

Greenbelt News Review

AN INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

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GCS Statement

"... GCS' relationship with the Potomac Cooperative Federation has been a problem for a long time. PCF is an organization of area cooperatives. Its larger members are Group Health, Rochdale Cooperatives and GCS. PCF has maintained an office to attempt to do certain types of cooperative promotional work in the area. There has been, however, a question as to the effectiveness of its program and how it should be set up.

This is not a new problem, but has been in existence for some time. Concern about the Federation was so great last year that the PCF Board retained Mr. Richard Carlson, Management Consultant for the Cooperative League of the U.S., to review the Federation set up. His findings were to the effect that the Federation lacked a consistent statement of objectives and a unified program. He also pointed out that if the principal members did not reach agreement on the PCF's objectives and budget, there was little point of continuing the Federation.

As a result of Mr. Carlson's report, a committee was appointed of PCF members to recommend a solution to the problem. Group Health was represented by Mr. Atkins; Nationwide Insurance by Mr. Mellon; Rochdale Cooperatives by Mr. Edwards; and GCS by Mr. Bierwagen. Mr. Bonham as served as Mr. Bierwagen's alternate. The committee has devoted a great deal of time to the problem but has not yet come up with a solution acceptable to everyone.

The concern of many of GCS' Board members stems from the questions of:

1. Whether GCS is getting a reasonable return from its annual contribution to the Federation's budget; and
2. Whether GCS has fair representation on the Federation's Board.

Perhaps a bit of background will help clarify why those questions persist in the minds of some of your Board members. GCS's annual contribution to PCF is 1/10th of 1% of its sales... or approximately \$9,000 a year. This amounts to about \$1.30 a year for each GCS member. By contrast, Group Health... contributing on the same basis... gives only about 15¢ a member each year. GCS' contribution is intended to pay its share of the cost for PCF's public relations and promotional work. While your Directors realize that it is extremely difficult to gauge the effectiveness of such public relations and promotional efforts, there is doubt in some of their minds that GCS is getting a reasonable return from its annual contribution to PCF.

GCS Drops PCF; The Story

Greenbelt Consumer Services is changing its status in the Potomac Cooperative Federation, it was announced this week. In the public interest we are reprinting the article from the GCS Newsletter explaining their position, and have asked Oliver E. Stone, PCF president, to give his point of view on the subject.

Another cause for concern on the part of some of your Directors has been the representation of area facet of this problem stems from a difference of opinion among the PCF members as to whether management of the Federation's member-societies should be represented on the PCF Board.

Some of the PCF members feel that such management should not have a voice in the Federation's promotional and educational work. Others, including your Directors, societies on the PCF Board. One are of the opinion that such promotional and educational efforts are a function of management... and that management should, therefore, be represented on the PCF Board.

But that is not all. Many of your Board members also feel that there is little relationship between either (1) the total area membership of PCF, and that membership's representation on the PCF Board; and (2) the funds contributed to PCF by the area societies and their representation on the PCF Board. And, in support of their concern they point out that the controlling majority of the PCF Directors represent societies which contribute less than \$1,000 out of a total budget of \$27,000; and, that the societies those Directors represent account for only 20% of the total area cooperative membership.

Your Board, and the Boards of the other cooperatives represented on the above-mentioned committee, are anxious to settle the PCF problem. As a matter of fact, on November 23rd your Board unanimously approved another proposal in that direction... a compromise it hoped would meet with everyone's approval. GCS based its compromise proposal on the premise that representation on the PCF Board be based essentially on the number of members in each a rea society.

BULLETIN

On December 7th the Federation Committee rejected GCS' compromise proposal. As a result, on December 9th your Board voted to request the PCF Board to change GCS' status in PCF to that of a Sponsoring Member, paying fees on the basis of services rendered... rather than continuing as a Regular Member, with dues based on sales.

PCF Statement

The Potomac Cooperative Federation on December 16 received a letter from Greenbelt Consumer Services stating that the GCS board had voted that GCS withdraw its membership from the Federation.

