperManager@www.cscia.org.**

Or can be dropped off at the CSCIA Office at 1223 River Bay Road.

Articles must be submitted via electronic format, either on a computer disk or via email. All articles should be clearly labeled with the 1) submitter's name, 2) phone number, 3) article filename (s), 4) **IBM format ONLY**, and 5) software product and 6) version used. Submitters should keep a backup copy of each data file, and should not submit disks containing extraneous files. After *The Caper* processes each article, the submitter's disk can be picked up at the CSCIA office during regular hours.

*The Caper* Staff and the Cape St. Claire Improvement Association reserve the right to refuse any article, letter or advertising that it deems inflammatory, in poor taste or inappropriate.

## **Board in Brief**

**T**he CSCIA Board of Governors met on January 9, 2006 for their monthly meeting. President Gallagher provided opening remarks, including:

He received a phone call from a resident involved with an adverse possession issue, stating that he agreed with the terms contained within the CSCIA's last letter and that legal documentation would follow.

- Concerning the mailing of the January 2006 Caper which contained ballots - he reported that a portion of the Cape either received the Caper late or did not receive it at all. A notice was placed on the Cape sign-board for residents to call the CSCIA office if their Caper was not received.

- There were no December 2005 BOG meeting minutes, since there was no quorum for the December 2005 Monthly BOG meeting. Annual CSCIA Committee reports

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www.cscia.org

### ***The Board of Governors***

#### **Office:**

President  
Vice-President  
Secretary  
Treasurer

#### **Officers:**

Sam Gallagher  
Daniel Wolin  
John Daly  
Matt Puglisi

#### **Committee:**

Beaches & Parks  
Building  
Caper  
Clubhouse  
Covenants  
Membership  
Personnel  
Piers  
Roads  
Web Master  
Nominating  
No Committee

#### **Chair:**

Craig Madden  
Josephine Gardner  
Daniel Wolin  
Mike Juras  
Matt Puglisi  
Mary Lamb  
John Daly  
Sam Gallagher  
Bruce Campbell  
Sam Gallagher  
Peter Clarke  
Kari Hotchkiss

#### **Budget Committee:**

Frank Newman  
Janet Little

are due January 13<sup>th</sup>.

### **Minutes and Financials:**

A motion was made to approve the November 14, 2005 Monthly BOG Meeting Minutes. This motion was seconded and approved, with one member abstaining. Another motion was made to approve the October 31, 2005 and November 30, 2005 Financials. This motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

### **Committee Reports:**

**Membership:** Governor Lamb reported that she had recruited sufficient people to assistance with the counting of ballots on January 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>. The Annual Meeting is scheduled for 7:00 PM on Saturday, January 28<sup>th</sup>. President Gallagher is working with Congressman Wayne Gilchrest's staff to determine his availability to attend our membership meeting.

**Clubhouse:** Governor Juras stated that he would be forwarding a letter to a past renter of our clubhouse for problems caused. He also stated that he has changed the clubhouse rental policy and contract so that the renters of the clubhouse may only be Cape residents, and that these residents must attend the gathering and be responsible for full contract compliance.

**Roads:** Governor Campbell reported that he is still working on submitting a "speed hump" policy proposal to the CSCIA. Governor Daly stated that the County should put a black-top patch on the open spaces/holes adjacent to Cape St. Claire Road as it approaches College Parkway, stating that these spaces/holes are large enough for vehicle axles to break if hit.

**Piers:** President Gallagher stated that the bubbler system was set up in November, and that boat slip contracts would be going out in February.

### **Old Business:**

Governor Gardner reported that a

house located at the corner of Little Magothy View and Cape St. Claire Road is again being advertised for sale as apartments. She requested that the CSCIA take appropriate action through its legal representative, while also reporting this residence to the County Zoning Department.

A roll call was taken. Five members were absent. A motion was made and approved to "excuse" four of these members as they had previously provided notification of their absence due to work obligations or vacation. The BOG also "excused" the fifth member, Kari Hotchkiss, as her baby decided to make an unexpected early arrival. Congratulations were expressed for Kari Hotchkiss and her baby.

The regular meeting of the January 9, 2006 Monthly BOG Meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM before entering into a Closed Session meeting. The next Monthly Board of Governors meeting is scheduled for **7:30 PM** on **February 13, 2006**.

