



THE NAV-LIGHT



THE COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER OF RIO VISTA
ESTABLISHED AND INCORPORATED IN 1954

Volume 15 Issue 5

May 6, 2016



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They Are Here! Coming Soon To Yard Near You



The not so welcomed Mosquito Invasion is about to begin. As a community association we cannot do much to eliminate the mosquitoes. The required contracts with a professional Pest Control company, the written permission from all properties owners in the area and the expense involved are beyond our means. However, as individual property owners we can do a lot to reduce the number of mosquitoes in our area.

The NUMBER ONE Action is:

Remove Mosquito Habitat

- Remove standing water from gutters, buckets, and other containers where mosquitoes can breed.
- Change water in birdbaths, fountains, and potted plants regularly.
- Thin out high grass and other vegetation where adult mosquitoes live and feed.
- Keep all pool water treated and circulating.
- Treat standing water in boats and old tires.

The RVCA Board Wants to Help

- The RVCA Board has purchased a bulk supply of Mosquito Dunks
- **The Dunks will be available at the Annual Meeting in June.**
- **Each dunk treats wet area 10 feet by ten feet.**
- Mosquito Dunks are harmless to fish, birds, pets, humans and other animals.
- When placed in standing water, they prevent the development of **mosquito larvae for 30 days.**
- **Larvae only live on the surface of the water**
- **No Larvae = No Adult Mosquitoes**
- If you need some Dunks sooner contact janburke5454@icloud.com
- The sooner we stop the larvae the better.

Mosquito Bits that can be sprinkled onto small areas can be purchased at most hardware stores.



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK.....

Spring has sprung! Finally! The weather is wonderful with warming, sunny days becoming the norm. It makes you realize what a wonderful, pleasant place we all live in and enjoy. The smell of freshly mowed lawns fills the air. The pollen will be gone soon. A little rain will help subdue the effects and clean our cars. It's great to be outside and spend time with the neighbors after the long, cold winter.

The community dock is fully rented this year. Hunter Plog has worked very hard to accommodate everyone. It was a difficult task as rental applications started coming in a little earlier than usual. According to the Maryland Department of Natural Resources we expect to have a good crab season this year. It should be much better than the last few years. We are reviewing options to improve the user experience of the slip renters and will keep everyone informed.

In the last Nav-Light, I asked for comments regarding telephone service in Rio Vista. I have only heard from a couple of residents who commented about constant static on the line, poor and slow internet connection and poor response from Verizon repair service. I would appreciate your emailing your concerns to riovistamd@riovistacom.org so I can accumulate responses to send to Verizon and the Maryland Public Utility Commission.

The St. Michaels Running Festival (SMRF) is scheduled to be run on **Saturday, May 21st**. The 5K Run/Walk will not be coming through Rio Vista this year, but many of you have graciously volunteered to help again. The 5K run/walk will be routed down Boundary Lane in an effort to decrease the time Route 33 will be shut down and to increase the safety of the participants.

Also, now would be a good time to mark your calendar for the upcoming Annual Community meeting. The meeting is scheduled for **Saturday, June 11, 3 pm to 5 pm**. Free Ice Cream, cupcakes and tea. Also, we will be handing out Mosquito Dumps to help fight mosquito problems.

If you have not shared your email address with us yet, please do so. We use your email to send the Nav-Light and to advise of any significant events within the community. We also use the email to alert every one of any security occurrences that you should be aware of. Your email is treated in confidence and is **not shared with anyone**. Sending the Nav-Light by email saves a lot of money spent on postage, and the Nav-Light looks so much better in color.

With the improving weather, I have noticed young children are becoming more active outside. Please be aware of walkers, bikers and children who will be on our streets and using the community facilities. There is a **25 mph speed limit** in Rio Vista. Please be vigilant and obey the speed limit.

As a reminder, open fires, such as yard debris burning, are not permitted within Rio Vista at any time.

Jack Davis

NOTES FROM THE BOARD

The board meetings during the Winter have been very productive with board members contributing their time and ideas to improve the life experiences in Rio Vista. We are lucky to have the participation of seven of your neighbors to oversee the management of the community.

The board pays particular attention to the financial condition of the community and provides excellent stewardship of the community assets including maintenance and improvement to the community dock, picnic ground and common areas such as the paper roads and community entrances at Madison, Lincoln and Riverview Terrace.

