

# Articles by Joe Keating 2002

## ► 2002 ten best about Waterford

*December 31, 2002*

Tonight completes another fun filled year in the life of Waterford as the center of the universe and the Capital of North Loudoun and the time has come to record the ten best things about Waterford for the year 2002.

10. The tennis court is finished, finally.
9. The John Wesley Church bell rings again.
8. "The No Through Trucks" signs limit trucks coming through the village.
7. The Old School has a Boys Room and a Girls Room.
6. Part of the millrace is cleaned out and has canoes by it.
5. Trees are planted in the Tannery Lot supplanting moribundant predecessors
4. The John Wesley Church is more active with two weddings.
3. "The Waterford News " is published again.
2. Waterford Foundation internets [www.waterfordfoundation.org/tour/tour.shtml](http://www.waterfordfoundation.org/tour/tour.shtml).
1. Waterford has a "White Christmas".

Remember the old riddle, "If a tree falls in a forest with no one there is there any sound?" The answer is No, but we don't have electricity for three days. Taylor Chamberlin has given us more details on the cause and that is the lack of maintenance and accessibility of the power line right-of way traditionally known as "Godfrey's Woods". This right-of -way actually goes across many property boundaries, even Greystone, and is an area of mature hardwood forest that has many trees overhanging the power lines. The hilly terrain limits access and when the inevitable line break from fallen trees occurs the cherry picker trucks have to wait for a tracked vehicle to haul them up to the break. The cost of the repairs during the ice storm probably could have paid for burying the entire power line in good weather.

The Wednesday trash pickup will be Saturday this week as we enter a new era of waste (not waist) management. Loudoun County has a new set of regulations concerning recycling that changes the way we handle recyclables. Perhaps now is the time for the Waterford Citizen's Association to assume a role in trash pickup and negotiate an advantageous collective arrangement for everyone in or close to the village as part of our dues.

## ► Sleigh left in Ice House lot

*December 24, 2002*

Last Sunday about dusk some guy in a red suit parked a sleigh drawn by eight reindeer in the Ice House lot on Second Street. He left carrying a sack and when he came back he was not carrying the sack. But when passers by noticed the sleigh and reindeer, one person said the Ice House lot was beginning to look a lot like Christmas.

The fact is Waterford looks more like Christmas than any place else for many other reasons than we all live here and people park reindeer sleighs around the village. About five years ago

someone parked one in the John Wesley Church lot long enough for someone to paint an oil painting of it. The artist also thought that the John Wesley Church lot was beginning to look a lot like Christmas.

Waterford looking more like Christmas may be due to the number of churches in the Village, past and present. Besides the Baptist, Presbyterian and John Wesley we have the Old Methodist and the Church that is near the intersection of High and Factory Street that is now a residence. Most would also count the Quaker Meeting house as a church, though strictly speaking it was a house of worship. If a numerical superiority in churches are what counts then any Waterfordian can justifiably have a holier than thou attitude.

We also have many more schools than other places. Camelot school, the school house on High Street, The Waterford Elementary, the Old School, the Quaker school house and the Second Street School just to name a few. This means we have always had an opportunity to hear children sing. Are you listening?

As you read this, remember that tonight it will get more and more quiet as the traffic in Waterford all is calm. As the few lights go out and the stars come out all is bright. We will have a more silent night than most other places and we will have a very merry Christmas once more. Make it so.

## ► *Coffee for Kentucky a casualty*

*December 17, 2002*

Even though the Kentucky coffee tree in front of the Rhodes's house at Bill Hunley's Trouble Enough Indeed fell across Second Street and remained suspended on the power lines for two days it was not the cause of the power outage. The power outage that left Waterford dark until about 2 am Friday started when the transformers on Canby Road blew with a shattering BLAM about 2 pm Wednesday. Electricity then joined the newspapers and trash pickup as things not being delivered to Waterford because of the ice.

The hopes of the Waterford Elementary School students for an extra day off Thursday because of no electricity were dashed when a plan taking the entire School to Loudoun Valley High School was put into effect.

Waterfordians once again rose to the occasion by logging more complaints per capita about the missing electricity to Dominion Power and Wage Radio than any other effected location. This tradition of complaining is verified in the book "Crossing the Line" by Taylor Chamberlin and James D. Peshek just published last week. This book is a must read for anyone who seeks to understand the roots of the way Waterford works. The book gives us the feeling that Waterford was the capital of North Loudoun. The entire late unpleasantness of the North Loudoun War (usually called The Civil) was fought for three reasons. They were to furnish opportunities to escape the pacific tendencies of Quakers ("Friend, it is unfortunate, but thee stands exactly where I am going to shoot"), create business opportunities or exact revenge for past or future personal slights. It is a wonder that the Federal Government or the Government of Virginia in rebellion against the Federal Government had time to do anything other than

answer the complaints and concerns of the citizens of Waterford.

The North Loudoun War was probably the last time we had to resort to the Kentucky coffee tree, a member of the pea family also called the Honey Locust, for coffee. We still have these trees around Waterford but unless roasted the beans are poison. To make coffee a cup full of seeds were placed in a pan in a single layer. They were then roasted in an oven for 30 minutes. After the seeds were cool they would be ground into a fine powder in a regular coffee grinder. Water would then be poured over the powder slowly. Supposedly the result tasted just like regular coffee. Yeah.

### ▶ Getting ready for a new crop

December 4, 2002

Whenever Waterfordians gather around hearth and home for the holidays such as Thanksgiving and St. Swivens Day The first order of business is to dispel or verify the new crop of village legends. Now for those you who are not familiar with village legends by virtue of being in Cuba, which has just recently acquired readers of this column, they are nothing more than urban legends that occur, or not, in the historic village of Waterford. The classic example of this is the alligators, escaped Florida baby alligator souvenirs, that roam the sewers of New York City.

The village legend version of this concerns the large alligators that roam the sewers of Waterford are escaped Florida souvenirs. This has been proven absolutely false. The alligators are descendants of a still breeding pair that arrived already in the pipe in 1976. More recently the village legend was that a Boa constrictor had escaped from a historic house in Waterford. As usual this was false as it was a Royal Python.

Over the years village legends have been that all Waterford cats have aids, travelers from Mexico get turista if they drink any water in Waterford, The John Birch Society and the American Communist Party were founded in Waterford, by the same person, and all Waterford chairs were made in Waterford.

The approach of New Years reminds us that all Waterfordians own formal wear and dress for dinner, that you have to have a book to belong to the Waterford Book Club and the Waterford Garden Club doesn't garden but the Gardeners Club does.

