Brentsville Neighbors

Information About Brentsville Shared Among Neighbors

August 2009



In our haste to recognize a few generous neighbors we accidentally omitted Mr. JJJ Shockley who is very generous in sharing the produce from his garden located on Izaak Walton Drive. Fresh veggies are always a treat. Thank you, sir! We are very glad to have you as a neighbor.

During the past month we lost another of our former neighbors who has contributed so much to Prince William County. Mrs. Frances Chandler went to the Great Beyond at the age of 101 years. Many may recall that she and her husband, Frank, were part of the founding group responsible for the PWC Fair. Remember seeing them there?

All former students, their families and guests are asked to please start planning to be in Brents ville on Saturday, September 12th, for the annual School Reunion from 11:00am until 1:00pm. The reunion is sponsored by the Prince William Historic Preservation Division with Kay and Morgan Breeden as your hosts. Light finger foods and refreshments will be served. Formal invitations will be sent to all former students but everyone is welcome to join us. We are keeping our fingers crossed that another tropical storm doesn't decide to join us this year. But rain or

shine we will be there. Won't you please join your fellow students to keep the memories alive?

There are two other events that we hope will be of interest on the courthouse grounds: The Prince William Farm Tour will again have a stop at our Haislip-Hall log home on Saturday, Sept. 26 and Sunday, Sept. 27, 2009 from 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. each day. Come learn about every-day skills that were important to 19th-century farmers in Prince William County. Also, learn about some of the animals that could have lived on these early farms. Activities include dipping candles, making butter, carding wool, pounding corn and gardening. Music will be provided during the activities. And then, Saturday – Sunday, Oct. 3-4, 2009, there will be a World War II Weekend at Brentsville from 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. each day. Join World War II living historians to learn about daily life for American soldiers in Europe and Japan. Men portraying American and German soldiers will bring historical equipment and armaments. Also learn about how local residents did their part to support the war effort. Both events are FREE. Please call 703-365-7895 for more information.

Very best wishes, Nelson & Morgan

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Where W I L D Things Live

Ebony Jewelwing Damselfly Calopteryx maculata (Beauvois, 1805)

Explanation of Names - CALOPTERYX: from the Greek "kalos" (beautiful) + "pteron" (wing or feather) MACULATA: from the Latin "macula" (a spot) - a reference to the white spot near the tip of the female's wing

Numbers - One of five Nearctic species in the genus.

Size - body length 1-1/2 to 2-1/4 inches **Identification** - wings of immature adults light to dark brownish; wings of mature adult males solid black; wings of females dark gray, shading to almost black apically, and with a conspicuous white spot at tip; male body metallic green or bluish; female body dark grayish or black **Range** - eastern two-thirds of US and eastern half of Canada

Habitat - along wooded slow-moving streams and small rivers; nymphs develop in water; adults often perch on low shrubbery in sun-lit openings in forest canopy

Season - adults March to October in the south; May to July/August in the north

Food - nymphs and adults prey on small insects and other arthropods

Remarks - Not a strong flier: adults flutter, butterfly-like, a short distance when disturbed. They are easy to get close to as long as you approach slowly and don't make any sudden movements. Ebony Jewelwings prefer sunny spots in the woods but usually perch only a minute or two before flitting to another nearby spot.

Source:http://bugguide.net/node/view/601

flashback

BRENTSVILLE

Mr. William Ramkey preached his last vacation sermon Sunday night. He will return to Richmond to continue his studies at the Theological Seminary.

Pvt. Johnny Melvin, who has completed his basic training, is enjoying his furlough visiting his many friends and his grandparents. Mr. and Mrs. Donivan.

Mr. John Chandler, of West Virginia, is visiting his nephew and niece, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Chandler.

Mr. and Mrs. Minor Baker, of Baltimore, were recent visitors of their uncle, Mr. Ray Hedrick. They were accompanied by friends, Mr and Mrs. McGowan. Other visitors of the Hedricks were Mrs. Bessie Offenbacker, of Halethorp, Md.; Mr and Mrs. Elmer Hedrick and family and Mr. "Buckie" Hedrick, of Arlington.

Mr. and Mrs. John Donivan had as their Sunday visitor Mrs. Donivan's stepmother, of Vienna.