## E-Mail News For Our Community

Get news about community events, news that is important from the Improvement Association, and upcoming dates to remember (such as quarterly meetings, sign ups for Cape Recreation Council Sports, Youth Sailing, Swim Club, Garden Club, PTO, etc.). All the things that slip our minds in these very busy times.

All email addresses will be kept private and only used to send you the Cape email newsletter.

Two ways to sign up:

- 1) Send us an Email with "Add Me to the List" in the subject line, at [cscia\\_news@yahoo.com](mailto:cscia_news@yahoo.com), including your name and address in the body of the email; or
- 2) Visit [www.cscia.org](http://www.cscia.org) and click on **News** on the left hand side of the page.

(Continued from page 1)

love the Cape. And this is why I serve on the Board of Governors.

No, I'm not up for re-election, and I'm not trying to sell you any swamp land. I just thought that as my last missive from the bully pulpit I'd take a minute to reflect on why I live here. I suspect you live here for some of the same reasons, too.

As always, I look forward to hearing from you. As I mentioned above, check the Cape website to find the best way to email me and if you'd like to email the incoming President, you can reach him or her at the same email as always: [president@cscia.org](mailto:president@cscia.org).

*Sam Gallagher,  
President*

## Mona Saved Us Money & Stress!

Mona sold a house for us while we were stationed overseas in 2002. We kept in touch with her and employed her services again to purchase a house before returning to the U.S. in 2003. At the top of a hot seller's market, Mona made our purchase of a new home a breeze. She met with the builders and cleverly negotiated on our behalf, emailed us blue prints and digital pictures and even made suggestions for changes we hadn't thought of. We were absolutely thrilled with her services, as usual.

We recently accepted job offers to return overseas on short notice. I called Mona right away to list the house for sale. Mona eased my anxiety, reassuring me that the right buyer would come along soon. She was right again! With each and every sale and purchase we have worked with Mona, her thorough knowledge of real estate law and savvy contract negotiation has saved us money and stress. Thanks for everything, Mona - again!

*David & Michelle Stephens*



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## PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING

### Mill Creek Pump Station

The Department of Public Works and the Health Department will be holding a public meeting regarding the December 17th sewer spill at the Mill Creek Pump Station. Public Works will present information about response and repair efforts, environmental assessments and remediation plans. The Health Department will present information on water quality monitoring and emergency creek closing.

The meeting will be held Thursday, February 9th, 2006 at 7 p.m. at Anne Arundel Community College, 101 College Parkway, Arnold, Md. in Room 101 of the Florestano Building.

Take Northbound Governor Ritchie

Highway to West Campus Drive (near Big Vanilla). Take West Campus Drive to the first intersection and turn right. The Florestano Building is on the left in front of Parking Lot E.

From College Parkway turn onto Ring Road and take the first right onto West Campus Drive and parking lot E will be on the right.

A map of the campus is available online at:

<http://www.aacc.cc.md.us/locationsandmaps/maps.cfm>.

For further information regarding the meeting, please contact Customer Relations at 410-222-7582 or 410-222-4355(TTY). Participants requiring special accommodations should notify this office at least five (5) working days prior to the meeting.

If the College should close due to inclement weather, the meeting will be rescheduled.

## YACHT CLUB

### HOSTS ANNUAL WINE & CHEESE PARTY TO KICK OFF THE 2006 BOATING SEASON

The Yacht Club of Cape St. Claire (YCCSC) is hosting its Annual Wine & Cheese Party on Friday, February 24, from 7-10 p.m. to kick-off the 2006 Boating Season. The event will be held at the Cape St. Claire Clubhouse.

The YCCSC is a social club for residents and property owners of Cape St. Claire who share an interest in boating and boating activities. Ownership of a boat is not a requirement for membership. Yacht Club activities include events on-the-water (raft-ups, Friday Night Races, cruising trips, regattas), and on-land (picnics, swim parties, banquets and educational/informational programs). Membership dues are \$35.00 per year, per family. Associ-

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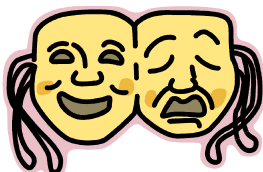
ate memberships are available to out-of-Cape St. Claire families provided they are sponsored by a paid in-Cape member.