Some of the village legends are obviously malevolent and have been foisted off by those Chauvinistic individuals still trying to exact revenge for Waterford backing the Union during the recent unpleasantness. One of these concerns wife swapping, several concern defrocked ministers and church congregations that rolled on hay strewn floors and other Anglophilic versions of Victorian hell-fire clubs.

The defining quality of all these legends is that they have to be too good to be true. But then some have said that is the defining quality of life in the historic village of Waterford.

### ▶ Halloween night all is bright

November 6, 2002

They grin and grimace, laugh and leer, weep and wail, cry and cower, forming a bright orange and white candle dancing crowd washing down the darkness of Waterford's Main Street Halloween night. And that was just the parents of the over two hundred trigger tasters. Their small charges dashed about from house to house in a swirl of neon rainbows caused by the glowing necklaces being sold on the steps of the Corner store amidst jack-o - lanterns mimicking the emotions and faces of their parents.

Black and white striped Martha Stewarts bobbed and weaved among black clad witches and Labrador retrievers as bulging bags bumped along the street. A witch had earlier Halloween day visited the Waterford Elementary School to launch this years Halloween of the literary theme. She then commuted to a large city to the east in full witch regalia and reported how surprising it is that people avoid eye contact with someone carrying a skull with one red eye.

Theme houses throughout the historic village were decorated in a manner based on the mystery books that the students have been reading. On Main Street a house down near boar country was evocative of The Dinosaur Mystery from the Box Car Children Mystery read by the 5th Grade while at the Pink House garden The Map in the Mystery Machine from the Scooby Doo Mysteries read by the Kindergarten (All Waterford children are exceptional.) was engraved on the patio.

Half way up the big hill the 4th grade's about to be released on the screen Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets was being displayed. On Second Street near Janney Street dinner was being served and rivulets of red were flowing on a set for almost local author Poe's The Masque of the Red Death that was read by the 3rd Grade. On the other side of Janney Street the Magnolia house yard was full of characters and fog from The Case of the Haunted Scarecrow, a Jigsaw Jones Mystery read by the 2nd Grade. Up Janney Street the 1st Grade's book, It's the Great Pumpkin Charlie Brown, was rising from the pumpkin patch.

This week beware of black labs telling you that since candy is bad for dogs they are really a kid.

## Jack Frost nips elephant ears

October 22, 2002

As the word frost begins to haunt the weather forecast, we realize that summer is truly drawing to a close and it's time to dig up the elephant ears and spread them out on the flats in the cellar to dry and loaf away the winter at an even 70 degrees Fahrenheit.

Ha!

Malanga, Dasheen, Wild Taro, poison, we have to keep growing elephant ears as an investment in knowledge to determine if this is one of the plants that is beneficial to our Waterford yard. We don't say garden because we have too many children, pets and not enough wealth to have a garden. Our definition of beneficial is a plant that requires no care, no sun and no water, crowds out weeds and is edible. So far only hosta meets this requirement.

Last week a man was looking for yard work and when asked how much an hour, he said \$16. We told him he had to find some Robbie Blancos as he was in campesino country as far as we

were concerned. We found out that was not out of line. With the building boom still going on in Loudoun, carpenters were getting \$36 an hour and the grass cutters were coming off a summer where \$50 an hour was usual. We wondered why the weed whackers before the fair were so industrious as to girdle every tree, and now we know that they were highly paid assassins.

We are going to continue doing our own yard work and carpentry. In Richmond they have yards but no gardens. They do have on occasion something called a "gyarden." "Gyarden" seem to be unique to Richmond.

Two women were once heard in Richmond discussing their yards. When challenged about not being natives of Richmond because they said they had a yard and not a "gyarden," one said "My deah, we only say gyarden when we chahge ova twenny dollahs to see the yard on the Gyarden Touah."

### ► Whistle-pig wastes windshield

October 16, 2002

Elaine Head, on the way to get flowers for the tour houses Wednesday afternoon before the fair, had her windshield shattered by a flying groundhog. This "no good deed goes unpunished" event occurred on Route 7 east of Leesburg near Countryside. She did not kill the groundhog, as it had been dead for some time before becoming airborne. This was not a supernatural event, but the result of a bloated and resilient woodchuck getting mixed up in heavy traffic and bouncing into the air. Elaine said the unfortunate animal carcass was last seen flying over the top of her car toward Leesburg.

It is too early to report on the contents of the lost and found during the fair, but at our house we have a pager and a camera. The camera has 20 exposures left that we will use up on newsworthy subjects before developing in an attempt to identify the owner. The pager has yet to go off and give us a clue as to whom it belongs.

A lively center during the fair was the Book Nook near the center of the universe equidistant from the post office, Corner Store and Pink House. Waterford's authors were heavily represented along with other Loudoun literati busily signing copies of their latest books. We plunged into Tony Horwitz's "Blue Latitudes" and immediately discovered that the Waterford Annual Homes Tour and Crafts Festival is a great training ground for all who, like Tony, would endeavor to recapture the experience of discoverers by sailing tall sailing ships such as the replica of Captain Cook's Endeavor. Climbing the masts of these ships is best accomplished by not looking down; just like using portable potties during the fair.

Thus the fair also becomes a vehicle that enables us all, like Tony, "to boldly go where those have gone before," but in a different context.

### ► Fair looms like deer in road

September 25, 2002

The end of summer and Waterford has stomped the pedal in the rush to the annual Homes Tour and Crafts Festival Oct. 4, 5 and 6.

The first generation of Waterford's post-war pool kids with friends and families gathered late Saturday at The Dormers on Second Street to celebrate the marriage of Hamilton's Marlena Miller to Waterford's Charlie Beach. This culminated a week of intense activity in the south end of the village as the gracious hosts prepared the nicest place for a big tent.

From The Dormers the pace continues as a record number of workers and contractors trucks are swarming around our houses and buildings in this year's rush to the fair with two major renovation projects: John Wesley Church and the Boy's and Girl's Rooms at the Old School and about five house restorations near completion.

The historic fabric of the village is suffering losses along with its gains, however. Waterford's historic first hot tub has been transported. Installed by the Gleadalls on an outdoor deck in the late 1970s as hot tubs began to spread east from their California origins, this tub was the pioneer and premier of all Waterford's hot tubs. It weathered with no casualties the controversy caused when a couple in California were discovered by neighbors after the tub stopped abruptly after days of operation when the filters became clogged with their remains. A greenhouse attached to the rear of the Isaac Steer Hough House later enclosed Waterford's historic tub. A tree fell on the greenhouse last spring, and the tub had to be removed as the greenhouse is being reduced in size to repair it. During the tub's existence it inspired a Margaritaville-type attitude among all who used it and was instrumental in the Gleadall's eventually retiring to Ocean City. A collection is being made from the historic hot tub's former inhabitants for a bronze plaque to mark its site.

