

The

Collingtonian

Vol. 7, No. 8

Mitchellville, MD

October, 1995

NEWS & VIEWS

Lake Dedication: Pioneers to be Honored

by Layne Beaty

It's the date we've been waiting for. October 21, the day of dual events: Collington Lake's dedication and our seventh birthday celebration.

It will be a day of honoring those eager and hardy classmates of 1988 who allowed neither mud nor lack of dining room to deter their arrival, plus a special salute by the Residents Association to our own Charles Trammell, who, with County officials, led the retrofit of our lake during months of legal and engineering impedimenta.

Prince George's County Executive Wayne Curry and others associated with



Bob Browning launching the Emma B. Sister boats to follow.

Collington Vote To Take Nation's Pulse

by Tom Street

While it would be too much to say that political soothsayers and national media pundits will descend on Collington October 6 to flash the news of the outcome of the vote on bylaws amendments of the Collington Residents Association to a tensely waiting nation, it is nonetheless true that a key issue to be decided, term limits, is identical to the one now roiling the flow of Congressional legislation. The issue is the same, and the arguments pro and con are the same.

The issue came to a boil at the August meeting of the Residents Association Council when representative Ed Beal proposed an amendment to the bylaws that "No person may serve as a resident Director (i.e., a resident nominated by the Association and appointed to the Board of Directors) for more than one three-year term until after a lapse of at least one year during which that person may not be a director."

And the fat was in the fire. Representatives stated the results of polls of their constituents, and the arguments,

Lake Dedication (Continued from p.1)

the lake's progress will join Collington leaders in the celebration.

At the lake there will be a ribbon-cutting ceremony and a long-anticipated Skipjack demonstration by the several Collingtonians who have built radio-controlled models of the famous Chesapeake sailing vessel.

With nearly a month to go some details of the day remain to be sorted out, but it will begin with a 10 a.m. brunch buffet in the Clock Tower gallery to honor the pioneer residents, then an 11 a.m. program in the Auditorium before moving to lakeside. Collingtonians are invited. Principals and guests will return to the Dining Room for lunch after the demonstration.

The Lake, built on Collington property by Prince George's County, is primarily a storm and water control project with Collington getting the recreational facilities offered as a side product.

As Collington's Executive Director, Gail Kohn, explains, "We had a pre-opening responsibility, as part of our commitment to Save the Bay, to keep the bay as clean as possible, to do what we could to control our storm water runoff. Prince George's County is world-renowned for its storm water management. We have had guests here from all over--New Zealand, Poland, Canada, Kansas--to see the Lake retrofit because we, in the County, have a reputation of not only moving water through a filtration that prevents the damage that can happen to Chesapeake Bay, but also makes those storm water management ponds attractive to wild life and to people."

Why is it called Collington Lake instead of Lake Collington? Walter Ristow, our resident authority on maps and such, who got the name registered with the U. S. Board of Geographical Names, points out that in alphabetical listings it won't be submerged among other Lakes.

As we go to press, Collington Lake's water level still suffers from the summer drought, but with luck Jupiter Pluvius will alleviate that by the big day.

Collington Vote (continued from p. 1)

familiar from the national debate, swirled.

"Permitting the incumbent to run is a limiting factor in securing nominees. Nobody wants to run against an incumbent knowing that he or she most likely wouldn't be appointed."

"But it's important to have experienced resident representatives on the Board. It takes three years to get well acquainted with issues and procedures and to be effective."

"Our terms should be the same as the Board's."

Back and forth, over and over, the debate surged. One representative said he came in with one set of instructions from his constituents, but believed he was changing his mind. Calls for "Question!" went unheeded, so intense was the fervor.

Finally, President Muldoon was able to calm the furor to establish that the issue would come to a vote at the annual meeting October 6. Until then the representatives will meet with their constituents and ascertain their views. At that time all residents can vote on the issue.

