

# Brentsville Neighbors

Information About Brentsville  
Shared Among Neighbors



September 2007

Welcome Neighbor!

August and September have been like trying to stuff ten pounds of corn into a five pound bag. Some things just don't fit! And so this newsletter is so very late and we beg your indulgence.

We were very fortunate to have Mr. Paul Spencer visiting from Australia during August. He took time from his busy schedule to present one of his research works on August 15<sup>th</sup> at the one-room school that was very much enjoyed by those attending on such short notice. Paul has completed two research papers (the latter was serialized in our newsletter) and has graciously agreed to make them both available in a bound booklet for only \$5.00 (plus \$2.00 shipping if mailed) with the proceeds going to the Brentsville Courthouse Fund. You may order copies from us by sending a check to Morgan (put Spencer Booklet in the note section) and we will make sure your copy is sent promptly.

The Brentsville One-Room School Reunion, held on September 8, 2007, was also a grand success. There is one picture of the students in this edition and more will follow. Unfortunately Casper Whetzel and Verona Craig did not arrive in time for their picture to be included but they were there!

There are many very beautiful places in Prince William County. We happen to believe Brentsville is the best but if you would like to visit another that is highly recommended, you are invited to join Prince William County's Historic Preservation Division for

the Grand Opening of Rippon Lodge Historic Site on October 20, 2007. A ribbon cutting ceremony will begin at 11:00 am. After the ceremony, Rippon Lodge will be open for tours until 5:00pm. In addition to tours of the house, visitors can enjoy a full day of events including performances by the Swordmasters, colonial dancing and militia drill demonstrations, a reenactment of a colonial duel, storytelling, games, crafts and tours of the Rippon Cemetery. Children will be able to choose and decorate their own pumpkins and everyone will enjoy hay rides around the property and the Prince William County Animal Shelter's petting zoo. Food and craft vendors will also be on site. Admission to the day's events is free. For more information, please call 703-499-9812. Rippon Lodge is located at 15520 Blackburn Road, Woodbridge, VA 22191.

So, DID YOU KNOW that September is (among other things) . . . Self Improvement Month, International Square Dance Month, National Chicken Month, National Courtesy Month, National Honey Month, National Piano Month, and Classical Music Month.

Very best wishes,  
Nelson & Morgan

## This month:

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- Where Wild Things Live ----- pages 2, 4 & 7
- A Letter from Bonnie Leigh -----pages 5 & 6
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With so many reunions and gatherings taking place, it is sometimes difficult to remember exactly who everyone is and how they fit. J.C. Breeden wrote the following to reflect on that situation.

### ***The Gathering***

“Who is that?”,  
an often heard phrase at our gatherings.  
Nephews, nieces, cousins, or grandchildren  
That did not exist last year  
Are now six or twelve years old.

A friend of one can soon become family to all.  
Though we are proud of our ancestry,  
A genuine caring for others, love and laughter,  
Is more important than blood.

Once yearly we all join  
And compete in friendly rivalry.  
The four main events are conversation,  
Eating, pitching horse shoes,  
And playing hearts, a card game.

Those who do not compete in sporting events  
Become a rather loud and vocal rooting gallery,  
Supporting the underdog, regardless of who it is.

Confident contenders, myself included,  
Have no problem declaring who  
The winners will be. Egos soar and chests  
Inflate as the pre game hype draws to an end.

At the end of the day, a few will reign supreme  
While others quietly eat their “crow pie.”  
So concludes another wonderful time  
Until next year, when we all gather again  
And ask, “Who is that?” or “Where is ...?”

JC Breeden

**A very special “Thank You” to Bill Wade and Edith Turner for your most generous support. It’s great to have neighbors -- especially “Brentsville Neighbors!”**

## **Where WILD Things Live**

### **Solidago rugosa**

*Rough-stemmed Goldenrod*

*Fireworks Goldenrod*

*Wrinkleleaf Goldenrod*

There are many varieties of goldenrod, but my favorites are those that bloom in late summer or early fall, such as rough-stemmed goldenrod flowers (*Solidago rugosa*). Just as forsythia heralds spring with masses of yellow blooms, so the aptly named “goldenrod” ushers in the fall.

### **Description**

About 80 perennial species make up the genus *Solidago*, most being found in the meadows and pastures, along roads, ditches and waste areas in North America, and a few from Europe that were introduced some 250 years ago.