### ▶ [Waterford has another actress](#)

*September 4, 2002*

In the all-Waterford's-children-are-exceptional department, Caitlin Ray has returned to her classes in the fifth grade at Dominion Academy in Leesburg after pursuing her career as an actress this summer. She filmed a commercial for the D.C. Department of Mental Health for local TV stations. She will also appear with actor Chris Rock in his debut as a director when the movie by Dreamworks Production Company is released next year. The movie, "Head of State," deals with the action surrounding Chris Rock's character that becomes a candidate for President of the United States. "Head of State" began lensing in Baltimore in mid-July.

Waterford has been the origin of many others who have appeared in major films. One of the foremost was Emily Yancy who appeared in the classic, "Cotton Comes to Harlem" in 1970. Emily's grandmother, Minnie Robinson Jackson, lived in the Weavers Cottage and the William Irish Shop on Main Street.

Gladys Lewis, who is active in the preservation of the John Wesley Methodist Church, is Emily Yancy's aunt.

The Preservation Society of Loudoun County is meeting at the John Wesley Methodist Church at 2 p.m. Saturday. John and Bronwyn Souders will present a brief program on church and its

context in the community. The renovation of the exterior of the church has been completed with the interior progressing to the rough-in of the plumbing in the down-yet-to-be-built-stairs fellowship room. Funding has slowed the completion of the interior and step-by-step donations are being sought for the stairs.

Rain, a significant rain, fell all day Wednesday. It was not so much that the creek rose and not enough that the Tannery Branch even got water. The weeds are expected to recover, but the net effect on the wells was probably close to nothing. With the fair approaching we expect that about half of us will be using the portable privies as the wells dry up again.

## ► *Traffic calmed on Main Street*

*August 28, 2002*

**When things got really quiet on Main Street at 8 a.m. on a Thursday morning, it doesn't take Sherlock Holmes to know that "the game is afoot."**

Sure enough, a car with a deployed air bag and drained radiator was near the Bank Building driveway. The front bore the telltale print of a tree trunk and parts of branches were protruding from the door. The Riedels reported that there had been some shouting the night before about 3:45 a.m., but the two occupants of the car had fled the scene, on foot.

Several other witnesses said that the driver, the shorter of the two, ran up the street saying that he was hurt and had to call his father. The taller seemed quite upset that the driver was not helping push the car out of the road. This event served as a catalyst that drew two deputies from the Loudoun County Sheriff's Department to lower Main Street in marked cars with blinking lights. Nothing calms traffic like marked cars with blinking lights, especially when a \$200 surcharge can be added to the normal fines and a court appearance is compulsory for all moving violations.

The mystery of Main Street gone quiet was solved.

The mystery of how a tree on the Milltown Road hit the front of the car was not solved. It seems a son of the car's owner had hurriedly left home, on foot, when the deputies were seeking information early Thursday morning, but they expect to crack the case soon. We feel bad about not being able to provide a more detailed description of what happened, but the language was not good and besides no one pays attention to what happens so early in the morning in Waterford.

Meanwhile, down at Catoctin creek the effects of an August with about one-third inches rain fall has changed the way it flows. Instead of a gently flowing broad creek we have a series of greenish ponds connected with narrow paths of water. When Rudyard Kipling's curious Elephant wanted to know what the crocodile ate, the Kolokolo Bird said, with a mournful cry, "Go to the banks of the great grey-green, greasy Limpopo River, all set about with fever-trees, and find out." What we have here in Waterford this summer's end is the much lesser gray-green greasy limpid dribble all set about with fever trees.

## ► [Road] plan to include whole village

August 21, 2002

Federal and county grants totaling \$450,000 will be used to create plans for the tourism enhancement for the entire village, not just the Clarkes Gap Road corridor. With the county taking the lead roll, the initial steps to create a plan for the village is expected to be completed as early as July 2003. Since the village is unincorporated, a representative from Waterford will serve on the planning committee that will take the first steps toward solving the traffic and visual problems that adversely effect the tourism potential of the historic landmark.

The funding for this planning, 80 percent from the federal government and 20 percent from Loudoun, was requested jointly by the Waterford Citizens' Association, the Waterford Foundation and the Waterford Elementary School Parent Teachers Association. The cooperation and support of all of Waterford's utility organizations such as Virginia Power, Verizon, Loudoun Cable, Loudoun County Sanitation Authority, as well as VDOT and other federal, state and local government agencies will be required to address the traffic, visual pollution and attendant storm-water concerns required to fulfill the conditions of the grants.

Waterford has been reading longtime Paeonian Springs neighbor Claire Kincannon's latest book "Paeonian to Paris." To read a book by a friend and neighbor is not without its trepidation. You ask yourself, "What am I going to do if I can't finish it." Fear not. In this case, it is "What can I do to get the book back from everybody who keeps reading my copy that they started just to look at and now won't give it back."

Claire takes two of her lifestyle preferences, not flying and being married to a world-class demographer, and uses this as the vehicle to transport us to the joys of setting up a household in the City of Light after living in a village whose teen-agers periodically paint the signs to read "onian rings."

For fans of Claire, and you will be by the time you finish "Paeonian to Paris," this is a good quick read to round out your summer. Get your own copy, we had to buy two. Also, since Claire's husband, Louis Kincannon, as director of the U.S. Census Bureau, is Loudoun's only presidential appointee, we wonder if she will be writing about Washington, D.C.

## ► Verizon: A historic statement

August 14, 2002

The great American corporate presence has finally come to the Waterford National Historic District in gleaming black enamel and shining white and red letters, Verizon. The sign appeared last week on the front of the Sally Nettle House, announcing to the world that Verizon Corporation is conscious of its presence in the historic district, and that we deserve the consideration that was shown by the preceding owners of the building going all the way back to when Bell Telephone bought the building in the early 1950s. The Historic Bell Telephone sign that was designed to harmoniously match the width of one of the half timbers sadly was removed, perhaps by vandals.

Frank Caldwell, retired Bell executive who was responsible for Waterford's exchange being



TUxedo-2, would always point out with pride how the Tudor style brick nogging had been preserved on the Nettle House by the Chamberlin brothers in the 1930s, and, with the addition that formed the housing for the telephone switching station, how well the whole building, named after the wife of Waterford's first mayor, fit into the context of the historic district.

We hope that Verizon will continue this tradition, even to the extent of lending its support to the efforts to underground all the utilities in the village, especially its own wires and cables though it did nail another sign to one of the poles. We hope the days of indifferent multinational corporations riding roughshod over bumpkin Bophal villages that rely on such things as Historic District Review Committees are past.

