

Pete's January 2010 email

Like every January, I'm happy to say hello and fill you in on what has been happening here. This year, the talk is all about the Main House project and the weather! As with many of you, our winter has been one of those kinds that the old timers always talked about. First there was the snow - Capon received 22 inches - and then the cold. As I write this, we have not been above freezing for over ten days, and the snow has stayed. When I walk around Capon during these kinds of winters, I think of how different it would look to you, so here are a few of my favorite winter sights.

As you arrive at the Main House, everything is covered with snow and ice. To stop for your welcome drink of Capon Water at the fountain out front, you'll have to crawl over a three foot pile of snow to reach the water spout. Then you'll notice that the usually "cool to the lips" Capon Water now feels warm since the water from the spring is much warmer than the air temperature.

Walking up the road towards the Spring House and looking around, you'll see another of the winter effects of Capon Water. In the midst of the snow cover, there is a two foot wide green path down the center of the lawn. That is where the Capon Water line is located. The pipe is only about a foot under ground, so the warm, moving water keeps the snow off the grass above it.

Speaking of water, while shuffleboard, tennis and badminton are out of the question, the pool is still available. In fact, even with the frigid temperatures, there is not a trace of ice on the pool. The sixty-five degree spring water that makes for a "refreshing" dip in the summer keeps ice from forming all winter long. Today, the water temperature at the thermometer next to the spray reads 44 degrees. The same is not true down at the fish pond. The pond is my favorite indicator of the type of winter we are having. Its been several years since conditions have been right, but this winter I've been able to dust off the old ice skates for a try. I'll excuse you if this causes you to imagine two very opposite images -- the beauty of the frozen fish pond and the surrounding snow cover, and... then.... me attempting to skate on it!

The frozen pond always makes me think of the old days in Capon history when ice blocks were cut from nearby ponds during the winter and packed in sawdust in the two ice houses that were located near today's basketball court. From there, the ice was used for refrigeration during the next hotel season. Just realizing that that would be possible this winter is an indication of how harsh temperatures have been.

Sorry, I've gone on about the weather and such so much that I haven't left much time for the Main House project. I hope you have been following the work on Capon's website. Every week or so we add new photos to show the progress. See for yourself! www.picasaweb.google.com/CaponSF

In addition to the pictures, I can summarize our progress in two ways. First, it is very big! While sections will be open as our season progresses, we will certainly be working on part of it when you visit this year. Secondly, our Capon maintenance crew - the same ones who care for the buildings, maintain the golf course and haul linens, trash and the like has been doing an unbelievable job through the very challenging weather conditions. To watch them at work, it is obvious that this is more than a job to them!

I'll look forward to your Capon visit this year when you will have a chance to follow the progress and see and enjoy their handiwork.

Pete, for the Capon Family