We are very sorry that Mrs James has been on the sick list.

Mr. William Brown, who had a stroke, is improving rapidly and is able to walk around.

Although still confined to bed Rev. Jesse Bell is much improved.

Mr. and Mrs. Bill Golliday had as their Sunday visitors Mrs. Golliday's brothers, Paul and Raymond Rush, and their families, of Winchester.

Mrs. Newton received a letter from her husband, Cpl. T. L. Newton, who is doing missionary work in Japan, telling of the great need of missionary work and relief in that country.

Source: The Manassas Journal, August 4, 1947

Above - R. H. Keys invoice to the county for supplies given the poor. Courtesy Ron Turner

Where WILD things live..



Ebony Jewelwing Damselfly Calopteryx maculata (Beauvois, 1805) See page 2

Below - Unidentified event at the courthouse - date unknown. Courtesy Gladys Eanes







Left -- Brentsville Girl Scout Picnic down at Seymours Island. What a day swimming, eating and games. June 1943 (clockwise starting at far left) Jean Keys, Patsy Keys, Mildred Fogle, Margaret Simpson, Betty Peterson, Mrs. Cox, Mrs. Bailey, Mattie Whetzel, Joyce Keys, Doris Stephens, Gladys Wolfe, Mary Lou lipscomb, Nancy Golladay, Faye Golladay Photo courtesy of Patsy Keys Blake



The Whetzel Family Reunion, July 18, 2009.

(L-R) Michael John and Tammie (Whetzel) Coe, Janice Speakes, Frederick Whetzel, Sam Green (Melissa's son), Casper Whetzel, Melissa Whetzel Buckner Green, Jeffery Buckner (Melissa's son) Mary (Brian's girlfriend) and Brian Whetzel.



A Girl Scout Troop from Gainesville looks over the site garden. They wish to adopt a garden next year.



Remembering Mama Mattie Catherine (Whetzel) Speakes

by Janice Speakes



Mama was born in Brentsville, Prince William County, Virginia on 15 October 1928. She was the first child of Tracie Irene Spitzer and Jesse James Whetzel but eventually had four brothers, Frederick, Thomas, Ira and Casper. They were all born and grew up during the Depression.

Mama and her childhood friends used to climb trees to play dolls. They used Queen Anne's Lace as doll umbrellas. She loved cats. Her favorite color was black and white, first choice. Now, if there was one with yellow and white stripes, that would be her pick of the litter. There were cats at her home where she grew up, so you might find a photo with her holding a few. After her marriage there were always cats, some dogs, some chickens, a pony and sheep.

Her education started in the one-room school in Brentsville for the first five years. Then everyone went to Nokesville School to the Brentsville District High School (now the Nokesville Elementary building).

Mama was in the Girl Scouts in the early 1940's. Her fellow scouts were Jean Keys, Patsy Keys, Mildred Fogle, Maragret Simpson, Betty Peterson, Joyce Keys, Gladys Wolfe, Catherine Counts, Doris Stephens, Mary Lou Lipscomb, Nancy and Fay Golladay. The scout leaders were Mrs. Cox and Mrs. Bailey. Their uniforms were white button front blouses with navy blue shorts.

When she was in high school she received a reading certificate for the number of approved books read. This was given 6 June 1941. A certificate for completing the prescribed courses of study from Brentsville District high School was given to her on 30th of May 1942, signed by the principal, C.O. Bittle. Her diploma for completing the requirements to graduate was given on 3 June 1947, also signed by Principle Bittle. Her senior year she also took a business course at the Manassas High School because BDHS didn't offer the course. After graduation she worked at the National Bank in Manassas, Va. For a short time.

Mama met my father, Everett Speakes, sometime after graduating from high school. He was living with his mother Alice May Bell Speakes at the home of Rev. Frank E. Bell and his family, in Brentsville. This is where Freddy and Hazel Wolfe now live. They married 2 June 1948 at 2pm on a Wednesday at her parents home in Brentsville. The ceremony was preformed by Rev. Clark Wood. Mrs. Vincent Davis sang "I Love You Truly" while being accompanied by Mr. Cleveland Fisher on the piano. He also played the Wedding March. Her maid of honor was Leona Wright. The best man was Paul Mauck. The couple honeymooned in Philadelphia, PA and other northern cities of that state. When they returned home, they lived temporarily with her parents until finding an apartment in Washington,D.C. within the home of a lady by the name of Mrs. Marlow.