The Old School will have Orff Schulwerk music classes starting this fall, taught by Eve Morrison Harrison who grew up in Waterford. A schedule starting with 4-year-olds at 3 p.m. and increasing in yearly increments to fifth-graders starting at 6 p.m. is being contemplated. Orff Schulwerk is a way to teach and learn music. It is based on things children like to do -- sing, chant rhymes, clap, dance, and keep a beat on anything near at hand. Recent graduates of the program are Olivia Henry, Catherine Laclede, Margaret Hayford, Julia Crowley and Katie Wolcott. Annie Grotophorst will attend the fifth-grade class this fall.

## ► Mahlon Meyers rounds the bend

August 8, 2002

Rounding the bend of Butchers Row by the Old School was a surprise last week, because you can now look into the front room of the Mahlon Meyers House, as the front wall is gone. It was taken down, and the old Waterford brick was saved as part of a preservation project that is enhancing this venerable old house. The stone front foundation was rebuilt and deepened inside and out, making way for the reclamation of the kitchen under the old part of the house, which is a classic in kitchens. It has a large walk-in fireplace, with a beehive oven at the back and the usual swinging pot crane off to the side. The stairway that was added at a later date is being removed so that the entire space, amazingly large in a deceitfully small-appearing house, can once more be used as the center of the home.

In the past, renovations to this house have been viewed as less than ideal. One, the addition of a bathroom, allegedly designed by a New Yorker who was stricken with a cantilevered past, appeared as a wart projecting from the rear. The subsequent work seems to have cured that wart, and the work now being done should enhance the endearing features of this house.

Yet to be seen are the three fireplaces on the first floor, two of them corner fireplaces; all are served by the same chimney, which also is used by the basement kitchen fireplace. The restored front will have steps different from those that projected out to the street. Loudoun County is indeed blessed to have as part of its housing stock houses such as those in Waterford.

The renovation of old houses keeps the building trade vibrant in such a graceful manner. The workman who were engaged rebuilding the front wall of the Mahlon Meyers House were

working in the hottest part of the day on what may be the hottest day of the year. But rather than broiling over brick and block building a new house out on a bare former pasture, they were carefully placing stones in deep shade with a gentle cool breeze blowing around the side of the Big Hill. What's more, the work when completed, will not increase our taxes by requiring us to pay for the additional infrastructure like with a new house, but will decrease our taxes by adding value to an old house with an existing infrastructure.

## ► Hysteranthy about to strike

Augut 1, 2002

With the warm rains this week and the approach of August we are about to be hit by Hysteranthy. Hysteranthy is the production of flowers before leaves, and the naked ladies (Amaryllis belladonna) seem to enjoy many of the historical qualities of Waterford and to be especially prolific around our historic village. They don't like to be moved, though they can be moved when they go dormant after flowering. They produce seeds, but the seedlings take three to six years to produce bulbs. They like to be left alone. No cultivation is required, but mulching is beneficial. Unlike the rest of Loudoun we are in USDA hardiness zone 7a so our naked ladies are happier.

Other things about Waterford attract the prolific naked ladies such as old burn piles. They are one of those plants that find benefits in the bare area left by a burn pile. To substantiate this, you only have to have seen the display that has appeared behind Mary Elizabeth Wallace's house in years past or behind Norman Weatherholtz's. Since putting out last years leaves in March the ladies have been lurking under ground, waiting a warm summer rain so that they can streak nakedly into view and start their strangely backward yearly cycle once again.

Many of the plants around Waterford must have gotten their start from wind-bourne seeds, and it is suspected that carpenter bees are efficient pollinators of this South African native. That is another thing that definitely makes them Waterfordians. Except for their children, they came here from someplace else.

## ► East meets west at new light

July 17, 2002

With talk of a traffic light going in at the intersection of Clarkes Gap Road (Route 662) and Charles Town Turnpike (Route 9), time has come to record the behaviors that have evolved as that intersection's use increased from an alternative way to Leesburg to the place along the commuter's Grand Trunk Road where east (West Virginia) meets west (Loudoun).

Early on the commuters, knowing that access difficulties getting on Route. 9 would precipitate a light, would pause and wave waiters on Route 662 on. As the numbers increased this practice became less frequent. Waiters on Route 662 who would count on westbound turn signals to provide a break to get across would often be surprised to find that the turn signal was not to go down Route 662 but to turn into Waterford Texaco. Any one who would count on a turn signal was playing Russian roulette.

Early morning commuters waiting on Route 662 for a break in the eastbound stream of

Charles Town jockeys became desperate to get on to Route 9 and developed the Waterford chicken run. The chicken run was made famous in the mid-1950s by the James Dean film "Rebel Without a Cause" and had many regional versions. The Waterford version is the last one in practice, as the participants tend to diminish rather rapidly.

What happens is the first car is waiting for a gap in traffic and sees one coming that can accommodate a quick dash into the space. Years ago some unknown and by now dead genius decided that by getting a running start, two cars, one riding the bumper of the first, could dart across the westbound lane and get in the space also. All that was required was to leave about 20 feet in front while waiting to get up speed.

At the point of entering Route 9, if the gap was too small, you could always cram on the breaks and back up and wait for another gap. Next came the interesting part. If one car can get in a gap, why not two, or three, or four? Of course that meant if any car having others behind decided to abort the dash ... well you get the idea. So did the West Virginians who would see a string of cars waiting on Route 662, each about 20 feet behind the one ahead. Car pool drivers involved in chicken runs usually found themselves driving alone.

Now you really know why there is a new light being considered as part of the intersection's proposed improvements in September 2005.

## **► Within the sound of the bell**

*July 12, 2002*

The Fourth of July this year we discovered that the ringing of the heavy bell of the John Wesley Methodist Church is a task that cannot be taken lightly.

The church, now being renovated, had its bell tower completed and the bell, large enough to be a factor in how the steeple was restored, had been stabilized and tested for safety. In a patriotic frenzy one of the village troublemakers decided to reintroduce the village to the bell ringing in the Fourth as the parade came down Main Street. This endeavor proved to be both physically and mentally taxing. The ringing in could not compare with the success of the rest of the day expertly organized by the Waterford Citizens' Association in an effort headed by Page Cox and involving the talents of about the entire membership of the WCA and then some.

The ringing was handicapped by the bell being hot, the bell rope being in the upper part of a hot balcony at the top of a hill with no clear communication with the rest of the ceremonies. The biggest handicap was the ignorance of the bell ringer. He jerked on the rope, expecting to hear golden peals of pure sound and was instead rewarded with unmoving resistance and, other than the slapping of the rope, silence.

