



Paper Boys & Coffee Shops

From the Publisher

As smoke lingers above rooftops of clapboard homes, the last of the woodpile disappears from sight. It is another brisk spring morning, reminding us how often winter refuses to surrender. Cars arrive downtown with just a hint of frost on the windows. With engines running, folks quickly dash in to buy the morning paper.

Our leading paperboy, Bun McBride, stands behind the counter at Black's Paper Store with his new playing card patterned suspenders. A stack of newspapers neatly folded behind him bears the names of regular patrons. As he waits for them to arrive, Burgoyne, Bentley, the Haleys, and Browns congregate and chat about the emerging events dominating last night's selectmen's meeting. Bun smiles and listens. Eaves dropping on the goings-on of the town, has made his job at Black's Paper Store entertaining, at best. As the community's legendary clerk, Bun — now 84 — has served tourists and locals alike in our lakeside community for more than six decades.

Across the street the Avery building begins to be illuminated by the sun, and the lake view from the downtown bridge shows calm waters. As salmon season has finally arrived, a few fishing lines are dropped off the town bridge while an early morning kayaker fiercely paddles from underneath the bridge. With ice-out, fishing skiffs make their way gently across Wolfeboro Bay.

Al Pierce heads up North Main Street, passing the bridge on his bicycle with his backpack strapped on tightly. When he arrives at Camelot Gift Shop, a few newspapers are missing, and coins have been deposited in a can from those early morning readers — testament to a small town honor system at its best.

A few regulars sit on the porch at Lydia's discussing Boston Globe headlines. Waiting for their muffins to be served, they watch Al across the street as he sweeps off the steps of Camelot while he plays his all time favorite tunes from the Big Band era — his broom in step with the music.

Morning runners approaching Black's Paper Store have just returned to town. Dodging a few puddles on the sidewalk after finishing the six mile Waumbec loop, they head to the Market Grille, for their morning coffee.

Most of the snow birds have returned to town and are warmly greeted by their year-round friends. They quickly catch up on the local events missed out on over the winter.

Before long, the coffee shops, paper stores and all downtown will be at peak season welcoming old and new friends and familiar faces. Bustling with excitement of summertime patrons, we celebrate another summer season in the Oldest Summer Resort in America.

Donna Di Casparro