We have fielded numerous concerns voiced by residents and keep in communication with Talbot County officials such as the Sheriff's Office and the Roads Department. Some of the accomplishments are directly attributable to the response of Talbot County to concerns the board has put before them.

Typical board meetings address issues such as finance, annual fee collection status, shore-line preservation projects, architectural committee applications, webpage status and resident concerns/inquiries.

The board typically meets the first Tuesday of each month. Agenda items can be sent to riovistamd@riovistacom.org or by contacting a board member directly.

DOCKMASTER'S REPORT

I think we have finally turned the page on the cold weather. Let the boating season begin! This year has been a banner year for the Rio Vista Marina. We have rented every slip this year. The slip rental fees are used to continue marina improvement projects. Welcome new slip holders and boat owners Mike and Whitney Fiore. Welcome back to slip holders Charle Elms, and Ralph Bowers.

I really don't have a fishing report. One can only hope the fishing and crabbing season will be great. The winter dredge by the DNR shows that the crab population is up by 30%. Since we did not have a hard freeze this winter the crabs were spared only to be eaten this summer.

Please keep an eye out for any suspicious activities down at the marina or the picnic area.

Thanks,
Hunter Plog

TREASURER'S REPORT

Your Rio Vista Community Association remains in good financial condition for 2016 with no debt and no known significant financial issues. The rip rap repair on the Spencer Cove side of the access road to the community dock is the largest financial commitment still to be completed. The board has set aside monies to pay for this much needed project. The permit application to the Maryland Department of Natural Resources needs to be completed and sent along with significant State fees before the project can be approved.

Collection of the annual fee has been very good and we appreciate those who have made that payment. There are a few late payers and I hope they will take the time to bring their accounts up to date. The completion of the community projects is dependent upon all of us making this effort.

The annual fee remains at \$50.00 per household. The board has kept the fee at this level for about 10 years. The board does not anticipate an increase in the foreseeable future. The fee is a mandatory assessment that is authorized in the Articles of Incorporation. For those few who have not already remitted payment for the 2015 fee, please do so as soon as you can.



You may have noticed about 6 or 7 old tires stacked at the end of the parking area at the community dock. The tires were originally used to protect the shoreline which was a common practice years ago. Over time, the tires were swept into the Miles River where several dozen still remain. You can easily see them from the access road at low tide. The tires are an obstruction for anglers and can interfere with crabbing.

Hunter Plog, our DOCKMASTER, undertook a project to remove the tires and then have them trucked away for recycling. However, we have not been able to find a way to dispose of the tires legally. Hunter temporarily stacked the half dozen or so that he had collected while he continued to work on a solution.

We noticed just recently that the stacked tires are gone. Don't know where, don't know how! If anyone knows who took the tires, please tell them we do not want them back. In fact, we have a great deal for anyone who wants more of them.



**The Legend of Two Johns:
How Vaudeville Came to the Choptank
By Dick Cooper**

On the Eastern Shore, where most places are named for the English home towns or close relatives of Colonial settlers, the etymology of the Caroline County crossroads neighborhood of Two Johns stands apart; way, way apart.

Unlike the academic high-brow names of Oxford and Cambridge, Two Johns' name has its origins in a joke, a fast-paced, two-hour-long string of jokes played out for decades on stages across America. And they were not just any jokes; they were "fat jokes."

Keene's Landing on the east bank of the Choptank River about five miles south of Denton was a well-known Caroline County farm that had once been owned by a family "of substance in this county." That family had moved on by the time John Stewart Crossy bought the landing and 400 acres on the river in the early 1880s

Crossy himself was a man of substance, financially and physically. He was a playwright, a composer, a singer, a thespian, an impresario, an entrepreneur and he was a vaudevillian. He managed a theatre in Philadelphia where a local newspaper reporter once wrote that Crossy was "a gentleman who never enters a street car because he can't get through the door. He carries a great gold cane when he walks and illumines his entire surroundings with his smile and shakes like a glorious mold of jelly when he laughs....His face is large, round and ruddy; a waxed mustache stands out sharply and aggressively."