This event is a great opportunity to meet other Cape Boaters and learn about the Yacht Club. For more information please call Karen Whitaker, Commodore at 410-757-2975.

*Submitted by  
Karen Whitaker*

## Cape St. Claire Culture Club

Not Boy  
George- we  
are talking  
theater!!!



Those of us  
long term residents that have been  
awaiting the time that Cape St.  
Claire will become the cultural  
Meca of Maryland, the time is

now!

We are looking to establish if there is interest in getting group tickets to local and/or New York events of culture. Events such as Wicked at the Kennedy Center, Les Miserable, Lion King, Non musical theater, the BSO, Annapolis Chorale, other concerts or just mingling with people that love theater and music.

We are talking about getting first dibs on discounted tickets, perhaps a bus, getting together with like minded Cape St. Clairions! If you are interested in joining please send me an email so that I can let you know about our organizational meeting. In the subject line please put "Culture Club". All ideas and comments welcome!

Contact: Amy Juris

Via Email at:

[amy@househuntress.com](mailto:amy@househuntress.com)

## Caper Corner

Well the time has come. After months of searching, a volunteer has been found to take my place as editor. Her name is Dana Raymond (she lives in the Cape) and will be starting with the March issue.

I will be transition that and the management duties to someone else over the next month.

It has been a pleasure (for *the most part*) doing the Caper for the community over the last five years. One last bit of thanks to Elaine Barnhart, Renee Novak, and Laura Seebeck. They made it easier.

I wish the best of luck to my successors and may they be able to make the Caper even better.

## Lost Canoe

It's a yellow, fiberglass, Old Town canoe. We're pretty sure the wind blew it into the river the weekend of Jan. 14. If found, please call Dana and Chris at 410-757-3738.

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## Cape Babysitters

The current and updated list of babysitters to the right. This is a list of willing sitters; it is up to the people hiring the sitter to evaluate their qualifications. If you would like to have your name added to this list

<u>Name</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Phone</u>
Meggan Armiger	410-349-0439	Amanda Machen	410-349-8175
Crystal Arp	410-626-7906	Michelle Maurer	410-626-7079
Melody Clore	410-757-3971	Shannon McClanahan	410-626-8380
Samantha Carr	410-626-8712	Monique Morgan	410-626-7037
Heather Carr	410-626-8712	Cindy Miller	410-626-8872
Ashley Donatelli	410-757-4792	Tabitha Miller	410-757-6663
Amy Dugan	410-349-1621	Sara Naeseth	410-757-9255
Britani Fox	410-626-7481	Madeleine Schroeder	410-626-7576
Molly Friedland	410-757-6517	Sydney Stultz	410-757-3014
Hillary Fisher	410-757-0304	Chelsey McLaughlin	410-349-0576
Lisa Gamiz	410-757-3127	Zachery Treakle	410-349-0576
Phoenix Geimer	410-349-0945	Lauren Tucker	410-757-6841
Winters Geimer	410-349-0945	Lauren Velasco	410-757-4350
Amy Laking	410-349-8320	Madison Welder	410-757-1359
Lauren Lepthien	410-349-0221	Liza Wambugu	410-757-4551
Margie Harper	410-626-8218		

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## Property Rights

I caused a bit of a stir last month when writing about voting. It was my attention to do so. I wanted people to think before voting for the Candidates that were running.

As of this writing, I have no idea how that vote will turn out. I may not be on the board any longer, we shall see. But I thought I would write this article to clear the air about what has been going on lately. There are a few people who know the facts a bit better than I, but I will do my best.

First, nothing was imminent, there has been a lot of talk about individuals wanting to buy the Riparian Rights in front of their homes along the water from the Magothy to the Little Magothy. However, there were nominations of individuals who might want to favor this type of sale.

I was told the rights were worth about \$10,000 by one person. Of course the benefits to that same individual could be upwards of a several hundred thousand. These numbers were off the cuff and I have no verification to back them up.

I can see a conflict of interest developing here if you owned "waterfront" without the riparian rights and wanted to get on the board to vote to sell them to yourself and others in a similar situation. This would be an instant lawsuit.

Anybody on the Board who owned this type of property and voted on this issue were it to come up, would be in a direct conflict of in-

terest between their responsibility to the board and community and their own potential for financial gain.. This being said, I don't think anyone ignorant enough to actually get caught in this situation. But you never know.

