

Summer 1992

U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 44
Oblong, IL

Tales



Babe Ruth, Hollywood & Steel Grips

By Ray Elliott
Page 8

Pennies for our thoughts ...

A few years ago, some enterprising University of Illinois freshman wrote nationally syndicated *Chicago Tribune* columnist Bob Greene with a scheme to finance the student's college expenses. The young man said if Greene would explain how simple, easy and affordable it would be for his readers to help finance a needy student's education, he was sure they would respond by the thousands. All each of the readers would have to do to help him out would be to send him a penny.

Greene writes an entertaining human-interest column and seems to follow his instincts in choosing his material from life. He wrote a column where he let the young man explain his proposal to the readers and included the address where the pennies could be sent. The response was phenomenal: pennies poured in from virtually every corner of the country.

Four years later, Greene wrote another column in which he interviewed the young man after he had graduated from the University of Illinois. The thousands of pennies, a few nickels, dimes, quarters and dollars, the young graduate reported, contributed significantly to his educational fund. He even had money left over and was going to give what he still had in the bank to another needy student.

At least that is the way I remember the story. Sometimes the interesting nature of human behavior in Greene's columns sticks with you long after yesterday's newspaper has been tossed away. And that's what I was thinking about when we were getting this issue of *Tales* together and trying to figure out ways to pay for it and future issues without having our hands out all the time. I hate that.

But it is unavoidable. People are always telling me how they like reading *Tales* and how they think it is a good educational and community-related project. I usually nod and wonder why they haven't sent any money. I talked to a man not long ago who told me how he liked to read *Tales*. Before I could respond, he said, "I know, I know, why haven't I sent any money then? I don't know, but I haven't."

I don't either. But I know a lot of people who like *Tales* yet can't afford the larger contributions we solicit. They can afford pennies or nickels or dimes or quarters or even dollars. So the idea is for everybody who likes *Tales* and what we're trying to do by giving young writers a forum and older people some recognition for their contributions to our world to reach down into his or her pocket for what change is there and send it to Tales from the general store, inc., R.R.#2, Box 46, Oblong, IL 62449 or R.R.#2, Box 401, Urbana, IL 61801.

Whether we hear from one of you with a penny or whether we hear from thousands of you with thousands of pennies, we'll apply what we get to pay our printing bills and keep the project going. And we'll let you know how many pennies and other coins and bills we receive as a result in the next issue. Send what you can, even if it is only a penny. We need to know you're out there and appreciate what we're doing. That and the pennies will keep us going just as the proposal the college student made through Bob Greene's column helped him make it through college.

— RAY ELLIOTT

Contents

On the Cover

The story of legendary baseball player Babe Ruth comes to life in Danville, Illinois, as people from the area gather together to help create the most recent movie version of the Bambino's life. See story on page 8.

Photo by Ray Elliott

Capturing the beauty of the Midwest on film

By Mehrdad Azemun

Photographers Larry Kanfer and Raymond Bial record the images of the Midwest to reveal a beauty many overlook.

6

8

Babe Ruth, Hollywood & Steel Grips

By Ray Elliott

Being a part of the making of a Hollywood movie about Babe Ruth is one way to get out of painting one's house.

Project Get Along

In response to Rodney King's plea, "Can we all get along?", students begin a summer project through *Tales* to find out how people all over the country would finish the sentence, "We can all get along if. ..." What would you say?

10

11

Robinson finally celebrates its famous native son

By Dwight Connelly

The first James Jones Celebration is held in the author's hometown of Robinson where scholars and fans praise the once notorious resident.

Tiger Tales

By Urbana High School students

Students write about various topics that concern them and their peers.

12

Departments

Mail's Here	4
Did You Know ...	5
The Last Word	15

Tales from the general store, inc.

Editor
Ray Elliott

Managing Editor
Vanessa Faurie

Tales is published by Tales from the general store, inc., a nonprofit cultural and community journalism corporation founded to preserve the history and culture of the Midwest. Address all correspondence to Tales from the general store, inc., R.R. 2, Oblong, IL 62449. Or telephone 217/384-5820.

The entire contents of *Tales from the general store* are Copyright 1992 by Tales from the general store, inc., and may not be reproduced in whole or in part without the written permission from the publisher.

The contents of *Tales* may be offered to other newspapers and magazines through syndication and may be published in book form as the material becomes available.

Anyone may submit articles, photographs and/or drawings for possible publication in *Tales*. If published, all material becomes the property of Tales from the general store, inc. No responsibility for returning unused submissions can be assumed, however, every effort will be made to return all submissions.



Little Tree stands tall on his own

By Ray Elliott

Some three years ago, Sandy Greenhalgh, an Urbana High School counselor, put a book and a note in my school mailbox. The book had a picture on the cover of a small boy wearing bib overalls that reminded me of ones I wore as a boy.

The name of the book was *The Education of Little Tree* by Forrest Carter. I hadn't heard of the book or the author. I did recognize from his credits, *The Outlaw Josey Wales*, a movie adapted from an earlier Carter book, *Gone to Texas*.

The note said, "You seem like a person who would like this book." What a nice thing to do, I thought, and stuck the book on top of a pile of papers I was carrying.

A few days later, I picked up the book and was immediately struck by Little Tree's simple, sensitive outlook on life.

From the opening bus ride where five-year-old Little Tree experiences social, cultural and racial hostility to his last ride out of the mountains a few years later, it is clear that the "education of Little Tree" isn't just about books by "Mr. Shakespeare" and others that Grandma reads aloud. Life with Wales and Bonnie Bee, the nurturing grandparents, has similar lessons.

I read well into the night. I laughed out loud; I cried silently, tears streaming down my cheeks. At the end, I was emotionally drained but felt like I'd just made some friends who would be with me forever.

I told others about the book and gave it to several friends, telling them all, "Here's a book I think you might enjoy." Sometimes I'd get a card or a call of thanks.

One man called from California at 6:30 a.m. after he'd read the book on a late-evening flight back to the West Coast. "Great book," he said. "I finished it somewhere over Denver."

I was impressed. "Brings a tear to your eyes once in a while," I said. "Brought some crocodile tears to Lloyd's eyes," he said and laughed.

And so it went. Last year I started reading a chapter or two now and then to some freshman classes composed of young people who, for one reason or another, don't do well in school, don't like it and aren't afraid to say so. When I wouldn't read for a while, somebody would invariably ask about Little Tree.

"When you gonna read about the Little Dude?" one kid asked every few days. "I likes the Little Dude."

So did I. One senior in my rhetoric class read it as part of an independent assignment and recommended it for other classes. I managed to get twenty-five copies this year. My two senior rhetoric classes passed the book around and read it during the first month of school. And I got the freshmen started with it.

Then I started getting notes, clippings and phone calls: *The Education of Little Tree* was a hoax. It wasn't the true story of a half-Cherokee boy raised by his grandparents. Forrest Carter was really Asa Carter, former KKK member and George Wallace speech writer responsible for the "Segregation now! Segregation tomorrow! Segregation forever!" speech Wallace gave in his 1963 inaugural address as Alabama governor. And the man who wrote that was nothing like Little Tree.

So what do you think of Little Tree now? people asked.

Well, I still think Little Tree is great. I've always looked at an author's life to see how it shaped his work. But it isn't absolutely necessary. The book either stands or falls on its own.

Yet some people feel betrayed, if the story about Carter's identity is true and his story untrue.

One acquaintance who looked at it as a book standing alone, although she was bothered by the allegations, said her mother refuses to read *Little Tree* since questions about the author have surfaced. As noble as that seems, I can think of many artists of different mediums who are far from model citizens. Yet we honor their work for what it is. And it seems to me that *The Education of Little Tree* is worthy of our honor.

The book was written by someone with awfully keen eyes and good ears to give the work such a ring of truth. Whether that person was Forrest Carter, aka Little Tree, or Asa Carter, hatemonger, or whether they were one and the same, I'm not sure. It may be that Asa became Forrest and wrote *Little Tree* as a form of catharsis.

"I'm not sure a bad person can write a good book," novelist Alice Walker once said. "If art doesn't make us better, then what on earth is it for?"

All of which makes for interesting and thought-provoking discussions about the value of the work, regardless of who did the writing or what the writer may have said or done and how anybody feels about that. *The Education of Little Tree* is worth reading, the controversy notwithstanding, if you're the kind of people who would appreciate it. And if you're not, you're the kind of person who ought to read it.

Mail's Here

CARE plants the most wonderful seeds on earth.

Seeds of self-sufficiency that help starving people become healthy, productive people. And we do it village by village by village. Please help us turn cries for help into the laughter of hope.



