

# The Village Crier

Newsletter of  
**The Annapolis Villagers**



October – November, 2005

Volume 13, Number 6



## CHRISTMAS BUS TRIP Saturday, Nov. 12, 2005

Sign up is over and thirty one Villagers will be going on another fabulous bus trip Sat., Nov. 12. Departure is from the Millersville Park & Ride at 7:30 AM and return is approx. 8:00 PM. We will visit the National Christmas Center (NCC) in Lancaster, PA. The NCC is dedicated to the history, tradition & wonderment of the world's most beloved holiday. After re-living childhood Christmas memories, we will go to Hershey Farms for a family style meal in a private room. During dinner, Jim Morrison, founder & curator of the NCC, will provide a presentation of a Christmas topic. Our trip will conclude at the American Music Theatre for an all new Christmas Musical Review. Following the review, there will be a back stage tour. Of course, the bus trip will include snacks, Goodie Bags and prizes. Directions to the Millersville Park & Ride for those who signed up:

**From points North:** Take I-695 (Baltimore Beltway) to I-97 South. Take I-97 S to Exit 10A, Benfield Blvd. / Severna Park. Go east on Benfield Blvd. to Veterans Hwy. Turn left onto Veteran Hwy. Follow signs for the Park & Ride (located next to the Severna Park Racquetball & Fitness Club and behind the Exxon Station).

**From points South:** Take I-97 North to Exit 10, Benfield Blvd. / Severna Park. At the end of the Exit 10 ramp, turn left onto Veterans Hwy. Continue straight on Veterans Hwy. across Benfield Blvd. and follow signs to the Park & Ride (located next to the Severna Park Racquetball & Fitness Club and behind the Exxon Station).

**From points West:** Take US 50 or MD 32 East to I-97. Get on I-97 North and follow directions as from points south.

## TRIVIA

How well do you know Charles Dickens'  
*A Christmas Carol* ?

Take the "A Christmas Carol" trivia quiz on page 4 And check out the other Christmas Carol Trivia in the e-Crier electronic newsletter

## Next Meeting

**Tuesday Nov. 8, 2005**

**Featuring Annual Display Contest**

## 2005 Annual Display Contest

*By Bob Eustice*

It is not too late to enter the annual display contest. The contest will be held at the members' meeting on Tuesday, November 8. This is the opportunity to implement that display idea that you may have been thinking about. The contest rules are simple and as follows:

- The display area must be no larger than 30 inches wide by 30 inches deep. There is no restriction on height.
- The display can be in a basket, crate, on a styrofoam base or other container, etc. as long as the width and depth of the finished display are within the 30 in x 30 in constraint.
- The display must contain one item made by Dept.56.
- The houses must be predominantly Dept.56 houses. Accessories may include items not exclusive to Dept.56.
- The theme is the entrant's choice.
- Each entrant must provide their own extension cord.
- Setup time is from 6:15 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
- The winners will be determined by a weighted ballot of the members present.
- Three cash prizes will be awarded as follows:  
1<sup>st</sup> Place - \$60; 2<sup>nd</sup> Place - \$45; 3<sup>rd</sup> Place - \$25

If you have any questions or would like to enter the contest, please contact Bob Eustice at 301-552-1858 or e-mail at [kateeustice@hotmail.com](mailto:kateeustice@hotmail.com). All entries must be received by Monday, November 7.

**OFFICERS &  
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## The Prez Says ...

A big "thank you" to Stella and her committee for arranging our delightful Anniversary Banquet at the Rose Restaurant. The food was good! The centerpieces were delightful and you couldn't find better company. See article elsewhere in the Newsletter.

I strongly encourage all Villagers to support the dealers who have been so generous in supporting us. When you visit their stores, please let them know you are from the Annapolis Villagers so they will know we appreciate their support. Russ Country Gardens had their Fall Festival in September. Pat Ehrenreich's and Bob Eustice's displays were winners. The Golden Goose held their D56 Open House and Signing Event in October. A big thank you to John & Pat for their outstanding effort in creating a display for this event. The Clarks and the Eustices attended this affair and all won door prizes. Jim came closest to guessing the correct number of pretzels in the jar. Valley View Farms will be holding their D56 Days on Nov. 12 & 13 with seminars and decorating ideas. Homestead Gardens will also be holding their Holiday Open House on Nov. 12 & 13. See the displays that Scott Daly and Ann Ketchum, speakers at our September meeting, have created. Gerard Dickens will be at the Golden Goose on Nov. 20.

