It Can’t be Eight Years Already

By Rande Davis

It’s the eighth anniversary of the *Monocacy Monocle*, so I thought might turn the tables and interview myself.

**What has been your biggest surprise?**

Most days, I would answer that I didn’t expect the time to go by so fast. On others, I am just left wondering: How did we make it?

**What has changed from the first days?**

We started out in black and white, went color, struggled a bit at first, but with a new printing press installed by *Frederick News-Post,* we turned the corner on that. Today, there are many more online opportunities to get a quick look at the news, so we strive to bring more in-depth and personal information. Still, print is the journal of record. You don’t fill a scrapbook with emails and internet conversations. From the first few issues, we have grown to an experienced staff of dedicated individuals who have developed into a solid team.

**What has pleased you the most in publishing the paper?**

For me, it is doing articles on some of our most valued citizens: seniors, leaders, volunteers, etc. Being able to give a certain degree of honor to these people and their contributions is very fulfilling. Also, I am pleased to report on issues with accuracy and no agenda.

**Any regrets?**

The space limitation of print media is regrettable but a fact of life. It’s a challenge, for example, to cover a three-hour meeting and come back and put it in seven hundred words or less, sometimes with no time to spare. It’s also a challenge to get a broad selection of articles so as to appeal to as many readers as possible within available space. One regrettable result is pictures not being as large as we would prefer.

**What’s the hardest part of doing the paper?**

Meeting deadlines. I have a sign on my desk that reads, “I love deadlines, especially the whooshing sound they make as the go flying by.” The pressure builds as we get to the close. Often we are proofing an issue close to midnight, not exactly my best time for performance.

**What should the readers know that you think they don’t?**

This is not *our* paper, it is *their* paper. I expected much more news, photos, and tips would come our way. While we are in newspaper format, our approach has more similarities to a magazine. Timeliness plays a part, but, also, we strive for a cross section of items more identified with a lifestyle magazine. We have many different columns that anyone could send information about–like Tidbits, Things to Do, Business Briefs—yet few readers take advantage of these to contribute items.

**Where do you expect to be in another eight years?**

Right here covering the community news, highlighting individuals of achievement, and bringing a sense of pride in what we do and celebrating the shared life of our readers.