1-800-521-CARE

Participation welcome

What a wonderful project *Tales* represents—to preserve the history and culture of the Midwest. I love your open-minded interpretation of that to include what Midwesterners think of the world and cultures apart from their own; I have the (last) issue in hand.

I assume that my husband and I are on your mailing list because we have a son at Urbana High School. Your writers for *Tales*—John Schomberg, Lori Adams, Michele Spence, Vanessa Faurie, Grace Han, *et al*—have outstanding intelligence, sensitivity and ability to write. You are to be congratulated for providing the means for their work to be read. I hope *Tales* will continue to receive enough financial support.

I teach English at University High School in Urbana and intend to encourage my students to submit.

— ROSEMARY LAUGHLIN
Urbana, Illinois

Polish teacher looking for student penpals

I am an English teacher living in Cracow, Poland's "university town." A lot of my students want to have penpals in America. Their average age is twenty; the youngest is fifteen. If your students would like to have pen-friends in Poland, please send addresses. Every letter will be answered!

Our biggest handicap here is that we have very few English books to study. It would be a great favor to us if you could send whatever used books of yours you can spare. English dictionaries would be most appreciated.

We are also anxious to receive items that you consider typically American to help us learn more about the American way of life.

Please accept our sincere thanks for your help and generosity.

In answering us, please use International Reply Coupons from the post office.

— Mr. PIOTR KOSIBOWICZ
Narutowicza 22/68
31-214 Krakow, Poland

Editor's Note: The English School No. 2 in Tartu, Estonia, also welcomes English-language

books for its students. You may send them to Tartu Secondary School No. 2, Jonissoni 3, 202400 Tartu, Estonia.

Penpals for Korean students wanted, too

I am in the junior of Korea air and correspondence university in Pusan, Korea. My major is English literature. Also, I am a master of Students Teenagers Club and the number of my membership has two thousand students of both sexes.

I am eagerly seeking foreign students who would like to correspond with our students. There are also many Korean people who want to exchange letters and friendship with American people. They frequently request me to let them have foreign pen friends since I have been to the USA in the year of 1987.

I've noticed this would help not only their English and emotional life, but also expand their knowledge of foreign lands. This would also promote a worldwide friendship and mutual relationship, as well as serving as a true foundation of world peace. I feel it is necessary to publish this simple wish among your readers.

The only information I need of a person is his or her name, address, sex, age, hobbies and picture, if possible. I expect to receive many letters from your readers wishing to correspond with our students.

I will appreciate it very much if you let me have the chance to do this for our students. This would be a warm and thoughtful favor.

Thank you.

— Miss KANG HO SUN
P.O. Box 774
Pusan 600-607
Korea

How do you get Foxfire?

The *Foxfire* magazine was mentioned in your last *Tales*. I was wondering if you have the address for Foxfire. Can you subscribe to it?

— NORMA HENDRIX
Marshall, Illinois

Editor's Note: The Foxfire project has magazines and other materials available. You may write to The Foxfire Fund, Inc., P.O. Box B, Rabun Gap, GA 30568,

Happy readers

I enjoy reading *Tales*.

— MARCELLA L. CLARK
Salinas, California

I enjoy the *Tales* publication. Thanks for sending them. Good luck!

— GLADYS O. TYHURST
Mount Vernon, Illinois

Genoa has annual Pioneer Day in late summer

Our community is fortunate to have a very fine railroad depot and caboose as its museum. (August 1991 was) our sixth year to have Pioneer Day at the museum, located at the west edge of Genoa, Illinois, on Route 72.

There were over thirty old-time crafters demonstrating all day, Sunday, August 25. Corn husk dolls, wood shaving, wheat flour, hand-shelling corn, rope making, butter churning, wheat weaving, rug braiding, hammered dulcimers, colonial tin punch, scherenschnitte (old-time German paper cutting), apple butter, apple cider making and demonstrations on how a household was run.

There was also a children's corner with rag tying hair, reading stories, teaching songs, teepees showing lifestyles of Indians, Swedish weaving, baking bread, homemade ice cream, quilting and many others.

A pork chop B.B.Q. dinner was served by the Lions' Club. Several area country musicians kept toes tapping, a gospel group and a clogging group. There was also an enacted train robbery and shoot-out.

Families came with their children, who were very fascinated by all the demonstrations, stayed all day. There was no charge, except for the B.B.Q. pork chops. There were free samples of all the other foods made during the day. No crafts were sold at the event, however, crafters were happy to take orders.

The museum was also open to the public all during the event.

We are interested in having other demonstrators who just enjoy telling folks about their craft and how it's made. Write JoAnn Watson, North Sycamore Street, Genoa, Illinois 60135.

Thanks.

— JANE PARKER BROWN
Genoa, Illinois



Photo courtesy of the Champaign County Historical Archives at The Urbana Free Library

Frank Sadorus of Champaign County photographed his family and various aspects of east-central Illinois in the early part of this century. Unlike most photos we see from that time, Sadorus occasionally captured a humorous, casual scene on film. He titled this work, "The Punkin Orchestra." The date is not known, but the print was made March 2, 1912.

Did You Know...

Tales contributor publishes works

Longtime *Tales* contributor John L. Freeland of Mansfield, Ohio, has published a collection of his short stories and a collection of poems.

Stories of a Lifetime; The Pictures on the Wall and Other Short Stories contains eighteen works of fiction, as well as a few of the author's family photos, over the course of 460-plus pages. *Across Memory's Pages; Poem in Rhyme and Rhythm* features twenty-eight poems and some Biblical quotations.

Freeland was born near Bellair, which is also the *Tales* project's birthplace, and went to school there and in nearby Casey. Throughout his ninety years, he has taught, farmed, worked on roads, in a foundry, in a factory, was a supervisor for a utility company and worked for the U.S. Postal Service.

Catalog includes earth-friendly items

The environment is an important issue. The Green Spirit

catalog by Tallmark offers many ways people of all ages can help make the world cleaner and safer.

The catalog contains more than 150 earth-friendly products. For young children, there are natural baby care products and art materials, animal T-shirts to color and hand-crafted animal mobiles. For older children, there are books on bird watching and gardening and computer and board games.

For inside the home, there are natural cleaning products, recycling aids, recycled paper products, plus energy-saving products for lighting, cooling/heating and water conservation.

For outside the home, the catalog offers solar lighting products, water saving lawn and garden aids, compost bins and accessories and even an innovative solar oven and solar-cooled hats.

There are also various gift ideas, including hand-made stationery, handblown glassware, wooden music boxes and door harps, southern-style hammocks and handwoven picnic baskets.

To receive a free copy, you may call (800) 942-4383 or write

Tallmark, P.O. Box 816, New Albany, IN 47150.

Book details pioneer life for women

Teacher, historian, author and lecturer Larry D. Underwood has published a book about America's pioneer women. *Love and Glory*, published by Media Publishing of Lincoln, Nebraska, paints a picture of life on the frontier from diaries, newspapers and occasional letters.

Frances Roe wrote, "I love the West and life at a western post, and the virtues of city life do not seem attractive to me." Yet Frances Grummond lived in constant fear of Indian attack. Of the attack that took the life of her husband, she wrote, "Then followed a few quick volleys, then scattering volleys, and then dead silence." But Mary Clementine Collins, a missionary to the Sioux, wrote, "I plead for these people. They are Americans with American ancestry. They have the true American pride of country."

"The strength, courage and heroism of America's pioneer

women often are overshadowed by the mythic, macho West," wrote John Jeorschke, editor of *True West* and *Old West*. Most of those women are lost to history, but from a list of names which survive, Larry Underwood has chosen a fascinating sample of saints and sinners, Indian captives and army wives. In *Love and Glory*, he tells their stories with warmth and an unstinting fidelity to fact."

Love and Glory (priced at \$9.95, 188 pages, paperback) is available at local bookstores or directly from the publisher: Media Publishing, a division of Westport Publishers, Inc., 2440 O Street, Suite 202, Lincoln, Nebraska 68510-1125.

Crawford County's first newspapers

"There is no more faithful historian of a community than the local press; and be it ever so humble or unpretentious, it can not fail in the course of years to furnish valuable information for future reference," wrote George W. Harper for the *History of Crawford and Clark Counties, 1883*.

Most of the first newspapers in Crawford County did not have long life spans—a few years at best. They started out as independent publications, but gradually the political leanings became more overt with the establishment of Democratic and Republican papers. But still, no other medium at that time could provide a small community with the news of its own area.