A Woman for the Ages

by Frances Kolarek

Mildred Ridgely Gray was born on Central Avenue in the shadow of a small church her grandfather, Lewis Ridgely, built in 1871, supplying the land on which it stood, the timber from which its siding was milled, and much of the labor. She was the youngest of 13 children, all but one born in the same house.

You might say she was born to head the Subcommittee on the Celebration of Faith under the Tricentennial Celebration Committee, a group named to plan a birthday party for Prince George's County's 300th in the year 1996. She was appointed by Parris Glendonning, then County Executive, in November, 1993 and since then she has dedicated the lion's share of her time to devising a suitable way to mark the history of worship in the County.

When the Tricentennial Celebration was first proposed, it seemed there would be adequate funds to underwrite its many projects. "But," Mildred says, "now the County has no money." She has raised funds, starting modestly to underwrite mailings to the 680 or so churches in the County which represent 69 different religious faiths.

"Houses of worship spring up every day," Mildred remarks. "It is impossible to keep an accurate count of all of them." It is Mildred's goal to publish a commemorative book picturing all places of worship in Prince George's County and giving a brief history of each. With no money, how will she do it? "It looks like we

will have to sell advertising in the book to raise the funds," she says, and outlines her plans to launch a sales campaign. Placing an obstacle in Mildred's way just makes her more determined to surmount it.

As a young woman she attended Bowie State College, winning a teaching certificate. Her first job when she was still in her teens was in Sharpersville where she presided over a one-room school house graced with outdoor pump and privy.

"We always kept a pot simmering on the back of the woodstove in cold weather," Mildred remembers. "That was lunch for me and my 15 pupils. And it helped

keep the room warm." From these modest beginnings Mildred rose to be principal of the Special Education Center in New Carrollton where she and a colleague devised the curriculum.

Mildred chose an educator, William S. Gray, for a husband and the couple had one daughter, Laverne. Laverne now lives in Baltimore where she works for the City in the field of housing for low-income families. William Gray was killed betimes in an accident, and it is in his memory and his honor that Mildred engages in a second project related to the Tricentennial.

It has to do, naturally, with school children and education. The project is called "At Home in History in Prince



Mildred Ridgely Gray

George's County" and its purpose is to better acquaint elementary school children with the history of the area. Children may make presentations about a given subject through a number of media: they can make a video presentation; an artistic display, for example, a collage; write an essay, or present a dramatic skit. The projects will be judged by a qualified panel and prizes of \$500 will go to the teachers of the winning students for use as needed.

Mildred became involved in historic preservation when Ridgely Church was almost demolished in the 1980's. The original building, which burned in the 1920's, was replaced by a new structure, and the widening of Central Avenue threatened to reach within 19 feet of its door. Mildred led the small congregation, which numbered between 30 and 40 souls, in a battle to get the State Roads Administration to move the little church back from the highway. "No dice," the Board said. "We're not in the business of moving buildings." "We'll see about that," Mildred said to herself. After countless visits to Annapolis with appeals to politicians and the support of the Historical and Cultural Trust, Ridgely Church was finally moved back from the road. And while Mildred also won a battle to make the church an historical landmark, the membership failed to follow up on the project and voted to merge with another congregation. Today, historic Ridgely Church continues to serve proudly as a house of worship, rented out to another group.

Mildred starts her day with a soak in Collington's spa, and then it's off in her Mercedes Benz coupe, aka a rag top, to visit, flatter, cajole and eventually win

over those who can help her with funds or influence or moral support in the pursuit of her pet projects. At the moment, it's money for the Tricentennial volume of Houses of Worship. We're betting the book is published. It may not sell as well as the Tricentennial Cookbook, which is being underwritten by the Committee, but it will appear, it will be handsome and professional, and it will stand as one more monument to Mildred's persistence and dedication to the causes she believes in.



Well, What About That?

*N*ew resident Bernice Burdette, who learned to drive a couple of decades ago at 64, tells us that traffic is not so bad on the Beltway on Sunday mornings when she heads to church near Andrews Air Force Base. Thanks, Bernice.

