

KELLY'S CORNER

by Jan Kelly

(Provincetown) All the warblers who are going to pass through, have, and we have another selection who will nest and raise their brood here. The woodpeckers are numerous this year. Hairy, downy, one red-headed and of course the populous flicker. The hairy and the downy are not shy and will work onward through the wood despite your proximity. Each has four toes and you can easily see the use of the fourth one behind. That toe, with its strong claw aided by the sharply pointed tail feathers enables the woodpecker to move up, down, and around a tree easily. The sharp long bill pecks into the wood. The flicker is not so public and obvious. Flickers are the woodpeckers that are shy and skittish. The types that would wear sunglasses and have unlisted phone numbers. As I approached a tree that was much past its prime, I noted small white bits on the ground. At first I thought it was shad or Canada juneberry petals. But to close view, it was bits of wood, thrown out of the tree by a flicker. I count this as the fourth season in this tree. No mailbox, unlisted number.

When my invitation from Mary-Jo Avellar and Duane Steele and the staff of the Red Inn noted that I was to share first year success at a very special party, I was delighted and intrigued. "Very special party" catches the imagination and the promise written on the invitation was kept. It was, indeed, a "very special party." Dress code started it off: black tie, etc. The Red Inn is such a beautiful spot. Now imagine full in every section, full of smiling people turned out in their best finery.

Everybody looks better and feels better when dressed up. An ordinary man is a demi-god in a tuxedo, a woman regal in a gown. And the food! A never-ending supply of ribs, chicken wings, little necks, mussels, lobster tails, shrimp, oysters, and platters of fruits and cheeses delighted both the eyes and the palate. It was all so lush and colorful you didn't have to eat it to enjoy it. One lobster tail, one shrimp, one oyster and two mussels satisfied me. I wanted to join in and talk with everybody. Old friends, newer friends, and many people I met for the first time made the occasion totally social. Limousines and a helicopter transported guests. Anne Leonard was a bit embarrassed when the limousine pulled up to her tiny waterless cottage, "Wind-Whisp." A limousine for transport and no water in the shack. A frozen pipe problem is still unattended.

Mary-Jo asked me if I would like a limousine to pick me up, but I explained *that* bike, Our Lady of Perpetual Poinsettias, likes to go to parties. She parked herself right up against the woodpile and watched all the comings and goings. She saw JoAnn and Henry Rose, Henry so proud in his black Calvin Klein suit, bow tie moving over to tuxedo class easily, JoAnn in



Simone and Nona and Nomi,
feet in third position

flowing black. Dot Cook and Hal Goodstein, Deola and Sonny Francis let you know right away it was a real Provincetown party. Mary and Justin Avellar were so at home you would think you were in their kitchen. They made you feel so welcome. The staff was polite and efficient. It wasn't easy maneuvering trays or drinks, platters of food and trays of used dishes among the perfectly crowded bar, dining rooms, deck, green room, and dance floor. Judy Wallace and Band played wonderfully listenable and danceable music. The conversations were so varied and so informative, I never even got to the dance floor. In the crowd I had a lively talk with Joe Patrick and only when I moved away did I note that he had red slacks on. Fooled me, waist up it was a tuxedo. Mary-Jo wore flowing white with bold red stripes wide at the shoulders. Duane wore classic black. Linda Tennyson wore sparkling and beaded white, Mae Bush wore her tails. John Ciluzzi wore a white jacket tuxedo, summer style. I wore my converted black priest vestments. I didn't see one drink or any food spilled. Tuxedo and gown manners everywhere. Maybe we should have one night a month or a season for formal dress. It does add to the fun and view. Susan told us it's only all those little pits in the wood from high heels that will have to be dealt with. Japanese formal next time. Thank you Mary-Jo, Duane, and staff for such a good time. It really was what you promised, a very special party.