After about five minutes of futile grunting, and growing desperate, he tied a loop in the rope about a foot from the floor and stood in it. Since the bell ringer weighs almost 300 pounds, something moved. And another step down on the rope and it moved some more, and more

and more and more. And then the bell rang.

Well, not exactly rang. First it clanks, then clanged, then banged, then rang.

The surprise of success caused the ringer to loose concentration and drift off task. The effort continued in a confused muddle of noise until the ringer, hands softened by years of indolence, now raw from the bristling rope, and fearing the embarrassment of being almost 300 pounds and being hauled down from the belfry by the rescue squad, ceased ringing.

To live within the sound of the bells of Waterford is to be a Waterfordian.

## **► Fireworks are a wise investment**

*June 26, 2002*

About 20 years ago a group of preteen Waterford boys were clustered around a battered mail-order catalog, and Jake Phillips said, " Fireworks are a wise investment." John Devine said that the first things you would hear on the Fourth of July were baby-wakers from the blacksmiths. A baby-waker is a half-ounce of powder in a tube of newspaper. It is laid on an anvil. One person lights the powder, and another hits it with a hammer.

Robert Loren Miller, whose mother was a Janney born in Braden House, spent summers in Waterford in the 1920s. He said they would use the V in the back of a propped up bench to launch rockets. With rockets there is an initial spurt from the fuse as it is lit and the satisfaction that a chain of events has been started that is really going somewhere. With a hiss the rocket flies up in the night, a trail of sparks leaving a spiral wake.

Launching things on the fourth in 1940s used to involve cherry bombs, cans and tennis balls. This is a tame version of the anvil bombs of the 1930s. Norman Weatherholtz once saw the bottom anvil blasted into the stump, and the top anvil went up to be just a dot in the sky. When it came down it went through the barn roof, the hay loft, and taking several support timbers with it, ended up buried beneath the muck in a cow stall.

It missed the cow.

Only those of us who have had the advantage of an unsupervised childhood will know the joys of gunpowder as a play thing. When the hissing stops the rocket is in free rise, now leaving a trail of sparks that starts to curve as the apex is reached. Then the flash and the boom. The flash warms the face, and the boom reaches down your throat to the pit of your stomach. It bangs against your ears so that your toes hear the sound. This causes you to involuntarily gasp ... eew.

Then the flower of light from the cascading sparks spreads out in a dark sky. They wink out one by one until only one is left and then you can say ... aaah. This year Waterford's Fourth of July starts on Factory Street at 10 am with registration for the 11 a.m. parade.

## ▶ A limb falls in Second Street

May 15, 2002

**The uphill side of a maple tree that is on the fence line of the icehouse lot pasture and yacht club fell into Second Street, blocking the early commuter traffic**

**Thursday morning.** The limb was hollow and had been the home of squirrels in the past. They were aware of the unstable condition of the tree because none seem to be in residence. By noon it had been dragged out of the way, and traffic was no longer calmed.

The cause of the limb fall was associated with the early morning thunderstorm that awoke the village, causing many to be up earlier than usual pulling plugs to protect their modems. This has replaced the traditional reaction to thunderstorms of shutting the windows, though a few die-hard traditionalists still shut windows.

A hundred years ago we would have been able to witness lanterns bobbing in the dark as key people along Second and Main streets rushed to open the millrace floodgates to save the mill from harm.

Former Waterfordian Mike Featherstone contacted us last week from Imperial Beach, Calif. He used to live in the Meeting House schoolhouse in the early 1980s. His friends will be glad to know that he has retired from the California Department of Corrections and is pursuing a second career in the wave transportation field.

Rainy April has created again one of our favorite sights as we come down Clarke's Gap Road toward the green tunnel. Look to your right to see the red bull in a green field. Kipling's Kim would assume his search was over but for the absence of the thousand red devils.

This Saturday is Waterford Flea Market and Yard Sale day.

## ▶ We are like whoa for good book

May 7, 2002

**Sunday afternoon Waterford's literati gathered at Greystone to launch the appearance of legal lit-smith Ed Good's latest leap into the land of letters, "A Grammar Book for You and I...oops, Me!"**

Ed has long been recognized as an expert in the area of communication, and has been a lecturer and author whose efforts have been directed at improving communication in the corporate and legal community. With this volume he has directed his efforts toward the rest of us who should know better but really don't. Ed is like one of those guys who like paid attention to teachers like Miss Hamrick in junior high school while the rest of us where like totally preoccupied with like more primitive urges.

Chapter 31, "Like, I'm like gonna learn how to like talk" deals with speech patterns that we all

have come to know. The humor and advice in this chapter should make it compulsory reading for anyone who opens their mouth in public, you know.

In this book he gives us all a chance to go back and finally get "All the Grammar You Need to Succeed in Life".

April showers brought the flowers, blooming this May in unprecedented profusion, thanks to the efforts of the bulb planters and the Waterford Gardeners Club. Of special note are the tulips along the Tannery Branch on lower Main Street that were planted by the Wyatt family on an extended weekend last fall. As you cross the wooden bridge at the foot of Main Street, look east toward the upstream side. The scene could be an old flow-blue plate except it is in color and real.

This coming weekend is Springtime in Waterford Weekend with eight houses and shops open 10 a.m.-5 Saturday and noon-5 p.m. Sunday. Six houses, the Waterford Market and the Huntley Farm Schoolhouse will be open on Second, Main and High streets.

## **► Main Street shooting wounds one**

May 1, 2002

**Wednesday afternoon, Jonathan Rose, a trim carpenter from Strasburg, was working alone in Norman Weatherholtz's old house when he inadvertently shot a nail into two fingers on his right hand with a pneumatic nail gun.** Though fastening the two fingers together, X-rays at Loudoun Hospital Center revealed that the nail missed any bones or joints. A six-hour-long visit to the emergency room at Lansdowne hospital was required to remove the nail and treat the wound. Rose expects he will have a sore right hand for a few days.

Norman Weatherholtz worked for years around Waterford, and we know that he did not hold with such tools as pneumatic nail guns. We don't know if Norman ever nailed his fingers together, but we do know that he once punched a hole through his hand with a hammer. He wrapped a kerosene soaked rag around his hand and kept on working. He did not hold with hospitals either.

Saturday afternoon the flags were out all over the village and a joyous shout was heard from the John Wesley Church as we thanked our elected representatives for doing so much for the preservation of Waterford this year. Senator John Warner, Congressman Frank Wolf and Catoclin Supervisor Sally Kurtz received the thanks and addressed an overflowing church with heartfelt remarks.