*M*argaret Martin could be addressed "Madame Secretary." She does the minutes for five Resident Association Committees.

*W*e are told that our George Chase developed the drug Valium and put it on the market when he worked with the firm of Hoffman LaRoche.

*A*lice Campbell spent some of her tender years on a dude ranch operated by her father at Jackson Hole, Wyoming. She misses the skiing and horseback riding which Collington, alas, doesn't afford.



Montpelier

by Edward Behr

Not far from Collington, close to Laurel, stands a National Historic Landmark truly worthy of the title. This is Montpelier, perhaps the grandest mansion in Prince George's County.

Completed in 1783, it is a stately, two-story, hip-roofed Georgian mansion with flanking wings and connecting "hyphens." It stands on a grassy hilltop amid boxwood hedges and splendid trees, overlooking the Patuxent River valley.

Montpelier fairly brims with history. It was built by Thomas Snowden, a member of a wealthy Quaker family that long dominated the local economy with

its iron works and textile mills. George Washington visited Montpelier on his way to and from the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia. Abigail Adams, who also stayed there, called it a "large, handsome, elegant house, where I was received with. . . true English hospitality."

A spacious center hall provided a river entrance for visitors arriving by boat

and, opposite, a carriage entrance for arrivals by road. The hall also served as a multipurpose room, sometimes accommodating overflow diners.

Today the formal dining room, fully furnished, offers a revealing glimpse of Montpelier as it looked about 1830. There are elegant cornices, handsome swags above the windows, a hand-sewn wall-to-wall carpet, individual floor cushions to protect feet from the cold, Hepplewhite sideboards, an original Snowden dining table and, at each place, a special water container to let each diner rinse his wine glass between courses.

Other rooms hold various reminders of the lifestyles of two centuries ago. A living room is lighted by

whale-oil lamps; on a table are dominoes and playing cards without numbers on them.

And, hidden behind the walls, a secret staircase leads from the first floor to a second floor bedroom.

All in all, Montpelier provides visitors with a delightful return to the past—a sampling of upper crust living in the County's earlier years.



Montpelier

A Frolicsome Quartet

The first concert of the music season, by the Capriol Quartet of recorders and viol da gamba had a spot of local spice from the revelation that Anna Dougherty has taken recorder lessons from one of the members. The concert, itself, ex-

hibited an astonishing array of recorders from the soprano to the contra bass, with the viol da gamba sometimes taking part. The selections ranged from the Renaissance to 1961, justifying the group's name, one of whose meanings is a frolicsome leap or caper.

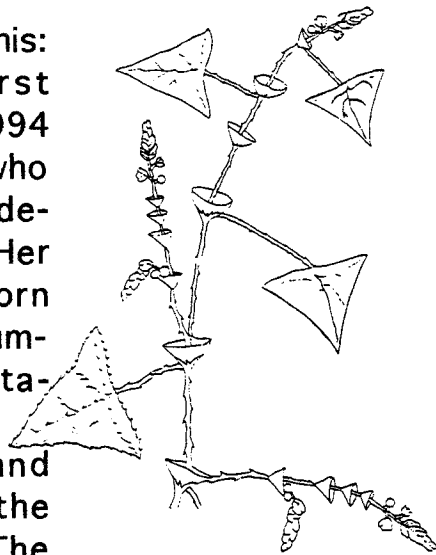
A silent battle is being waged against a relentless intruder intent on establishing territorial domination over native flora along the Collington trail. The invader is the Mile-a-Minute vine, Polygonum perforliatum.

Also known as minute weed and tear-thumb, "the barbed stem can grow at a rate of 6 inches a day and forms tangled mats that overwhelm other vegetation. It has been spreading rapidly southward from Pennsylvania since the late seventies." So states the MOFFA Quarterly. It spreads by seed dispersal and needs to be eradicated before the seeds ripen in early fall.