The Federation board believes that the unity of cooperatives in the Potomac area is important. Therefore we regard this proposed GCS action as an unfortunate and backward step. We are encouraged to hear that both the GCS supervisory committee and the GCS Congress have expressed a similar view, and we hope that as a result the GCS board will reconsider its action.

The fact that the action appears to have been based on a misunderstanding concerning the dues which GCS has paid to the Federation gives us further reason to hope for reconsideration. The GCS board questioned whether GCS was getting a reasonable return from its annual payments, which the GCS Newsletter refers to as \$9,000 per year. Actually GCS has never paid more than about \$5,000 per year. In his report on the Federation, cited in the GCS Newsletter, See PCF Page 2

Woodland Hills Land Deal Completed; Half-Million \$ Improvement Expected

Formal purchase of the Woodland Hills tract of land was completed Friday, December 22, in the office of Krooth & Altman, Washington attorneys, just nine days before the purchase deadline date of December 31, it was announced last Friday by Anthony Madden, president of the group. Completion of the sale climaxed nine months of organizing and recruiting work by members of the non-profit cooperative home building group. Members are particularly proud of the fact that not one cent of the members' money was spent during the entire nine month period—all labor was voluntary and the little costs involved were donated by individual members.

Present at the closing were a battery of interested parties—Government representatives from PHA, title company representatives, lawyers, stenographers, and in addition, Wallace Campbell, Executive Secretary of the Cooperative League of the USA, James Cassels, Foundation for Cooperative Housing representative, and Joseph Kanter, seller of the property. Martin Haker, Treasurer of the Woodland Hills group, handed over certified checks in payment for the land as Charles McDonald and Anthony Madden signed papers for the formal purchase of the tract.

Acquisition of the land, it is estimated, will bring more than a half million dollars in improvements and home construction to Greenbelt during 1956, and will be a substantial contributing factor towards reduced taxes in the future. The few choice openings left in Woodland Hills are being reserved for veterans only on the package deal (lot - improvements - home and appliances), Madden disclosed. Vets do not use up their vets' rights by participating in this deal. Non-vets may purchase a lot only.

The next membership meeting will be held Tuesday, January 3 at 8 p.m. in the Greenbelt city council room above the variety store.

Hebrew Services

Friday, December 30 - Time: 8 p.m. Candelighting time: 4:17 p.m.

"Burning of The Greens" Scheduled For Tuesday Evening By Rec Dep

The city will offer the citizens something delightfully new, eye-filling and inexpensive as a New Year's gift Tuesday, January 3, at 7:30 p.m. assuming the weather will lend a helping hand.

We've been familiar with the phrase "hanging of the greens" as far back as we can remember, but not until the other day did we encounter "burning of the greens" for the first time. Seems

Community Church

Sunday, January 1 - Morning Worship at 9 and 11, with John B. Carman, graduate student at Yale Divinity School, son of Dr. and Mrs. John S. Carman of Vellore Christian Medical College, India, and grandson of Rev. and Mrs. Hull, will be guest speaker. Sermon topic, "Christ and the World Revolution." Church School as follows: 9 and 11, Nursery, Kindergarten, Primary; 10 a.m., Junior, Junior High, College Age, and Adult Classes; Senior High Pilgrim Fellowship, 7-8:30 p.m., Social Hall. There will be no Junior Hi P.F. in the Fellowship Center this Sunday Evening.

Lutheran Church

Sunday, January 1 - 9:45 a.m., New Year's Day worship service for the members of the Sunday school and their parents. 11 a.m., Regular service of worship. Sermon by Pastor Birner: "His Eye Is On Us."

