

## Water Watchers' Vigilance Triggers Finding of Harbor Trash Impairment

By Lew Diuguid

The Baltimore Harbor Watershed Association, founded in Canton five years ago, has achieved a major advance toward its goal of a trash-free harbor by persuading the state to acknowledge that the waterway is, indeed, "impaired" by the refuse that flows into it from the City's storm sewer system. In turn, the federal Environmental Protection Agency

has declared the harbor from Hull St. in Locust Point to the Korean War Memorial in Canton (plus some of the Middle Branch) impaired, requiring the City to abate the pollution systematically over the coming decade.

Until now, City Hall could officially ignore the floating rubbish, the bane of tourists and residents alike, even as it deployed a blue fleet of trash scoopers to

reduce the flotsam. The BHWA collaborated with the Harbor affiliate of Waterkeeper, a national organization dedicated to litigious enforcement of the federal Clean Water Act. Engineer Philip Lee, a former Fell's Pointer and president of BHWA, pointed out that his group is devoted to achieving "a swimmable, fishable and trash-free Harbor by 2020."

BHWA came about (*Continued*)

## Holidays are Making, Breaking, Traditions

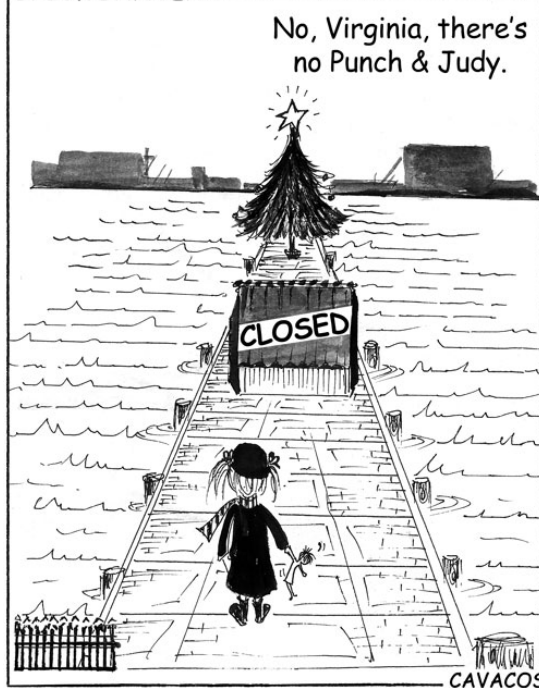
Santa arrived in Fell's Point by tug last Saturday, consolidating an event initiated in 2005 by the then fledgling Development Corp. An unseasonable wind blew down the bountiful tree, the mayor came late, and the Parade of Lighted Boats once more lit the chill harbor. The Rev. Jack Trautwein again will be offering Christmas Eve Candlelight Carol Service at 7:30PM in the Vagabond Theater. But another fixture of the holiday, the Punch & Judy puppet theater for the youngsters on Broadway Pier, is dark for the first time in 15 years.

Puppeteer Mark Walker, who has played primary roles—including that of Charles Dickens—in devising the recent Old Tyme Christmases, explained, "It's not to say Punch & Judy won't return in the future. I'm sort of taking a sabbatical because of the differences between the Development Corp. and the Preservation Society" concerning the October Fun Festival. Actually, the Corp. has just changed its name, to Main Street, reflecting the inter-governmental program that provides development funds for local businesses.

"Even though I never was a member of the DC, I enjoyed helping them out," said Mark. "It was fun starting with a blank slate, creating events on paper, and then watching things come to life. But since I'm now a board member of the PS, and this little flare-up occurred, all of that just tossed me into a very awkward situation. That being said, I had already done a fair amount lining up some of the activities. . . . I really hope this year's a great success." The Figgy Pudding Race today (Dec.13) is one of his inspirations.