It looks like this:

It was first spotted here in 1994 by M.E. Wallen, who warned of its destructiveness. Her warning was born out this past summer when infestations appeared along our upland trail and along the lakeside trail. The

defenders first resorted to chemical weaponry. This proved effective initially, but was soon overwhelmed by massive vegetative wave assaults through flanking movements along the swamp trail. Defenders had to resort to hand to hand combat. Keen-eyed scouts like Mary MacMartin were quick to spot new outbreaks. The see-saw battle continues.



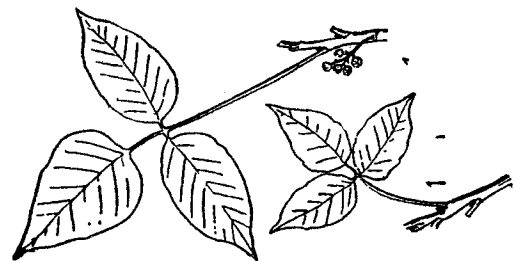
Gardeners! Beware the three-leaved ivy.

Collington gardeners have long coped with a swarm of challenges: Plant diseases, insects, rabbits and, of course, weeds. This year, apparently for the first time, the most obnoxious weed of all--poison ivy--has invaded some of our prized flower beds.

A sprig or more of rhus radicans sprouts uninvited beneath a holly bush, another sullies a handsome stand of iris, yet another encroaches on a clump of chrysanthemums. In one Collington garden, at least 20 poison ivy plants were pulled up during one late-summer week. Some had grown almost two feet tall.

How has this misfortune come about after six years almost free of this pest? Presumably it's just one of the vagaries of nature. In any year, it seems, poison ivy seeds can be spread through bird droppings.

This summer, moreover, some of the seedlings went almost unnoticed and got a strong start while gardeners were away. Once firmly implanted, poison ivy can be hard--and sometimes painful--to get rid of. Do uproot the plants before they grow any bigger and more obnoxious.



Three-leaved Poison Ivy

Hilltop's High Achievers

Although Collington's Hilltop Gardens founder Lee Miller died November 1994, new plants again grew high this summer. (As high, that is, as the rainless summer would permit.) But we have equally energetic green-thumb Pete Heinze to thank for assuming the Hilltop chairmanship, and for his many hours under the sun.

But behind every successful man, we find a good woman. (Check out What Every Woman Knows by J. Barrie). So, behind Lee Miller was wife Olivia, the planner--and also a planter. And behind Pete is his wife Mary, also--I understand--a planner and a "picker"--as Olivia puts it. "Mary picked 100 pints of blackberries this summer," says Olivia, "and they were sold at the vegetable stand."

This honor system vegetable stand in the Scooter Park provides money for the Garden such as the improved water system, a new shed and the wire fence to keep out deer and other garden marauders.



Freshly picked blackberries go well on breakfast cereal.

"We have to secure the fence even more," Pete notes. "For some ground hogs did get in and hogged some of our

cantaloupes.

"From the Residents Association we received \$2,000 for the fence--but the vegetable sale netted \$1,600 more which was needed for the fencing," Pete explains. (Ed. note: Don't forget the pay-as-you-get-a vegetable. Not only elbow grease, but money keeps the garden going.)

"The biggest crops included tomatoes, summer squash, lettuce, peppers, okra and string beans," say the Heinzes, "but we also had watermelon, berries, and melons."



Brisk trade at the Home Groan Stand

The Gardens' acre includes flowers which border fences and parking areas and credit goes to Olivia who is a do-er as she puts it. Flowers include day lilies, juniper, hibiscus, Rose of Sharon, forsythia, iris, coreopsis, black-eyed Susans, sedum and periwinkle. And evergreens line the drive to the foot of the hill.

Hilltop Gardens drew 17 Collington gardeners this year, says Garden mover and shaker Pete Heinze, noting that some garden plots are neat and beautiful, and other, forgotten and choked by weeds. But one big problem the gardeners face are the crows who are not fazed by a

(Continued on p. 10)

•A Moving Experience•

by Anne Cadman-Walker

Almost everyone has had a moving experience. But not everyone makes a pun out of it.