Many thanks to Bernie and his Charity Committee for their efforts in preparing recommendations for distribution of the Club's charitable funds. These recommendations will be voted on at the November meeting.

We have many activities scheduled for the rest of the year and beginning next year. After our business meeting on Nov. 8, we will have our annual display contest. It's not too late to enter. The more entries we have the better contest it will be. Our long awaited bus trip to the Lancaster area is Nov. 12. Many members have been working hard to make it the best bus trip yet. We will be decorating The Hospice of the Chesapeake on Tues., Nov. 29 and go out to dinner after this. Our Olde Fashion Christmas Party will be on Tues., Dec. 13. As in the past, I'm sure you'll find the best food ever plus a lot of fun. We have the perfect start for your New Year planned and that is our annual house tour on the weekend of Jan. 6-8, 2006.

I want to thank Dean Stevenson who volunteered to be our Sunshine person. Please let Dean know if any club member or family member living in the household is ill, having surgery, etc.

**Everyone, it is not too soon to begin thinking of what you want from your club next year. Your board members would appreciate ideas for guest speakers at our meetings, topics for discussion, and trips or activities that interest you. Planning for next year will be done at the February board meeting.**

I wish everyone a lot of fun and success in creating your villages and other decorations for the holidays.

**K ate****Welcome New Members...****Mary & Vince Pleyo of Odenton, MD**

### September Meeting Highlights

After the business meeting, we were entertained by a demonstration by Scott Daly and Ann Ketchum, Display Designers from Homestead Gardens. Their ideas and techniques were unique even for the club's most experienced displayers. They showed clever and unusual ways to display Department 56 village pieces. Scott and Ann are responsible for creating the outstanding village displays at Homestead Gardens during the Holiday Season.

This was followed by our annual ice cream social. Many thanks to Ruth Baldwin and Dean Stevenson, our masterful sundae makers, and to John Stevenson for his assistance.

Door Prize Winners as follows:  
 Jim Underwood – *Fieldstone Entry Gate*  
 Robert Young – *First Deposit*  
 Trudi Baer – *Slate Stone Path*  
 Trudi was also our 50/50 raffle winner. Congratulations to all our winners.

### MAVG Payout to Annapolis Villagers

During a recent Mid-Atlantic Village Gathering (MAVG) General Committee Meeting, it was announced that the Annapolis Villagers will receive \$3,300 from the proceeds of the 2005 MAVG held in Reston, VA. The money will be used for the club's charitable donations in 2006 and 2007.

It is only through the club's participation as MAVG committee members and as volunteers during the gatherings that makes these funds available for charity on behalf of the club. We are proud of our participation and fundraising which greatly benefit local charities. We are fortunate to have the opportunity to continue to support the 2007 MAVG.

### HAPPY BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

The following members are celebrating a birthday in November or December. On behalf of the Annapolis Villagers, we wish you *the best* on your special day.

|                   |        |
|-------------------|--------|
| John Ogle         | Nov 6  |
| Ann Wall          | Nov 11 |
| Judy Calabrese    | Nov 15 |
| Wanda Sellers     | Nov 16 |
| Pete Baer         | Nov 16 |
| Greg Flowers      | Nov 16 |
| Bernie Dvorak     | Nov 19 |
| Betty Skipper     | Nov 19 |
| Kerry McCutcheon  | Nov 23 |
| Ruth Baldwin      | Nov 25 |
| James Underwood   | Nov 27 |
| Vince Pleyo       | Dec 5  |
| Patricia Weyant   | Dec 6  |
| Ed Butkiewicz     | Dec 8  |
| Larry Voigt       | Dec 14 |
| Wendy Stam        | Dec 17 |
| Rosetta Clarke    | Dec 24 |
| Carol Dietz       | Dec 25 |
| Barry Ebersberger | Dec 30 |
| Mary Pleyo        | Dec 31 |

If your birthday is in November or December and you are not listed, we apologize but we do not have your birthday in our data base. Please notify Pete Baer so the data base can be updated.