I was born on Sunday, 26 October 1952. When I was about six months old Mom, Dad, and Dads' mother, Alice, moved to a house in Buckhall on Signal Hill Road. It was owned by Everett's cousin, Meredeth Speakes. They later bought the house and that is where we lived until after my fathers' death in 1970.

When the new Mrs. Speakes was first married her cooking skills weren't so good. Dad would say, "We had Spam for every meal." But she learned cooking from her mother, mother-in-law, and neighbors in Buckhall. She also learned by trial and error but eventually she became quite good. Her specialty was baking. Dad gained weight after her cooking skills were mastered and he especially liked her to bake him pies. One of his favorite was Coconut Crème. Friends said that her coffee "was so strong that it didn't need a cup to stand up." I believe that one of those friends was J.K. Dunn. Friends that dad worked with at Safeway, ('Bill" Hendley and his wife Mandy) would tease mama or play pranks on her in fun. At first she became upset but later she just laughed and went on realizing that they really liked her. One prank was with grocery bags. They would say, "take this one it is light." Actually it was the heaviest. The two couples frequently went places to gether.

Mom and dad had a vegetable garden and daddy liked to raise sheep. Mama learned how to handle those wiggly "all legs" lambs which always seemed to be born on the coldest, snowiest night possible. There were some ewes that would always have twins. Once they had twin black lambs. Dad would have his sheep sheared in the

(Continued on page 6)

Spring and sell the wool. I liked to watch and hold the lambs. I used to pick my mother little purplish blue flowers with tiny yellow centers called Bluets. When I picked them I got the roots also. I carried them and handed them to my mother who put them in a small glass with water on the kitchen window sill.

Mama became a member of the Homemaker's Club of Buckhall where she learned various skills to help 'maked a home more comfortable' and how to preserve your foods for the coming year. While living in Buckhall she wrote a column for the Journal Messenger (the Manassas newspaper), about the happenings in the neighborhood. Her column started in 1955 and ran until sometime in the early 1960's.

In the late 1960's mama was devoted to taking care of her husband. She went with him for his cancer treatments at the University of Virginia in Charlottes ville where she was taught how to wait on him; give him shots for pain; and later how to feed him with a feeding tube. He wasn't able to eat the regular way because of the type of the smokers' cancer that makes the tongue swell so you can't close your mouth. It also takes away your voice box so you can't talk. This was extremely hard for her to watch.

Before daddy died he was shown the proofs of my graduation photos. He told mama that he knew he wouldn't see me graduate. He died on 12 August 1970 at age 43. Mama grieved very much and didn't feel she could still live in the house they had shared together. She sold the house to George Reeves and decided to move in with her mother, Tracie Whetzel, who was also a widow. Rather than living alone, she felt that the three of them could benefit from living together. Mama and I moved to Brentsville in the late Spring of 1971. Sometime later my grandmother woke up and said to mama, 'I think I have had a stroke.' Mama called the rescue unit. My grandmother passed away on July 29, 1982.

My mother was a member of the Brentsville Presbyterian Church most of her life. She later became a Deacon of the church. She also became a member of the Bradley-Brentsville Homemakers Club in the mid 1970's. She was the person to send out greetings for birthdays, anniversaries, births and etc., because she could always remember these kinds of things. She liked thinking of others.

Her favorite color was red so she bought all kinds of things in that color. She would have some pink or blue or floral items but she liked red the best. She loved to buy purses and shoes to the point that she would have so many that they wouldn't all fit in her closet. She enjoyed crocheting with crochet cotton making many, many dollies in the pineapple design, her favorite pattern. She once made a round table cloth using this pattern that was big enough to fit a 48 inch diameter table. These of course took many weeks to finish. Once she was asked if she

could make a table runner from an old square that someone's grandmother had made. Mama and I worked together and wrote up the directions for the square. Then she reproduced the square, making enough squares to do the table runner(a decorative piece of 'fabric' crocheted in a certain pattern). The woman was very pleased with the finished product and said it looked just like the one she remembered.