Here is a list of the first newspapers in Crawford County, according to the 1883 book: 1852 - *The Wabash Sentinel* (Hutsonville), later called the *Journal*; 1856 - *The Ruralist* (Palestine); 1857 - *The Crawford Banner* (Hutsonville) and *The Robinson Gazette*; 1859 - *The Yellow Jacket* (Palestine); 1860 - *The Crawford County Bulletin* (Robinson); 1862 - *The Monitor* (Robinson); 1863 - *The Constitution* (Robinson) and *The Robinson Argus*; 1871 - *The Real Estate Advertiser* (Palestine, monthly); 1874 - *The Palestine News*; 1879 - *The Crawford Democrat* (Robinson); 1880 - *The Palestine Saturday Call*; and 1882 - *The Anti-Monopolist* (Robinson).

capturing the beauty of the midwest on film

By Mehrdad Azemun

When many Americans think about beautiful areas of the United States, they rarely think of the Midwest. The landscape is looked at only as farm land, and its small towns are seen as dull and commonplace. But two area photographers challenge these widely held notions and have been working for years to reveal the Midwest (specifically east-central Illinois and western Indiana) as a beautiful, unique place. Although they differ in subject matter and approach, they both show the Midwest to be more than simply the breadbasket of the nation.

For more than a decade, Larry Kanfer has been capturing the Illinois landscape on film. Originally from Portland, Oregon, he moved to Urbana-Champaign in the mid-seventies to attend the School of Architecture at the University of Illinois. Though he has a degree in architecture, photography has become the focus of Kanfer's work.

His initial reaction to the Midwestern landscape was an honest but common one: "I hated it." However, he began to go out into the country more and more often as a hiatus to his architectural studies. Eventually, he grew to love the land. He began to take landscape photographs and sold his first print in 1978.

What eventually drew Kanfer to the landscape is a special kind of beauty—one that he explained in the introduction to his book, *Prairiescapes*, as a non-traditional beauty. According to Kanfer, the beauty is chronological rather than physical.

Kanfer expounded on this chronology. First, there is the literal dead of winter where the fields are laid bare and there seems to be little or no life anywhere. With March comes the first signs of spring, when people can feel, as Kanfer said, "a sense of power—you know what's coming." Suddenly, the fields become black, and the buzz of activity on the farms picks up.

The summer months bring the more obvious changes. "You go from being able to see forever to being able to see only ten-foot corn. It's like a maze." After several weeks, the corn turns brown, and by fall, the weather fronts slow down as the prelude to another winter.

Kanfer finds wonder in this sequence of events. "It's that change that is so beautiful," he said. In contrast, the beauty of Kanfer's birthplace, the Pacific



"Oasis" by Larry Kanfer

Northwest, is more obvious. "The beauty strikes you; it slaps you in the face," he said. "The beauty (here) grows on you."

The wonder of the Illinois landscape's season cycle can be seen and felt repeatedly in Kanfer's prints, specifically in "Awaiting Spring" where the fence row, laying idle for weeks, straddles the field that has been sitting dormant through winter and is entering that most precarious period in early spring when it begins to seem doubtful that the warming will ever come. "Corn" displays the proud and prosperous labor of the farmer and the land with the broad, arcing leaves in the midsummer sunlight.

Kanfer's photographs obviously display the landscape and its subtle beauties, but what do they say about the people who live on the land and the way in which they live? People are often absent

from Kanfer's photographs. He prefers instead "to show signs of people, like an empty chair, where civilization has made the mark, where we have made the mark on the landscape."

Kanfer's work displays not only the landscape, but interprets the land to speak about the Midwestern citizen. "The Midwest is known to be a very conservative place," Kanfer said, "sort of entombed between the two coasts. I can see that with the landscape. It's very solid. Over generations, things have been built up here, as opposed to the West Coast where people went for quick money. This accounts for its solidity."

Kanfer likes to illustrate this static nature by "showing the bare bones, the solid singularities." These singularities can be a lone tree, one farmhouse or a schoolhouse standing alone in (and

above) the land.

"I feel a strength in them," he said of these solitary features, "like they are standing up. I always think back to the pioneers, when it was thirty below zero and you don't have a furnace, what do you do?"

An example of Kanfer's partiality for singularities can be seen in "Oasis." The farmhouse and trees are standing as if in defiance. They are the only things on a thingless landscape, the feature that gains the most importance is not the land itself. It is the great expanse of the heavens. For this reason, the sky often takes up at least the top half of many of Kanfer's photographs.

As an artist with architectural training, Kanfer places emphasis on line, balance and other factors in his composition. However, he believes the most important factor is emotion or mood, rather than

the rational construction of an image. A photograph can "have such an overwhelming feeling that the rules of photography don't matter, and really, that's the bottom line: it has to have an overwhelming feeling." His photographs of the countryside (and the mood they evoke) recall a passage about the Midwestern landscape by William Inge:

When I lived for a while in western Massachusetts friends liked to tell me about a woman from Minnesota who had come to the Berkshires for a vacation that she did not appear to be enjoying. She took no pleasure at all in the lush, romantic landscape. When asked what she thought of the scenery she replied, "There isn't any. The mountains get in the way." I appreciated the story and realized that I felt the same way. No mountains can be as beautiful to me as the far horizon, level as a floor, twenty or thirty miles in the distance. The sight fills me with the wonderful feeling of personal freedom, and also with a sense of infinity. Man finds his solitude here and in the nature of all being.

Now an adopted son of the Midwest, Kanfer operates his own studio in Champaign and has been working on a couple of projects. His most recent book, *On This Island*, is a collection of photographs taken on Long Island. A new collection of Illinois landscape photography and two calendars (one for the University of Illinois) are also available.

Kanfer enjoys the photographic work he has done in this area—not because it is easy, but because it is difficult. One has to search for the beauty, unlike the slap-in-the-face beauty of the Pacific Northwest.

Although Kanfer has a portfolio of work from the Northwest, he said "it's too easy. It's not fun for me to take photographs of something that just by itself is beautiful." He prefers the Midwest because it is challenging to capture on film. Rising to that challenge, Kanfer said, "is what I thrive on."

Another photographer who differs in subject matter and approach is Raymond Bial. Like Kanfer, Bial has been working on photography in the area for more than a decade. However, his emphasis is not so much on landscape photography as portraiture.

Bial grew up in a small, southern Indiana town, as well as on farms in Illinois and Michigan.

He graduated from the University of Illinois and then went to work on the East Coast. Something significant happened when he came home for Christmas 1971, as he recalled in his introduction to *Common Ground*, a collection of portraits, still lifes and landscapes. As he drove around the Illinois countryside, he found himself "drawn not just by the familiarity of the region, but by the extent of the changes which had occurred in just the few years since I'd left college."

After this experience, Bial took photographs of rural life whenever he came home: storefronts, gas stations, fence posts in a wood lot. Then, after a "short stint in graduate school," he was back photographing regularly.

Never having taken a formal photography course, Bial said, "Photography happened to me. I never really thought of it."

He continued to take short trips into the country and tried to capture what he considered to be representative of rural life and culture. Finally, after more than a year of doing landscapes and still lifes, he "garnered enough courage to approach someone and ask them if I can take their picture." When Bial was traveling by the Wabash River in Indiana, he saw a man tinkering with his tractor under a shade tree. Bial offered to take the man's picture, and the man easily accepted.

"It became pretty routine after that," he said. And his portrait style has not changed much since then.

Bial has now published three books on rural life. The first was *Ivesdale* (1982), which was devoted to the town of Ivesdale in southwest Champaign County. The second was *Common Ground* (1986, and edited by Bial's wife, Linda). The latest and largest collection is *Stopping By: Portraits From Small Towns* (1988).

Bial has taken scores of weekend trips into the countryside and usually drives to towns with a population of three thousand or less. There, he simply steps inside one of the small businesses or stores and asks the people if they mind him taking their picture. The results are an honest and straightforward depiction of rural citizens.

Subjects usually face the camera squarely and pose as they wish: sitting or standing, smiling or not. Bial rejects the photojournalistic approach of taking candids.

"A lot of photographers shy away from portraits," he said. "If they want to do pictures of people, they want to do candids where they capture someone unaware. If someone knows they are being photographed and are comfortable—that's an interesting challenge."

Bial's task is to provide as realistic a portrait as possible so "you can understand something of the person and get to know them just by looking at it." He also rejects the idea of people going to a studio "to get an

idealized version of themselves. They pose and they're very self-conscious. I like the idea of somebody just presenting themselves to the camera."

What is remarkable about Bial's photographs is how the subjects remain so relaxed in front of a bulky Mamiya camera and myriad lights. There are perhaps two reasons for the results Bial gets. The first is his low-key manner. The second, according to him, is the people themselves. "I pretty much let them be themselves. It's pretty easy to do in rural areas. They don't have the pretensions of people in the larger cities."