That's what I--a former news writer--seem to be doing. For my moving experience centered on leaving physically our 20-year abode, and disposing of 40 years of family collectibles. These included tired, comfortable chairs, unfinished stories, old photos, family letters--some dating back to 1880--plus a husband with almost 1,000 books. Thus began the business of choosing and disposing, not the husband, but everything else.

As I faced ceaseless packing I didn't weep but I wailed. Even the light-hearted New Yorker magazine recently carried a story about the trauma of moving. And our own Layne Beaty compared his moving experience (The Collingtonian, Dec. 1994) to surviving a hurricane.

"Moving is like dying" I wrote my daughters. One daughter sent Bible verses, another a budget and the third promised storage. All three helped.

Friends took pity on us. One woman, experienced as a Clutter Counselor, presented her effective techniques. First, she said, we could get free boxes for packing tumblers from liquor stores. We did, some 20 of them, which we stored in the walk-in closet. This 8-foot by 12-foot space was nearly empty as originally she had me move the clothes to my husband's closet after he had moved his to his den closet.

Then she had us dump the closeted

clothes on the bed. You face the excess. You cannot get into bed without removing what you never wear. Most packers think they can just pluck out a few garments from the usual closet. They actually remove very little. We immediately took many items to the Community Shelter.

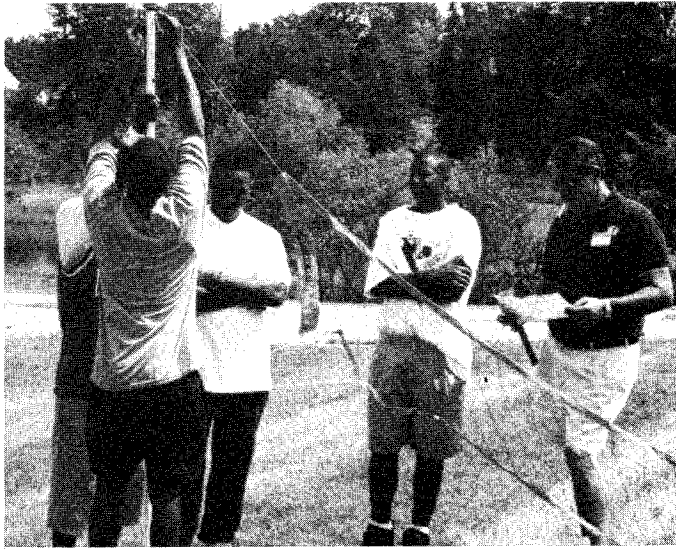
Decide which of several bookcases you will keep. Then put ALL books on the floor. Put into the "keep" boxes only your MUST books which eventually will go into boxes marked for your new residence. List these books by category on each box. Others go to libraries or a Vassar lady who picks them up at the door to take to her fund-raiser. Allow yourself a few tears of mourning. The Shelter, the Vassar lady, the libraries, the various charities--all will provide you with receipts for your income tax records.

The CC listed what we should do each specific week--such as clean out the front hall closet for keep items, put things for kids behind the sofa, clear out desks, stray books, linen closet (using linens to pack pictures). Then, the worst job, tackle your file cabinets and condense all those folders. Sell or donate obsolete Victrola records, or find a friendly collector. Then there's the china. Friends helped and the movers handled pictures and mirrors. Our CC put actual dates of the week for each step and we posted it in the kitchen.

We of course marked every box in clear black printing with its contents and destination, and sent old family letters and pictures to relatives.

The CC also told us: Call the Salvation Army allowing a two-week delay for their pick up. Ask the Salvation Army what it will or will not take. Also

•A Visit from Foxlake•



Weighty problem,
heavyweight consideration

On a Sunny September Saturday, Foxlake residents and Collingtonians joined to share fun, games and food at a highly successful outing.