There was a sale of a piece of Cape property that had a pool built on it some 40 years ago. The board sold the property to the individual to avoid an adverse possession claim, which was more than likely not winnable from a CSCIA point of view. The negotiations took several months but the board got the best possible deal it could hope for.

At this time we started discussing by law amendment requiring unanimous approval from the board to buy and sell property. The conclusion of that discussion is what you voted on last month.

It will be interesting to see what the community voted for, I am sure you will be reading about it in the next issue of the Caper.

A different type of property rights would be Slips in our marina. A very strict policy is needed to ensure that we are fair and equitable to all those residents (200+) waiting to get slips. This strict operation is in place today, but we (as a community) must be vigilant to make sure it stays that way. No back room deals and no special favors.

Currently, I hear that an error the County made with the rezoning of Deep Creek to MA1 a

couple years ago is being corrected. I hope the board gets to report next month that the County Council has corrected the error, which will allow 6 new deep water slips to be built this year.

This next issue is rather sensitive, so I will not go into great detail because it has to do with a legal matter that is still unresolved. However, suffice it to say that a resident threatened a lawsuit because they thought they were due a slip (mostly because of the location of their home and its' history, which they bought here a couple years ago.) I believe their assumptions are without merit, given the ownership history of the house (That is just my opinion, not a legal one!)

They then proceeded to interject themselves between the county error and it's correction. The county council sometimes does not like to pass legislation when there is pending litigation. That is what I was told.

This delayed the correction of the zoning error. As I stated above, the County Council has now decided to do right by us and pass legislation that will correct the error. This will allow us to complete the Deep Creek marina as intended many years ago when the rezoning got started.

I tell you this so that the community is informed and will pay attention to a very important issue should something else happen.

These were the property rights issues facing the Board in 2005. Let's see where it takes us in 2006.

Dan Wolin, CSCIA VP

## Garden Club

Greetings Cape Folk!

What a strange winter we've had, with hardly a day below freezing in weeks! This gardener has several friends who are still planting bulbs, and plans to pop an azalea in the ground one of these days when she gets around to it. As long as the ground isn't frozen, potted plants and bulbs can go in – what a joy it is to live in this mild zone 7 climate!

The Garden Club convened in January with its new board of officers. We had several new faces join our regular members, much to our delight, and we heard horticulturalist Gene Sumi of Homestead Gardens give another marvelous talk, this one on shade gardening. He talked about the various kinds of shade: wet, dry, part, and full, and the plants that are adapted to each type. He also explained that evergreen shade-tolerant shrubs, like rhododendrons and azal-

eas, are active during the winter, photosynthesizing while the leaves are off the trees above them, making the most of their brief time in the sun. Such plants particularly love a good layer of mulch around their ankles, as they are accustomed to growing in the leafy litter of a forest floor. He also talked about a new variety of grass available that is adapted for growing a lush lawn in the shade, even wet shade. It's called sabre grass – I bet there is many a Cape resident who would love a bag of this seed in the spring!

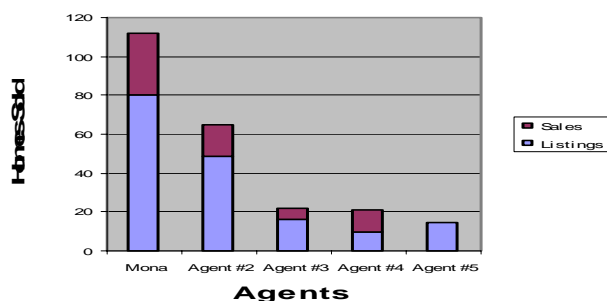
This time of year may seem dreary in the garden, but there can be lots going on if one plans well: evergreens of all shades from blue to green to gold, berries of all colors, dried grasses, the red and yellow stems of Siberian dogwoods, and even the earliest bulbs, like snowdrops and crocus, which are poking up in this gardener's shielded, south-facing garden. In our climate, even pansies bloom through the winter cold. Mr. Sumi also told us about hellebores, shade-loving perennials with gorgeous foliage year-round.