Mama also did printed cross-stitch and embroidery designs on pillowcases and table runners. She was an avid reader of the Bible, historical romances, christian romances, mysteries and her newspapers. She knew the Bible very well. Some of her favorite authors were Phyllis Whitney, Victoria Holt and Lilian Jackson Brown to name a few. She kept a list of everything she had read, listing the title, author and when she read it. Mama liked to keep paper work organized. She kept the papers and booklets on new items bought, even after they didn't work anymore. All papers were put in a file folder marked by name. Paid bills and bank statements had their own files. Her checkbook was kept in order with very few mistakes.

Mama never learned to drive a car. Daddy tried to teach her but he would yell because she couldn't get the clutch and gas working properly. It made her nervous so she quit. If she had been able to learn on and automatic she probably would have driven but not in bad weather like snow and ice or heavy traffic. Most likely she would have gotten a red car with red interior!

For about seven years mama was a volunteer for the Prince William Hospitals' Pink Ladys Auxiliary. She worked at the checkout desk of the thrift shop. The first place was in Manassas Shopping Center on Mathis Ave. and the last is on Center Street in Old Town Manassas (where it still is at this writing 2009). She enjoyed meeting customers and working with the other Pink Ladys with whom she made some good friends. She received certificates for the number of hours volunteered and a pin for her five years of service. There are certificates from November 1974 to October 1981.

After Grandmother Tracie passed away, mama moved in with my husband, Frank Riley, and me. She lived with us for about 10 years. When Frank and I broke up in 1990, mama lived with Lucy and Ella Mae Hartman for a time. When I remarried for the second time, she moved back in with us. This marriage didn't last long so she applied and was accepted at the Marywood Apartments on Crestwood Dr. in Manassas on 15 August of 1992. She lived there for almost 10 years and enjoyed having her own place, talking to other residents and going to their activities. They had a bus to take them shopping or on short day trips.

In 1998 she started having trouble with her memory and taking care of herself. She wouldn't eat unless

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Brentsville

A Look Back in History by Ronald Ray Turner

Charles Keys' Dog

Not every case that was brought before the court in 1888 is worthy of talking about 120 years after the fact. This case might be one of those, as it's not about murder, robbery or assault, and did not even require a jury. However, it was a big deal for Charles Keys.

In August of 1888, S. R. Lowe of Independent Hill had again found his sheep dead from what appeared to be a dog attack. He had complained to Charles Keys that he suspected it was his dog killing the sheep. But, without proof, what could he do? Keys said his dog was not involved and "would talk no more of it."

On September 10, a man by the name of John Pearson, along with S. R. Lowe went to C. M. Copen, a Justice of the Peace. Under oath both declared they witnessed the dog of Charles Keys kill a sheep belonging to Lowe. Justice Copen sent for Keys to tell him the dog would have to be killed. Keys replied that he would not come and that no one was going to take his dog. Copen immediately sent for D. C. Norman, a constable, and ordered him to go to Charles

Keys' place and kill the dog. That order would go unfilled as Keys would not produce the dog.

A day later, Constable Norman returned to the Keys' house with a warrant for Charles to appear before Justice Copen at 2 o'clock in the afternoon of September 14th. Charles accepted the warrant but failed to show for the hearing. The case was continued on the Sept. 15th and 16th with Keys' still refusing to come to court. The case was re-scheduled for September 19th. Keys again was a no show for his case.

The court seemed to be out of options other than putting Keys in jail. The Judge ruled without Keys present that the fine would be \$4.00 per day amounting to \$24 for concealing the dog, \$1.00 for warrants, 50 cents for trying the case, 50 cents for witnesses, 60 cents constable fees, and a fee of \$1.25 for Justice Copen. Furthermore, it was ordered that, if the dog were ever found, it should be killed.

The court records show that all the fines and assessments were paid by the defendant Charles Keys. He must have really loved that dog.

A interesting tidbit from the Manassas Gazette in August 1872. This was later reprinted in the Alexandria Gazette. I don't think with all the artificial lights today we could see a rainbow at night.

"A singular phenomenon was noticed at Brentsville on the night of August 10. During the rain the moon broke through the clouds in the west and there appeared in the east, spanning the entire heavens, a beautiful rainbow which remained there for fully half an hour."