Simone D'Amico is having a big year. Besides her eighth birthday, Simone has been baptized and will receive her First Communion. Simone's mother, Carol, had exposed her to religion and has had many discussions on the matter through the years. Church was occasional, rather than regular and the option was left open. But when Simone observed her class mates going off to catechism class each Monday afternoon, she was more than curious and wanted to go too. The

classes are very capably taught by Maureen Hurst and Floran Coelho. Classes prior to First Communion and Confirmation have always intrigued me. Questions of faith, religiosity, and the meaning of the universe, questions that grown men and women of spiritual and intellectual bent would lock themselves into dark cavernous convents and monasteries, or live in a cave or wander the more barren topography of the world, wear hair shirts, fast, deny themselves pleasures of the flesh and enjoy none of the trappings of the world in order to answer. These people ended up on their mountain, in their cave or in their sanctuary among many others of the same garb and quest *still* seeking. Yet these great questions of universal knowledge trip off the lispng tongues of our school children without a moment's hesitation. With surety and confidence beyond their years, they let loose the great truths. Well, back to Simone. Classes went well. Everybody was happy and Simone was baptized into the Catholic church last month. Carol called her sisters and parents in Boston. They were all delighted, said they would attend and that there would be a surprise. The noted day arrived, Carol and Simone patiently waited. Their wait was rewarded. Down narrow Kiley Court a silver limousine drew up before the tiny path to Carol and Simone's small Peter Hunt cottage, porch, and three rooms. A dapper and oh-so-polite young chauffeur moved smoothly from door to door. Geraldine out the first, Adeline and Michael out the second, Beverly, out the third and Mr. and Mrs. Rosa and Sebastian D'Amico, Nona and Noni, out the fourth. Rosa hoisted her shopping bags and all six walked in procession by the wondering and wide-eyed Carol and Simone. They followed last. "I'm not going to do anything till I eat," Rosa announced. On went the coffee pot, packages and packages of North End goodies were opened for view. The repast began. Chauffeur and all, they prepared for Simone's spiritual event. All in white lace stockings, proud and excited, Simone observed all her family around her. The plan was underway, in action. Palates pleased, the family was escorted back to the limousine and out of Kiley Court towards St. Peter's. Carol asked the chauffeur if he would stop at the Pilgrim Variety so that she could buy more film. She assured him she could maneuver the door by herself at arrival. But no, out bounced the dashing driver and the darkened windows of this car that seemed so long it would need all of Provincetown and part of Truro to turn around, held their secret from Commercial Street no more. Out stepped Carol, Instamatic camera in hand. Besides a few she didn't know, Carol counted four friends saluting her. Red faced and walking too fast, Carol went in for her film. The privacy of the church was a relief. Adeline

and Sebastian, were the godparents, Auntie and Noni. Father Burns performed the ceremony. Carol, family, and friends looked on. The service was explicit and sacred. A change took place before us as Simone's decision was activated. Intent on Father Burn's words, receiving the balm on her throat, bending for the drops of holy water on her forehead, Simone was poised and aware of every step. She was serious and following throughout the ceremony. She was joyous after, comfortable in the protection of her family and ready to have fun. The entourage went to the Mews for brunch. An excellent meal and beautiful surroundings brought forth the comic relief. Beverly is the leader in that. A family enjoying a meal, enjoying each other, telling stories that cover all emotions, is a wonderful activity to observe and even better if you are part of it. Thank you all in the D'Amico Family for visiting us and for making Simone's baptism even more special. Days after, when the photos returned, Carol asked Simone: "Why are you holding your feet in that pose in all these pictures?" "That's the third position," Simone said.

The story doesn't end here. What comes after baptism? First Communion, how all this got started. Now, a dress for the occasion. Think you can go down Commercial Street and find a "First Communion dress?" Oh no. Orleans? Hyannis? Oh no. All the way to New Bedford to *Silverstein's* and there the rows of puff and lace live rack after rack, waiting for the choices of innumerable second graders. Irene Russell and daughter Dawn went with Carol. The battle was on. Mothers liking cotton, eyelets, smocking, sweet and simple classic dresses that could be worn again. Maybe for two summers. Daughters liking puff and lace and geometric design sent beyond lace by clever sewing machines. The angel on top of the tree, among the clouds, in a dream. Who can tell what they're thinking? Or maybe they're just thinking they want to look like each other as much as possible. Carol and Simone's battle was brief, Carol for classic simplicity, Simone for the puff and lace. Simone flashed those eyes. "You told me that the only thing that was important is that I get what I like and I like this dress!" "Okay, okay, you're right," Carol said. "But why do you want that one and not this one?" "Because that's just a white dress and this is a First Communion dress!" End of argument. Carol urged Irene not to argue, you just can't win. Two hours and ten minutes later, Irene found that out.

I hope you will go to the First Communion ceremony on June 15 at 11:00 am. It's a beautiful day for the young people and their families. You don't have to be a relative to join in. I and several others will see you there.