

KELLY'S CORNER



blowing out the candles

by Jan Kelly

Spring and summer have their blooming plants, but so has autumn. The balance of Nature has growth and blooming as long as the temperature can support it. In winter, dormancy and closed tight buds, red against the older brown, hold themselves and the tree's growth for spring. The plants of autumn correspond in color to the rest of the season. Goldenrod has shades of the foliage and frames it with a green of passing summer. Goldenrod is of the daisy family and a late bloomer. Asters abound along the roadsides, blue, white and yellow. And the bittersweet entwines within its own growth as well as through and around the growth of other plants. Bittersweet is similar to witch hazel in its blooming pattern. When most of the species have bloomed and their seeds have been distributed by wind, birds, animals or disturbance, the bittersweet and witch hazel pop their dry popcorn-like shells to expose their fruit.

The bittersweet's is orange, perfectly dramatic against the yellowed husk that surrounds it loosely in a crackled pattern. The juxtaposition is that the spring blossoms were green. This is climbing bittersweet, the species we see on the Cape. It likes to be near water, but can be found erratically, throughout the woods. The Asiatic bittersweet is gaining territory on the climbing bittersweet, but the species you will

most likely see is the climbing bittersweet. It is collected in its dry state and is used as an ornamental. It can last, holding its colors, seeds, and calyxes indefinitely. I have some hanging that is 16 years old. Roadside stands as well as florists sell it, or you can collect your own. It's a pleasant way to spend a sunny autumn afternoon.

The witch hazel you would have to travel to see. One of the best spots would be Essex, Connecticut. This is the home of E.E. Dickinson Co., where the fluid extract of the witch hazel leaves becomes an astringent which has been used through the decades as body rub, an after shave, a scalp toner, a facial toner, for massage and for insect bites. It is one of the least expensive and most versatile health and beauty aids available. The fruit of this shrub also ripens in fall after its leaves have fallen. But the witch hazel does not retain its black seeds. They are ejected, catapulted out of their shell. Along the river bank there are continuous explosions of a miniature scale. What remains can be used as an ornamental. Witch hazel was used by the North American Indians long before European civilization's arrival, but the name is borrowed from the divining rods of England, hazel twigs. Try a little witch hazel, part of our botanical bounty, you'll recognize its healthful properties quickly.

Anne Kane has had her first summer vacation in 36 years—not that she wanted it—her knee did. Anne had knee surgery in the late spring and her doctor advised time off the joints. It isn't easy for a veteran bartender, knowledgeable of the season's every tick, to watch and feel Memorial Day come and go, The Blessing of the Fleet come and go, the 4th of July come and go, the whole wild, crazy, battle-fatigued summer go into Labor Day and disappear from your calendar, watching and feeling it passively. Active people are vibrant and can get a jolt when told to stop.

A little ranting and raving brings the being round to acceptance and summer goes as well as it can. The good part was, Anne didn't complain, she explained, but didn't complain. But everybody else complained, she was missed daily and especially on those "big" days of summer celebration. You can't get a better drink and you can't get better company than Anne Kane.

In 1942 Anne Kane graduated from high school in her native Providence, Rhode Island and went off to California in 1944. Adventure was easier to come by in California than it was in Providence, Rhode Island. This was the beginning of Anne's "salad days," a course that will last this lady all her life. The Brown Derby, Lake Arrowhead and Palm Springs were on her route. This is when Anne first met Arthur Blake performing at the Chi Chi Club and quite handsome he was, Anne reports. Ida Lupino would still travel

here for one of Anne Kane's famous Bloody Marys if she knew she were here. Kirk Douglas, Anne's Lithuanian cousin, got a hasty exit from Anne's trailer, calling at a too-odd hour of the night. Palm Springs is a place of perfect climate and a movie star's hideout. All we New Englanders get lonely for foliage, covered bridges, Harvard Yard, Beacon Hill and of course, the Cape, so in 1949 Anne headed back. She worked for 10 years at the Reservoir Club on Fresh Pond Parkway in Cambridge. The Reservoir Club was a watering hole for Irish pols, John Lacey Delaney heading it up and Kennedy in the eye of all of them. Mike Walsh was the well-built handsome Irishman who first taught Anne to tend bar. It was more like osmosis. Mike Walsh would talk, spin the tales of Prohibition and politics and Anne would listen with fascination and respect, naturally and gradually learning how to make a perfect drink. I know what Anne means, she taught me to tend bar in the same manner. In 1950 and 51, Anne's summer job was at the Coonamessett Inn, then owned by Edna Harris. Edna made Anne her first female bartender. On her day off, Anne left Falmouth to visit Provincetown. She fell in love with the town and returned for all the reasons of her heart in 1953. From 1953 to '58, Anne tended bar for Reggie Cabral in the Carriage Room of the Atlantic House. It was a room of intimate piano music, "Cafe Society" and featured greats like Mae Barnes and Blossom Dearie. Anne was the second female bartender in Pro-

vincetown. Pearl Snow, who recently died at age 89, worked the Sunken Bar at the Provincetown Inn. Anne went to the Town House in 1959, in 1960 over to the Crown & Anchor, pouring and mixing during the shows of Hildegard and Arthur Blake. That parking area was jammed with limos. Then a stint at the Bradford and back to the Town House. It's been 23 years in all at the Town House. If you ask Anne why she chose this profession, you know before you start she's a maverick, an original, an iconoclast. I mean, who else calls themselves Junior after their mother? Yes, Anne Kane, Jr., she prefers. But if you ask her, Anne is unaware of that singularity which makes her bar full, like magnets on the seats, the draw is there. Anne will tell you yes, the money is good, but the people are so interesting, varied and never-ending. She's also fascinated with making a perfect drink, the best drink for everybody and anybody. All good reasoning, but we also know that behind the bar is a perfect stage for her one-liners, humor so dry you can spit dust when you laugh—and the wonderful singing voice. A break from the bar to the piano jams the bar fuller. Ice cubes clinking and the cash register ringing, merry is the leisure life. But years of pivoting from bar to register have taken their toll on Anne's knee.



Bobby Ray

That quick turn to make change and move to the next demand finally slowed the action.

Only for a while though, and the action was all back in motion Thursday, September 25th. That's Anne's birthday and we all had something special in mind this year, wanting to make the missed summer more remote and unimportant. But Pat Frost of the Cape Inn beat us all. Pat and the other three owners of the Cape Inn, Judy Bartoswicz, Mary Nowd, and Dale Carmel, put together a birthday benefit bash for Anne Kane. The posters were of Anne in Statue of Liberty garb "and now we honor another great lady, Anne Kane, Jr." The entertainers showed up and performed out of professional courtesy and genuine love. Bobby Ray was the generator. He started the show and put the effort, time and talent it took to get the assemblage homogenous. He was wonderful. He's a gentle man and a great lady, too. Peter Piano, Lenny of the Moors, Dolly Gibson kept the show moving, each with their own style of singing, of playing and of banter. Friendship in action. Toby Hall accompanied Anne for her repertoire. The food tables sagged with abundance. The bar was turnstyle fast. Babies, great-grandparents and every age in between laughed, clapped, ate and drank. The cake was beautifully unique, candled like a Swedish Xmas tree and delicious. Merriment pervades; happy was the mood. We are all so grateful to Pat Frost and her partners for allowing all of us to share Anne's birthday with her, but also to give us an opportunity to help out. The party was a benefit and the door count was impressive. The private and added donations were generous and are still arriving. Anne Kane was so touched and is so grateful to all who participated. She asked me to thank you all here.