If only those who are distrustful and cynical of our imperfect political system could see that it is meant to work and made to work toward perfection only by the diligence and concern of good men and women such as the three we honored Saturday in this small village.

A new publication, Waterford Wildlife is now in its second edition and reports all sorts of items of interest to Waterford. Published by Nicole Hamilton of Thicket Court, it has articles such as the sightings of bears and coyotes.

## ► Soccer team back in action

*April 18, 2002*

Last Sunday afternoon the fact that all Waterford women are athletic came to the fore as the not-under-30 women's soccer team hit the pitch for practice at Waterford Elementary School. The team is back in action for the spring soccer season. Game times are 3:30-5 p.m. at the school.

This is not to say that Waterford is not also proud of its many talented residents and would like to congratulate thespians -- Mimi Westervelt, Morgan El-Shafey and Olivia Henry -- on their upcoming performances in the Growing Stage's "Little Women of Orchard House." The show opens Friday at Loudoun Valley High School in Purcellville, and tickets are conveniently available over the Internet at <http://www.growingstage.org> or by phone at 540-338-5367. Advance tickets are \$15 for adults and \$10 for students and seniors. If you wait until the day of the show, all tickets cost \$16.

While you are on the Internet you might get in the mood for the play by going to <http://www.louisamayalcott.org> to take a virtual tour of Orchard House.

Tony Horwitz, who has recently returned from Australia, where he has been working on a book on Captain Cook, will be the speaker at Loudoun Country Day School April 25 at 7 p.m. in the auditorium.

Plan ahead for May 11, the day before Mother's Day, for the second annual Waterford flea market and yard sale. This benefit is for the Waterford Foundations KIDZ Fund. At the Old School tables will be available for \$35. If you have items too numerous or large for the Old School, participate in the sale from your yard. It is important that you plan ahead so that your yard can be included on the map and items advertised on the Web site.

As you can tell, spring has sprung, and the village is a perfect storm of activity.

In a perfect storm

Starry skies of white petals

Swirl before your eyes.

## ► Dark braved to hear Holland

*March 27, 2002*

Several Waterfordians flocked to Loudoun Country Day School's lecture series "Writers on

Writing" on a cold dark Thursday night to hear Barbara Holland. ,Barbara, whose books and commentary on life in Loudoun have made her a favorite at the authors booth during the annual Homes Tour and Crafts festival, has a new book, "They Went Whistling: Women Wayfarers, Warriors, Runaways, and Renegades." Barbara admitted to being down to only one cat and is looking for a preferably black kitten to adopt. Waterford's Tony Horwitz will be the "Writers on Writing" speaker next at the LCDS auditorium at 7 p.m. April 25.

Last week the Waterford News resumed publication after an absence of 137 years. Publication will be monthly and it will be a venue for Waterford's young writers, who should submit their articles by the April 15 deadline. The editor is Olivia Henry, who is carrying on in the tradition of Lida Dutton, editor of the earlier Waterford News.

Two of Waterford's dogs have passed away recently. Carolyn Taylor's Labrador, Hannah, and Mary Dudley's bulldog, Butch. Waterford is small enough that anyone who wants to take a daily stroll around the village can easily learn the names and disposition of all the dogs.

The cats are more of a challenge, as they tend to travel alone rather than dragging an owner behind as some kind of status symbol or trophy. Olivia Henry found this out about the dogs but she did not want the first edition of the Waterford News to be depressing so she wrote about the Chuck Anderson's gray cat, Mosby.

*Waterfordians often wax poetic about our cats.*

Waterford's cats are a very mixed breed  
Who descended from cats dropped helter-skelter  
By people who are full of hatred and greed  
Who came here looking for the animal shelter.

These cats followed the children into the house  
And like all your children, you can't throw them out.  
Cats not carefully watched will bring in a mouse  
Speak of the shelter and the children will pout.

You get cat food and try not to be bitter.  
The cat takes your chair and wakes you with face licks.  
And early one morning leaves you a litter.  
So instead of just one cat you now have six.

Waterford does not have a venue for old writers.

■ *A buck beaver bumped fatally*

*March 19, 2002*



The warm rain Wednesday night was the last signal that was needed by the 2-year-old buck beaver to leave his parents lodge on Schooley Mill Run. He was aware of the need for caution because of the presence of the coyote family further down stream, but he had been content to dine on woodchuck all winter long. He headed out, heeding the Horace Greeley advice to go west.

Little did he realize that he was about to become an accident statistic and would fall prey not to the predation of the coyote but to the leading cause of accidental death in beavers, the automobile. He had crossed the point of no return just past the centerline of Clarke's Gap Road about 100 yards south of Dear Path Lane. An early morning commuting driver, looking toward the just lighting sky at the top of the hill had no chance to see the brown pelted form scurrying across the black macadam.

A faint bump beneath the floorboards and the young buck beaver's short life was gone. The car sped on.

Waterford does not have ordinary road kill. Even our road kill is historic, and we recognize the importance of the beaver (*castor Canadensis*) as the cause for early exploration by trappers. This loss is unfortunate during this time of drought as beaver ponds can help keep the water table up.

Tim McGinn has been digging at the foundation of the Vine Covered Cottage on Main Street last week. He is placing drains around the former Mary Elizabeth Wallace home to help dry out the foundation. He discovered a fossil brick sidewalk, wonderfully preserved, eight inches below the existing brick sidewalk. The constant addition to the surface of Main Street had submerged the old sidewalk, and a new one was built in 1962 over the unknown sunken one. Even the new one is being covered as each rain washes down Main Street.

Pompeii had Mount Vesuvius and Waterford has VDOT. In far less time than Pompeii lay beneath the volcanic ash, at the present rate of buildup, VDOT will have gutters above our chimney tops.

## ► Waterford loses a favorite son

*March 12, 2002*

Christo Bentley died Thursday evening, after a long illness, in the log house he helped build on Church Street in Waterford. His family lost a son, brother and father, and the rest of us lost a man who was the best big brother anyone could ask for. That was his role to his friends who included several generations of children who grew up in the in the ultimate kid-dom of the village.

In most activities that we do by choice or by necessity, Christo was ready to give us the benefit of his knowledge, gleaned from having done the same thing before both successfully and some times unsuccessfully. This knowledge would flow smoothly from the best and worst ways and places to ride sleds, brew beer or repair or make anything, especially things required to get by in old houses. He was always careful to say both what to do and what not to do.

His whole life, Christo, time and time again, was able to help us feel better and even good about situations that before talking to him had been causes for dismay. He should still be helping us now instead of being missed so much.

There is some additional information about last week's column and Cindy the dog versus the groundhog.