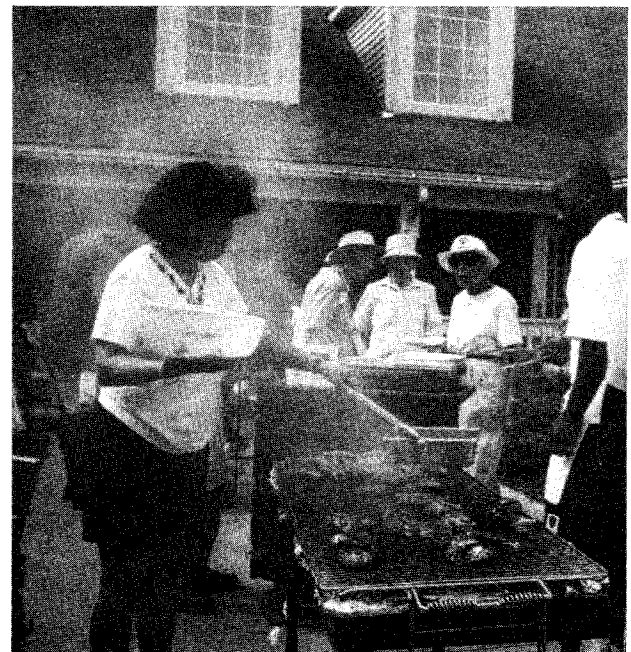
You have to start young.



Water balloons make wet feet.



It takes three (legs) to tangle.



Foxlake food, Collington chefs.

Memory by Association

Referring to Roy Blough's article on "Memory by Association:" The name Chatten seems to be swallowed up during an introduction, so I add: "Chatten, always chattin'."

A customer of the bank where I was working came to me to change her joint accounts to a single one after the death of her husband. She was concerned that she would not be able to take care of her finances because her husband had always done it. I suggested she call me whenever she had a problem, telling her my name --"Chatten, always chattin'." A few weeks later the telephone rang and the caller asked, "Is Mrs. Gabby there?"



Collingtonians tell County "NO"

By a wide margin, 64 to 12, Collington residents made clear their opposition to proposals to expedite zoning and land use actions. The PTZ Committee had ascertained residents' views by urging them to sign their concurrence or opposition on lists set up on the library table.

Waldy Gimenez of the Collington staff served above and beyond the call of duty to express our position and last out the meeting in Upper Marlboro until the final gavel at 3 a.m. As thoroughly reported in the general media, the Council failed to be swayed by our conclusions and voted 8 to 2 to approve the proposals.

The PTZ Committee? As explained by one of its resident members, it is a standing committee to the Board of Directors with a mixed Board, Staff and resident membership. Over the past several years it has met at no fixed interval, but as occasion demands.



Hilltop Garden (Continued from p. 7)

scarecrow--and swoop in to gobble up tomatoes and corn.

Collington is classed as an Urban Wildlife Sanctuary, Pete says, and we are not permitted to shoot destructive birds. So--to make a bad pun--they are crowing over us.

Moving (Continued from p. 8)

reserve your moving company early. Get recommendations and estimates on these and check if they offer insurance.

Pack up kitchen in stages and use plastic and paper tableware for final days.

Have a deadline or you'll never finish.

But allow time for friends bringing bourbon, wine or offers of dinner.

A final question to reluctant movers: Even if you love your children and they love you, would it work to live with them? Be honest.

HERE at Collington (yes, of course, we made it), the residents say: "The best time for Life Care is before you need it."

The Collingtonian is published monthly (except July and August) by the Collington Residents Association, Inc., 10450 Lottsford Road, Mitchellville, MD. 20721-2734.

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Upcoming Drama

By Conna Shaw

Try-outs were held for the first time on September 13 for parts in "The Importance of Being Earnest" by Oscar Wilde, proclaimed as a "Trivial Comedy for Serious People."

