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Gary & Diana Ditto's Newsletter

Winter 2023

Centenarian Paul H. Snyder

by Antoinette Kranenburg

Kensington Parkwood's Paul Snyder's life changed in 2021. Word spread on social media, the Parkwood list serve, and beyond that Paul would turn one hundred. A party was not possible yet because of Covid. Instead, Paul received countless birthday cards, online well-wishes, balloons, gifts and many cards made by elementary school children. "It was just fantastic!" says Paul. A second grader's advice to "get a dog that is also 100" tickles him.



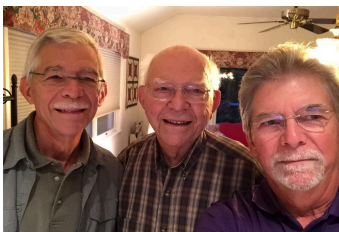
Paul Snyder in his favorite cap
(Bill O'Leary/The Washington Post)

Paul's long and well-lived life inspired articles in the Parkwood newsletter, his hometown The New Republic Newspaper, The Washington Post and beyond. Grateful, Paul appreciates his new friends most of all.

Paul Henry Snyder was born December 5, 1921, in Meyersdale, Pennsylvania in Somerset County, near Cumberland, Maryland. Paul had an older brother Emerson, and a younger brother Bill. His father William Snyder was an insurance agent and served as the Township tax collector. After their three boys left home; his mother Fannie worked in a shirt factory, and as a cook at the YMCA camp.

"My mother tells me that when my older brother Emerson started school, I cried and cried and cried and wanted to go with him." His mother consented and Paul started school in a one-room schoolhouse, at age four! By second grade the family moved to nearby Summit Township. Paul attended an eight-grade school, and graduated from Meyersdale High School in 1938 at age sixteen.

—Continued on page 2



Dave, Paul and Mike Snyder

Inside this issue: Thanksgiving Town Dance 2023...Breakfast with Santa at Station 5... WCCC Blood Drive...St. Paul's Community Pancake Breakfasts...Kensington Arts Theatre...and more

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— Paul Snyder continued

A local businessman loaned him \$300 to attend Franklin Commercial College in Connellsville, Pennsylvania for two years. Paul graduated valedictorian and paid back the loan.

While working for the State of Pennsylvania in Harrisburg Paul accepted a job in Washington, D.C., and so did a friend. The two took the bus to Washington. Neither had been there before. First thing off the bus, they got a newspaper to try and find a room.

It was the spring of 1941 and boarding houses thrived in Washington. The two found a room in a big home on 16th Street by Scott Circle. About twenty kids stayed there. They ate in a big dining room served by waiters!

Their landlady ran a boarding house for girls around the corner and would invite the girls over. That is how Paul and Kay met. Kathryn Mowder had come to Washington from Ponca City, Oklahoma, for a government job as stenographer. The two would walk to work by the Washington Monument and got along well.

Paul knew his draft number would come up in September 1942. With his parents' permission, Paul and Kay married January of '42. "We figured we'd have a good life together from January to September."



Paul and his friends from home went to Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania, where he was inducted into the Army Air Corps and eventually assigned to the finance office at Bolling Field in Anacostia, N.E., Washington, D.C.

While working at Bolling Field, Paul lived off-base with Kay, got basic training, and went to the Finance School of the Army at Wake Forest College, North Carolina for advanced training.

After two years Paul was transferred to Westover Field, Massachusetts. Kay went with him and worked making fuses for hand grenades at Westinghouse, which had converted to military production.

The Army was short of infantry men after the Battle of the Bulge in Europe. Paul was transferred to the Infantry and went to Camp Gordon, Georgia for thirteen weeks advanced training as a squad leader. "It was rough, but when I completed that training I never felt so good physically in all my life!"

After VE Day happened (Victory in Europe) Paul was ordered to the Pacific. "I had my mind made up: this is the way it is going to be, and I will just take it as it comes."

The Army gave points for being married, for kids, for months of service, for service overseas. In January 1946 Paul had enough points to go home. After delay upon delay he made it to Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania to be discharged, and then at last to Kay in Washington, D.C.

Friend and veteran, Jonathan Walker, interviewed Paul about his experiences, including his time on Luzon, the Philippines and in Okazaki, Japan with the 11th Replacement Depot. The video is posted at the Library of Congress, Veterans History Project, Paul H. Snyder.

While working in the Bolling Field Finance Office as civilian chief clerk, Paul went to night school for his degree in accounting at Ben Franklin University. Then Paul worked for Maryland & Virginia Milk Producers Cooperative and retired as assistant secretary in 1986.

Son David was born in 1947 and Michael in 1951. Fortunately Lot 1, Block 1 on County Road became available. The Snyders moved to Parkwood in 1951 and became members of the Silver Spring Church of Christ.