In the late 1870s, Crossy, who also went by his stage names of John C. Stewart or Fatty Stewart, wrote and produced a play, entitled "Two Johns" loosely based on Shakespeare's "Comedy of Errors." Instead of having twins separated at birth moving about the stage and constantly being mistaken for each other in awkward situations, Crossy hired other portly actors to play his mirror image. One of them, John Hart, was an established actor. Another was Frank Rush who, before he joined "Two Johns," turned down an offer from P.T. Barnum to appear in his show as the "Fattest Boy in the World." The play was full of slapstick, sight gags, pratfalls and pretty girls and it made people laugh. Laughter in the 1880s was something Americans were more than happy to pay for.

The newly elected President James A. Garfield, who ran as a reformer after more than a decade of corrupt government, was the second President to be assassinated in less than 15 years. The nation was still deeply wounded by the Civil War and slid into a deep financial recession. Factories closed, people were out of work and hungry and in search of a diversion. For a nickel or a dime they could escape into a local theatre to watch "Two Johns" for a few hours and laugh until their sides hurt. Then they could go home and tell all of the jokes to their friends and neighbors and laugh for another week.

The Legend of Two Johns
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Meeting New Neighbors



Bradford Family is Changing Lives – Including Their Own

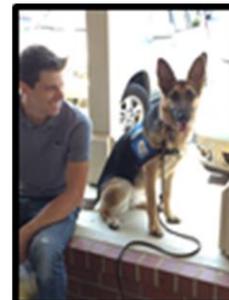
St. Michaels, MD (DATE) – The Bradford family moved from Upstate New York to St. Michaels, MD. Billy is a photographer and artist. Mary is a professional dog trainer. Both of them are lucky enough to do what they love for their work. This summer the Bradford family has much to celebrate; Haida – the puppy they lovingly raised – will soon begin formal training at Guiding Eyes for the Blind to become a guide dog for a blind or visually impaired person.

Guide dogs aren't born with the skills to keep a blind person safe; they are carefully trained and prepared for the job. Guiding Eyes puppy raisers provide hours of patient teaching and numerous socialization journeys. For the Bradford family, their hard work will pay off in May when Haida returns to Guiding Eyes' headquarters in Yorktown Heights, NY to take her In-For-Training evaluation.

The In-For-Training evaluation is an important event for puppy raisers like the Bradford family. Guiding Eyes believes that each dog "chooses its own career" and only those dogs showing the self-confidence and composure necessary for guide work are assigned to undergo the rigors of guide dog training.

For someone without sight, a Guiding Eyes dog is a priceless, life-changing gift providing independence, companionship, and mobility. Guiding Eyes puppy raisers come from all walks of life and include couples, families with children, young adults, and senior citizens. The volunteers welcome 8 week-old puppies into their homes and with full support from the nonprofit, including training classes and free vet care. Raisers love, nurture, and educate the puppies for a 11 to 16 month period before sending them off to their calling as a guide dog for a blind or visually impaired person.

Mary Bradford says, "Seeing the profound and immediate difference a Guiding Eyes dogs can make in someone's life is what makes puppy raising so awesome."



The Bradford Family
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The Legend of Two Johns

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Their coins all added up and Crossy got rich. By one account of a nine-month theatrical season, the "Two Johns" troupe put on 251 shows, traveled 11,000 miles by train and played in theatres in 20 states and the District of Columbia. In the days before air conditioning, theatres closed for business in the summer months. Crossy and his wife, Isabell, also an established playwright, bought the Caroline County property to be their summer home and a retreat from the circuit. (In Philadelphia, Crossy had tried to keep a theatre open one summer by installing a large "blowing machine" that forced cool air from a neighboring coal yard into the building but it wasn't enough to beat the city heat and the plan was abandoned.)

By the summer of 1884, the Crossyses were established on the Choptank and used their newfound money to renovate the property and rename it "Two Johns" in honor of the source of their wealth. They invited other actors, musicians and stage performers to be their guests and enjoy the clean country air and the cooling breezes along the riverbank. The Big City guests came by steamboat from Baltimore giving the deckhands something to talk about. In June 1884, they invited their business friends to their new home to help them celebrate their Silver Wedding Anniversary. They also hired out the riverboat *Highland Light* to ferry a load of their new neighbors down river from Denton to join in the festivities. The guests included a reporter from the Denton Journal who chronicled the adventure under the headline "A Notable Wedding Anniversary" in the June 28 edition.

