

LEVITTOWN

Planned community with colorful names

Levittown was built in the early to mid-1950s to offer affordable housing in a gardenlike setting, according to the builder's plans.

By JAMES MCGINNIS
Courier Staff

To most people, Levittown is just a neighborhood.

To Dave Marable, it's a marvel, with systematic lines every morning, alphabetically assigned street.

In an aerial map of Levittown's 71,211 homes, some would see a sprawling suburban community. Marable sees the shape of an American eagle.

In the summer, you might find the retired art teacher searching for Cold War-era beach shellers hidden under leaves. Or looking for rare trees inconspicuously planted by Levittown's founder, William J. Levitt.

Marable was 4 years old in 1952 when his parents bought a Levittowner model in the Willowood

section. During the 60th anniversary of the community in 2012, Marable reconstructed a 100-year



Dave Marable

Levittown kitchen, with the trademark black speckled tile and white aluminum cabinets. "This is my past," he said, when asked about his interest in Levittown. Marable said he believes he has a duty to collect the history of Levittown before it's lost to ignorance and redevelopment.

Levittown might have been one of the largest townships in the state, if it had been combined into

one municipality, he said. Efforts to incorporate Levittown into a city failed in the 1990s. Some worried that the community would lack enough resources or industry to offset the massive residential tax base.

Instead, Levittown spread out over four municipalities: Middletown, Falls, Bristol Township and Tullytown, and three school districts: Bristol Township, Newtownay and Pottersburg.

The street layouts help eliminate through-traffic. Most streets in each section are connected to a "drive" that goes around the section.

Only one home in these neighborhoods has the number 18, Marable said. It was a special request made by one of Levitt's employees, who dared to have the colorful address.

Today, the community is tied together by 48 sections whose street names end

seriously begin with the same letter. There are two sections for many letters. One section of the letter would be "Jones" and the other would be "Jones." For example, Sawtooth Lane would be in the Shophouse section while Sweetgrass Road would be in the Snowball Gate section.

In all, Levitt built six models of homes, from the modest, two-bedroom Rancher to the upscale, three-bedroom Country Clubber. Each model was offered in several styles and model years, although interior floor plans were largely identical.

End Near Gate, Paradise Gate, and Snowball Gate are called "The Gates" and were the only neighborhoods constructed without sidewalks, Marable lives in Snowball Gate.

James McGinnis can be reached at 724-780-3249 or jmcp@pittsburghcourier.com.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Population: 51,000

MAJOR TOWN EVENT

St. Michael the Archangel Fest, July

RECREATION SITES

Two Gates park and athletic complex, Spenton and Woodbourne roads; Pinewood Park, Pinewood Drive; Elderberry Park, Elderberry Drive and Hill Lane; Oakton Valley Park, nine-hole golf course, 10-meter swimming pool, small lake and lake, pedestrian trails, 141 S. Oakton Valley Road, Parkers Hill, Franklin City Park, Belmont Lane and Venetian Way, Frosty Hollow Park, New Falls and New Rodgers roads, Black Oak Park, Green Lane and Hill Creek Road, Silver Lake County Park and Nature Center, Bell Road and Route 12

POINT OF INTEREST

Baker Museum, Holly Drive, Bristol Township

COMMUNITY NEWS FIND THEM

ADVERTISEMENT	PAGE
Asset Management	20
Berg Insurance	27
Capgemini, Scott + Stewart	28 & 29
Carli Chapman Agency	30
Circle K/Go 24	34
Coast Windows	35
F & B Services	37
Farm and Home-OK	37
Liberty Press	38
PH Action	37
Pharmax Jerry	38
Proper (ABC) Real Estate	37