Paul and son David in front of 10106 Cedar Lane

The family enjoyed the outdoors: tent-camping, scouting, fishing. In 1973 they bought an Airstream trailer and when Paul retired, an Airstream motorhome, like Walter Strosnider, his best friend and fishing buddy. The couples made many trips together for years.

A widower since 2005 after 63 years of marriage with Kay, Paul lives independently. He starts the day with the exercises he began doing in his twenties and cooks his breakfast. Paul is close to his "boys" and enjoys his grandkids and friends. They love Paul's wit and wisdom.



Paul and Dave Snyder getting a pedicure at A&L Nails



Paul and Council member Kate Stewart



Want to be active and prevent injury? Contact Antoinette and come for a sample Alexander session. Text 240-762-9755 or email ak@KensingtonAlexander.com.



Happy Trackers pose for Michael Fistere after the Train Show

A HUGE THANK YOU

to all who helped make the **Kensington Train Show 2023** a wonderful time for so many:

National Capitol Train Trackers - They are the heart throb of the Train Show, dedicated volunteers who give of themselves to make the event possible. The Kensington Train Show is their favorite, marquee event of the year. Keep coming back!!

Matthew Dodd....Singing train songs and telling train stories. Dodd keeps audience after audience spell bound as he spins his tales and strums his guitar.

The New Orleans Jazz Band was on fire, keeping the auditorium hopping.

Noyes Library Foundation sponsored an I Spy scavenger hunt which the small kids loved.

Troup 439 had a great time serving food and drink to the audience.

Many others participated to make this a magical day of happy children, parents, grandparents, and train enthusiasts, who came out in record numbers. Over two thousand people attended...Wow!

See you the weekend after Labor Day at the **Kensington Train Show 2024**, September 7 and 8.



Norm Beaver and trains he made.

Breakfast with Santa at Station 5

Saturday, December 9, 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
10620 Connecticut Avenue, Kensington

Bring the family and have breakfast with Santa at the KVFD Station! There will be coloring books and a Christmas movie will be playing. Donations are appreciated.

The Gary & Diana Ditto's Newsletter is mailed to 10,000+ households in our community. **If you have an article or event you would like included in the next issue, please let us know by February 1 2024.**

We thank Paul Snyder, Kira Lueders and Jeff Griffith. The editor is Antoinette Kranenburg of Kensington.

Coming up in Kensington:

- Nov. 22 — WCCC Red Cross Blood Drive
- Nov. 22 — Thanksgiving Town Dance with the Nighthawks
- Dec. 1 — Antique Row Open House & Light Up Kensington
- Dec. 3. — Town Christmas Tree Lighting
- Dec. 5 — Paul Snyders 102nd Birthday
- Dec. 7 — Town Menorah Lighting
- Dec. 9. — Pancake Breakfast, St.Paul Fellowship Hall
- Dec. 9 — KVFD Breakfast with Santa
- Dec. 21 — Caroling Around the Fountain, Flynn Park
- Dec.22 — BabyCat Ugly Sweater Party

Community Pancake Breakfasts

First Saturdays, 8— 10:30 a.m.
St. Paul's United Methodist Church
10401 Armory Avenue, Kensington

All are welcome! Enjoy pancakes, scrambled eggs, sausage meat, fruit, and more in the Fellowship Hall. Instead of charging a fixed price, families are asked to make a goodwill donation. The suggested amount is \$8 for adults and \$2 for children under 12, or \$20 for a family of 4. The proceeds are donated to charitable organizations in our region and around the world



Thanksgiving Town Dance 2023

Wednesday, November 22, 7:00- 11:00 p.m.
Kensington Town Hall

Come out and dance to the blues and roots rock of the legendary Nighthawks! Tickets are \$10 at the door. Bring your own, non-alcoholic drinks and snacks. Donations of non-perishable food are welcome. The event benefits Bethesda Help and the 20895 Hunger Ministry.

Woman's Club of Chevy Chase American Red Cross Blood Drive

Help address the blood shortage for all blood types, especially type O-, O+ and platelet donors. Dates are Wednesday, 10 a.m. -3 p.m. November 22nd, December 22nd, January 24th. Schedule your appointment at wccmaryland.org/blood-drive OR call 800-733-2767.

KAT is Reopening!

The Kensington Arts Theatre is back for the 2024 season bringing thought provoking musical theater to the Town Hall stage! Assistant directors, technicians, stage managers, stagehands, behind the scenes organizers - whatever your skills, they'll find a place for you! Interested in getting involved? Please email boxoffice@katonline.org.

Fun Home opens the season February 9 - 25, 2024. "A refreshingly honest, wholly original musical about seeing your parents through grown-up eyes."



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4104 Knowles Ave
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10006 Frederick Ave
Kensington/Kensington
Active - \$829,000



3535 Chevy Chase Lake Dr #106
Chevy Chase/Hamlet House
Active - \$489,000



5809 Nicholson Ln #16
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Active - \$349,000