Many species are difficult to distinguish. Probably due to their bright, golden yellow flower heads blooming in late summer, the goldenrod is often unfairly blamed for causing hay fever in humans. The pollen causing these allergy problems is mainly produced by Ragweed (*Ambrosia* sp.), blooming at the same time as the goldenrod, but is wind-pollinated. Goldenrod pollen is too heavy and sticky to be blown far from the flowers, and is thus mainly pollinated by insects.

Goldenrods are easily recognized by their golden inflorescence with hundreds of small capitula, but some are spike-like and other have auxiliary racemes. Propagation is by wind-disseminated seed or by underground rhizomes. They form patches that are actually vegetative clones of a single plant.

### **Use and cultivation**

Goldenrod is used as a food plant by the larvae of some Lepidoptera species (The order Lepidoptera is the second most speciose order in the class Insecta and includes the butterflies, moths and skippers). The Goldenrod then forms a leathery bulb (called a gall) around the invading insect as a quarantine to keep it confined to a small part of the plant.

# Students who attended school in Brentsville



Angie Lee Breeden



Bucky Golladay



Douglas Gilbert Keys



Elmer Daniel Breeden



Ethel Vivian Breeden



Frankie Golladay



Franklin Cornwell



George Arthur Melvin



John Foley Melvin



Mary Louise Keys

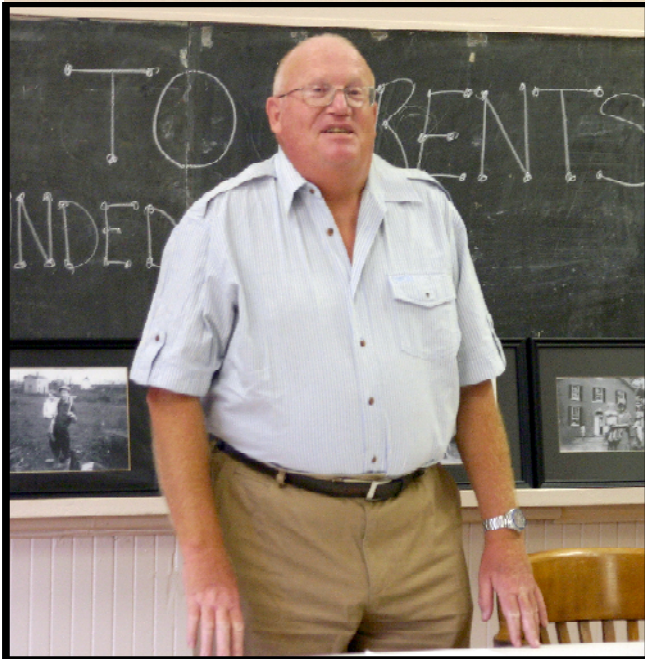


Raymond Stewart Keys



Virginia Amelia Keys





Paul Spencer, visiting from Adelaide, Australia, speaks of his research on Brentsville

2007 Brentsville School Reunion  
Identification on bottom of page 7

Where WILD  
things live..



**Solidago rugosa**  
*Rough-stemmed Goldenrod*  
*Fireworks Goldenrod*  
*Wrinkleleaf Goldenrod*  
(See page 2)



# A Letter from Bonnie Leigh (Henderson) DeHart

Dear Morgan:

Thank you for my first copy of the Brentsville Neighbors newsletter. I enjoyed it from cover to cover. It brought back many memories of my time when my family lived there too.

I cherish the years we lived in Brentsville and remember it as a quiet little place where everyone knew everyone and no one was afraid of anyone or anything. We played from sunup until sundown as soon as we stepped off the school bus and all summer long. We thought nothing of walking right into our friends homes after school and they into ours. I wish my own children had been able to know that lifestyle.

In mine and Bill's time there, we lived in Uncle Jim and Aunt Bessie's house for a while when they moved to Tennessee around 1957-58. We lived across the hill from the Golladays and across the holler from the only Puerto Ricans that I ever knew of back then. When U Jim and his family came back "home" we moved up next to the store in Granddad Shoemaker's house. It took a lot of renovation but it was a nice old two story house and we were happy there for a long time. Mama helped Mrs. Shoemaker in the store and we had a big garden out back and in the side yard. Every Sunday mama had a huge dinner and Jackie and Buckie came, so did Granddad and sometimes Aunt Marie and Uncle Frank Fairburn in the summer if they were in town. She always took Mrs. Shoemaker over a plate and watched the store so she could eat her dinner in the back.



