You have heard of a young girl and a single guy coming to Wildwood for a summer job and then leaving with the love of their lives. Well, that happened to Dolores Phillips and Bill Kraus AND it happened also to their daughter Marianne Kraus and Jim McGinty Jr, AND also to their son Jim McGinty III and Judy Clary. Now that is quite a coincidence and it all happened in Wildwood, to one family and to three generations.

It was in 1948 that Dolores Phillips who had just graduated from high school in Haddonfield, NJ and was working in Strawbridge’s in Philadelphia, decided to visit her family in North Wildwood at their home at Second and Surf. Dolores was walking on the beach one day and stopped to talk with Bill Kraus, a good-looking North Wildwood lifeguard. Well, by December of that year, Dolores and Bill eloped to Maryland.

Later, to make it official, in January, 1949, they were married in a church in Haddonfield, Bill was four years older than Dolores and he had been a lifeguard for several years before they were married. Bill worked for PGW and then owned Abington Keypunch for many years...

Dolores and Bill Kraus’ two children, Richard and Marianne enjoyed summers in Wildwood too. When Marianne Kraus was thirteen, she ventured down to Wildwood in April to look for a job. She stayed with her relatives in North Wildwood and worked as a waitress which she did every summer until 1973. It was that year that the drinking age was lowered to 18, and she was eighteen. She ventured in to the Number One Tavern on First in North Wildwood, which she knew was popular with the lifeguards in the evenings after work. There she met Jim McGinty Jr, who was a lifeguard in North Wildwood since 1969. He also worked as a private detective for the Grady Detective Agency. Marianne and Jim were married shortly thereafter.

Jim’s father, James McGinty Sr., was a policeman and an Irish tenor who sang in Wildwood. His wife, Renee Beagle McGinty had been a waitress at Cozy Morley’s.

Marianne and Jim, Jr. had three children: Erin, Braeden and Jessica Mottershead. Marianne Kraus McGinty surrounded by three of her five grandchildren: left to right Ryan, Braeden and Jessica Mottershead.

Dolores and Bill Kraus in 1949 after they were married.

North Wildwood lifeguard Bill Kraus in 1948

Jim McGinty and Marianne Kraus on the North Wildwood beach after they became engaged, 1969

Anita Hirsch, Author of the recently published book “Wildwood-By-The-Sea: Nostalgia and Recipes”

You may be a fourth generation maintaining the “meet your love in Wildwood” tradition.

Sweet - Sour Sausage Balls

Dolores Kraus prepared these for the holidays when the family got together. These can be made ahead. After simmering for 30 minutes, cool, and refrigerate or freeze sausage balls in their sauce. To serve, reheat in a 350 degree oven for 20 minutes.

- 4 lb. bulk pork sausage
- 4 eggs, slightly beaten
- 1 1/2 c. soft bread crumbs
- 3 c. catsup
- 3/4 c. brown sugar, firmly packed
- 1/2 c. white wine
- 1/2 c. vinegar
- 1/2 c. soy sauce

Mix together sausage, eggs and bread crumbs. Shape mixture into balls the size of walnuts. Bake in a greased pan until browned on all sides. Drain. Combine catsup, brown sugar, vinegar, and soy sauce. Pour over sausage balls and simmer 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. Serve hot.

Yield: 150 balls

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