The faces from some of his rural portraits (particularly the farmers) tell of lives devoted to the land and serve as a fitting illustration to Kathryn Kerr's poem, "Down Home," from the book, *First Frost* (a joint project of Kerr's poetry and Bial's photos):

*When the sun came up,
we fed the hogs
then crossed the pasture
with the dog.
It was hot at 6 a.m.
and we were tired.*

*Home,
to smell the damp
woods in the ravine,
clover in the sun.
We honored the years
its took to turn*

*poor soil into cedar
Seven barns and shed,
we went into every one,
examined each post
each trimmed and notched
and fitted by hand.*

*The walls and roofs
are salvage.
You are proud
to waste nothing,
need little,
to farm.*

One of these portraits is "Pat Feeny, farmer," from Ivesdale. He stands in front of a wall of

corn. Behind the farmer is his life—the thing for which he strains his body and the land. This is an environmental portrait in every sense of the term. The subject is shown with his joint labor and joint creation.

One aspect of Bial's work that is often overlooked is the still life. The majority of these prints is a display of stagnation: an old tractor overgrown by Queen Anne's Lace, a rusty can upside down on a fencepost, a tub filled with rain water in the middle of

Continued on page 14



A country porch that caught Raymond Bial's eye.



"Pat Feeny, farmer" by Raymond Bial



"Awaiting Spring" by Larry Kanfer

Babe Ruth, Hollyw

By
Ray
Elliott

ONE day last summer when all I had to look forward to for two weeks was scraping and painting my house, I saw a piece in the newspaper about extras being needed in Danville, Illinois, where a crew was filming part of the latest Babe Ruth movie starring John Goodman and Kelly McGillis.

That sounded interesting. Years ago in Los Angeles, I had slept in rather than go to work as an extra on the set of *It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World*. Afterwards, I'd regret-

ted not going and had always wanted to see how movies are made and then see the finished product. Danville was only thirty minutes from my house. So I decided not to sleep in this time.

That's what I told everybody, anyway. To be perfectly honest, however, the reason I drove to Danville that first day, stood in line with scores of others, all with their own reasons for being there, with my picture in hand, and agreed to have my hair cut and beard shaved, if I was selected, was because I hate to paint.

I calculated the money I would make as an extra. The fourteen-day job paid five dollars an hour and time and a half each hour over twelve each day of a seven-day-a-week schedule. Because filming sometimes depended on the weather and shots scheduled couldn't always be completed on time, extras had to agree to stay until the day's shooting was completed and work Saturdays, Sundays and the Fourth of July.



Above: Steel Grips on location in Danville
At right: Hollywood turns back the clock in Danville Stadium to a time when Babe Ruth (played by John Goodman, standing at home plate) took center stage in the world of sports.

Photos by Ray Elliott



Now I remembered why I'd slept in. With any overtime at all on this job, though, it would pay about a thousand dollars for playing around, meeting new people and learning about something I knew very little. The money would pay someone else to do the painting. I didn't know if that would do the job, but I knew it would go a long way toward it.

The next step was to call the casting office at a designated time. When I finally redialed enough to get beyond the busy signal, I was given a number and told when to report for a haircut, shave and wardrobe. I was in the movies and out of the painting! It sounded like a good trade off to me. I needed a haircut anyway.

No question but one of the barbers in a makeshift shop in a room of the junior high just behind the baseball stadium where scenes from the movie would be filmed enjoyed clipping off my beard and chopping off

my hair, making me look like a working class stiff of seventy-five years ago. Made me look goofy, too. But I kind of liked this new look for the occasion.

Back in the boys' locker room, which served as a dressing room for male extras, to try on the period clothing we'd been issued from wardrobe, the man next to me looked over and shook his head. He was a construction worker who had had a ponytail that hung down below his belt. He'd cut it off earlier and saved it for sentimental value.

"I've seen you around for four or five years," he said. "But I wouldn't have known you if I hadn't seen you in that barber chair."

I knew what he meant. When I first looked at the thin, elongated, rather English-looking face that stared back at me in the mirror, I started to look over my shoulder to see who was behind me. It gave me a somewhat different feeling about myself.

Dressed in a mint green, worsted wool, three-piece suit with trousers two inches too short, black lace-up dress shoes and a matching dress cap with a fastened-down top, I was nothing short of silly looking. What a man won't do to get out of something he doesn't want to do, I thought. Two weeks of this may be as bad as painting.

The routine was the same each day—long, often boring, repetitious and tiring. Makeup and wardrobe opened early so everybody could get dressed, have period hair styles and be ready for the day's filming on time. After getting ready, the extras headed for the stadium to standby for scenes. Each morning a tent just outside had tables full of rolls and large containers of orange juice to get the day rolling.

Inside the stadium, which had been refurbished to resemble both Fenway Park in Boston and Pittsburgh's Forbes Field in their

early days, extras sat around, talked, slept, read or watched the crew get ready for the day's work. Some people tried to figure out what and where the first shots would be taken so they could find seats in the scene.

The latter group studied the angles like billiards players and always ended up in front of the camera when everything was set up and ready for the first shot by around nine. By then, the early summer sun was hitting the entire field and box seats on both sides of the diamond.

I knew from the beginning that while extras were necessary to make the movie, they weren't high on the totem pole. You could tell that when you saw the roped-off areas for the regular staff filled with fresh fruit and more fulfilling food than was provided for the masses. But when I heard that the young film interns or beginning film makers walking around with bullhorns were called wranglers, I was

ood & Steel Grips



sunglasses, snuff out filter cigarettes, cover up white socks (which were forbidden) and hide coolers or anything else not of the period of the film. Some would move off after strays who were playing cards, reading or talking up in the higher parts of the bleachers and move them down on the set.

After a couple of hours or so of shooting the same short segment time after time, then moving the cameras and equipment for another angle of the same shot, it would be time for lunch. That was the signal for everyone to hurry out of the bleachers and pour through the exits, down the stairs and back out to the tent where each extra got a sack lunch, consisting of a sandwich, a bag of chips, some kind of cookie or cake and a can of pop.

One day I was waiting for the line to thin and was talking to a dapper-looking man in his seventies. Dressed in a thirties' suit with a homburg sitting jauntily on his head, he looked like an old-time character actor or as if he really were of the time.

Steel Grips, as Ray Wright is known by people around Danville because he put in so many years at Industrial Gloves, said, "Thing that scares me out here is when they announce lunch."

I laughed, watching the crowd move along.

"Doesn't it?" he asked, a twinkle in his eyes. "Huh? Why, it's just like the sinking of the Titanic. That's no joke. And did you see 'em throwin' hot dogs (for the crowd scenes)? It's like a monkey in the zoo. You'd have thought they was throwin' 'em twenty-dollar gold pieces."

Meanwhile, the movie crew and some extras who worked down on the field ate under another tent and from a different menu. Rumors circulated among the extras that a chef from Los Angeles and his crew cooked in a fully equipped mobile kitchen in the trailer of a semi parked nearby and served broiled swordfish, prime rib and such for lunch. The rumors proved to be

true.

When Babe Ruth was making \$100,000 a year for filling Yankee Stadium and eating as many hot dogs as he wanted, Steel Grips was dropping out of high school and going to work in a large vegetable garden for seventy-five cents a day. He didn't follow baseball much back then but knew Ruth by reputation.

"I didn't have the money to go to a ball game," he said, "and Chicago was a long ways away."

After working in the vegetable garden and whatever jobs he could find for several years, Steel Grips turned twenty-one and found the job in the glove factory

he was saying but laughed with him. He helped fight the boredom and the heat.

The afternoon and evening shootings were repeats of the morning shots. By early afternoon, it got so hot that wranglers kept the water and the Gatorade coolers full and available to make sure no one became dehydrated or overheated.

Like everyone else, I was drenched with sweat before noon and wore a wet shirt throughout the day. What was worse, though, was that male extras only got clean shirts every other day. The damp, smelly shirts were a bit too much of a reminder of the times, I

Series or some dramatic victory for the home team. I made it just inside the third-base line and turned toward home plate when Goodman touched it and turned to his right to head for the dugout.

He broke out of the Babe Ruth trot that he had down pat and ran. As I came on line abreast of him, I could see the look of terror in his eyes as he tried to get through the crowd. The scene was real, and a retake wasn't needed.

I wouldn't do a retake as an extra, either. But in the two weeks I learned a little about movie making and earned some money to hire the painting done. I also read two newspapers a day and four books during that time. I don't often have the opportunity to do that.

Far and away the best book was a biography of Babe Ruth simply called *The Babe* by Robert W. Creamer. I'd seen parts of the William Bendix version of the Babe Ruth story and wondered why anybody would try to make a movie about him. The book simply did the job much better. Creamer clearly described Ruth's life, and readers see the real man.

I learned more than I really wanted to know about one of the greatest sports heroes of the century. Many of the raw, slice-of-life anecdotes from the book didn't make it to the movie. I saw Ruth as a rude but fun-loving man with an enormous appetite and lust for life. I wondered if the movie could do justice to him.