"Right royally did Mr. and Mrs. John S. Crossy celebrate their silver wedding anniversary on Saturday last," wrote the reporter. "Crossy's is the old Keene's Landing property delightfully locate on the noble Choptank but improved and adorned under the care of the present owner beyond recognition."

A party of 50 Dentonians mingled with vaudevillians and by all reports had a smashing good time. "Music, both vocal and instrumental, furnished by the Crossy family, particularly delighted the visitors," the reporter wrote. He also noted that Mr. Crossy let the visitors know that the Sabbath was fast approaching and wished them well as they departed back upstream on the steamer to make sure they were home before midnight.

The Crossyses social circle expanded the cultural offering of life in Denton. He and his theatrical friends would give public readings in the town and offer music and dancing in the pavilion he built at his home. The house itself was converted into a gingerbread mansion with 21 rooms, peaked gables and a garret.

One of the guests was Paul Dresser, a famous composer, singer and actor who became best known for writing the song "On the Banks of the Wabash, Far Away." Dresser changed his name from Dreiser when he left home as a teen-ager to join a minstrel show as a piano player. He was the older brother of the famous novelist Theodore Dreiser. Reports written in the 1930s about the history of Two Johns during its heyday included future movie star Louise Dresser as one of the frequent visitors, but that is highly unlikely. She was born Louise Kerlin in 1879 and changed her name in the late 1890s after Paul Dresser, who was then a big star of Tin Pan Alley, convinced her the name change would

The Bradford Family

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The Guiding Eyes Puppy Raising Program is comprised of more than 400 volunteers from Maine to North Carolina. Puppy raisers come from all walks of life and include couples, families with children, young adults, and senior citizens. Some already have forever pets of their own, while others commit to raising guide dogs as a way to give their love to a new dog each year. No matter the circumstance, all puppy raisers agree that the program is emotionally rewarding. Raisers live in urban, suburban, and rural areas, in apartments, townhomes, and single family residences.

Guiding Eyes for the Blind is always looking for more puppy raisers. Orientation classes for our local region will begin in May of 2016 and puppies will be arriving in June of 2016. **Puppy raising classes are held on Tuesday evenings in Easton, MD.**

Visit www.guidingeyes.org/volunteer/puppy-raising/ for additional information on the Puppy Raising Program and to fill out a puppy raiser application.

The Legend of Two Johns

help her career. It may have for a brief while, but Paul Dresser died penniless in 1905 from complications brought on by alcoholism and obesity. The Dressers were not related but she was frequently referred to as his sister. When John Hart paid a visit to Crossy the Denton Journal reported that "the Two Johns weigh 300 pounds each and are enjoying themselves in proportion to their size."

Through the 1880s and well into the next decade Crossy did much more than lounge on the banks of the river with his fellow actors. He built a general store that he advertised as "The Largest and Best Stocked Store on the Peninsula." His ads in the Denton Journal boasted "We can dress man, woman, boy, girl and infant from head to foot; we can furnish a house from garret to cellar; we can supply any mechanic with tools; we can furnish you with the finest Groceries." He also built a saw mill, a grist mill—40 cent discount on flour if you brought your own barrel—and a fertilizer plant. His wharf was a regular stop for Choptank River steamboats and he became the postmaster of the area now known as Two Johns on the maps and the riverboat schedules. He was a bigtime advertiser in the Denton Journal taking out large ads for his enterprises that he promoted as being easily reachable from the County Seat on a "prime shell pike."

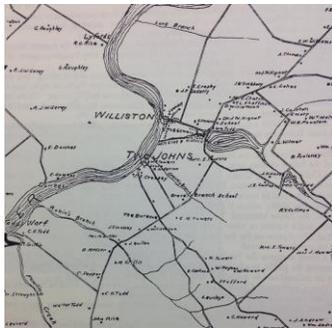
His comings and goings were recorded in the Journal and it became a social event when the Crossyses returned to Caroline County every May. Throughout the summer months, Crossy could be seen on the river aboard his little steamer *John S. Crossy*, a 46-footer "with a large hurricane deck" that could get up a head of steam burning "coal, wood or naphtha."