### Recap of Annual Anniversary Banquet

*By Kate Eustice*

Stella, thank you so much for planning our 13<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner Banquet held on Sept. 24 at the Rose Restaurant. You did a wonderful job and we were treated to a wonderful variety of entrees. Also, your invocation was beautiful. Ina, thank you once again, for creating the perfect centerpieces. The Snowbaby centerpieces were delightful. We thank Marge Ebersberger for discounting the snowbabies. Pat, the magnets with pictures from various house tours were truly memorable gifts. Thank you so much. Dean & Ruth, thank you for our clever place cards noting our dinner orders. Dean, we appreciate your efforts in providing us with background music. We all appreciated the D56 Snowbabies notepads that Cathy Kramer donated to us. We had a lot of prize winners. Julius Angelucci won the raffle for the D56 Halloween accessory "Taking Bones for a Walk". Georgina Shultz was the winner of the raffle for the centerpiece. Marsha Voigt & Pat Ehrenreich won door prize "20th Anniversary Dickens' Village Pin Sets" donated by The Golden Goose. Our lucky centerpiece winners were Jim Clark, John Stevenson & Bob Eustice. A great time was had by all.

### Thank You! Homestead Gardens

Thank you to Homestead Gardens of Davidsonville, MD for their recent donation of the new Dept 56 Halloween accessory "Taking Bones for a Walk". This delightful piece was raffled off at the Anniversary Banquet. Julius Angelucci was the winner. The amount of \$67 was collected for the club's treasury.

### Editor's Note

Many of the Villagers' first introduction to Dept 56 was by their attraction to the Victorian Dickens' Village, particularly the Christmas Carol renditions. As we approach another Christmas season, we hope you enjoy the Christmas Carol Quiz below and the Christmas Carol Trivia in the e-Crier section of this issue.

How ever you came to be a D56 collector, we wish you a very Happy Holiday Season.

### A Christmas Carol Quiz

How well do you know *A Christmas Carol*? Keep in mind that this quiz is based on the book *A Christmas Carol* and not any of the many movies or television programs that have been made from the book.

1. Marley's first name was \_\_\_\_\_.  
a) Phillip, b) Geoff, c) Jacob
2. \_\_\_\_\_ is the name of Scrooge's nephew.  
a) John, b) Fred, c) George
3. \_\_\_\_\_ and Scrooge were apprentices for Fezziwig.  
a) Thomas Fields, b) Dick Wilkins,  
c) John Openshaw
4. Scrooge's sister was named \_\_\_\_\_.  
a) Sue, b) Fran, c) Liz
5. When he was young Scrooge, was in love with \_\_\_\_\_.  
a) Belle, b) Dora, c) Flora
6. \_\_\_\_\_ Cratchit played a joke on her father and hid from him when he came home.  
a) Bella, b) Sarah, c) Martha
7. \_\_\_\_\_ were the children that the Ghost of Christmas Present showed to Scrooge.  
a) Faith and Hope, b) Ignorance and Want,  
c) William and Mary
8. The charwoman, the laundress and the undertaker's assistant sold what they took from Scrooge to \_\_\_\_\_.  
a) old Joe, b) Uncle Nick, c) big John
9. After being visited by the ghosts, Scrooge sent a \_\_\_\_\_ to the Cratchit family.  
a) turkey, b) letter, c) box of toys
10. "And so, as \_\_\_\_\_ observed, God bless Us, Every One!"  
a) Scrooge, b) Tiny Tim,  
c) Ghost of Christmas Present

**Quiz answers on page 6**

### Christmas Party Reminder!!!!!!!

#### ***OLDE FASHION CHRISTMAS PARTY***

**Tuesday December 13<sup>th</sup> starting at 6:30pm**

**Call Ruth Baldwin 410-923-3239 to sign up**

Please bring one of the following per family for the bake goods wheel:

1. Cake *or* Pie
2. Brownies *or* Cookies (at least 1 dozen)
3. Candy (at least a small tin of fudge, peanut brittle etc.)

Please label it as to what it is and, if you would like to share a recipe, include it.

If you do not want to cook something there is a Giant just up the street from the meeting place and you can purchase something there on your way.