Waterford Market, making it a sort of Abercrombie and Fitch, provided the provisions for this expedition into the heart of darkest Loudoun. Jim Ratcliffe tells us that Sadah Ridley was with them. Jim says that he thought that the groundhog was the incarnate Kurtz of Conrad's "Heart of Darkness". Sadah, who is two years younger, recounted that it was his first trip to the dam. He had been told by his grandmother, Louise Mallory not to go beyond the point, and here he found himself in the company of two madmen searching for the source of the Nile way beyond the dam.

He said he had a sense of foreboding. (Did the Groundhog whisper, "The horror! The horror!"?) Sadah brought us up to date since he spent his summers in Waterford where all things are historic. He is now the Membership Cultivation Manager for the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

## ► *Lion stalks Waterford veldt*

*March 5, 2002*

**The Lion of Winter, the only lion to stalk the Waterford veldt, came in on the first of March, and last week Bunny Allen died on an island off Mozambique.**

In case you don't remember, he was one of those men known as the Great White Hunter so essential for novelists to produce the image of Africa . The Waterford veldt is formed by the Serengeti plains of the Catoctin Creek flood plain. The Cape buffaloes of the beef cattle have been grazing for a month now, content with dry feet from the drought, and free of the tsetse fly and rinderpest because of the seasonally cool weather.

The Waterford veldt is not without its high drama. Twenty years ago great hunters Jim Ratcliffe and Chip Keating prowled the banks of the Catoctin, observing every track, scat and spore from the closing to the opening of the school year. One hot afternoon in June they were trekking along the hard-packed game trail leading away from the Victoria Falls formed by the cataract of the Catoctin flowing over the old dam. From the base of a primrose they heard a

snort and a grunt. On to the path staggered a groundhog.

This was no usual groundhog whose normal behavior is to scurry to ground when approached or to give a shrill whistle and dive into its den when surprised. This one had eyes that gleamed rabidly. It gazed at them, opened its mouth, exposing strong yellow teeth that shown through foam flecked lips. The groundhog charged. The boys stood transfixed in terror. In a flash Jim's faithful dog Cindy, a large yellow dog, barged between them, straight at the deranged animal. Cindy deftly seized it by the neck and flung it into the air, instantly killing the rabid beast.

Cindy has been dead many years now, but she is still honored as one of Waterford's animal heroes that, if not saving the lives of two of Waterford's great hunters, at least saved them from a series of shots.

## ► Waterford: Petersons' Guide still guides

*February 19, 2002*

Mimi Westerveldt showed a program to members of the Waterford Gardeners Club that was made in the 1980s and featured her mother, Virginia Peterson, advocating butterfly gardens. The program was a legacy to us all from her mother, who died last Easter. The program also featured an interview with Mimi's stepfather, the American icon Roger Tory Peterson, whose lifework created field guides to just about every beautiful thing in nature.

Valentine's Day in Waterford was celebrated by hearing about butterfly gardens from Mimi as she addressed the club at its meeting at the Good House on Thursday. Mimi presented each member with a valentine that included a list of the species of indigenous butterflies and the plants that are necessary for their sustenance and development that can be grown in Waterford. Many are plants that are already plentiful and were well known to the gardeners in attendance.

Waterford is looking forward to spring with great enthusiasm for the appearance of the more than 8,000 bulbs that have been planted. Plans are being made to keep the flowers sprayed with soap solution to deter the deer from eating the flowers.

Waterfordians who are interested in attending the Philadelphia Flower Show should contact me at 540-882-3217. There will be a trip departing early Wednesday morning March 7 and returning late the same day. Helen Wolcott, who is a demonstrator at the Waterford Fair, has a booth at the Philadelphia Flower Show this year. Her and her sister's booth is called the Artist and the Gardener and is in location 303 at the show.

## ► Later alligator at Old School

*February 12, 2002*

The Waterford Underground Social Committee surfaced Saturday night at the Old School, and to the tunes of the '50s and early 60's a large portion of the village shook rattled and rolled amidst be vies of car hops, bobby sox, blue jeans, Mamie Doud hats (one minked), peg pants,

peddle pushers, penny loafers, poodle skirts, white shirtwaists with up-turned collars, two chess-club band-aided specs, bare-shouldered full-length formals, bongo-less bereted beatnik basic black, Luckied T-shirts and sweaters (both types, lettered and tight), bell bottoms (both types, Elvised and sailed), and a white sport coat with a pink carnation.

Everybody danced to the mid-century favorites with outstanding demonstrations of the twist, monkey, fruge, DB, bop, shag, bunny-hop, jitter bug and stroll with a large variety of dips, twirls and throws thrown in. The event that instantly emptied every back seat in the parking lot was The First Waterford Midwinter Cheek-to-Cheek Dance prize competition conducted amidst the wildly cheering throng. In front of the stage bedecked with a collection of historical sartorial splendor from the mid 20th century,

Hop Chair Ed Good presented the following prizes (the last before the Olympics) on behalf of the Committee: Best Fonz look-alike hair-do, David Godfrey; Best Connie Francis look-alike hair-do, Valerie Custer; Best Elvis impressionist, Fletcher Askew; Best Marilyn Monroe routine, Susanne Chadwick; Best sock-hop fast-dance couple, Nancy and Don Devine; Best and closest cheek-to-cheek dance couple Diana and Terry Arney; Best male and female overall '50s costume, Joe and JoEllen Keating.

The Waterford Citizens' Association met Tuesday night at the Old School. The budget for the year 2002 was approved assuring that the village will continue to meet its obligations to the Waterford community at large. New members should contact WCA President Terry Arney to join. Individual membership is \$10 and family membership is \$20. The WCA concerns itself with the health, safety and welfare of Waterford and the surrounding community. One of its principal activities is the presentation of the 4th of July celebration each year.

After the WCA meeting the lights were turned off and as the doors to the auditorium closed the air was redolent with the scent of White Shoulders, Clearasil, and Butch Wax. In the cold night at some distant drive-in a chopped and channeled 50 Merc layed rubber and an echo bounced off the window at the back of the darkened stage.

After a while, crocodile.

## ► WCA boasts 8000 bulbs buried

*January 30, 2002*

Thanks to a great spate of volunteerism by villagers and wonderful weather last weekend all 8000 bulbs that the Waterford Gardeners Club received from the America the Beautiful Fund have been planted. Special thanks should go to Diana Arney and Mary Kenneson along with Edith Crockett and Elaine Head, all from the WCA, for a special effort in making this planting such a flowering success. All of the planned areas did not receive a full coverage of bulbs so it is hoped that the success of this year's effort can continue next year.

