



# La Dee Dah



## Le Monde Demain

March 2004

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Volume 04; Issue 01

### Feedback & Update

Well, it's been awhile. We had been sending this, our homespun newsletter, to many of you on a more-or-less regular basis a couple of years back. Then suddenly we fell victim to a despicable computer virus (W32.Klez) that caused us to lose all our data, files, pictures and templates. (You're probably wondering how we could have been so shortsighted as to not back up everything. But we thought we had! The problem was we backed it up on a separate hard drive on the same computer; all was lost.)

We got on with our lives and continued with our business while we rebuilt the things we had to have in order to serve our clients. We kept in touch with some of you through our regular mailings of items of value, but no newsletter. But after many of your inquiries and now having overcome the setback of (if not the anger with) the lily-livered coward who perpetrated the felony, we're back in print.

We intend to print and send you *La Dee Dah* on a semi-regular, almost monthly basis, depending upon the urgency of the news, competing priorities, and the alignment of the stars.

For those of you who are new to our fold, we hope you find our publication informative and entertaining. We believe everyone is entitled to our own opinion. If you have something to share, or would like to comment on anything we say, tell us and we may print it for all to see (if it is not too critical of or different from our own preconceived notions).

If you know of someone who would like to be included among the select few who receive this renowned periodical, just call, fax, e-mail, or write to tell us and we'll deal them in. If, on the other hand for some inexplicable reason you would prefer to not be on our list, just let us know and we'll drop you like *The Donald* drops an apprentice.

(For the record... It's good to be back.)

### Excise Tax on New Homes

The debate about how to pay for school construction has led Howard County legislators to approve an excise tax on new construction homes.

The new \$1-per-square-foot tax will be targeted to pay for the new high school and three new elementary school buildings to be built over the next four years. County Executive James N. Robey tried to increase the transfer tax on the sale of all real estate in the county to pay for the new schools, but that proposal was defeated both last year and this year. The excise tax is an alternative.

The question that remains on the minds of county officials is, "Will it be enough?" The proposed transfer tax increase would have generated about \$200 million, whereas the new excise tax, which will apply only to new homes priced more than \$200 thousand, is expected to raise \$58 million. The new high school, now being built across from Mount View Middle School, is expected to cost \$53 million, leaving the legislators scrambling for additional ways to pay the bill.

You may already be in a mild state of shock with the recent increase in the taxable assessment on your home. If yours increased by more than 40 percent, you are among the majority. But it's hard to argue against the valuation considering what has happened to the sale price of county homes.

What does all this mean to you? Well, as Howard County homeowners, we expect the value of our homes to continue to climb. And, of course, the taxes on them will grow, too. (Another reason our number system is infinite.)

He who has his thumb on the purse has the power.

Otto von Bismarck  
1815 - 1898

### Who is it?

He was born January 18, 1941 in Howard County. He married Janet Rohrback 43 years ago. They have two children, Cheryl and Wayne, and one grandson, Kevin (who is just now learning to drive). He worked one summer at the Enchanted Forest, and graduated from Howard High School in 1959. (One of his teachers told him he would never amount to anything; he says the jury is still out on that.)

#### *His philosophy in a nutshell:*

"Public service above all else" (He's afraid that sometimes it was above even family, but he's not one to look back.)

#### *The best lesson he ever learned:*

"By-and-large, people are very responsible." (He remembers people going out of their way to keep their word, and is happy to cite examples. Ask him about the young man who returned the borrowed shoes after the Grateful Dead concert!)

#### *If he could change one thing:*

He would find some way to ensure that people can get along with each other; whether it's neighbors, family members, or other countries.

#### *If he had the opportunity to spend an evening with anyone:*

First Janet, but other than her, he enjoys average people (like himself) who share like interests and life experiences. Famous people are too smart or egocentric.

#### *One thing he would like people to know:*

He cares. He always tries to do the right thing.

Oh, yeah, if you are looking for the best crab cakes he recommends Gunnings Seafood Restaurant, Parkway Drive in Hanover.

#### *Who is it?*

E-mail, call, or write us by March 31 with the right name and we will enter you in our drawing for a \$50 gift certificate to Gunnings.