But the film was entertaining. I enjoyed seeing it and watching how some parts of the old stadium in Danville showed up in one angle of a shot, then the ivy-covered outfield walls of Wrigley Field, where some of the movie was filmed, appeared in another angle. I was also amazed to learn that one camera is able to take a shot of a few hundred extras and multiply it into a full stadium of thousands.

I've satisfied my curiosity about movie-making, and as Steel Grips said, "It was different and something to do."

Best of all, it wasn't painting.

'This is the best thing that has happened to D-ville since they put the color in the Oleo.'

that he would stay with for his entire adult working life. He didn't retire until 1985 when he was nearing his seventieth birthday.

"I got a job in 1937 for thirty-two cents an hour, \$2.56 a day," he said, "and didn't have enough sense to go any place else. I worked there forty-eight years."

That's a long time by any standards. But men of Steel Grips' generation stayed put in their jobs and home, even though they thought the jobs were "boring" and the town was "deader than yesterday's newspaper."

"Yes, sir," he said, talking about his job, the town he'd lived in all of his life and the movie being filmed there, "this is the best thing that has happened to D-ville since they put the color in the Oleo."

When he said that and laughed, some younger people looked at him blankly. I was embarrassed to admit that I understood what

thought, and totally unnecessary for the realistic effect of the movie.

But another night right before quitting time, I saw a real aspect of life rather unexpectedly that worked quite well. The assistant director got on the bullhorn and set up the scene for the extras as he always did. This time Ruth was going to hit a home run to win the game. The crowd would vault over the walls and storm the field.

"Now I know you're tired and want to go home," he said, knowing that the extras were also accustomed to shooting the same scene time after time. "But when the Babe rounds third base, jump over that wall and let everyone know how you feel. If you get it right, we may not have to shoot it again."

That was all it took. When the Babe rounded third, we leaped over the wall, hollering and screaming as real crowds do after the final game of the World

more clear on the real status of extras.

When it was time to set up a shot, the wranglers would walk around through the extras like cowboys rounding up the herd to get it on the trail or bed it down for the night. One of them would raise the bullhorn and amplify the instructions to everyone.

"All A's move down behind the dugout on the first-base side," the wrangler would say to the extras who had authentic period clothing. B's were mostly men who wore dark but modern suits and couldn't be too close to the camera.

Before he could finish, people would be on their feet and moving toward the designated area. Other wranglers would try to direct people to move in an orderly manner and fill up the seats logically. But people knew where they wanted to sit.

The wranglers would move through the crowd, telling everyone to remove glasses and

Rodney King asked

Can we all get along?

Through Tales, Urbana High School students are trying to find out

By Ray Elliott

A group of Urbana High School students and recent graduates far from riot-torn south-central Los Angeles have decided to take the question Rodney King asked in his emotional press conference—"Can we all get along?"—and turn it into a positive experience they hope will provide some succinct answers to how people can get along as well as provide some worthwhile practical experience.

I met with the students to discuss the idea and was immediately struck with their sincerity and compassion. They all talked at once, bubbling with enthusiasm, got committees formed and planned initial assignments.

"Protest of the Rodney King verdict led to damage and death," recent graduate Ben Burrus said after the meeting. "I feel this project is a chance to do something positive for society. It is a chance for building instead of destroying."

What the students hope to build is a series of answers to an idea taken from King's question about getting along with each other. Just what does it take, the students want to know. When they collect a representative sample, they plan to publish the results in a book. What they're

looking for is a finish to the sentence: "We can all get along if ..." from a broad cross-section of people who, in King's words, are going to be here for a while and have to get along with one another. They want to know what people think it takes for them to get along with different races and cultures.

"I think the whole idea makes people realize what they are and what they know at heart," graduate Alex Trujillo said. The Miami-born Cuban-American knows a little about what it takes to get along with people. He moved to Urbana two years ago to escape the Miami streets.

"It was kind of funny," he said, explaining how Urbana was different than his predominantly Cuban-American high school. "I was kind of quiet, just figuring out what was going on.

"The black guys liked me okay. But the black girls didn't like me. They said I was stuck up because I wouldn't speak to them. Hey, I was new and didn't know what was going on, so I didn't just go up and start talking to anybody.

"The white girls liked me because I was new, and they were curious about me. That made the white guys not like me because they thought I was trying to be a casanova.

But, hey, all I was trying to do was see what was going on."

What's going on and where the world is headed was motivation enough for the students when the idea for the book came up. Although most of those involved in the project have their own plans for the future pretty well mapped out, they still think about the larger picture.

"I think for the United States to have a hopeful future everyone needs to be involved in it," graduate Karen Webber said. "A project that deals with how we can get along is an important part of that future."

Other students see the project as a worthwhile way they can get together with a culturally and racially diverse group of their peers and work for a common purpose.

"There are many opportunities for students to get involved," graduate Rob Scharlau said. "But this project incorporates many different aspects. You can get involved in writing, marketing, financing—a great real-life experience helping run a business with people you enjoy and care about."

Graduate Matt Foster would like "to help

make this a better place for my children by helping educate people about each other." Foster recently reported for duty with the National Guard.

Before leaving, he and the others were busy drafting letters and electronic-mail notes they have begun sending to schools across the country. More responses will come from other mailings and personal interviews.

"I want to talk to gang members," graduate Tiffany Stevenson said. "I think we need to hear what everybody says about what could help us get along."

The students have also asked the media for help in spreading the word about the project. So if you've got a finish to "We can all get along if ..." that you'd like to be considered for inclusion in the book, send your response along with your name (which won't be used), address and age to Project Get Along, c/o Tales, R.R. 2, Box 401, Urbana, IL 61801.

"I'm excited about reading all the quotes and helping select the ones that go in," graduate Amanda Wizeki said. "I think it will be interesting to see what the quotes can teach me and others about how we can get along better."

REPLY FORM

Please make copies of this form and pass them along to others who would like to respond. We need your help at the grassroots level to get as many different responses as possible.

Provide your response to the following in any way you wish.
Please write legibly.

Name _____

Age _____

City/State _____

We can all get along if _____

Send this response to the following address by July 15:

**Project Get Along
c/o Tales
R.R. 2, Box 401
Urbana, IL 61801**

Robinson finally celebrates its famous

NATIVE SON

By Dwight Connelly

You can go home again—if you are novelist James Jones, and if home is Robinson, Illinois. Jones, who died in 1977, could not, of course, come home in body, but perhaps he did in spirit as biographers, literary critics and personal friends celebrated the first James Jones Celebration November 16 at Lincoln Trail College and the Robinson Elks Club.

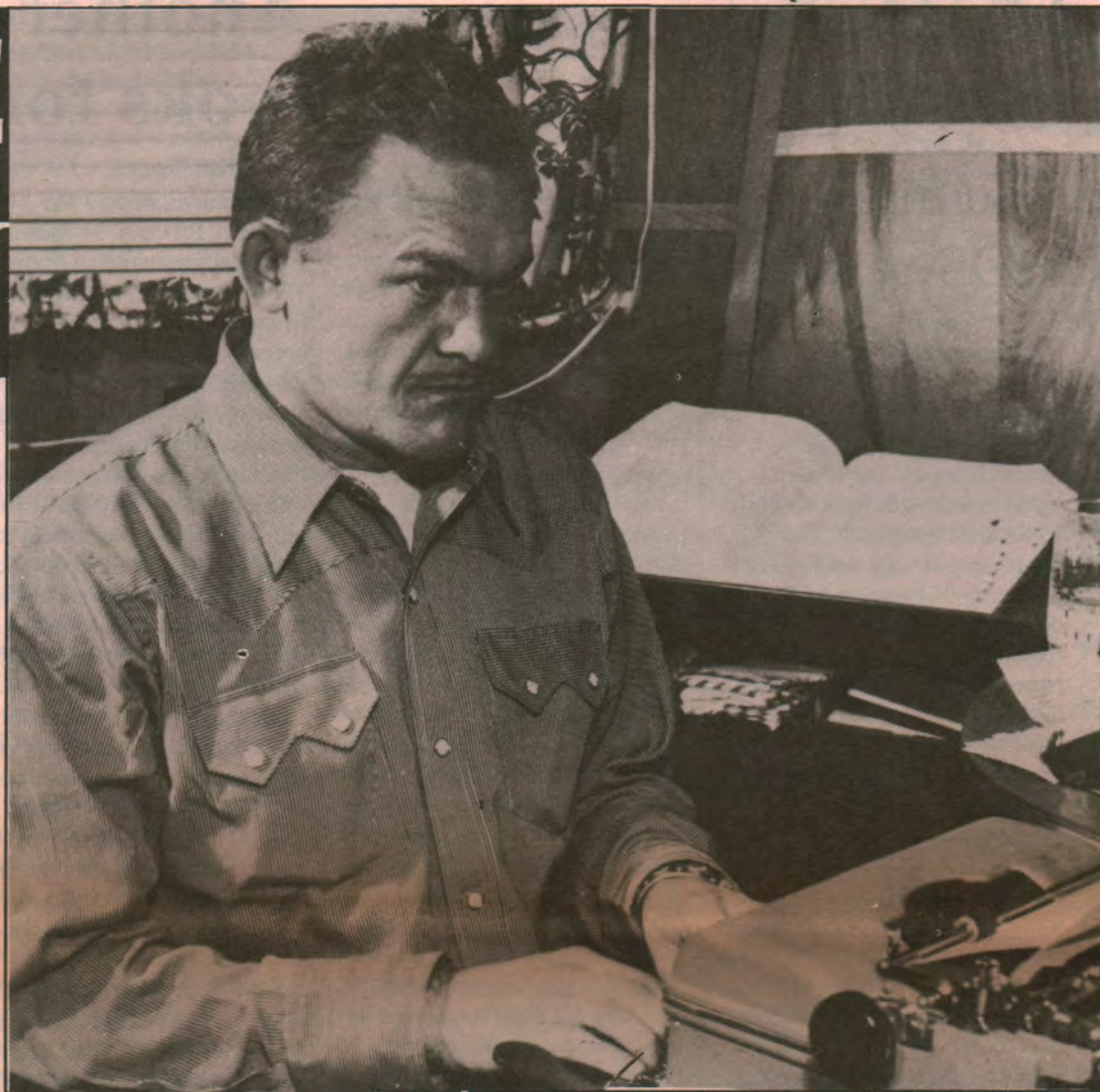
The celebration would have surprised the young Jim Jones who grew up in Robinson as an unhappy and often rebellious son of a dentist father who drank too much and a social-climbing mother he did not like. It might even have surprised the adult James Jones, who used the old home town for characters and location in the controversial novel of small-town intrigue, *Some Came Running*.

