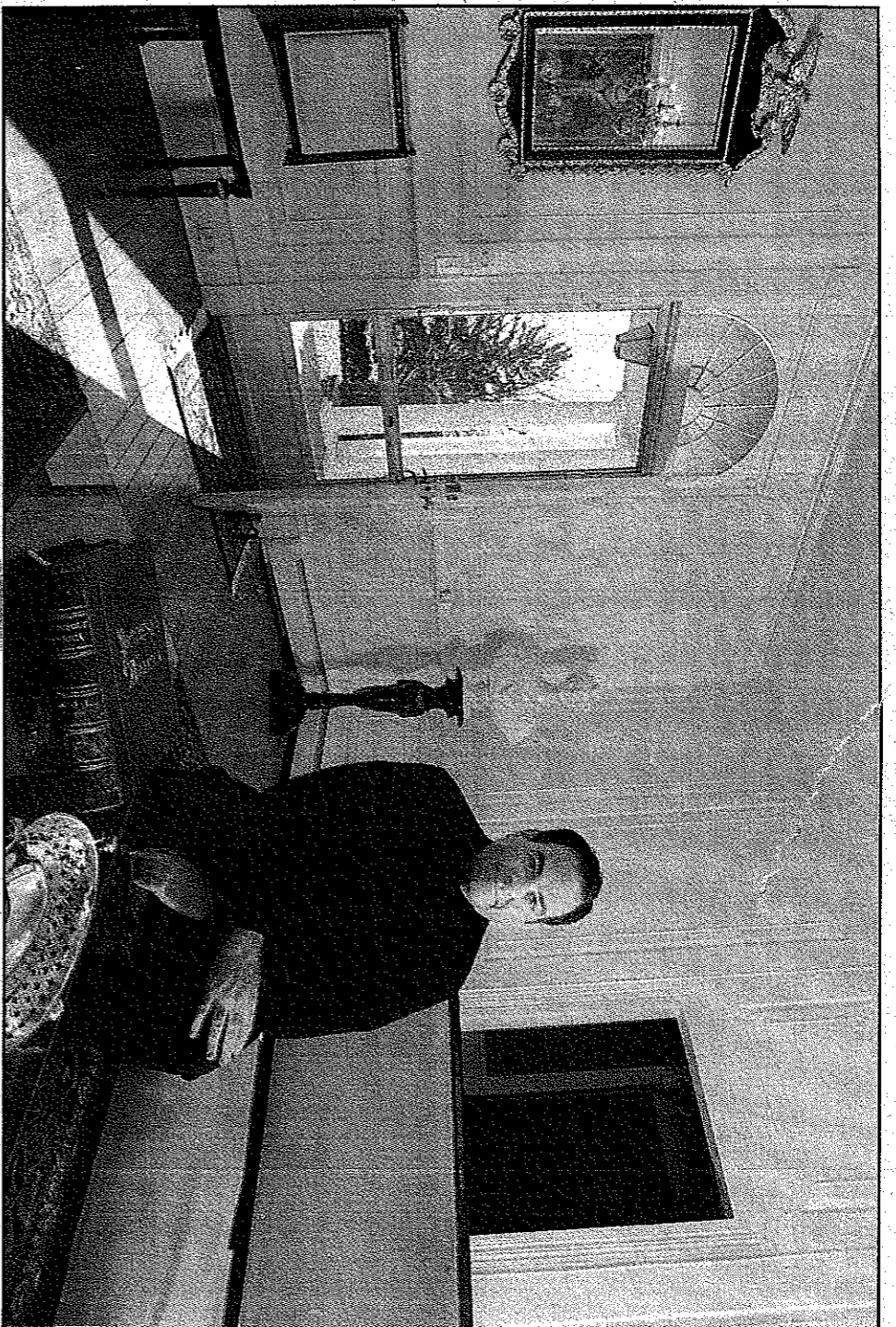




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By Kevin G. Gilbert/Staff Photographer

Scott Faulkner sits among the many artifacts he has collected at his home in Harpers Ferry W.Va.