If you would not be forgotten,  
As soon as you are dead and rotten,  
Either write things worthy reading,  
Or do things worth the writing.

Poor Richard

### The Race is on...

*Politics is the art of looking for trouble, finding it everywhere, diagnosing it incorrectly, and applying the wrong remedies.*

**Groucho Marx**

**Q.** What's the difference between baseball and politics?

**A.** In baseball you're out if you're caught stealing.

**Q.** How many presidential candidates does it take to change a light bulb?

**A.** None; they only promise change!

*All the problems we face in the United States today can be traced to an unenlightened immigration policy on the part of the American Indian.*

**Pat Paulsen**

Politicians and diapers have one thing in common. They should both be changed regularly, and for the same reason.

*A statesman is a politician who's been dead 10 or 15 years.*

**Harry S Truman**

"My uncle ran for Senate last year."

"Really? What does he do now?"

"Nothing. He got elected."

### The Other Shoe



Thanks to MacNelly Productions

### Minding Our Own Business: Pricing Your House For Sale

Two bakers, Al and Bob, bake equally good bread. In fact, most people cannot tell the difference! Their bakeries are right next door to each other. Baker Al prices his bread at \$1.00 a loaf, Baker Bob at \$1.20. Each bakes 100 loaves per day. Total demand for their bread varies based on price and season, but runs from 150 to 200 loaves per day. (Day-old bread sells for 25% off.)

Which bakery gets more traffic?

Where would you go first if you wanted to buy bread?

Which baker sells more day-old bread?

What are the chances Baker Al will take less than full price for his fresh bread?

How about Baker Bob, might he take less than full price?

Say you are next in line to buy the last loaf of bread from Baker Al when the person behind you offers \$1.10 for that last loaf. What might you do?

- Demand that Baker Al sell you the bread at \$1.00 or you will never come back!
- Offer Baker Al \$1.15 for the last loaf.
- Go next door and pay \$1.20 for fresh bread.
- Go next door and pay \$.90 for day-old bread.
- Get to Al's Bakery earlier tomorrow!
- Go on the Atkins Diet and give up bread altogether.

What has this got to do with pricing your house for sale? Maybe we should talk!

Congratulations to Tim and Michele Thompson and their sons, Keith and TJ. They settled on their new home in February (a four bedroom two-story in Columbia). They are Howard County residents moving from Elkridge to a home of their own!

Remember, it's about YOU and your home. We know that, and we want to help. So don't hesitate to call us.

For *real* help selling or buying real estate in Howard County or the vicinity, **Call us at 410-418-8104.**

Our advice:  
**Require Excellence!**



### Recipe Corner: Amy's Fruit Crisp

Amy Grunditz is a loan officer with Prosperity Mortgage in our office. She adapted this recipe because her fiancé, Robb Preis, would not eat his veggies, so she decided to make him something fruity he would eat that didn't have quite as much fat as some other concoctions. This isn't exactly health food, but Robb will eat it (it's delicious), and it's not really bad for you. So spoil yourself, like Amy spoils Robb. (I'm not as nice as Amy. I say she should make him sit there until he decides to eat every carrot and pea on his plate!)

Oh, yeah...the recipe is on a separate file card. If for some reason you did not get one, just contact us and we'll see that you do. (It would be silly to tell you about it and then not share it with you, wouldn't it?)

You can find our past recipes on our Website:  
[www.DickCorfield.com](http://www.DickCorfield.com)



Richard, REALTOR

If you have any questions or comments, feel free to contact us:

**Dick Corfield**  
13087 Williamfield Drive  
Ellicott City, MD 21042

410-418-8104 (Office)  
410-531-3148 (Fax)  
410-241-7839 (Cell – anytime)  
[Dick@DickCorfield.com](mailto:Dick@DickCorfield.com)

The enclosed *Howard County Housing Report* may be of interest to you. At the end of January there were 399 single-family homes for sale in Howard County. (That includes townhomes, but not condominiums.)

For comparison, at the end of April 1999 there were 1102!

### Equal Housing Opportunity

We will do all we can to find you the home you want wherever YOU want to live...

**It's what we do!**