The adult Jones might also find it amusing that part of the celebration in his honor took place in the Elks Club since he was permanently banned from the establishment for improper conduct.

Still, Robinson was home. It was Robinson where Jones grew up and where he returned after military service. It was Robinson where he met Lowney Turner Handy who, with husband Harry, would take Jones into their home, support him and help him as he wrote the classic World War II novel, *From Here To Eternity*.

Lowney Handy, who died in 1964, was also honored during the Jones celebration—by implication, if not by design. Handy, as director of the famous Writers Colony located on the Handy farm at the west edge of nearby Marshall, was instrumental in Jones' success, as well as in the success of several other writers in the fifties and sixties.

However, the gathering at Lincoln Trail College, just north



James Jones

Handy Colony Collection, Sangamon State University Archives

of Robinson, was planned to praise Jones and his works, not Lowney Handy. Called simply "James Jones: A Celebration," the conference was devoted to "James Jones: The Man" during the morning session and to

signs of the adult maverick. His former Scoutmaster, for example, recalled that Jones once talked another Scout into drinking hard cider at a Scout meeting.

Andy Turner, brother of Lowney Turner Handy and a

success of *From Here To Eternity*. "I think Jim might have believed the Colony was not as successful as he hoped it would be," Sackrider said, "but many of those who wrote at the Colony learned discipline and other things that helped them throughout their lives, even if they never sold a novel. I was one of those."

The morning session ended with a showing of the television documentary, "James Jones: Reveille to Taps," created in 1983 by Mike Lennon of Sangamon State University in Springfield.

During the lunch break, as well as during other breaks in the formal activities, there was time for Jones fans and researchers to exchange ideas and information. A large display of Writers Colony materials from the Sangamon State archives, which had been donated by Lowney Handy's sister-in-law, Margaret Turner, also was a popular attraction between sessions.

There was even time for autographs. Kaylie Jones busily signed copies of her latest novel,

KAYLIE JONES, WHO WAS BORN AFTER JONES LEFT ILLINOIS, RECALLED HER FATHER AS A LOVING PERSON WHO WAS ALWAYS DOWN TO EARTH.

"James Jones: The Works" during the afternoon session.

On hand as guest of honor was Kaylie Jones, daughter of James Jones and author of three novels.

University of Illinois professor of English George Hendrick moderated the morning session. Editor of *To Reach Eternity: The Letters of James Jones*, it was Hendrick who initiated the idea of a conference honoring Jones.

In recalling James Jones the man, acquaintances noted that, even as a youngster, he showed

close friend of Jones during the Colony years, fondly remembered the adult Jones as an ideal drinking buddy and a genuinely nice person who was never changed by fame.

Kaylie Jones, who was born after Jones left Illinois, recalled her father as a loving person who was always down to earth.

Don Sackrider, retired airline pilot and former member of the Writers Colony, noted that Jones contributed heavily to the support of the Colony following the

Group formed in author's honor

A society dedicated to the memory of *From Here To Eternity* author James Jones was organized during a celebration in the writer's honor November 16 in Robinson.

Appropriately named the James Jones Society, the group is open to anyone interested in Jones, Harry and Lowney Turner Handy, and the Writers Colony which flourished in Marshall in the fifties. Membership dues are ten dollars per year, and anyone joining within the first six months will be considered a charter member.

George Hendrick, University of Illinois professor of English and editor of *To Reach Eternity: The Letters of James Jones*, was elected to lead the organization. Hendrick is also the author of several other books. The treasurer is Juanita Martin of the Learning Resource Center at Lincoln Trail College (LTC), and the secretary is Jan Sutter, also of LTC and administrative assistant to the chancellor of Illinois Eastern Community Colleges.

Other members of the society's board of directors include Kaylie Jones, daughter of James Jones and author of three novels; Mike Lennon, professor of English at Sangamon State University in Springfield, co-producer of the television documentary, "James Jones: From Reveille to Taps," and co-editor of *The James Jones Reader*; Kathy Stillwell of Gatlinburg, Tennessee, and friend of Kaylie Jones; Helen Howe of Robinson and former LTC English teacher; James R. Giles, professor of English at Northern Illinois University, author of *James Jones* and co-editor of *The James Jones Reader*; and Don Sackrider of Miami, Florida, a former member of the Marshall Writers Colony.

The bylaws of the organization are still in the development stage, but the group has already scheduled the next annual celebration in honor of Jones for November 7, 1992, in Robinson.

Discussion at the organizational meeting indicated interest in preserving historical material related to Jones, publishing a newsletter, promoting and studying Jones' works and establishing a scholarship for creative writers.

Those interested in joining the James Jones Society may send ten dollars to Juanita Martin, Lincoln Trail College, Route 3, Robinson, IL 62454.

— Dwight Connelly

Continued on page 14

TIGER TALES

Special Student Features From Urbana High School

Medical profession must re-examine policy after woman's AIDS-related death

By Tricia Beiser

While we were continuing with our lives on December 8, 1991, a once-healthy young woman died at her home in Florida. She was unable to fulfill any of life's simple tasks. Twenty-three-year-old Kimberly Bergalis was less than half of her normal body weight. Her skin was white and chalky. She had a blank stare in her eyes. She was in the last stages of an Aids-related tuberculosis that destroyed her body and brain. Bergalis became the first American to die of Aids after being infected by her dentist, who died of Aids in 1990.

Kimberly Bergalis and the Minneapolis doctors were on opposite sides of the controversy of Aids-infected health-care workers. When she was diagnosed as having Aids, officials were looking for other explanations. They were questioning her about drug use or promiscuity. When the officials realized that these two things were not a part of Bergalis' life, they concluded that her dentist did in fact pass on the Aids virus to her. Since then, four other patients of this dentist have been diagnosed with Aids.

Just a few years ago, it was thought to be impossible to contract Aids from a physician or dentist who had the deadly virus. Society thought if the doctor's medical equipment was sterilized, if gloves were worn, and if hands were clean, the patient was not at risk. We now know that this is untrue.

According to a *Newsweek* poll, more than nine out of ten Americans feel that a doctor should be required to tell his or her patients if he or she has Aids. Also, according to this poll, 95 percent of all surgeons, 94 percent of all physicians, 94 percent of all dentists and 90 percent of all health-care workers should be required to tell their patients if they are infected with Aids.

Health officials are beginning to admit there is some risk for

both patient and doctor. According to the federal Center for Disease Control (CDC) in Atlanta, there were 6,436 reported cases of health-care workers with Aids from the early 1980s until last March. These figures include 703 nonsurgeon physicians, 47 surgeons, 171 dental workers and 1,358 nurses. Experts feel that these figures represent only a small portion of the health-care workers who are infected with Aids. Thousands more have been tested HIV positive. Others may be infected but symptom-free.