A tower of power

Faulkner, the man behind the fight to stop a cell phone firm's bid to put its tower in Harpers Ferry, has worked with presidents

By CLYDE FORD

Staff Writer
HARPERS FERRY, W.Va. — The view from the front door sold Scott Faulkner on the house on top of Bolivar Heights.

The house is high above Harpers Ferry and looks down on the historic town, Maryland Heights and the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers.

The view was magnificent and Faulkner knew that was the house he wanted.

It was soon after he bought the house that he learned the landscape around Harpers Ferry and Bolivar was being threatened by a company planning to build a tower hundreds of feet high.

The year was 1986. Faulkner's next appointment by President Ronald Reagan was tied up in a political battle. Faulkner knew he did not want to live in Washington and he also did not know where he would be sent.

Reagan wanted to appoint him as the Organization of American States ambassador to Grenada, a small Caribbean island that has 110 land

Civil War historians and preservationists fear that the cellular phone tower would mar the view of the Harpers Ferry area and the Blue Ridge Mountains at a time when tourism is a major source of revenue for the county and West Virginia.

gressional liaison between the Federal Aviation Administration and Congress.

Then, as now, Faulkner, as president of the Friends of Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, took the point in waging a battle to stop a tower from being built.

Faulkner and others are working to stop U.S. Cellular from constructing a tower that would mar the view of the

Ferry area and the Blue Ridge Mountains at a time when tourism is a major source of revenue for the county and West Virginia.

Faulkner and others are optimistic that the compromise worked out in the earlier tower battle will also work in this case.

They hope the cellular tower will be built next to the town's water towers and the cable television tower on top of Bolivar Heights next to the house Faulkner shares with his wife, Vicki, who is president of a labor relations firm.

Because of the higher elevation, the tower would not have to be built as high to provide the same signal coverage. In addition, the tower could be hidden behind a screen of evergreen trees so that it would not stick out in the landscape that Faulkner and others love.

Faulkner, 44, said his love of the environment and scenic preservation comes from his father, who worked 41 years with the Department of the Interior, drawing in plans to preserve wildlife

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There are times when his love of the outdoors collides with the beliefs held by some Republicans.

"There are some Republicans who do portray that stereotype of 'Pave the land and make a buck,'" Faulkner said.

Less partisan

As he's grown older, Faulkner said he's become less partisan. He's worked with Democrats on environmental issues and after serving as the first Congressional administrator at Newt Gingrich's request, he's found Republicans can be as corrupt and scandalous as Democrats. But that comes later in this story.

As soon as Faulkner was old enough to lick envelopes, his mother had him help her stuffing envelopes, first for Barry Goldwater in 1964, and then Richard Nixon in 1968.

Faulkner joined Republican clubs in college, campaigned for Nixon in 1972, and while working on a degree in public administration at American University he worked for various congressmen.

In 1980, he became the personnel director for Ronald Reagan's presidential campaign. "For a hundred days I had no life except for the campaign," Faulkner said.

In mid-September, nearly two months before Reagan defeated President Jimmy Carter, Faulkner began to assemble a list of the people who would serve in Reagan's White House.

The work had to be carried out secretly because the campaign did not want to appear complacent. Voting polls had shown the race to be close, but internal tracking documents had given the Republicans the confidence to start laying the ground work for the transition, Faulkner said.

After the election, he was appointed to work at the Government Services Administration and found wide ranging fraud committed by both Republicans and Democrats.

GSA is the federal agency that oversees \$42 billion worth of property owned by the government and federal contracts.

"We found Republicans were into property fraud and Democrats worked with contract and supply fraud," Faulkner said. "It was like the Mob," he said with a laugh.

Corruption was so wide spread that the new appointees went through mounds of inspector general reports to eliminate more than \$2 billion in fraud, Faulkner said.

"We built a new organization in the old one," Faulkner said.

Out of Africa

After the 1984 re-election, Faulkner and his supervisor were asked which assignments they wanted next. His supervisor took a posting as an ambassador in Europe.