Everyone that remembers to bring something will get a coupon for a special drawing!!!

We will also have an unwanted gift exchange as in previous years. If you have a D56 item that you would like to exchanged, bring it un-wrapped. There will be two categories for the exchange:

Items with retail value \$15.00-\$30.00

Items with retail value over \$30.00

Everyone who brings something will get a small or large coupon for this also.

Hope to see you there for a night of friendship and fun!!!!

### Golden Goose Club Display Contest

At the invitation of The Golden Goose in Occoquan, VA, four clubs in the Maryland/Virginia area participated in a display contest held during their Annual Dept 56 Open House on Sunday, Oct. 9. The theme for the open house was Octoberfest and the Golden Goose provided each club with a house and associated accessories to construct a display. John & Pat Ehrenreich volunteered to create the display for the Annapolis Villagers. They demonstrated their highly creative talents by constructing a delightful harvest time display that featured the New England Village Chapman's Cider House, Harvest Bounty accessory and autumn landscaping materials. The display was contained in a large apple (28" wide X 28" deep X 27" high) carved out of styrofoam. Participating clubs were permitted to keep their display. Many thanks to John and Pat for their outstanding effort on behalf of the Annapolis Villagers.

Please let me know!!!!

If you know of a member, spouse, or a family member living with them that has been sick, had an operation or needs some cheering up, please contact me so that I can send them a card from the club. It is always nice to know that someone is thinking of you and wishing you well.

Beginning with this issue, we will be publishing Birthday Greetings in the newsletter but we still want members to know that we are thinking of them if they are sick or have had a death in the family. Sometimes the only way for me to know is if someone calls or emails me. Thanks for your help.

Dean Stevenson 410-923-2755, or email at dpstevenson@comcast.net

Charity Committee Meeting

The Annapolis Villagers Charity Committee meeting was held on September 22, 2005 at Squisito's Restaurant in Annapolis. Those attending were Pete & Trudi Baer, Ruth Baldwin, Georgina Shultz, Dean Stevenson, and Bernie & Penny Dvorak.

We extend a hearty welcome to Dean Stevenson, who volunteered to join our committee. She was appointed as a voting member replacing Bernice Smith, whose past service is noted and greatly appreciated.

One of the many topics discussed was the possibility of designating one of our club meetings as "Charity Night." We have done this in the past. On "Charity Night," members can bring clothing, non-perishable food, etc. for distribution to the Arden House and/or other charities. Stella has agreed to inquire from the Arden House, exactly what they need. Other Charities can also be included. Volunteers will be needed to deliver the donations to the various charities. "Charity Night" is something for all of us to consider. We will bring this up for discussion and vote at the November meeting as well as the committee's recommendations for the club's 2006 & 2007 charity donations.

We extends many thanks to Squisito's, for allowing our meeting to go well beyond their closing hours.

NCC NEWS

Bob Obenland has been re-elected as NCC President for the next two year term with a majority of the votes.

With only one candidate for each of the other three officer positions, the NCC President, in accordance with the NCC Bylaws, dispensed with the ballot and declared the following elected:

- Vice-President: Jackie Pool
Secretary: Ethel Campbell
Treasurer: Randy Miller



2006 HOUSE TOURS

By Pat Ehrenreich

LARGE OR SMALL, WE LOVE TO SEE THEM ALL! Displays, that is...

We have seen so many fantastic displays over the years. I am sure there are more to be seen—this is a talented club. Members have created wonderful large & small displays with D56 villages and non-D56 villages. We have been privileged to have so many members open their homes for the tours so we can all come together in the spirit of the holidays.

If you would like to open your home during our Tours on Friday, Jan. 6, Saturday, Jan. 7 or Sunday, Jan. 8, please contact Pat Ehrenreich by Dec. 6 so that I can prepare the tour schedule.

410-647-1680 or email: news56@aol.com



Homestead Gardens
Valley View Farms

Russ Country Gardens & Gifts
The Christmas Goose

The Golden Goose

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS!

Over the years, Villagers have been very fortunate to receive the support of area dealers who have generously contributed to the club. Their donations have been used as door prizes, raffles, gifts, etc and have made many of the club's activities a great successes. The above dealers have recently donated the following to the club.