Reader Feedback

Just received my Brentsville Neighbors and immediately read it. Thanks so much for all the work & time you all put into getting it out. I was a little "put out" by Stanleys info about there being a path/road from their property to "the log." I never knew that - I always walked around the road; and it was hot on my bear feet too. Now I'll have to check w/ Sam & Bud to see if they knew about the shortcut. Funny how we all grew up together and they know about stuff I don't; they tell me it's because I was a girl. I do remember going to Stanly's home to use the phone but I think it was a table-top dial model. Also I remember when his mother had a cow and we used to carry a half-gallon jar there and buy milk. Keep the memories coming - they are greatly appreciated.

Mary Pearson Pumphrey

Read about the 8 July occurrence 04:05:06 07/07/09 in the copy you left at the Brentsville Supperate. Interesting but did you know that another one occurred a little mor fhan 8 hours later? It was 12:34;56 7/8/9. Keep the newsletter coming. I have been a neighbor of George Reaves since 1978 and have been to see the Brentsville Restoreration sight many times.

Keep up the good work,

Bill Bradlee

You guys must sweat sometimes at work to organize an issue each and every month. But it's so rich in memories, and revives our memory to a point. As we age, we need this by the bushels to fight Alzheimers, ha ha!

Bobbie Ratliff

someone was there to encourage her. She abruptly stopped paying the bills because she didn't know who or what they were. This started after Jean (Keys) Dunn passed away on June 29, 1998. She had been on of the Brentsville foursome — Jean Keys, Gladys Wolfe, Joyce Keys and herself and the loss of her very good friend hit her really hard. She didn't want to keep scrapbooks anymore because all she would get were deaths. She was diagnosed as having Dementia/ Alzheimer's. I had her moved into Cobblestones Assisted Living. At first things seemed to be good. The staff was caring and nice. Later, due to their lack of the proper amount of staff for the number of residents, she would fall and end up with huge purple/ black bruises. Mamas' roommate would take her possessions because she thought they were hers. Finally one night after the residents were to be in bed, mama got up, got dressed and slipped out unnoticed. The doors were locked so no one from the outside could get in but the residents could go out at anytime. Not secure for people that aren't sure what they are doing or where they are. At about 10pm Cobblestones called me at home to tell me that my mother was in the hospital. Some caring person had found her wandering, called the rescue unit and they took her to Prince William Hospital. They didn't know anything else or how she left without someone seeing her.

The next day I was able to visit my mother. The hospital staff said that they were surprised she wasn't hurt. She was just bruised up and wanted to go home. Her eyes looked like she had a raccoon mask on with a little scrap on her nose and chin. Cobblestones didn't want her back because of what happened and I had to find her a nursing home within 24 hours. This wasn't what I wanted for my mother but there wasn't any choice because my own life with husband number three was worse than the second one. I was living in an abusive situation, certainly no place for my mother. I was upset over the decision I had to make because I knew it wasn't what my mother would have wanted. Neither did I but there wasn't anyone else to take care of her.

Mama was put in the Alzheimer's unit of Oak Springs in Warrenton, Fauquier County, VA. There the residents are behind security doors so they can't wander. The nursing staff always acted like they cared about their patients. They had small activities for those that would try to 'play'. Just before her death when I came to visit she acted more like herself. She was happier and she smiled. My mother died 12 July 2008. Her funeral service was held at Price/Pierce Funeral Home on Center Street in Manassas. Her viewing and service was on the same day, Friday at noon, 15 July. She is buried beside her husband, Everett Speakes, at Buckhall Cemetery. At the time of my fathers' death they had been married for 25 years, 2 months and 8 days.

When WAR Came to Brentsville

Brentsville, two miles from Bristow Station.

Aug 2nd 1863.

Dear Father,

Your letter of the 29th was received on the 31st. I have already explained why I did not write sooner, but think you must have got a letter from me on the 20th as I sent one last Monday and also one on Wednesday.