Baptist Chapel

Sunday, January 1 - 9:45 a.m., Sunday School for all ages. John S. Stewart, Jr., Superintendent. 11 a.m., Morning Worship Service. The Chapel Choir will sing "He Leadeth Me" by Lorenz directed by Mrs. John S. Oleksak, Director. The pastor will preach on the subject, "Forgetting The Past, Facing The Future" based on Philippians 3. 6 p.m., Training Union for all ages. Roy C. Thomas, Director. 7 p.m., Evening Worship Service. Informal hymn singing led by Dr. James T. McCarl. "Preparation For Evangelism" is the subject for the pastor's message.

it's a German custom several centuries old and smacks of both pagan and Christian concepts. Folks believed that to burn the Christmas greens at the close of the holiday season would ward off the evil spirits as well as save the tree from the disgrace of the refuse heap. The flames were supposed to commemorate the light of the Star which guided the Three Wise Men to Bethlehem.

While tradition held that the greens should be burned on Twelfth-night we feel that it would be more expedient to hold the event nearer Christmas. Our fire chief, Joe Lewis, strongly advised this earlier date as the longer the Christmas greens stay in the home the drier and more acute fire hazards they become.

When bringing your tree to the softball field a large star will be formed. Please place your tree in the middle of the star and the men will place them where they are to go. On the night of the event the Fire Department will stand by throughout the evening.

The ceremony will be brief but a short talk by Mayor Tom Canning or city manager Charles MacDonald and we thought that maybe a short community sing would be nice. The message of the Mayor will be about the custom of the burning of the Greens.

We hope to see all of you and wish each and everyone of you a Happy New Year.

Catholic Church

Sodality Sunday for ladies and young girls of Parish. Senior Sodality Holy Communion at 7:30 Mass. Junior Sodality Holy Communion at 8:30 Mass. Sunday Masses: 7:30, 8:30, 9:30 and High Mass at 11. No Sunday School this week; Sunday School resumes January 8. Baptisms every Sunday at 1 p.m. Confessions: Saturday, 3:30 to 5:30 and 7:30 to 9:30. St. Hugh's School reopens Tuesday, January 3 at 9 a.m.

Methodist Church

Sunday, January 1 - 9:30 a.m., Church School. 11 a.m., Morning worship conducted by Rev. Knock. His sermon is titled "The Goodness of Newness." A nursery is provided during this service.

Adult Education Classes

Northwestern Senior high school announces adult education classes for the second semester. A fee of \$2 is required for each enrollee per semester. Registrants must be 16 years of age or over and not attending school below the college level.

Sewing... Tues., Jan. 3... Room 213... Tues. & Thurs... 7:00-9:00 p.m.
Wood Shop... Tues., Jan. 3... Room 113... Tues. & Thurs... 7:00-9:00 p.m.
Metal Shop... Tues., Jan. 3... Room 114... Tues. & Thurs... 7:00-9:00 p.m.
Beg. Shorthand... Wed., Jan. 4... Room 205... Mon. & Wed... 7:00-9:30 p.m.
Sewing... Wed., Jan. 4... Room 213... Mon. & Wed... 7:30-9:30 p.m.
Typewriting... Tues., Jan. 10... Room 203... Tues. & Thurs... 7:30-9:30 p.m.

Registration for Adult Education Classes at Bladensburg Senior High School will be held Thursday, January 5, at the high school. The time for registration is 7:30 to 9 p.m. Classes will be offered in general education and shop work. The first class will meet Monday, January 9, at 7:30 p.m. The registration fee of \$2 will be collected at that time.

New Year's Dance Party

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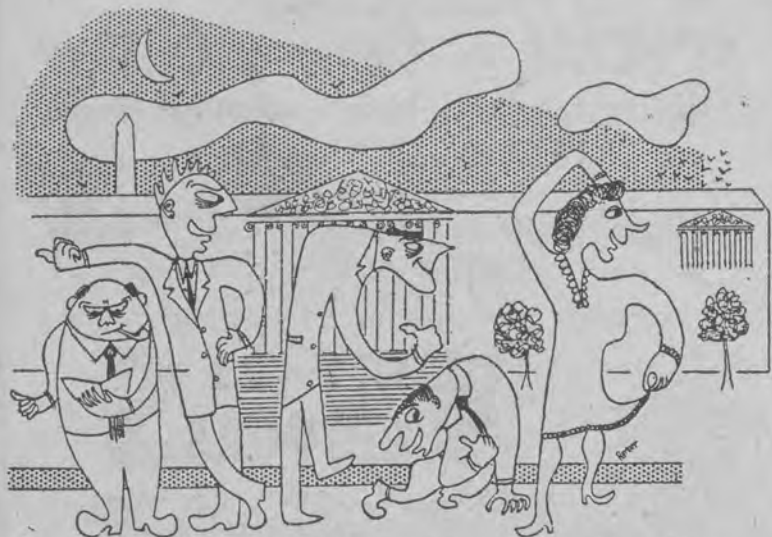
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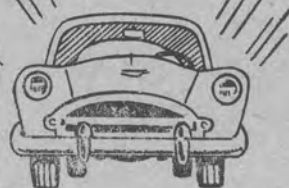
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PCF from page 1

