

Voices by the bay

'Anyone who's spent any time in Aberdeen knows that the Cronins are icons in the community.'

—Harford County Councilman Richard Slutzky



SPYGLASS

opinion and commentary

Were you there?

A consultant had begun looking at ways to strengthen Aberdeen's police force.

—Feb. 29, 1980

EDITORIALS

All for one? Single supplier of water may be Harford's next step

Harford County Executive David Craig last week proposed creating a joint authority among the county and its three municipalities to both manage and distribute the public water supply.

Craig, who launched his trial balloon at the annual dinner meeting of the Harford County Chamber of Commerce, wants to merge the various water systems into one and have it overseen by a joint authority, a quasi-public arrangement similar to the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission which provides water and sewer services to the state's two most populous counties.

Typically, these outfits are overseen by a board whose members are appointed by the governing bodies of the areas which they serve. Otherwise, they essentially operate autonomously.

They can borrow money by selling their own bonds and, if revenues don't meet expenses, they can raise rates, although depending how the authority is structured, some oversight from the state Public Service Commission could be involved.

The good thing from the standpoint of elected officials is they don't have to take the heat when rates go up or service is bad. And, the attractive reason for the municipalities to join is they could be relieved of huge costs that adversely affect their bottom lines virtually forever.

Aberdeen needs more water and knows

it will have to spend tens of millions of dollars to get it. Bel Air's water supply is extremely tenuous and, although the town's water is supplied by the private Maryland American Water Company, few summers have gone by of late where the county didn't end up selling water to the private supplier. Havre de Grace has the most reliable plant of the three, but it also has the highest growth rate and must still pay for expensive upgrades.

The downside, of course, is that the authority will end up becoming a de facto regulator of growth.

In areas where public water service is not available but desired by developers, the authority could very well usurp the powers of the elected municipal officials to annex and the elected county officials to say "yea" or "nay" to the service extension.

What's in all this for the county government? Order, for one thing.

Ensuring a plentiful and safe water supply is another. One central water company would seem to be beneficial to consumers, as well, but that depends whether you think big is better.

Craig's proposal is just that, a proposal, but one which clearly bears considering. There's much study and debate ahead.

We would encourage that process to move forward. This is one idea that should be thoroughly vetted, not quashed out of the gate.

Keeping the focus local is key for local leaders

Considering the number of people elected to office in Aberdeen, Havre de Grace, Perryville and Port Deposit who seem to have viewed their tenure in local government as nothing more than a steppingstone to higher office, it's always nice to see someone who can remain focused on important local issues when they're in local elected office.