In the winter time it snowed from October through March. Unlike nowadays when we hardly get any snow around here. All the kids in Brentsville would gather in the store lot to sleigh ride as soon as supper was over. If we were lucky someone would find an old tire or a pile of wood to make a fire to keep warm. There

would be Marilyn Snouffer, Stanley Keys, Donnie and Butch Golladay, Donald Carter, Linda Shoemaker, Jeannie Schaeffer, Bill and I, Jennings Breeden, Buzzy Shoemaker, Danny Shoemaker (now deceased) Terry and Jeannie King (who moved into the Webster house after the Curds I think) Jeannie is now deceased. And many more that I can't think of right now. Jackie and Buckie would join us on Friday or Saturday nights if the roads were clear enough to get there from Manassas and that would be a real treat. We would stay out until we were blue and soaked to the bone but it was the happiest time I can remember.

Spring and summer it was the same with croquet set up in the side yard and badmitten and softball games until it was so dark we couldn't see the ball. We used to swim down at the run next to Uncle Ben's and Janice and Randy would sometimes come down and fish with us. They were my cousins too.



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We moved from Brentsville around 1962 to Manassas and it was never as much fun after that "living in town."

I continued to live in and around Manassas until I moved to southside Virginia in 1979. The small town where I live now reminds me a lot of Brentsville. No one locks anything and everyone knows everyone and all their children have grown up together. It is a slower pace and I am happy to be raising my adopted daughter here. She loves the small high school she attends and the classmates she goes to school with here. I have been with the Department of Social Services for going on 28 years. Bill lives in Stephenson just outside of Winchester and loves it there. He has two grown daughters and three granddaughters. His oldest granddaughter just graduated from high school last month. He has been retired from the union as a heavy equipment operator for some years now due to his poor eyesight. Our oldest brother, Johnny, passed away a year ago in April. He lived in Winchester with his wife Pauline and their children lived nearby. Then of course, Jackie and Buckie live in Warrenton with Steve since leaving Manassas several years ago. They love it out in the country. Sherrie, their oldest daughter lives up in Cumberland, Maryland and Candy is still in Manassas. Cork, their youngest son, lives just a few miles away with his wife and three children. That about covers my immediate family. I get emails from Dorothy Bean sometimes. I am amazed that her mother, Verona, who is in her 90's is still living and in fairly good health. They live up in the valley and Mrs. Bean still comes to Brentsville twice a year to visit.

I must close for now. I look forward to more newsletters.

Sincerely yours,

Bonnie DeHart

## Flashback

### **CARTER, MELVIN LEONARD (SPARKY)**

On August 18, 1964, near his home at Brentsville, Va., MELVIN LEONARD CARTER, son of the late John Henry and Rebecca Ann Carter; brother of James Wilby Carter, Henry Lee Carter of Vienna, Va., Ernest Robert Carter, John William Carter, Rose Belle Robertson, and Nellie M. Couch, all of Arlington, Va., Lloyd Eugene Carter of Falls Church, Va., Oscar Randolph Carter and Mrs. Louise A. Baumbach, both of Brentsville, Va. Friends may call at the Baker Funeral Home, 314 North-West St., Manassas, Va., where services will be held Thursday, August 20, at 1 p.m. Interment National Memorial Park Cemetery, Falls Church, Va.

Source: The Washington Post, August 19, 1964, pg. B6

### **From the Brentsville Courthouse**

24 August 1846

Keys vs Murphy



The Commonwealth of Virginia, To the Coroner of Prince William County – Greetings: Whereas Walter Keys at a Court held for prince William County at the Court house on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of August 1842, by the Judgment of our said County Court of prince William County, recover against Hedgman Murphey \$45.00 with interest thereon to be computed after the rate of six per centum per annum from the 4<sup>th</sup> day of August 1841, till payment for debt, & also \$1.06 for his costs by him about his suit in that behalf expended, whereof the said Hedgman Murphey is convicted as by the record thereof, in the same court manifestly appears. And afterwards the said Hedgman Murphey died, seized whose death administration of the personal estate of the said Hedgman Murphey deceased has been committed to Redmon Foster, Sheriff of Prince William County, as we are informed. And now on behalf of the said Walter Keys it is said that although Judgement be given as aforesaid, yet execution of the debt, interest, and costs aforesaid still remain to be made. Therefore we command at the instance of the said Walter Keys, we command you that you make known to the said Redmon Foster, sheriff of Prince William County, administrator of the said Hedgman Murphey deceased as aforesaid that he be before the justices of our said County Court of Prince William, at the Court House of said county on the first Monday in November next, to shew if he has anything to say why the said Walter Keys ought not to have execution against him as administrator as aforesaid, of the debt, interest and costs aforesaid according to the judgment aforesaid. And have then there this writ. Witness John Williams clerk of our said court at the Court House aforesaid this 24<sup>th</sup> day of August 1846 and in the 71<sup>st</sup> year of the Commonwealth.