Mr. Carlson states that, after allowing for direct services provided by the Federation to GCS, "This leaves GCS's net contribution to the Federation at the rate of approximately \$600 per annum."

The GCS board should, I think, try to find out why it is that it stands alone in its position on the Federation, with all other societies, large and small, opposed to it.

The Federation is an association of consumer cooperatives in the Potomac area—Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia. Its object is to promote co-op development. The Federation and its predecessor organizations have played an important role in the development of every large consumer cooperative now operating in the Potomac area—including GCS, which owes its existence to the work of a committee of one of the predecessor groups.

At critical points in GCS's history the Federation has played a key role—for example, in helping to solve serious management problems that led to the coming of the present manager, in defending GCS when it was attacked by the House Small Business Committee, in leading the drive for GCS's first major expansion into Takoma Park. It has played a similar role for other cooperatives, large and small, in the Potomac area. There is no question but that the Federation deserves much of the credit for the sturdy and varied cooperative development in the Potomac area—unmatched anywhere else in the United States.

The article in the GCS Newsletter cites divergences between the GCS proposals and the present Federation structure (which was adopted, incidentally, with the support of GCS). The article does not indicate the numerous steps taken by the Federation to try to meet GCS demands.

The special Federation committee which was set up to try to reach an understanding with GCS agreed to compulsory management representation on the Federation board, even though other societies felt that they should be free to make their own decisions as to who should represent them. The committee agreed to the GCS formula for representation on the Federation board—based on units of 200 members and \$1,500 in dues—even though the other societies preferred to see representation based only on members. In the light of the GCS board's criticism of the Federation program, the Federation's executive secretary has resigned—even though all members of the Federation board, including the GCS representatives, were impressed with the extent of

Our Nabors

Rev. Glenn W. Samuelson, pastor of the Greenbelt Baptist Chapel, will attend the Adult Sunday School Conference of the Southern Baptist Convention at Norfolk, Va. December 29 and 30.

Dan Branch, Jr., a midshipman at the U. S. Naval Academy, is spending the Christmas holidays with his family at 13-H Ridge. This is Danny's first visit since entering the Academy last July.

Mr. and Mrs. Ormand Schmidt, 8-T Laurel Hill, are proud parents of their first child, Greg Keith, who weighed in December 18 at 8 lbs. 6 oz.

It's a boy also for Mr. and Mrs. James Bordas, 14-L Ridge. Barry was born December 17 weighing 5 pounds 9 ounces and has a 3-year old brother.

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Repeatedly the Federation board has compromised to meet GCS demands. The last Federation proposal accepted every important GCS request except that requiring a board of over 100 directors, with proxy voting and an individual representative of certain societies being able to cast up to 40 votes. The other societies would not accept proxy voting—in fact, legally could not do so, since the Federation is incorporated under the D.C. Cooperative Law, which forbids proxy voting. By scaling down the number of directors under the GCS formula and giving three votes (out of about 15) to the small societies, the committee avoided the necessity for proxy voting and gave the small societies a reasonable but certainly not "controlling" voice in the Federation.

In the interest of GCS, of the Federation, and of the cooperative movement as a whole, we in the Federation sincerely hope that GCS will not withdraw.

O. E. Stone, President
Potomac Cooperative Federation

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