The Legend of Two Johns

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The Legend of Two Johns

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The "Two Johns" show continued its national run with the troupe moving back and forth across the country as fast as the trains could take them. They played extensively throughout the Midwest and South making headlines from Newport, Nebraska to Logansport, Indiana, to Savannah, Georgia. The rave reviews followed them with comments including "You will laugh until given further orders at the 'Two Johns,'" and "From the time the first curtain went up until the final fall there was a continuous guffaw." But not all of the critics were so smitten. In 1888, a San Francisco Chronicle writer put it this way: "The Bush Theatre has been inflicted with something called 'Two Johns.' It looks as if two fat men have met who found they could make up like one another and conclude that the Creator had designed them for public exhibition. But they have made a mistake in the intentions of the Creator. He evidently meant them for the dime museum."

By 1900, the Crossyses sold Two Johns and eventually moved to St. Louis, Missouri, to live with their son, a well-known physician. John Stewart Crossy, who was born in Dublin, Ireland and came to America when he was nine years old, gained fame and wealth on the American stage. He was 71 when died in his son's home of heart failure in 1905. His death was reported in newspapers throughout the United States and Canada where he was remembered as "the famous fat man." The Denton Journal carried his obituary on the front page and noted "For a number of years, Mr. Crossy spent his summers at Two Johns, this county, where he owned and occupied a large and beautiful home overlooking the Choptank River. He was a fine comedian and was known all over the country." Isabell Crossy died in St. Louis in 1935. She was 93.

The legend of the vaudevillians on the Choptank continued through the 20th Century with various whisper-down-the-lane modifications. Author Hulbert Footner, in his 1944 regional classic book "Rivers of the Eastern Shore" wrote, "John Stewart and John Crossey (sic) were two vaudeville actors who had gravitated together as a team because they looked as much alike as twins." Footner's vast team of researchers apparently failed to inform him not only did they look alike, they were the same man. He went on to write that the people of Caroline County "where amazed by the goings-on at the Two Johns; not understanding it at all, they naturally thought the worst." Instead of having guests, from Denton invited to John and Isabell Crossy's wedding anniversary party, he wrote "In order to win their good will, the Two Johns chartered a steamboat one Sunday and invited the whole town of Denton to come to one of their shows."

Footner did explore the ruin of the mansion before he wrote his book. He described it as having a "dizzy façade, like an extravaganza of 1885, with its bay windows fancy porches, gingerbread work and an absurd little wooden tower topping it all."

Finally, in 1947 the last vestiges of the old estate went up in flames. The Denton Journal's front page story repeated the story that the mansion had been the summer home of two rotund actors, this time naming them "J. Stuart Crossey" and "John Hart" whose act was known as "The Fat Men's Club." According to the report, the men christened their new home "Two Johns" and after it was finished "the steamboat from Baltimore made it a regular stop and almost every day brought gay parties of guests. The Two Johns eventually fell on evil days. Crossey died in a garret, according to the best Bohemian tradition, and his partner dropped out of sight."

The wharf and outbuildings are long gone. The only traces of the bustling complex on the Choptank are the Two Johns name on the map, a suburban housing development off Harmony Road that bears its name and a County Parks sign listing the hours of the public landing. It is closed between dusk and dawn. On a recent winter day, a lone bald eagle skimmed low over the water. It was the only living thing moving over a place where, for a brief time, vaudevillians came to Caroline County to relax, sing and dance just for fun.

*Dick Cooper is a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist.
He can be reached at
dickcooper@coopermediaassociates.com.*



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410-745-5483 (fax)
poorehouse1@verizon.net

"Thank you" to Larry Poore of the Poorehouse for his support of Rio Vista Community! They have expanded with an office in Easton.



Thank you for picking up after your dog! But, please leave their treasures **only in your own trash!!!!**

DATES TO REMEMBER

Christ Church
REV. Mark Nestlehutt
(410) 745 – 90
info@christsmichaels.org

WEEKLY

Tuesdays 8-9 AM at Blue Heron Coffee (W. Chestnut St.)
Sunday Readings Bible Discussion Group