Teste, J. Williams C.C.

Executed – 8<sup>th</sup> September 1846 – J. H. Reid, coroner, Prince William County

Source: PWC VA Clerk's Loose Papers, Volume IV, Copyright 2004 by Ronald Ray Turner

(Continued from page 2)

Parasitoid wasps have evolved to find these galls, and lay eggs in the insect after penetrating the bulb. In a final nod to evolutionary complexity, woodpeckers have learned to blast open the gall and eat the wasp-infested insect holed up in the center.

Goldenrods can be used for decoration and making tea. Goldenrods are, in some places, held as a sign of good luck or good fortune; but they are considered weeds by some.

Goldenrods bloom in late summer and early fall and some species produce abundant nectar when moisture is plentiful before bloom, and the bloom period is relatively warm and sunny. Honey from goldenrods often is dark and strong due to admixtures of other nectars. However when there is a strong honey flow, a light (often water white), spicy-tasting honey is produced. While the bees are ripening the honey there is a rank odor and taste, but finished honey is much milder. Goldenrod is a companion plant, playing host to some beneficial insects, repelling some pests

### **Industrial use**

Inventor Thomas Edison experimented with goldenrod to produce rubber, which it contains naturally. Edison created a fertilization and cultivation process to maximize the rubber content in each plant. His experiments produced a 12 foot tall plant that yielded as much as 12 percent rubber. The rubber produced through Edison's process was resilient and long lasting. The tires on the Model T given to him by his friend Henry Ford were made from goldenrod. Examples of the rubber can still be found in his laboratory, elastic and rot free after more than 50 years. However, even though Edison turned his research over to the U.S. government a year before his death, goldenrod rubber never went beyond the experimental stage.

### **Medicinal use**

The variety *Solidago virgaurea* is a traditional kidney tonic. It has aquaretic, anti-inflammatory, antispasmodic and antiseptic action and seems to increase kidney output. This makes it useful as an agent to counter inflammation and irritation of the kidneys when bacterial infection or stones are present. The aquaretic action is also useful in helping to

dissolve kidney stones by diluting their components and prevent them from reoccurring.

### **Cultural significance**

The goldenrod is the state flower of the U.S. states of Kentucky (adopted March 16, 1926) and Nebraska (adopted April 4, 1895). It used to be the state flower of Alabama, being adopted as such on September 6, 1927, but was later rejected in favour of the camellia. Goldenrod was recently named the state wildflower for South Carolina.

In Midwestern states in the mid-twentieth century it was said that when the goldenrod bloomed, it would soon be time to go back to school—the blossoms appeared in mid- to late August, shortly before the traditional start of school on the day after Labor Day.

In Sufjan Stevens' song, Casimir Pulaski Day, the narrator brings goldenrod to his girlfriend upon finding out that she has been diagnosed with bone cancer. Carrie Hamby's song, Solidago, tells the story of Thomas Edison's experiments with making goldenrod a domestic source of rubber during the 2nd world war.

Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Goldenrod#Description>

### **2007 Brentsville School Reunion**

The Brentsville one-room school reunion of 2007 was one of the best ever. There were 17 former students and 19 friends and family members present. We were especially pleased to have Mary Varner Staggs and Robert L. Varner, Jr., children of Mrs. Dorothy Woodhouse Varner with us.

Casper Whetzel (Midland, VA) and Verona (Counts) Craig (Grottoes, VA) arrived after the picture but were very much a part of the celebration. Verona will be 102 years old on October 27, 1905, and as always, was a joy to behold!

Pictured at the bottom of page 4 are: (left to right) Harold Wright (Reedville, VA); Fred Wolfe (across the road); Nancy (Keys) Shely (Manassas); Frank Golladay (Manassas); Lucy (Bean) Hartman (Manassas); Edith (Melvin) Turner (Chester, VA); Joyce (Keys) Smith (Broad Run, VA); Warren Wright (Tampa, FL); Leonard Wright (Nokesville); Fay (Golladay) Samsky (Manassas); Gladys (Wolfe) Eanes (Brentsville); Bill Golladay (Edinburg, VA); Nelson Keys (Manassas); David Landis (Nokesville); and Frances (Keys) Duckett (Springfield, VA).

# *Brentsville Neighbors*

Information About Brentsville  
Shared Among Neighbors  
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**Please note:** If you receive your copy damaged or with missing pages,  
PLEASE let us know and we will replace the copy right away.

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**In GOD we Trust**