Health officials think it is extremely unlikely that a patient will get Aids from a physician, dentist or nurse. They believe the greater risk involves the health-care workers performing surgery or other involved procedures.

Patients assume that state or federal agencies watch over and protect their health care. This may be true in some parts of the medical system, but doctors with Aids can basically make their own decisions. New York is the only state that has rules for HIV-infected health-care workers. The CDC is still trying to come up with guidelines on this issue.

Mandatory testing of all health-care workers might seem like a good idea, but some experts believe it would be impractical. There can be a six-month period between infection and the development of antibodies that show up on a test.

Other physicians think the risks of testing are worth the effort. Dr. Sanford Kuvin, vice chairman of the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases in Washington D.C., said, "The inherent right to know—for patient and doctor alike—always has to supersede confidentiality. The doctor doesn't have to put it up on a signboard, but there has to be informed consent if he is going to do invasive procedures."

Testing doctors brings up the issue of testing the patients, also. Dr. Paul Rothman, president of Search Alliance, an Aids-research

organization in Los Angeles, said, "Doctors are afraid. They want to know the HIV status of their patients, and doctors who work in surgery ask us about it all the time. If we get the patient's permission, we give the information, otherwise it's up to the surgeon to discover it on his own."

In the same *Newsweek* poll, the question of whether patients should be required to tell physicians, dentists and other health-care workers if they have or are infected with Aids showed 97 percent agreed they should be obligated to do so; 2 percent disagreed.

Although there is no cure for Aids right now, there are a few drugs that may help the victim. The drug AZT has lengthened the lives of many people who are HIV positive. Some researchers reported that combining AZT with the experimental drug known as DDC and DDI, may increase survival rates.

The following is an excerpt from Kimberly Bergalis' letter released for publication as she neared death: "I was infected by Dr. Acer in 1987. My life has been sheer hell except for the good times and closeness with my family and my enjoyment of life and nature. Aids has slowly destroyed me. Unless a cure is found, I will be another one of your statistics soon."

"Who do I blame? Do I blame myself? I sure don't. I never used IV drugs, never slept with anyone and never had a blood transfusion. I blame Dr. Acer and every single one of you bastards. Anyone who knew that Dr. Acer was infected and had full-blown Aids and stood by not doing a damn thing about it. You are all as guilty as he was. You've ruined my life and my family's."

Bergalis' final statement of the letter said, "If laws are not formed to provide protection, then my suffering and death was in vain."

Tricia Beiser is a 1992 graduate.

Another generation looks for its niche

By Mike Tsay

Time moves in only one direction, forward. My parents, and grandparents came from Taiwan to America. They did not fit in as well as I do now. That is because time continues on, never stopping. Myself, along with some of my other Asian friends were born here in the States. From the day we were born we experienced the way of America, not Taiwan. We undeniably look Asian, but if you could not see us, you would think you are talking to an American. How do we decide who we want to identify with?

Recently, at Chinese School (a place parents can send their kids to become more Chinese), the group that was my age had a seminar to find out how we felt about this issue. No parents were allowed to listen in on our thoughts, just the adviser, and about fifteen teenagers. We talked about stereotypes, the way in which people treat us, dating and all those other great subjects that all teens love to talk about.

I figured that the thing that annoyed us the most was the stereotyping. Just because you are Asian you are expected to score nearly perfect on everything you do, attend the best schools for college, and double major in some advanced field of science that no one knows anything about. It is true that some people do that, but it's not just the Asians. What about the ones who enjoy the arts, English, humanities? Asians who want to make a career out of those fields often get mocked, even by parents, which makes us wonder why did they come to America if they don't want us to be American?

I've been called names by people, but most of the time they don't have much to do in my life so I really could care less. Most of my friends are white, and we often joke around calling each other names. This is always done in good humor, and no one takes offense from it. It has never gotten out of hand with my friends, and we all respect each other's past. I don't feel that this is causing us to lose our identity. All of my Asian friends know our heritage. We know what our parents went through to get here.

And we are happy they did what they did.

The problem is trying to decide what you want to become; it seems that the only way to go is to live and to fit in with Americans. We are part of the society now, and we must contribute all that we've got. Being part of America and building on it will help us all. Everyone has to learn to adapt so that all can go on in life to pursue the goals they have set for themselves, goals they want to fulfill. You can control your life, and you can give yourself a happy life by following your dreams.

As a teenager, you are faced with so many problems that you must overcome. Pressure in school to live up to the expectations set by people you know are doubled by the pressures put onto you by your parents. Again, parents push hard for some reason; in a way that is all they ever say to you. On matters that do not concern academics, such as do they think you should be in drama since it takes so much time, what about dating, will they be disappointed if the other person is not the same race?

It seems those decisions are all left up to you to make. You never know if your decisions hurt your parents because they never really say anything about them. This does cause some great confusion at times.

Parents that immigrated to America still hold the ideals and standards from the country they left. The time has come for them to realize that their children are part of a different generation, in a different land. The children are going to make the decisions they feel are the best for them, and the parents should make their opinions known. The support that it would bring the kids is unmeasurable.

Time may move forward, and times change. My generation will come forward, and we will see what we can do in the world. We will let our parents know how we feel about being who we are, but they can help us feel better about our choices. The world is growing smaller.

Mike Tsay is a 1992 graduate.

America's challenges there for the viewing

By David Fish

I was only eight years old, and I figured it would be better to skip school with my friend than to go. I always stopped by his house on the way to the bus stop. He was late getting ready because his parents were fighting. My mom said that his parents will probably get divorced. She also said that lots of parents get divorced nowadays. I think it's stupid to get married, but if you marry someone you fight with, you're crazy. When Mrs. Smith realized how late we were, she gave us each a Poptart and told us to run to the bus stop. As we walked out of John's house I said, "Hey, let's ditch school and go to the park." He said, "OK, I don't understand that stupid math anyway."

We ran to the bus stop and got there just as the bus was about to leave. John and I went to the back of the bus. The kids were making fun of Matty Fatty because he was crying since someone had taken his lunch money.

Usually we make cheat sheets for our spelling test, but since we were skipping, we decided to make fun of Wak Tan Dun, the kid from China. He did all of his homework and was the smartest

VOICE OF DEMOCRACY

in class. My uncle told me that all the parents in China sold their television sets to America because they wanted their kids studying instead of watching TV.

We got off at school but ran to the park. There were a lot of people there because it is near all the big office buildings. There were people with long hair and colored shirts holding up peace signs. Whenever I am with my grandpa, he says, "Damn hippies. Get a job." I guess it would be good if they got jobs so they could afford haircuts. John said his older brother was against war and could tell you a hundred reasons why war was bad. My grandpa was in the war. He said there are times when you should fight for your country. I think if there is something important to fight for, it is better to fight than to chicken out and hold up peace signs.

We walked some more and saw a bum. Our principal said that if we kept horsing around in class, we would end up like bums if all our classes are like that. He rambled on about how all American education is going to

hell, but I told him that I was going to be rich so it did not matter.

The bum asked John for a quarter. John told him to get a job. The bum said there were no jobs open. This is true because my dad had the same problem. He got laid off because his car plant closed. He said everyone was buying "those Jap cars." I suppose if we bought American cars, Americans would have more jobs.

We walked to a tree by the guys with long hair to eat our lunch. John was lucky. His mom gives him cake, peanut butter sandwiches and cookies for lunch. I always get turkey on rye and milk money. I told my mom how John always gets the good stuff. She said that she does not want me to end up like most Americans with cholesterol and heart trouble. She also said I was lucky to get anything at all because in some countries the children starve. I told her that I would like to mail those poor kids my food.

When we were done with lunch, we tossed our bags on the ground and started to walk away. Then one of the long-haired guys said, "Hey, kid, pick that up. Our country's not a garbage can." He

kept babbling on about how the landfills are filled and that there is a hole in the ozone layer and lots of other things. It seems we better do something to clean up our country or we'll be in trouble.

John and I decided to go to the bathroom. When we got there, a black guy had just spray-painted the words "Black Power" on the wall. I asked him what it meant. He said the white man had been oppressing the black man for so long. He said my grandpa probably had slaves. I told him that he did not. He said that I was more than likely prejudiced. I told him that I was not, but I knew someone who was. He said I was cool but told me never to be racist. I said I wouldn't.

We decided it was time to get back to school. We got there are crossed our names off of the absence list. We went back home on the bus. When I got home, my mom asked me what I learned in school. I said that if we don't change, we're in trouble.

David Fish is a 1992 graduate. This article was a submission for the annual VFW-sponsored Voice of Democracy essay contest for 1991-92.

Sam waits in a better place to greet those who follow

By Benjamin Burrus

Learning stamps you with its moments.

