

Meet Your Neighbors – *The Fasnachts*

By Marge Green

I find some of the responses I receive to the question, "How did you find Pine Knoll Shores", a little different. I recently sat down and chatted with a non retirement family and discovered they had been guests of mutual friends, the Helwigs, on Beechwood Drive. After several visits with them, they really liked the ambience of our area. However, the point I am trying to make is the fact that a very important desire of theirs for their distant future was pulling at them when they visited. Both of them are from Pennsylvania and had hoped some day to be fortunate enough to settle down near the ocean and enjoy beach life to its fullest, be that fishing, boating or just walking in the sand. Pine Knoll Shores was an immediate answer to their long cherished dreams.

They found a house that suited their needs at 141 Loblolly Drive. It was "hello" North Carolina and "goodbye" Pennsylvania. Larry and Darlene Fasnacht along with their son, Larry, are now permanent residents. This is not to say that the transition was an easy one since both had five siblings. They and their parents were hard to leave but it has had an unexpected effect. While most of their brothers and sisters lived in Pennsylvania, they communicated by phone except for special occasions. Darlene told me that now they do not have time to go and visit "up north". Some members of their large family or friends are usually in residence for short vacations all summer long.

An incident occurred on moving day that was traumatic to everyone, especially young Larry. We can all sympathize with moving in problems especially when a large lab, Maggie, is involved. She was also in a new environment

and wanted to explore. Before they knew it Maggie was missing. Envision, if you can, your pet loose in a new area without proper identification. The telephone number and address on her collar were for another area. Their friends, the Helwigs, were contacted to help with their disaster. Do you call the police? Do you have an animal rescue officer? How can you get the word out? Layne Helwig organized her friends. The Fasnachts' close neighbors were contacted and soon various sightings of Maggie were reported. I am sure the canals were a strong magnet and once in the water what's a lab to do but enjoy? Within a relatively short period of time, Ryan and Lily Sweet came down the street with Maggie on a leash. That neighborhood concern and acts of kindness to the Fasnachts cemented within them the idea they had chosen wisely and this is where they wanted to live out their dreams.

Darlene was born in New Brunswick, New Jersey. She was actually raised in Pennsylvania living there until she moved to Pine Knoll Shores. Larry was born in Grantville, Pennsylvania. They met on a blind date. I must say the young lady who set

it up probably heard no thanks from either Darlene or Larry. Unfortunately there was a little misunderstanding as to expectations of their "date". One was overdressed for the occasion and the other underdressed since he came straight from work. However, we will leave it there since true love did eventually prevail and they have been happily married since 1990.

Darlene graduated from Central Columbian High School in Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania. Her field of interest has been teaching children with special needs, specifically mental retardation. She received her training at Harrisburg Community College and then her degree from Millersville University. She worked in special education for ten years. All of that time she was continually upgrading her training so she could better meet the needs of her students since she considered it a blessing to be their teacher and mentor. She has received certification to teach in North Carolina Schools. Currently she is teaching at St. Egbert's School in Morehead City.

Larry graduated from Lower Dauphin High School in Hummelstown, Pennsylvania. He

then entered a four year apprentice program graduating as a journeyman pipe fitter. He has one of those specialized jobs where he could almost live anywhere. Now he works in management of large projects, often under extreme conditions, around the world building and repairing pipe lines for oil, gas and nuclear companies.

Their son, Larry junior, is in the eighth grade at Morehead Middle School. He is a real neat fellow. He has so many interests. He thinks like an engineer. When he was seven, he built a Legos truck with a motor which could function as designed. Now at age 13, he is building his own gas powered trucks and air planes. His future seems to be in mechanical engineering but only so long as it is in an applied usage where he can get his hands on the project.

Before taking my leave I inquired what they liked the best about their town. As you would expect it was the beach life and the people who have been so kind, caring and helpful. Young Larry finds it hard to miss a day at the ocean. He loves tubing and fishing with his father. Darlene mentioned a special word of thanks goes to the earlier pioneers who did so much to protect our maritime forest. They all like the South with its welcoming atmosphere. Where else could you enjoy the water, and have a dock for your boat at your back door? There was just one negative, the mosquitoes last summer were really bad. I told them that was a little unusual and this year was certainly better.

Now that you know a little about the Fasnachts, stop and chat sometime when ever you see them out. They are a pleasure to know.



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