Faulkner wanted Africa.

He had become fascinated with African art in the 1970s after buying a blanket used by nomadic tribes as a tent divider. The intricate colors and weaving with symbols warding off evil astounded him.

His passion for the art led him to study African history and culture.

"There's just something about the continent. It's an emotional thing, not an intellectual thing," Faulkner said.

Faulkner got what he wanted.

He was posted to the equatorial African nation of Malawi to serve as director of the Peace Corps operations there. The country is about the size of Pennsylvania in east central Africa.

The Malawi government was threatening to expel the Peace Corps operations and the 25 volunteers.

Faulkner found the trouble to be a mix of local politics and disfavor of the local Peace Corps operation.

"It was like an exercise in customer service," Faulkner said.

He went around to various government agencies there, and worked to match their needs with what the Peace Corps could provide.

Instead of being kicked out of the nation, the Peace Corps program tripled in size during the two and a half years he was there.

"They say the Peace Corps is the toughest job you'll ever love. You really feel that," Faulkner said.

African artifacts

While there, he collected pottery, wood sculptings, masks, and wood toys. Some of his artifacts are on loan to the Smithsonian Museum of African Art, the British Museum, and other museums.

He's turned the attic of his house into an African art exhibit gallery, complete with descriptions of the artifacts on the wall just like a museum.

In 1986 he was called back to Washington by the State Department to become the OAS ambassador to Grenada, but ended up with the FAA posting.

In 1989, when President George Bush took office, Faulkner and other Reagan appointees learned they were no longer wanted.

"In one week I picked up the FAA's highest honor and the next week I got the pink slip," Faulkner said.

Off to the private sector

He went to work in the private sector with a management consulting firm, Philip Crosby Associates, Inc.

Faulkner worked with Fortune 500 companies such as Marriott and Bell Atlantic in training them on quality management principles.

Faulkner said working with corporations can be frustrating. He said at times it was easier to get dock workers to understand better management principles than the corporate executives except for the rare corporate visionaries who see beyond the immediate future.

"Give me a group of blue collar people over suits any time," Faulkner said.

U.S. Rep. Newt Gingrich, then the Republican minority whip, sent his entire staff and GOPAC fund-raising team, to Philip Crosby Associates for training in quality management to become more efficient.

Faulkner, then a vice president with the firm, taught the courses.

In 1994, Gingrich became speaker of the House of Representatives and he created a position for Faulkner — chief administrative officer of the House of Representatives — to attempt to create order out of chaos.

The 24 months he spent on the job, updating the accounting procedures of how Congressmen spent money for their offices and contracts, is chronicled in a book by former Washington Post and Wall Street Journal reporter Ronald Kessler called "Inside Congress: the Shocking Scandals, Corruption, and Abuse of Power Behind the Scenes on Capitol Hill."

"(Faulkner) would find enough to con-

vince him that the House — which initiates taxation and appropriations bills to run a government that spends \$1.6 trillion a year — was the most disastrously run, self-indulgent, out-of-control organization he'd ever seen or heard of," Kessler wrote. "And it would all be his to clean up."

Budding author

Faulkner said he also is writing his own book.

He found rampant waste and corruption and representatives who spoke of reforming Congress until they found that also meant losing their perks such as custom made furniture, limitless allowances, and a leased warehouse full of new, unused furniture, some dating back to 1962.

But changing the way the House operated meant dealing with a lot of different egos and agendas, Faulkner said.

"You're walking through a complicated land mine field to get anything done up there," Faulkner said.

Some of those in Congress appeared to have been generally interested in reform, but politicians tend to lose their interest quickly on long-term issues, Faulkner said.

"People lose their focus as other issues come up," Faulkner said. "They're into short-term, make the pain go away fixes."

Faulkner, who returned to the private sector after Gingrich appeared to lose interest in reform, said his house on top of the hill allows him to see far off.

One of the things he's already done is to put in his will that when he dies the house is given to the Harpers Ferry Historical Society.