Wednesdays, 11 AM - 12:30 PM
Wednesday Book Discussion Group

Thursdays, 10 AM
Mommy, Music & Me

Thursdays, 8 PM
AA Meetings

MONTHLY

1st Monday at 9:30 AM
Caregivers Meeting

1st Wednesday at 12:10 PM
Healing Service

3rd Sunday at 5 PM
Dinner Church

3rd Monday at 5 PM
Christmas in St. Michaels Meeting

DATES

May 14th
8 AM Men's Club Breakfast

May 15th
5 PM Farewell Celebration for the Reverend
Mark S. Nestlehutt

May 16th
9 AM St. Michaels Art League Meeting

May 22nd
9 AM Bay Hundred Covenant Churches Tent
Service at the CBMM

May 29th
9 AM Combined Service (Only one service)

June 5th
8 AM & 9:30 AM Begin summer service schedule

June 26th
Bay Hundred Community Picnic

August 6th
Unity Day

Union United Methodist Church
Rev. Dr. William T. Wallace, Sr.
(410) 745-2784
uumc@atlanticbb.net

St. Luke's United Methodist Church
Rev. Marty Wiley
(410) 745-2534

stlukeschurch@verizon.net

MONTHLY

Craft Shows

June 4th, 10AM-5PM The 27th Annual Strawberry Festival
and Craft Show,

July 2nd, 10AM-4PM Craft Show

August 13th, 10AM-4PM Craft Show

St. Michael's Mission Church
Rev. James Nash, Pastor
Rev. Glenn M. Evers, Associate Pastor
(410) 822-2344

www.sspeaston.org

WEEKLY

Wednesdays 12:00 Noon
Mass & Confessions (before Mass)

Saturdays 5:30 PM
Mass

Sundays 10:15 PM
Mass

St. Michaels Community Center
103 Railroad Avenue
St. Michaels, MD 21663
(410) 745-6073
trish@stmichaelscc.org

WEEKLY

Wednesdays 9:30 - 10:15
St. Michaels Housing Authority on
Dodson Ave. Chair Yoga for adults and
seniors.

10:30 -12:30
Community Center Prepared meal &
weekly activities (1st Wed – Bingo, 2nd
Wed – Brain Games, 3rd Wed – Arts or
Crafts. 4th Wed – helpful insurance or
medical information

Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays 9 AM – 12PM
Learn to carve, Everyone is welcome, Free!

Tuesday and Thursdays 8:30
Moderate to intermediate tennis players
are welcome at the SM High School tennis
courts Free.

BIWEEKLY

2nd and 4th Wednesdays 1 PM – 2PM
Chess Club, FREE! Everyone is welcome
from novice to experts, students to seniors.

Treasure Cove has moved to 200 Railroad Ave. across
the street from the Union United Methodist Church. Open
Mondays – Saturday 10 AM - 3PM
(410)745-0669

Board of Governors

President	Jack Davis	(410) 745-2461
Vice-President/Legal Liaison	Judy Sandground	(410) 745-5118
Secretary	Jan Burke	(410) 745-9768
Treasurer	Jack Davis	(410) 745-2461
Erosion Control	Jack Davis	(410) 745-2461
Architectural Review	Barry Burke	(410) 745-3885
Nav-Light	Charles Rogers	(818) 207-0007
Finance	Sharri Foy	(401) 745-8622
Landscape	Hunter Plog	(410) 745-5492
E-mail	Rio Vista Association	riovistamd@riovistacom.org

Committees

Architectural E-mail	Barry Burke (architectural@riovistacom.org)	(410) 745-3885
	Doug Gibson	(410) 745-9487
	Patrick Kennedy	(410) 745-2800
Communications	Charles Rogers	(818) 207-2007
	Sandi Droege	(410) 745-6572
Community Events	Ann Davis	(410) 745-2461
	Sandi Droege	(410) 745-6572
Dock	Hunter Plog	(410) 745-5492
	Jan Burke	(410) 745-9768
Document Review	Judy Sandground	(410) 745-5118
	Jan Burke	(410) 745-9768
Erosion Control	Jack Davis	(410) 745-2461
	Bernie Grove	(410) 745-6154
	Roy Droege	(410) 745-6572
Finance	Sharri Foy	(401) 745-8622
Landscape	Hunter Plog	(410) 745-5492
Neighborhood Watch	Charles Rogers	(818) 207-2007
	Hunter Plog	(410) 745-5492
	Jan Burke	(410) 745-9768
Web Masters	Sandi Droege	(410) 745-6572
	Dick Cooper	(410) 745-5233