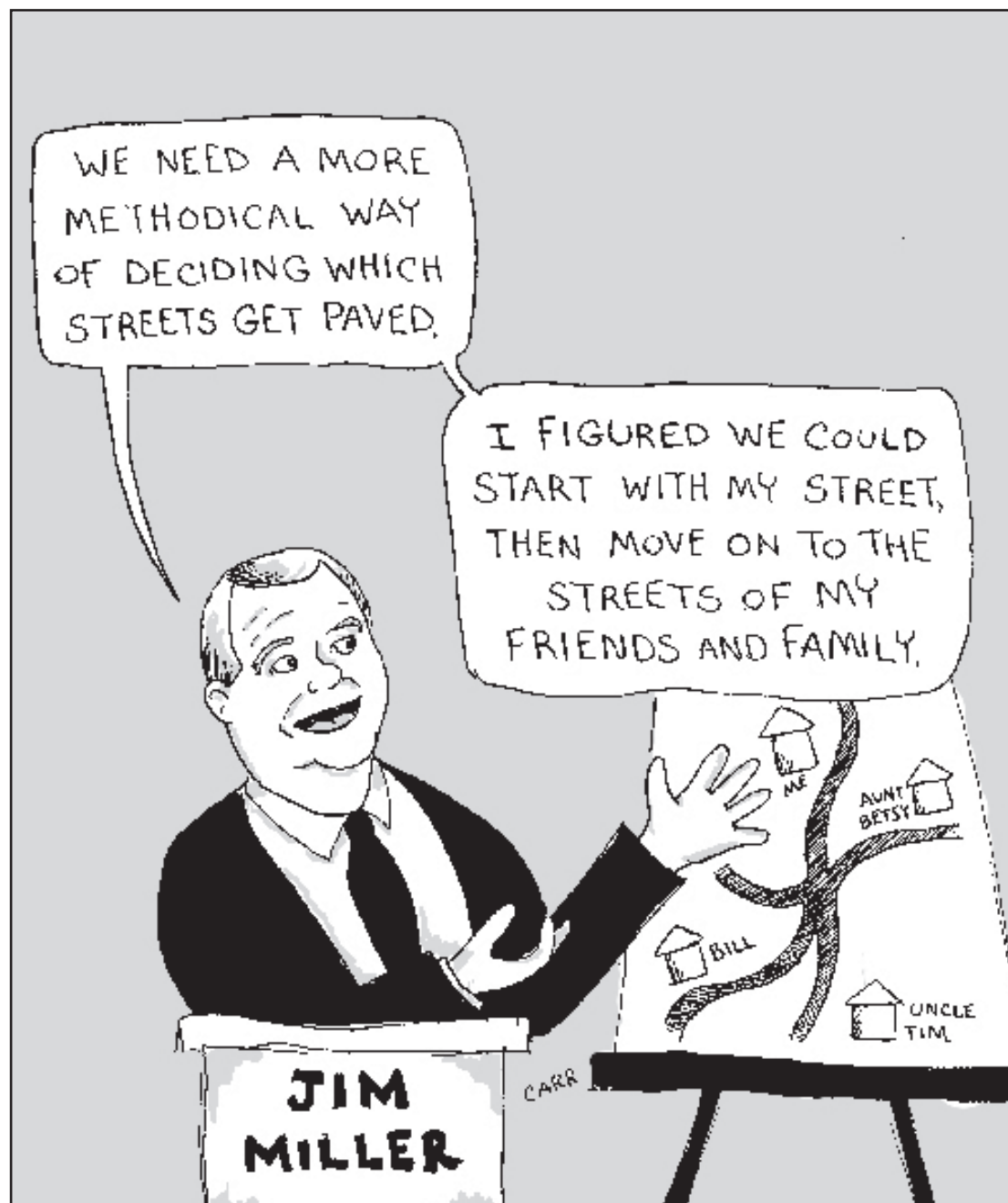
One person who comes to mind is Perryville Town Commissioner Barbara Brown, who when asked about running for re-election in this spring's town election, had some very thoughtful things to say.

She's been pushing some public access to waterfront issues in town and had this to say about them: "Back to when I was growing up, when we wanted to go

to the river, we did. No one cared. When kids go down to the boat launch, other places, kids want to get their feet wet or jump overboard, people yell and scream at them and tell them to leave. It's nice to have place to go and do those kinds of things."

She is hardly the only person to have expressed the sentiment that local governments should be in the business of providing services to the people who live in the communities that elect them. But she is one of a relative few who does more than talk about it.

It'd be nice if more people in local government focused as intensely on such issues of public service and a little less on the next political step.



Looking Back 50 years

APG on the list for testing facility

From The Havre de Grace Record dated Thursday morning, Feb. 27, 1958:
By Erika Butler
Record staff

A large headline three lines long on the front of *The Record* 50 years ago this week proclaimed: "Aberdeen Proving Ground to get Army testing facility from Jefferson, Ind.; huge building program for local post."

It was good news for Harford County that the ammunition testing operation would be moved from Indiana to Aberdeen, in that it meant construction of permanent buildings valued at about \$2 million. It was also expected to bring hundreds of jobs to the post.

The move was necessitated by a decline in testing requirements of conventional ammunition, production of which had dropped in recent years.

Among the construction plans were a two-story bachelor officers quarters for 60, \$100,000 to \$500,000; accommodations for 652 enlisted men, \$500,000 to \$1 million; an administration and supply building, \$100,000 to \$500,000; a mess hall, \$100,000 to \$500,000; and a central heating plant for those facilities, \$100,000 to \$500,000.

This was old news to *The Record*, which patted itself on the back for publishing a story about the move back in December. Under the headline "The RECORD ahead on important news," editors noted they had received the information, released this week by the Army, from a reliable source.