The flowers, which range from white to pale green to pink to purple, bloom in February or March! This gardener also recently planted a flowering apricot tree, *Prunus Mume*, which is also supposed to bud and bloom in February as well. It's the annual mystery: will this February be as mild as January, or will the cold winter snows finally come?

Please join us in February for our next speaker, JoAnn Kuhn, a Master Gardener who will speak to us about the new plant introductions for 2006.

Breeders are always coming up with new colors and plants – did you know that coneflowers are now available in white, yellow, and orange? And there is even a double-decker coneflower in pink that has two layers of petals, the normal bottom layer and one on top! But these are already old news – who knows what 2006 will bring? Come to our meeting and find out! Join us at **6:45 p.m. on Tuesday, February 21<sup>st</sup>**, for a fun talk and some refreshments to boot!

### *Mona Sells The Cape*



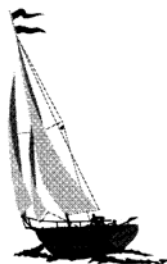
### *Cape Saint Claire Improvement Association*

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Laura Seebeck at 410-757-3181.

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## CAPE FOLK

**B**y the time this reaches our readers the holiday season will be well and truly over and we'll be tucked up safe and warm in our homes looking at catalogs and planning fabulous spring gardens and summer vacations. Here at Cape Folk we're doing a follow up on some of the features we wrote about to close out 2005.

Cape St. Claire's own Heather Atcherson, the current Miss Maryland Junior Teen was in Anaheim, California over Thanksgiving to compete with other contestants for the National Title. Holly Frye, Heather's Mom, told Cape Folk that they did the complete Hollywood tour with stops at Disneyland, The Chinese Theater and Walk of Fame, Venice Beach, Rodeo Drive for shopping and they joined the pageant sponsors for a fabulous Thanksgiving banquet. Heather earned first runner-up

in Academic Achievement and went on to the final pageant. There were 42 representatives from throughout the nation and the family was confident Heather would at least place in the first ten. The other contestants were the best in the country, but then Heather is from Cape St. Claire and as we all knew, that alone would give her an edge over the others! As the contest progressed it became clear that Heather was going to make it to the finals and as the names of the last five girls were called the family's hearts were pounding. As Holly explained, "The fourth runner up was called, not Heather! The third and second names were announced and Heather was not amongst them and the tension was rising." It was down to two girls Miss Tennessee and Miss Maryland. After a long speech from the Master for Ceremonies the first runner up was announced "Heather Atcherson!" Now this lovely Cape St. Claire teenager adds First Runner-Up in the National American Miss Pageant to her list of awards. Well done Heather!

Cape resident and Oscar Winning Documentary filmmaker Susan Haddary has been working on her second season of The Discovery Channel's "The Critical Hour". The series takes place in the emergency room of Baltimore's Shock Trauma Unit, focusing on inner-city juvenile crime in episodes "Shattered World" and "Manic Moments", while "Alternate Heroes" focuses on firefighters and police officers injured in the line of duty. Is there perhaps another Oscar in the works for Susan and creative team partner Bill Whiteford? Let's hope so!

Cape Folk's debut four years ago featured local sculptor D.H. Banker whose drawings, stone carvings and bronze figures will be on display in the McNutt room at St. John's College Library in March of 2006. Deb Banker recently had a successful one woman exhibit at the De Mattei Gallery on West Street.

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Annapolis Attorney Renee C. Swafford, who lives here in the Cape on weekends is running for County Council. Renee who was the subject of one of our earliest Cape Folk features has our best wishes for a successful campaign.

Cape neighbor Jane Elkin, formerly of Trinitas and featured not too long ago in Cape Folk, is an active member of the professional choir of The Basilica of The National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington. The choir has recently released a CD of music commemorating the papacy of Pope John Paul II. It was recorded in Rome at the Basilica in the Sanctuary of St. Maria Maggiore. The CD has been hailed as one of the most outstanding choral recordings available. Its concept was to match the Pope's theological ideas and intersperse them with the choral works of such brilliant composers as Taverner, Palistrina, Ferrant, Britton, Perosi and others. The end result is amazing. The choir was seen on television this holi-

day season on EWTN and WHUT and Jane's CDs with Trinitas, as well as the choir CD are available in the Shrine gift shop, as well as in music and religious book stores throughout the area. Jane told Cape Folk she has recently become certified as a Handwriting Analyst and as formed a new company appropriately called "ABC Graphology". Reading between the lines, we at Cape Folk, feel Jane is well on her way to success.