Homestead Gardens: D56 Accessory, Walking the Bones that was raffled at the Anniversary Banquet.

Russ Country Gardens: Gift Certificates that will be in everyone's Goodie Bag on the upcoming Bus Trip.

Valley View Farms: Current accessories that will also be in everyone's Goodie Bag on the Bus Trip.

The Christmas Goose: The LE North Pole Gift Set "Teddy Bear Training Center" that will be used at a future club event.

The Golden Goose: "City Zoological Garden", lighted "Santa's Sleigh", 9 sets of the 20th Anniversary Dickens' Village History Pins, "Year Round Lighted Lawn Ornaments" and "American Flags". These items will also be used at future club activities.

Villagers are strongly encouraged to support the dealers who have been very generous in their contributions to the club.

### Rainbow Florist Holiday Open House November 11 and 12

Rainbow Florist in Laurel, MD is holding their Holiday Open House on November 11-12. The hours on Friday are from 9:00 a.m. to 6 p.m. and on Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Browse the D56 displays, collectibles, floral arrangements, ornaments, trees, giftware and gourmet gift baskets. Gourmet sampling will be featured.

Rainbow Florist is located at 370 Main Street, Laurel, MD. For more info, call (301) 725-4454 or (800) 526-3587 or visit their web site at [www.RainbowFloristandMore.com](http://www.RainbowFloristandMore.com).

### D56 ARTIST SIGNING EVENTS AT HOMESTEAD GARDENS & VALLEY VIEW FARMS November 12 & 13

Homestead Gardens in Davidsonville, MD is holding their *Holiday Open House Weekend* on Nov. 12-13. During the same weekend, Valley View Farms in Cockeysville, MD is holding their *Department 56 Days at Valley View Farms*. Paul Lundberg, Dept. 56 artist and designer, will attend both events and sign D56 pieces. Mr. Lundberg has been a designer of Dept 56 Village houses for seven years. He has worked on many pieces for the North Pole Series and the Original Snow Village. His most recent work included the North Pole 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary piece "Santa's Toy Company".

At Homestead Gardens on Saturday, Nov. 12<sup>th</sup>, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Mr. Lundberg will sign any D56 piece purchased on that day. During their Holiday Open House Weekend there will be workshops and live music and you'll have the opportunity to speak with display designers, Scott Daly & Ann Ketchum, who will answer questions and offer tips on setting up your displays at home.

At Valley View Farms on Sunday, Nov. 13<sup>th</sup>, 12 noon to 3 p.m. Mr. Lundberg will sign any current Dept 56 pieces. During their Department 56 Days weekend you can join the experts to learn tip & techniques for displaying the ever-popular Dept 56 houses and accessories. Valley View's "Village Mayor", John Hessler, will be on hand to guide you through the entire process of building and collecting.

While at both dealers, browse the collectibles, light displays, ornaments, garlands, trees, gifts, etc. that have made them both among the area's holiday destinations.

Contact the stores for more info or visit their web sites.  
Homestead Gardens: 410-798-5000 / 301-261-4550 or  
[www.homesteadgardens.com](http://www.homesteadgardens.com)

Valley View Farms: 410-527-0700 or  
[www.valleyviewfarms.com](http://www.valleyviewfarms.com)

### D56 Village Vignette Workshops at Homestead Gardens

Homestead Gardens, Davidsonville, MD is offering D56 vignette workshops. Workshops will be held on Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m. on Nov. 15, 22, 29 & Dec. 6, 13. Fee is \$30, \$27 Garden Club Member and includes supplies other than D56 pieces. You should bring a house and associated accessories along with a serrated knife, wire cutters & glue gun. Participants may purchase (10% discount) additional items that evening for the display. During the workshop, you will create a village vignette that you take home. Pre-registration is required with Customer Service, 410-798-5000.

Call (410) 798-5000 or visit their web site at [www.homesteadgardens.com](http://www.homesteadgardens.com) for further details.