The schedule for the 2002 Waterford Concert Series at the Old School has been announced. Concerts will be at 4 in the afternoon on 17 March, 21 April, 27 October and 17 November. Because of the efforts of Waterford volunteers now is the time that you can tell your favorite

friends one of the secrets of the great life that Waterford gives. Starting about 11 of a third Sunday in March, April, October or November you can go to the Eiffel Tower Café or Tuscarora Mill in Leesburg, the Fleur de Lis in Lovettsville or Cheng's Oriental or The Pacific Rim in Sterling, and because you have a ticket to the Waterford Concert that day, you will receive special offers. After lunch at 2 you can go to the steps of the Old School at be given a guided walking tour of Waterford.

One of the sights that we are looking forward to seeing in March or April is the entire right bank of the Tannery Branch on which Cate, Steve, Catherine and Ford Wyatt spent last weekend planting bulbs. After the guided walking tour you go back up to the Old School at 4 starting with on March 17 the Metropolitan Opera Finalists. Because you have saved your ticket stub you can then go spend the night for six months after each concert at The Laurel Brigade Inn, Georges Mill, or Tarara Bed and Breakfast and receive a 10% discount.

Sundays don't get any better than that.

Waterfordians have been discussing the proposed roundabout at the intersection of 9 and Clarkes Gap Road. A village wit commented that with the speeds that SUVs approach the intersection it would soon be known as a layabout.

## ► Villagers inaugurate governor

*January 23, 2002*

Accompanying Louetta Watkins of Leesburg, Waterford was represented by Betsy Coffee-Chaudet, Roy Chaudet, JoEllen and Molly Keating, Robin Smith, and JoEllen's daughter, Jessie, at the inauguration of Governor Mark Warner in Richmond this weekend. Following the ceremonies and parade at the capitol, the Chaudets hosted a reception for the party amid period furniture, chandeliers, pier mirrors to the ceiling and a working gas fireplace in their suite at the historic Linden Row. After dining at the Tobacco Company, the Waterford contingent danced until 2 in the morning at the Young and Young at Heart Inaugural Ball, several pausing to have their picture taken with the new governor.

Gavin Ruedisueli, Adam Larson and Holly Wolcott are Loudoun Valley High School musicians selected to participate in the All-District-Band Feb. 1-2. You can hear them perform in this regional group at a free public performance at Loudoun Valley High School Saturday, Feb. 2, at 3 p.m.

"The Waterford News" is resuming publication. This newspaper, first and last appearing during The Late Unpleasantness fought mostly in Virginia, is returning as a community newspaper. Olivia Henry says editorially, "We encourage anyone under 18 living in Waterford to submit articles." She also says, "If anyone else would like to submit articles that would be interesting to young people, please feel free." The first edition in March will actually be free and the paper will be published four times a year.

The gruel recipe two weeks ago was not in error. It does contain one full quart of water for just one serving, taking care that no tears make it too watery. You only get one basin and should not want some more. Waterford is so traditional that several have insisted that the

traditional-size serving is somewhat below two ounces and that this amount in the recipe should suffice for more than 16 hungry boys.

We noticed that in a final paroxysm of generosity from the outgoing administration of the State of Virginia, letters were sent out to recipients of caregiver's grants for 2000 saying that the balance due from the grants would not be paid because there was no money. Also grants awarded for 2001 would not be paid for the same reason. They were not heartless in this however. They said that a record of the amount owed would be kept so that payment could be made when money were available, if ever.

## ► 20197 mourns past postmaster

*January 9, 2002*

20197 is mourning the loss of Christine James, one of the Waterford Post Office's longest serving postmasters, serving in that capacity for more than 23 years. Her service as head of the historic post office began May 13, 1959 when the ZIP was 22190, though she had been working in the post office for many years before. Her term as Waterford Postmaster was third longest since we first became part of the postal system in 1800, when the US Postal Service was founded.

Thursday morning a large construction-type dumpster arrived at the Wisteria Covered Cottage, no longer wisteria covered since it got a new roof in the 1980s. The long-term home of the late Mary Elizabeth Wallace is undergoing renovation, beginning with the removal of the wooden addition at the rear. It will be replaced after historic brick front is stabilized and provisions are made to provide drainage for the basement and foundation. The addition will occupy the same footprint of the current one but will have a gable roof. The work is being done by T.H. McGinn and Co. Kevin Reudiseuli is the architect.

Robin and Robbie Smith shoveled on back from Buffalo this weekend after managing to shuffle off to Buffalo Christmas day, arriving after the first 3 feet of snow, but just in time for the second 4 feet of snow. Waterford's champion snow boarder, Robin said that there was no snow boarding in Buffalo. The resort slopes, all just south of Buffalo, did not have any snow. You can cope with the cold mornings in an old house if you have a bowl of gruel for breakfast. Our current recipe is 1/8 cup of barley, 1/8 cup of quinoa, and 1/4 cup of oats with 2 beef bullion cubes. Simmer 1/2 hour in 1 quart of water in a big pot. If it sticks to the bottom the fire is too hot. This makes one serving.

## ► 2002 and Auks Getting Closer

*January 2, 2002*

In yore you could pass by the site of the Big Apple and look toward the extinct volcano of Sugarloaf across an inky blackness that now twinkles with the fires of the Auk's forges making weapons to subjugate the Middle Kingdom. These fires glow in patterns that swirl along bucolic streets arranged with all the neatness and order of a Thomas Kinkade painting.

When you swoop over Clarkes gap you are fleeing the Black Horsemen. As you turn off the

Kings road to Charlestown you have to stay close to the ground and make your Hobbit feet fly. Fortunately the ups and downs of the road cause the arrows of pursuers to fly over your head. If you persevere all the way through the green tunnel and reach the running water where Schooley's Sward is on the right and Schooley's swale is on the left you will be home and safe because all your magic will work in Waterford.

Obviously for a Christmas week movie many of us went and saw "Lord of the Rings."

Some chose to travel further, spending Christmas day at Dulles waiting for airports to the north to dig out from record-breaking snow.

Gifts arrived in Waterford with the first being a copy of the Waterford Citizens' Association Occasional News Letter. So you will be prepared for the next meeting you should know that the year was a financial success for fund raising and the WCA should be able to carry on with a full slate of traditional activities in 2002.

And speaking of slate, the nominating committee has nominated Terry Arney for president, Charles Brock for vice president and Edith Crockett and Steven Rubin to continue as secretary and treasurer.

Another gift now sparkles in the sun. Workman completed, not slate, but the bright copper roof on the steeple of the John Wesley Methodist Church just in time to shine on Waterford's festive holiday streets and to add a new glow to old Waterford for 2002.