While Cape St. Claire has its share of talent and is home to artists, musicians, writers, producers, poets, entrepreneurs, scientists, engineers, politicians, lawyers, tinkers, tailors soldiers and sailors, (Yes, we do it all here in living color) in order for Cape Folk to maintain the diversity so well represented in our community, we need to hear from you. If you would like to be featured or know someone who has a story to tell, please contact the Caper and let us know.

A big thank you to all of the people who call or stop by to support The Caper and particularly our column. We love writing about you and we're thrilled you enjoy reading about who's who and what's going on in our community! Happy New Year Cape St. Claire.

Submitted by  
Mandy Johnson

*Mandy Johnson is the Director and Founder of The Enehey Group, an Investigative Research Company specializing in human rights issues and pre-trial investigation for law firms.*



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## Vital Views

### WHAT HAPPENED AT MILL CREEK?

Well the New Year finally made it - as if we could have stopped it. I hope everyone had an opportunity to enjoy a safe and happy holiday season. For me, the end of 2005 meant the changing of the guard at the Council; Ed Reilly (District 7) was elected Chairman, and yours truly was elected to serve as Vice Chairman. As with all new titles comes additional work, concerns, and worries, but your Council leadership is up to the task. As we enter the last year of this term, the Council will continue to move forward to address funding needs, infrastructure shortfalls and educational plans.

The end of the year also brought

about an environmental nightmare for the County and the citizens of our district. By now, most of you have read the articles or seen the news clips regarding the Mill Creek pumping station malfunction. For those who were away, the following is a bit of old news.

On December 19th, I was notified there had been a major fault in the wastewater line serving the Mill Creek Pumping Station. The result was nothing short of a catastrophe as millions of gallons of raw sewage flowed into Mill Creek. When I arrived on site, I was dumbfounded to find a crater, the size of a small pond swallowing up grass, mud and, yes, trees. The erosion of dirt had caused the pumping station to fill with mud and debris and ultimately shut down.

The Mill Creek pumping station is a prime example of the aging fa-

cilities we have in Anne Arundel County. Originally built in 1973 with then state-of-the-art technology, the station has suffered from repeated problems, including odor and fumes to mechanical failures, third party breaches and now the collapse of the 36" sewer line.

Including this latest spill, there have been more than two dozen separate spills into the waterway. Since the early 90's the County has spent several million dollars to upgrade the systems to prevent overflow from reaching the river. The latest spill - more than 3,000,000 gallons - is by far the most devastating. So what do we do? There are two immediate concerns.

The first is to not only fix the broken line but to go further 'upstream' in the system and replace additional sections of the

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pipeline that inspections have shown may have been compromised. Corrosion inside the lines appears to be the culprit. According to conversations with Department of Public Works employees, when the Mill Creek Station was put into service and the concrete piping was used, it was the newest and safest technology. Now, it appears it is susceptible to "sewer gases," which corrode away the concrete.

Residents will be able to see where the repair and replacement work is progressing as it requires above ground "by-pass" lines, usually blue in color laid along the public roadways. With so much of the County's system made from these concrete pipes, one has to wonder whether we can repair and replace before another major spill.

The second concern, and perhaps the one most effecting local residents, is what has this done to Mill Creek and the Magothy. Since the spill several environmental agencies, as well as individuals, have been involved in testing the waterways. Among the concerns are: to what level and extent the water is contaminated with algae and bacteria, and what steps will be needed to restore Mill Creek wetlands.

Plans are currently underway to implement a sediment removal plan in the affected areas. Sediment removal and a containment system have been approved by the Maryland Department of the Environment. I have spoken with officials from the Department of the Environment about possible dredging in the most effective areas to remove phosphates in the sediments.

In the coming weeks, my office, the Department of Public Works, the Health Department and others from the County will be holding a town meeting to discuss Mill Creek, the pumping station and what happens next. Notification will likely be by press release and contact to the community associations who have expressed an interest in participating. If you would like to be notified, please send me an email at [cvi-tale@aacounty.org](mailto:cvi-tale@aacounty.org). We will provide as much lead-time as possible.

By Cathleen Vitale,  
5th District  
County Council Representative

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