Mark recalled that his time in the 'Point goes back to performing his magic act at the

BRICK BANTER



Fun Festivals in the 1980s, "I always felt the 'Point had this Dickensian atmosphere, especially during the holidays"—including some cold ones. "I have met a lot of interesting people down here performing my Punch act. And of course I love to hear the little children squeal with delight. That makes it all worthwhile for me."

Mark works for Johns Hopkins at Bond Street Wharf and he knows the bars and bricks of this community as well as any old-timer, but he lives in Harford County. For all his sabbatical, he, Punch & Judy found work up there on Dec. 6 as the festivities on Broadway were falling a little short this year. Still, in another tradition, the now two town criers will be walking through the streets saluting households on Christmas at 11AM.

## Halloween Public Urination Worst "in 28 Years"

Store- and homeowner Charles Norton of Shakespeare St. on Nov. 8 mailed this letter (slightly abridged) about troubles at Halloween to Jason Sullivan, director of the Development Corp. (now Main Street) that promoted the events:

*Halloween in Fell's Point is inevitable . . . with or without any sponsorship or any promoting. The Development Corp. should be lauded for its sponsorship of the children's event in Thames Street Park and on the Square; and 98 Rock should be commended for not over-amplifying the music.*

*BUT with sponsorship and the promotion of any event comes responsibility. The public urination this Halloween was worse than it has been in the 28 years that I have been a merchant and resident here. At one point there were over 18 people*

*lined up urinating in the 800 block of S. Bethel, on my property and the homes of my neighbors, where children were trick-or-treating. There were altercations between neighbors and urinators and my neighbor's fence was damaged. NONE OF THIS SHOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO ANYONE!*

*At 1AM, I walked around Fell's Point. There were roughly 60 police cadets, 46 uniformed officers and 3 mounted police in the 700 & 800 blocks of Broadway and the 1600 -1700 blocks of Thames St. And there were only 11 spot-a-pots in all of Fell's Point! You cannot expect the facilities of some 30 bars and only 11 spot-a-pots to answer the needs of the thousands of people who descended on Fell's Point. And it was very apparent that a pair of officers here and there patrolling the side streets could do little to dissuade urinators or pre- (Continued)*

## Happenings

### Pageant and Bazaar

The Corner Theater at 251 S. Ann St. revives "The Best Christmas Pageant Ever," with bazaar to benefit youth programs before and after each show. Through Dec. 21, Fridays 8PM. Saturdays 3 and 8PM, Sundays 7. Tickets \$8-17, [www.fpct.org](http://www.fpct.org) or 410.276.7837.

### Before You Build or Paint . . .

By Jerome Bird

Chair, Design Review Committee

Last year, this community voted to become a district under the City's Commission for Historic and Architectural Preservation. That means all property owners within the CHAP district—roughly Eastern Ave. on the north, the waterfront on the south, Caroline St. on the west and Chester St. on the east—are subject to guidelines that protect them against unwarranted demolition or inappropriate exterior modifications. They help keep Fell's Point an eccentric mix of 18th, 19th, and 20th century structures.

Homeowners who wish to make exterior improvements, i.e. replace windows, change colors, or add decks, must get a Building Permit and prior approval. To get the permit, property owners must complete a CHAP Application for a Notice to Proceed describing the improvement. Then they should get the improvement reviewed by the organization recognized by CHAP for review. In Fell's Point, it's the Preservation Society's Design Review Committee. It meets at 6PM on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays each month. For an appointment, call 410.675.6750, ext. 11.

### 'Pointer Volunteers Please

By Jacquie Greff

Fell's Pointer Circulation Manager

This free community newsletter is made possible by a small squad of volunteer journalists, graphic designers and distributors—all neighbors of yours! We regularly have people moving in and out of the neighborhood and need new volunteers. If you enjoy this newsletter and are willing to donate about an hour a month, we could use your help delivering it to nearby homes and businesses. Fringe benefits include getting to know your neighbors and your neighborhood better. Call me at 410.675.0591 or [jacquie@Tonal-Vision.com](mailto:jacquie@Tonal-Vision.com)

## Only in Fell's Point-XV: Turkey Joe for the Holidays

By Mark Walker

Here are two stories that make a pass at being seasonal from Joe Trabert, the genteelly retired owner of Turkey Joe's that graced Broadway in the 1970s. As with many tales from that era, the plotter of the first shenanigan was the late, fermented Jeff Knapp.