Since I wrote last I have been Lieut. of the guard one day, on picket another, and marched another. Yesterday morning we were called in from picket very unexpectedly in order to march. The day was extremely hot. The sun's rays came down burning like fire, while there was not a breath of air. We left the railroad a little to the right after passing Catlett's Station. Though we rested often, toward noon the men began to fall out, and when we stacked arms here not more than a third of the brigade was present.

Capt. Walker, who having been Quartermaster has not marched much lately, had to stop, coming very near being sun struck. Several other officers gave out, and some of the men fainted away entirely. None in our regiment I believe died, though I heard there were some in the other regs. It was wrong, I think, to march us in the middle of the day when it seemed as if we might have rested till towards evening as well as not, and many say it was our Brig. Gen's fault. But he has always been considerate of the men's comfort and I think he must have been ordered to get here at such a time, and obeyed them without regard to the heat.

I had no breakfast, and had not time to put anything aboard the teams, so I had a pretty good load. Though I had no gun or cartridges, my head felt very badly all the last part of the march, but I managed to come through and do not feel sick today as I expected to.

We are camped in a pretty grove of locusts right back of the county court houses and jail. The town is in a dilapidated and deserted condition. There was a fight here I believe last summer, and the cavalry have been here a good many times. The corps is now strung along the railroad between here and Catlett's and the general impression seems to be that we are to stop here some time.

So I think I shall have to have a dress suit, coat, pants, and vest, and send them out in a valise by express marked "not be delivered except on presentation of receipt". Then I can send the receipt by the sutler to Washington and get it, unless you happen to have some way of sending it direct.

There is very little chance of getting a furlough. I lose my right in Co. Has a private, and there are several of the original officers who have no been home yet that will go of course before I can. I don't know how you will get the size of the clothes unless from my clothes I had last summer or the tailor that made them.

A sash, I suppose, you have sent or will send with the sword. I think I can afford to carry a couple of white handkerchiefs now. I can't think of anything else in the clothing line that I want now, that is if you have sent the blouse. I have got one of the Govt. ones that will do for now. Cousin Eddie would probably know about these things and the best places to get them. I have full credit at the sutler's now and he will probably keep a good supply as we are so near the railroad, so I shall probably live rather better than I have.

Boxes will be acceptable however once in a while. I think you had better not put much besides the clothes in the valise or travelling bag. Indeed there will probably not be room for much else. As I said, everything in the last box kept nicely. Willie, Corp. Meserve, and myself feasted on it for two days. Meserve had some flour and syrup come in his box and we made one giant supper on slapjacks and cider apple sauce. Yesterday morning I had a good deal left on hand, and as the teams were filled with clothing could not get my box aboard. But by giving away some and taking an extra haversack I got it all started. The bottle of pickles I passed around at the first stopping place and the boiled cider diluted with water gave several of us a good drink. Whether in consequence of the extra good living or our marches in the hot sun, I have had a severe pain in my head just over my eyes which the doctor thinks is a kind of neuralgia. But I have not felt it much today and if we keep still here shall probably get over it.

We had services this morning under the shade of the trees and are enjoying the quiet very much. The men are all washing up and putting on their new clothes, making a great improvement in their looks.

But the mail closes shortly and I must close. They say the paymaster is here; I hope so for I do not want to draw on you for money. I was very sorry to hear that mother was unwell [and] trust she may be over her trouble before this.

Love to the children and all from Joseph.

Direct to me in Co E. Geo. Walker is now Capt. I mess with him.

THE CIVIL WAR LETTERS

OF

JOSEPH PERRIN BURRAGE

AND

WILLIAM ALLEN BURRAGE

THE THIRTY-THIRD MASSACHUSETTS
VOLUNTEERS
IN NORTHERN VIRGINIA, 1862-1863
TRANSCRIBED AND ANNOTATED BY STUDENTS AT VIRGINIA
TECH 2008

Brentsville Neighbors

Information About Brentsville Shared Among Neighbors

Contact us on: morganbreeden@aol.com

Just in from the SciFi Channel: "It looks like the Brentsville case will be the second investigation in the premiere episode on Wednesday, August 19th. This is subject to change, so please check your local listings, but it does look like that will be the date." Watch for us on "Ghost Hunters" in their new season!

IN GOD WE TRUST

Brentsville Neighbors c/o Morgan Breeden 9721 Windy Hill Drive Nokesville, VA 20181