BPO Elks 1564 honored longtime members 50 years ago this week at its "Old Timers' Night." Among those recognized for at least 25 years of service and some for 30, were Thomas Borneman, George Cox, John Barrow, Louis Getz, Sam White, Roland Fournier, Richard Wright and Malcolm Jackson.

Kay Grossman of Aberdeen appeared this week 50 years ago on the television show "It

Could Be You." At one point in the show, someone in the audience is surprised when he or she is reunited with a relative or friend who hadn't been seen in years. Grossman's sister, whom she hadn't seen in five years, was the surprise on this week's show.

Schools reopened last week 50 years ago after being shut down for several days because of the blizzard. After days of working to clear bus routes and school drives and sidewalks, bus drivers made practice runs over the weekend to see what roads were passable. While conditions were not ideal at the beginning of the week, no children were put in hazardous situations, according to school officials.

Ann Bowman was involved in a mixup 50 years ago this week, and *The Record* was helping her out. Bowman, who lived near Churchville, had been at a teenage dance in Havre de Grace sponsored by the Knights of Columbus. She wore her tan alpaca coat and laid it near the rest of the coats.

But when she got ready to leave and put on her coat, she realized it was way too big. "Now Miss Bowman has a coat that is too large to wear and some other teener has one too small." The question, according to *The Record*, was "Who had the other coat?" Anyone who had the coat was asked to call Bowman.

Members of the Harford press and radio corps were guests at the Chesapeake Lumber Company at a luncheon this week 50 years ago, as the local firm explained its plan to aid homeowners in a campaign of renovating and rebuilding.

Among those at the lunch included representatives from the Democratic Ledger, radio stations WAMD and WASA, the Harford Democrat and *The Record*.

The boys baseball group of Havre de Grace Little League was to hold a meeting to select

a new commissioner to replace John Harris, who was stepping down.

The recent blizzard brought "Dollar Days" to a halt in Havre de Grace, but some stores brought them back after the storm was over. Post Road Cleaners was continuing its dry cleaning special Feb. 28 and March 1 50 years ago this week. It would cost customers \$1 to have their suits, dresses, topcoats, two pants and two skirts clean and pressed.

At the movies this week 50 years ago, State Theatre in Havre de Grace was showing "Golden Age of Comedy" starring Will Rogers, Jean Harlow and Carol Lombard, and "Hell in Korea." Also coming this week were "Wells Fargo," "The Forest Rangers" and "Woman of the River," with Sophia Loren.

READERS RESPOND

Obama party is set

To the Editor:

A "Yes We Can" Obama Party is set for March 2, 4 to 6:30 p.m., at Aberdeen Shopping Plaza in the Family Buffet near Ollie's, off West Bel Air Avenue.

Bring a cell phone, though it's not required, to hook up to a national conference call.

Sign up on line, woody399@comcast.net, or call 410-272-8187, ask for Janice or leave a call back number. All are welcome. No charge. Sponsored by Maryland Women for Obama. Voter registration for those interested.

Janice Grant
Aberdeen

Thanks for the ride

To the Editor:

I would like to thank Lt. J. Eyer for the assistance given on election night during the hazardous icy conditions in the northern area of Harford County. The ride home was greatly appreciated.

When the decision was made to keep the polls

open until 9:30 p.m., there was no consideration for the people who worked the polls. By taking this action it placed the workers in harm's way.

I was fortunate to get home safely because of Lt. J. Eyer.

Marci Collins
Darlington

THE RECORD

Jim Quimby

President

John D. Worthington IV

Publisher

Ted Hendricks

Executive Editor

Letters to the editor are welcomed by *The Record*, and correspondents are reminded that brief ones are invariably better read. The deadline for letters for each week's issue is noon, Tuesday.

All letters must be signed and include full address and telephone number for verification. Only the name of the writer will be published. Free expression of diverse views and ideas by our correspondents is encouraged, and light editing for grammar and spelling can be expected. *The Record* of course reserves the right to reject any letter deemed unsuitable for publication.

Address correspondence to: *The Record*, 316 St. John St., Havre de Grace, Md., 21078.