### Gerald Charles Dickens' Visit to Golden Goose Occoquan, VA Sunday, November 20

Gerald Charles Dickens, great-great grandson of novelist Charles Dickens will again make his annual visit to the Golden Goose with a performance of "A Christmas Carol" from the original script used by his ancestor in the 1880's. He leaps, laughs & sobs as he portrays all of the voices of the story bringing awe to all with his brilliant performance. Before the performance, Mr. Dickens will sign one Dickens memento which you may bring, and any number of items which are purchased on the day of the visit. The Golden Goose, on this day only, will have available a large selection of Dickens' books and gifts for sale and signing. Schedule: 12 p.m.—2 p.m. Signing at Golden Goose. 3 p.m.—4 p.m. Performance of "A Christmas Carol". 4:30 p.m.—5 p.m. Signing at the Golden Goose. Seating for the Performance is first-come, first-served and in order to preserve the ambiance of the occasion there will be no seating after the performance begins. Call for more info: 703-494-4964

### Answers for A Christmas Carol Quiz

- |                     |                           |
|---------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. c - Jacob        | 7. b - Ignorance and Want |
| 2. b - Fred         | 8. a - old Joe            |
| 3. b - Dick Wilkins | 9. a - turkey             |
| 4. b - Fran         | 10. b - Tiny Tim          |
| 5. a - Belle        |                           |
| 6. c - Martha       |                           |

Quiz from Charles Dickens Gad's Hill Place  
at [www.perryweb.com/dickens/](http://www.perryweb.com/dickens/)

# CALENDAR

## 2005

### November

Nov 8 **Annapolis Villagers Members Meeting and Annual Display Contest.**

Nov 12 **Annapolis Villagers Bus Trip** to American Music Theatre and National Christmas Center. See The Village Crier for details.

Nov 12-13 **Department 56 Days at Valley View Farms.** Seminars and Decorating ideas. Check [www.valleyviewfarms.com](http://www.valleyviewfarms.com) or call 410-527-0700 for details

Nov 20 **Gerald Dickens Visit at Golden Goose.** Occoquan, VA. For info call 703-494-4964

### December

Dec 13 **Annual Olde Fashion Christmas Party**

## 2006

### January

Jan 7-8 **Annapolis Villagers House Tours**

Jan 10 **Annapolis Villagers Members Meeting.**

### February

Feb 14 **Annapolis Villagers Board Meeting.**

### March

Mar 14 **Annapolis Villagers Members Meeting.**

### April

Apr 11 **Annapolis Villagers Board Meeting.**

Apr 27-30 **Chicago Gathering 2006.** Wyndham Hotel, Rosemont, IL. For info call 773-973-1160 /

847-310-8064 or Check [www.chicagogathering.org](http://www.chicagogathering.org)

### May

May 9 **Annapolis Villagers Members Meeting.**

May 19-21 **Le Petits Village D56 Gathering** Plaza Hotel, Quebec City, Quebec, Canada. [www.lespetitsvillages.com](http://www.lespetitsvillages.com) for info.

### June

Jun 13 **Annapolis Villagers Board Meeting.**

Let us know about Dealer Events, Open Houses, Swap & Sells, Show & Sells, etc. and we will list it on our calendar.

## DIRECTIONS

### Meetings Held At American Legion Post 175

Unless otherwise noted, all Annapolis Villagers' Membership Meetings and Board Meetings are held at The American Legion, Post 175, Severna Park in Manhattan Beach. Meetings start at 7 P.M.

From Rt. 50, take Rt. 2 North exit. Follow Rt. 2 N (Ritchie Highway) through Arnold. After the traffic light at Rt. 2 and College Parkway, the next light is Jones Station Rd. At the Rt. 2 N and Jones Station Rd intersection (BP and Crown gas Stations), turn right onto Jones Station Rd and make an immediate left onto Manhattan Beach Rd which is behind the Crown Station. Follow Manhattan Beach Rd approximately two tenths of a mile. Make a left into the parking lot of The American Legion Post 175. The entrance to the Banquet Room is to the left side of the parking lot in the rear.

From Baltimore Beltway, take Rt. 2 S. Follow Rt. 2 S (Ritchie Highway) through Severna Park. At Jones Station Rd, make a left. From Jones Station Rd., proceed as above.

**IN CASE OF INCLEMENT WEATHER,  
WE WILL FOLLOW  
ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY SCHOOLS.**

## From the Editor.....

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this edition of The Crier.