A Pole named Shorty owned a bar, and every year he sponsored a cruise out of the Inner Harbor. Just about everybody on board but Jeff was Polish. Jeff may have had one too many of his signature VTNFs—vodka, tonic, no fruit—by return time. As the boat was passing the foot of Broadway, Jeff asked the captain to make a stop—since Jeff lived just down the street on Lancaster. When the captain said no, Jeff told a Fell's Point friend, "This is where I get off," and jumped in to swim home.

As Jeff neared Broadway Pier, he was picked up by the marine police, who then operated off the end of it. The officer asked if Jeff realized "it's illegal to swim in the harbor." Jeff replied that he'd been on a cruise and was pushed overboard. The patrolman asked, "What did the guy look like?" Jeff replied, "He was wearing red and white clothes." I'd have paid \$100 to see the officer's face when he pulled up next to the cruise boat, now docked: just about all of the debarking passengers wore red and white.

At this point the tale has two tails. We could make it seasonal—a cruise down 'nee Patapsco by Salvation Army Santas. But no, December water is too cold even for Jeff. This was a Polish holiday cruise on a midsummer night, and red and white are Poland's colors.

Turkey Joe's other tale definitely takes place on New Year's Eve. Every Dec. 3, Joe sold tickets to a "members-only" celebration at his bar. It was confined to 55 people, the fire code limit, and drinks and food were included. He always sold out—except for this particular year. By Christmas Eve he still had 35 tickets, which puzzled him.

When New Year's Eve arrived, Joe noticed regulars passing him by. Geoffrey Footner, who owned Rick's American Bar a couple of doors down, had tired of the business and was officially closing his saloon that night—with free food and drink for all. [Plus this from Footner: "Everyone had known I would be closing down that night . . . including Joe the Turkey."] And to all a good night!

**HALLOWEEN** *cont. from front vent damage to property.*

*This Halloween was not an example of how to promote business, a livable community or respect for Fell's Point. It was the opposite, and sadly it sets the tone and attitudes for the rest of the year. Next Halloween, the Corp., the City and its Police need to coordinate efforts . . . to the benefit of the entire community. Police need to be stationed on all of the side streets, with 5 to 10 times the number of spot-a-pots available at several locations.*

Norton sent copies to Mayor Sheila Dixon, Councilman James Kraft, Major Roger Bergeron and Del. Peter Hammen. Only Hammen replied. Sullivan did not, and The Fell's Pointer also was unable to elicit a response from him. He did, however, e-mail a survey asking opinions of the Halloween celebration. The 'Pointer's own informal survey found angry residents matching Norton's observations. One resident on the east side of the square who asked a celebrant not to urinate on his house got socked, breaking his jaw. An

## Is The Sun Staring Back?

A letter for which The Sun failed to find room: *Dear Editor: I have read The Sun for most of my 73 years, enduring its several redesigns along the way. They occur more often lately, none more distressing than the most recent. It carries personal journalism to absurdity, with full-length photos of your embarrassed writers staring out from the prose that is supposed to be their business. On Nov. 12, for instance, Jean Marbella wrote a sidebar to the story on appointment of a new Hopkins president, focusing on his family. It might have included a photo of them but no, there was only room for the already too familiar shot of Marbella, arms crossed.*

*Makeup of a daily newspaper by definition must bear repetition. This latest is already showing wear, i.e. also, the regional page map that feels the need to show us each day where Baltimore is. Fifty years ago, The Sun used a design unique among serious dailies. It had two front pages, that is, the true one was devoted to national and international news; the last page was the local front page, with all the important stories of the region starting there and continuing inside. People were used to it, so it was changed . . . The Sunpapers' readership and prestige were at highs then compared to today under (Chicago) Tribune owners. Times are tough for newspapers. Please, though, play to your reportorial strengths, not to gimmicks. - Lewis H. Diuguid*

