

Move Over, Lindas And Michaels

Here Come Jennifers And Jasons

By LORRAINE MCCLISH

Kindergarten teachers are hereby alerted to be prepared for the Jasons and the Jennifers that will be coming into their classrooms in about five years. They are here in great numbers to replace the Debs and the Scotts of another year, and the Kathys and the Mikes before that.

One of our staff members reminded us that W. Somerset Maugham once said in a short story that he felt sorry for anyone by the name of Dorothy because everyone always knew exactly how old she was.

Someone asked did we know that the astronauts were overwhelmingly juniors?

About two years ago Observing Life section editor, Margaret Miller printed what she still refers to as her "Debby Page." Every single girl who announced her engagement that week was Debby, Debi, Deborah, Debra or Deb.

A former kindergarten teacher in Southfield told us

that out of 13 girls in a class some years ago, eight of them were named Linda. When she tried to switch a few of them to other classes, the teachers protested because they had enough Lindas of their own.

One girl by the name Sue, whose name hit a high in popularity 20 years ago, told us she once was dating four Mikes. Simultaneously.

But the Sues never did outrank the Kathys of that era. A check of a couple of 1973 high school year books showed that nearly one girl out of every 10 was Cathy, Kathy, Kathleen, Kay, Katie, Cathi, Kathie, Kathi, Kathryn, Catherine or Kate. All told, the Mikes, the Deblys and the Sues ran a poor second place.

When we asked a local junior high school principal for a list of student names, and explained what we wanted it for, he said we didn't have to bother counting; the Davids were going to come in first. And he was right. It was hardly a contest at all.

We gathered up a couple of 1943 high school year books to see if we could find any trends or changes and found two very significant things. The mothers were heavy on J's when those daughters

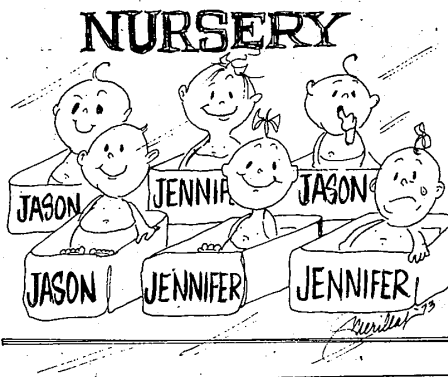
were born. Almost every other girl was Joan, Jeanne, Jane, June, Jean, Jeannette, Janet or June. (No Jans. Not a one.) And if mother didn't favor any of those for first choice, she got a J in her daughter's name by calling her Betty June or Mary Jean or Patty Jo.

Another thing significant in those year books was that for all the Bills and Bobs you know (and you know a lot of them) they all came out in print as William or Robert. Likewise, the Beths and the Bettys went formal with Elizabeth. And all the Eds (there was a pretty good representation of those too) came out with Edward, Edwin or Edgar.

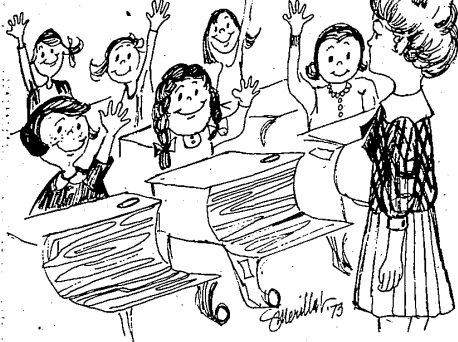
Not too long after that high school girls changed their names, or the spelling of their names, to Toni, Lori, or Vicki, but not in the year book. Nicknames turned up in great numbers in the year book only about 10 years ago.

The Marys and the Johns have held steady with hardly a rise or fall in popularity. The Bills and the Bobs have fallen off in some number over the past 50 years, but they are still hanging in there on the new birth lists.

Good luck to you, Jenny and Jason. We hope you like your name. Wear it proudly.



IS LINDA HERE?



Livonians To Call Thailand

Sgt. Charles R. Glassmire, stationed in Thailand with the U.S. Air Force, will receive a telephone call later this week because his father-in-law was diligent on his job.

It was Martin Heiss of Livonia who saw the announcement of a contest sponsored by the Communications Workers of America, AFL-CIO, and relayed the word to his daughter, Nancy Glassmire, just in time for her to win a free call to her overseas serviceman.

The call is planned Dec. 29 because that is Nancy's birthday.

With her when she picks up the receiver will be the couple's 13-month-old daughter, Stephanie, and two sets of parents, Mr. and Mrs. Heiss of Lancaster Avenue, Livonia, and Mr. and Mrs. Robert Glassmire of Six Mile Road.

Michael, a graduate of Franklin High School, went into the Army in 1968 and has been serving in Germany for three years.

Shiny new ice skates and trusty old ones will hit the ice Thursday, Dec. 27, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. when Girl Scouts from Livonia, Garden

City and Redford Township Sportsland Arena, Cherry Hill Rd. west of Newburgh Rd., Westland, and some 350 scouts are expected to attend.

It will be held in the

GS Skating Party Tonight



MRS. NANCY GLASSMIRE of Livonia, her daughter, Stephanie, and her father, Martin Heiss of Livonia, make arrangements for a holiday call to Mrs. Glassmire's husband, Charles, in Thailand. The call was won through a contest sponsored by Local 4001 of the Communications Workers of America (AFL-CIO). (Observer photo by Bob Wooding)

m. m. memos

We all may dream of a White Christmas, but 11 inches of whiteness coming all at once in the week before the big day can leave its mark on the celebration.

So everyone is going to have his own 1973 Christmas and snow memories.

For my part, I'll remember sympathy for our junior high musicians whose much-rehearsed Christmas concert was cancelled, and for our student editor who couldn't distribute the Christmas issue of the school paper.

And I won't forget right away the moment of panic when our car got firmly stuck on ice while we were on our quest for a Christmas tree. We expressed then our gratitude to the gentleman who got us unstuck, and right here I'd like to repeat those thanks.

That incident led to remembering another Big Snow Christmas of a few years ago. The white stuff piled up Christmas Eve, and the next morning I drove my little, no-snow-tire car to my parents' bungalow home in these suburbs with an abandon I don't even believe now.

This year I heard about a minister friend who on Saturday morning still had a few dozen poinsettia plants in his hallway because the church still was cold and the parking lot uncleared.

And was told about the plight of many in the snow-clogged university town near here. Seems these folks were heading for all sorts of exotic places like New Orleans and Florida and California - if they could just get their cars away from the curb so they could get to the airport.

One nice time of the days before Christmas also was sort of snow-related. Invited to a wedding, I was determined to be on time and allow for parking lot problems. So daughter and I arrived well ahead of the ceremony and enjoyed a long string of Christmas carols played by the organist. About the first time there had been in the busy season to relax and enjoy the music of Christmas.

White Christmases, I've concluded, are never dull.

-Margaret Miller

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