If you have news to share, email me at [JEhrenreich@msn.com](mailto:JEhrenreich@msn.com) or call me at (410) 647-1680.

*John Ehrenreich*

**NEWS DEADLINE FOR  
THE NEXT ISSUE OF  
THE VILLAGE CRIER  
DECEMBER 20, 2005**

**Please send your items of interest so that they are received by the deadline.**

The Village Crier  
John A. Ehrenreich, Editor  
304 Gordon Avenue  
Severna Park, MD 21146

Email: [JEhrenreich@msn.com](mailto:JEhrenreich@msn.com)

## A Christmas Carol Trivia

?Charley Dickens said, "My father was always at his best at Christmas." Charles Dickens loved to celebrate Christmas. His favorite time during the holidays was Twelfth Night, the feast of the Epiphany.

?Early in 1843, as a response to a government report on the abuse of child laborers in mines & factories, Dickens vowed he would strike a "sledge-hammer blow . . . on behalf of the Poor Man's Child." That sledge-hammer was *A Christmas Carol*.

?It only took Dickens about six weeks to write *A Christmas Carol*. Tiny Tim and Bob Cratchit helped speed up the process. When Dickens wrote he "saw" his characters much like the way that young Ebenezer Scrooge saw the characters from the books he had read. As Dickens wrote *A Christmas Carol* he said that the Cratchits were "ever tugging at his coat sleeve, as if impatient for him to get back to his desk and continue the story of their lives".

? "Old Marley was as dead as a door-nail." The line appears toward the beginning of the novel. Dickens included this because of a dream. He dreamt one of his good friends was pronounced to be "as dead Sir . . . as a door-nail".

?The Cratchit family is based on Dickens' childhood home life. He lived in poor circumstances in a "two up two down" four roomed house which he shared with his parents and five siblings. Like Peter Cratchit, young Charles, the eldest boy, was often sent to pawn the family's goods when money was tight. Like many poor families the Cratchit's had nothing in which to roast meat. They relied on the ovens of their local baker which were available on Sundays and Christmas when the bakery was closed.

?*A Christmas Carol* was first published in 1843. Initially six thousand copies were printed. More copies were ordered after the first printing was sold in only five days.

?One literary critic called *A Christmas Carol* a "national institution". Dickens' friend and fellow author, **William Makepeace Thackeray**, was quick to correct the critic and call the book a "national benefit".

?At the time Dickens wrote *A Christmas Carol* Christmas wasn't commonly celebrated as a festive holiday. In *The Pickwick Papers* and *A Christmas Carol* Dickens' descriptions of feasting, games and family unity combined with his message that Christmas was a time "when want is keenly felt and abundance rejoices" helped revive popular interest in many Christmas traditions that are still practiced today.

?In 1867 Dickens read *A Christmas Carol* at a public reading in Chicago. One of the audience members, Mr. Fairbanks, was a scale manufacturer. Mr. Fairbanks was so moved that he decided to "break the custom we have hitherto observed of opening the works on Christmas day." Not only did he close the factory on Christmas day, but he gave Christmas turkeys to all of his employees.

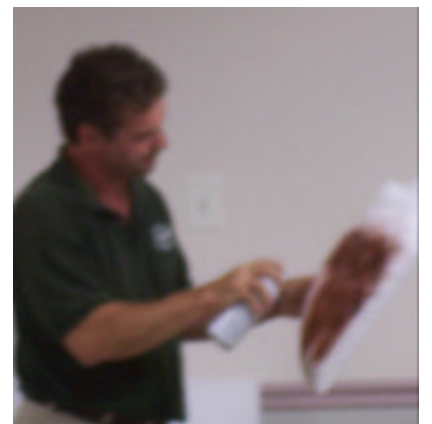
*Trivia from Charles Dickens Gad's Hill Place at [www.perryweb.com/dickens/](http://www.perryweb.com/dickens/)*





**Bob & Kate Eustice and John & Pat Ehrenreich with displays at Russ Country Gardens' Display Contest**

**Scott Daly and Ann Ketchum of Homestead Gardens demonstrating Display Techniques at the September Membership Meeting**



***THE ANNAPOLIS VILLAGERS 13th ANNIVERSARY BANQUET***