This play has entertained audiences since its opening night in London in 1895. In this hundredth anniversary year, Collington residents and our friends can again enjoy some of the funniest lines in English literature (we assume you have seen it at least once somewhere). Smile at the ridiculous situations in which you will find some of your friends appearing, masquerading as the characters Oscar Wilde has created.

In order of their appearance, the cast includes: Tully Torbert, Ken Muldoon, Tom Street, Edna Lingreen, Dorothy Mayer, Betty Clark, Kay Swift, Sam Saben and Doyen Klein.

The play was selected by and is under the direction of Marcia Behr. Don't miss it. The performance will start at 7:30 in our own Auditorium. Come prepared to relax and enjoy.

•Gailyn Gwin•

By Virginia Colony

Of all the teaches who come to Collington to help us keep our arteries open and life pulsing, Gailyn Gwin is one of the most outstanding. She is director of the Collington Singers and has a musical talent that finds many different outlets.

Vivacious and loquacious, she is an attractive and inspiring figure in any group. Her grandfather was Welsh and passed along the inevitable musical talents of the Welsh to his granddaughter.

With a fine voice, Gailyn has been a member of the Oratorio Society of Washington for 23 years. She has served as Director of Music at the Oakland Presbyterian Church in Laurel for 30 years, directing both children and adult choirs.

Musical activities in the District of Columbia and Prince George's County have claimed her time and talent.

Her acquaintance with Collington began with her visits here to the late Caryl Hubbell, her aunt. It was during these trips that Gailyn learned of the Collington Singers. The rest is history.

Since her recent marriage to Joseph Irwin, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service, Gailyn has spent the summer vacationing, gardening and organizing her house. She looks forward to a new season with the Collington Singers.

Mutual affection between Gailyn and the Singers keeps her coming back, since there is no monetary recompense. The Singers want to publicly thank Gailyn, a talented and generous woman, for sharing her talents with us. They extend a heartfelt invitation to join the Singers who meet Monday afternoons at 4:15 in the Auditorium.



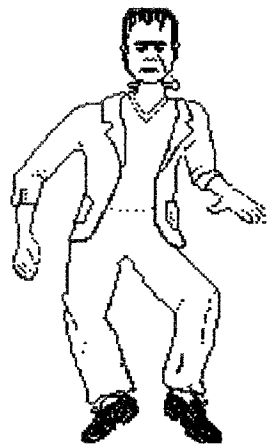
Trick or Treat!



Halloween Party

Collington's annual Halloween Party will be held this year on Monday, October 30 between 6:30 and 8:30 p.m.

Trick or Treat time is set for the hour between 6:30 and 7:30, when goblins, witches and werewolves will be knocking on residents' doors. If you want to serve treats to our young visitors--relatives of residents and children of our staff--please sign up in the book at the desk in the Clock Tower--if you have not already signed up with your Cluster or Corridor representative.



The Costume Parade

Everybody in costume will get a chance to strut around the Courtyard Corridor. Judges will announce the winners in the Auditorium.

Videos for Small Fry

Halloween videos especially chosen to entertain little guests will run continually. Small children will not be allowed into the Chamber of Horrors which is TOO SPOOKY for them.

Refreshments will be served throughout the evening. Punch and cookies will be found at a number of different stations on the Courtyard Level.

Volunteers Needed!

The success of our Halloween Parties has always depended on the work of many volunteers, whose efforts deserve a hearty round of applause and much thanks.

The Sign Up Book in the Clock Tower lists all the areas where help is needed. We list them below:

- Cookie baking--slice and bake cookies are just fine.
- Guides. Residents on scooters or on foot are needed to help children get to the Trick or Treat areas and find their way back to the Creighton Center for the festivities there.
- Hosts for Trick or Treat who are willing to open their door to a our guests.
- Decorators to trim the halls.
- UN-decorators to clear away after the party is over.
- Escorts to help children go through the Chamber of Horrors.
- Hosts for the Video Room who will welcome younger children and their parents and make them feel at home.