## HARBOR *cont. from front*

because a physician, John Dowling, retired to the Anchorage, was outraged by the trash that flowed from nearby Harris Creek, historic but now piped beneath its intensely urban—and littered—watershed. Lee, of nearby Moffatt & Nichol Engineering, came on board and helped broaden the group's reach to embrace all streams feeding into the Patapsco River that forms the Harbor. The first project was to encourage the City to experiment with a trash netting system on Harris. The results have been mixed, City crews collect tons of trash but the system often is overwhelmed by deluges or maintenance delays.

John Kellett, a BHWA member, invented an alternative for the Jones Falls trash outflow, an anchored barge with paddlewheel-powered conveyor belts to pick up the trash. It, too, fell short in intense downfalls and the City plans to try it in less turbulent Harris Creek. Association volunteers accept that the long-term solution lies in educating residents not to throw trash into gutters and storm sewers, and Lee has taken this lesson into area schools.

Now, following an EPA finding in September, the City must come up with a documented measure of the trash accumulation and devise steps to reduce it annually, in accord with EPA guidelines. It will have precedents in programs already underway in Los Angeles and on the Anacostia River in Washington. In a parallel effort, BHWA also is encouraging tighter vigilance by the City on detection of toxins in the Harbor. BHWA website: [www.baltimorewaters.org](http://www.baltimorewaters.org).

eventual meeting of several community leaders, including Sullivan, and governmental staffers approached a consensus that Halloween here has become such a major event that the City and the bar owners who benefit must shoulder responsibility, said Residents' Association President Arthur Perschetz. A police officer who was on the square acknowledged the cadets, prohibited from taking any action, were of no use and maybe even at risk.

## Schedules

### Trash

Place trash, in cans only, for pickup after 6AM on Mondays and Thursdays.

### Recycling

All recycling material should be placed in a recycling bin, cardboard box, paper bag or any container of choice, as long as it is clearly marked "recycle". Do not use plastic bags. Place outside by 7AM on 2nd and 4th FRIDAYS of month. Acceptable: aluminum, tin and steel containers, cans; plastic narrow-neck and screw-top bottles and jars with recycling symbols 1-7; glass: bottles and jars; paper and cardboard, including magazines, mail, shredded paper, books, newsprint.

### Leaves Collection

Place at curb in bags with trash on Thursdays, through end of year.

### Neighborhood Meetings

Douglass Place: Third Wednesday of every other month at the Polish National Alliance, 1637 Eastern Avenue, 410.563.1297.

Fell's Point Antique Dealers' Association: Call 410.675.4776.

Fell's Point Community Organization: Tuesday, Nov. 11, 7PM at EBLO building, 606 S. Ann St. Follow-up on Halloween. Did closing side streets to all but residential autos help the police control crowds? Recommendations for continuing to work with police and FPDC next year. Setting '09 goals, 443.791.1717.

The Fell's Point Development Corp.: Board meets first Tuesday of month at 8AM, FPDC office, 1730 Bank St. 410.675.8900.

Fell's Point Residents' Association: First Wednesdays, 7PM, Bertha's 2nd Floor.

Greenspace Action Partnership: Second Tuesdays, 6PM, Obsidian Realty, 1816 Aliceanna St. 410.732.8232.

Society for the Preservation of Fell's Point and Federal Hill: Call 410.675.6750.

## thanks!

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## PRINTER AD

**The Fell's Pointer is published monthly by volunteers of Fell's Point Citizens on Patrol, Inc. Questions, input and participation in patrols and this newsletter are welcome. E-mail [fpcop@verizon.net](mailto:fpcop@verizon.net). Online [www.fpcop.com](http://www.fpcop.com). Write P.O. Box 6137, Baltimore, MD 21231.**