Because of my dog Sam, I do not fear death. Wait, let me explain.

When I was two, my parents bought our family a dog. Little did they realize that the dog would play a part in my understanding of death.

The dog was a cute puppy, and we became very attached to him. Sam was a German Shepherd-Collie mix, and he grew to be a large dog. Sam, once loved by the neighborhood, became the neighborhood nuisance. He got into people's trash almost daily. One grumpy neighbor demanded that either we keep Sam in our yard or he would be shot. My parents believed it would be better for Sam to be taken to the animal shelter and put to sleep as he had physical problems, too.

Our family loaded up into our white Datsun to take Sam away. I asked my Mom where Sam was going because I did not know yet. Mom said, "Sam is going to a better place."

I pictured a "better place." It was on a beach. Sam was running alone in front of a forest of pine trees. His footprints trailed in the wet sand. Everything was fresh and clean, and Sam seemed happy.

I couldn't understand why Sam needed to go, but I pictured him in the better place and just figured that he would be happier there.

About three months after we took Sam away, I asked my parents, "Where's my dog?" My parents realized that I did not understand that Sam was away for good. They explained that I would not see my dog again, that he had gone to the better place and once he had gone there he couldn't come back.

Now I pictured Sam running on the beach, looking for a way back to us, his family. The beach was now on an island and Sam seemed lonely. I wanted my dog back.

I don't believe that Sam is in a better place anymore, but when friends or relatives have died, I picture them finding my dog and keeping him company.

Benjamin Burrus is a 1992 graduate.

Children of alcoholics can find the help they need

By Jennifer McLane

There are at least 28 million children in this country who have had at least one alcoholic parent. The National Association for Children of Alcoholics reports at least 10 percent of the population is affected by having an alcoholic parent. Many of these children either won't admit their parent is an alcoholic, or they don't think having an alcoholic parent has affected their lives. Most of these children grow up thinking that their parents' sorrows are their own fault. Many students at Urbana High School have sadly dealt with this for who knows how many years. Fortunately, when they are ready, there are places and groups that can help.

According to Co-Dependents Anonymous, for people who don't know whether they are co-dependents as a result of their parents' alcoholic problem, there are signs. The major characteristics of a co-dependent are assuming responsibility for others' feelings, actions and behaviors. Many have problems identifying or expressing their

feelings. They alter the truth and often lie without knowing it. They put others' wants and needs before their own. They judge themselves according to the standards of others. They have to be "needed" in order to have a relationship with others.

Other results that may occur in dysfunctional families are denial, low self-esteem, compulsive behavior, frozen feelings and medical or physical disorders.

Unfortunately, these children don't understand the affects of mixed messages like, "I love you but don't bother me." Or "I'll be there for you ... next time." Many of these children end up seeing the results of their childhood problems in their adult lives.

I talked with a woman who, just a short time ago, began to realize what types of long-term affects her childhood had on her actions. Both her mother and father were heavy drinkers. She was an only child and was left alone often. Yet it wasn't unusual for the mother to drag the girl off to the bars with her. The mother would

make her daughter sit in the car for hours while she sat in the bar and drank. The woman told me that she often times felt responsible for things that went wrong. For instance, she was molested as a child, and as many molested children do, blamed it on herself. She was never allowed to go out with her friends without her mother coming along. She was made to feel guilty for things she had no connection to. It was all a part of living with alcoholic parents.

Certain occurrences came up in her life that almost tore her family apart. What she didn't realize was that her actions were a result of being an ACOA, or adult child of alcoholics. She catered to everyone's needs but her own. She always tried to solve other peoples' problems while ignoring her own. She had to be needed and never seemed to get enough attention. She lied often when it was easier to tell the truth. But how could she fix problems she didn't even know she had?

The only way she could ever fix

these problems was to learn about herself. There are different types of groups for different people. There are Al-anon meetings for families, Alateen, Alcoholics Anonymous and ACOA group meetings for people who need recovery, and meetings for people who want to find out more about these groups.

ACOA groups help children of alcoholics learn how to begin to recover. They help them realize that alcoholism is a disease. Their parents were victims of this disease. Learning about it and understanding the disease is the beginning of forgiveness.

Hopefully, those who are affected by this will be able to attend some of these groups and realize that they are not the ones to blame. They may have a chance to realize their problems before the family tears apart. This problem affects a large part of our society. If you need help, please get it.

Jennifer McLane is a 1992 graduate.

Kanfer/Bial

Continued from page 7

prairie grass. These images prompt questions in the viewer's mind. Who lived in these places and for how long have they been gone? What took them away?

Bial has been pondering such questions for years now, and his photographs help to provide some answers to these problems. The gradual transformation of the rural landscape is one of the principle reasons Bial started photography in the first place.

"It was a response to the subject matter, rather than picking up photography to be an artist," he said. "So I started photographing a lot of the things that were disappearing—hedgerows, old barns—that I remember from my youth."

He recognizes the changes that have been going on for decades in Illinois, as well as in the rest of the Midwest. As a part of his photographic work, he looks rather deeply into the history of the area. He believes the changes have been going on since the railroads went out of business because it was the railroads that created many of these towns.

"Many of the towns have been dying a slow death since the turn of the century," Bial said. "Many towns in the thirties and forties had maybe ten businesses, and now they're down to maybe one grocery store that's barely hanging on."

But while the smaller towns are dying out slowly, the larger towns are losing their personalities in a different way. "The bigger towns try to be like their bigger cities and remodel their entire main street and change it so much that they lose that character."

Although these transformations have become part of the Midwest, it seems as though "in the last twenty years, with the crisis in rural areas and farming, there has been a marked decline in rural population. A lot of the people themselves are being displaced, the economy being what it is." These changes are not simply a few individuals moving away or a few shops closing. The effects are much deeper. "The whole landscape, and the society and community are changing, too. Many towns are having to get larger in order to survive, and the distance between the towns is greater."

With all this in mind, Bial has assigned himself the task of making a record of the unique features of rural life. He chose to photograph what he knew best—the area he felt was being neglected. Bial chose to travel to the smallest towns because "the

smaller communities are the ones that have a tendency not to change. They have the more traditional flavor."

Bial wanted to capture the rural flavors on film before they vanished with the towns that he visited. Two of these photographs are from *Stopping By*. In both photos, the subjects pose casually and in a relaxed fashion. There are the old logos: "Grapette: Thirsty or not" and "Mail Pouch Tobacco." Bial's careful composition looks at the storefronts straight-on and does not complicate the frame with an abstract angle. These images help to make a picture of life on the farms and in the small towns.

Along with his book on rural life, Bial has two books of portraits taken in Champaign-Urbana. The first, *There is a Season*, is a collection of senior citizens at the Champaign County Nursing Home. Bial visited with the participants, none of whom he knew previously, for half an hour to forty-five minutes, took their photograph and then interviewed them. The book is a wonderful and realistic book about aging. Many of the subjects have realized their age with dignity and wisdom. One of the women said in the book, "I think the same but cannot do the same things. That's hard." For Bial, the project had a personal side because of the deaths of his mother and grandfather a few years before the project.

"I started photographing a lot of the things that were disappearing—hedgerows, old barns—that I remember from my youth."

Raymond Bial

The second book, published in 1985, is *In All My Years: Portraits of Older Blacks of Champaign-Urbana* (also edited by Linda Bial). The book started as a documentary history project for the oral history roundtables that took place within the black community. Bial did "a few photographs and decided to do more because they turned out so well." Like his previous book, this one includes a short text about the subject of each portrait.

In addition to his post as director of the Parkland College

Library in Champaign, Bial has been busy with "a whole slew of projects." A book of all the Carnegie libraries in Illinois (another collaboration with his wife, Linda) came out this past summer. He has also been working on three children's books, the first called *Cornbelt Harvest*, with photographs taken in Champaign County. The second, due out next year, is about the county fair, and the third is devoted to the Amish community. What is particularly interesting about these three books is that the photographs are in color, a format Bial has not worked in since his beginning photography work.

Bial characterized his style as a blend of documentation and art. "In all of my work, I want some kind of substantive character," he said. "I don't want to do something that's just for art's sake or an abstraction. At the same time, I'm real careful about how things are composed."

He is also careful not to exploit his subjects. "There's always a sense that you take a photograph, instead of making a photograph. I think photographers should be really sensitive to that. I've always tried to use the phrase 'make a photograph.' There's really a predatory sense: You 'shoot' pictures, and people 'aim' their cameras here and they can be very intrusive and very rude."

It is his sensitivity for his subject matter that produces Bial's wonderful results. His photography speaks especially clear about the scope of life in this area of the Midwest because it takes into account life in the larger towns as well as the smaller towns, which are allowed to slip away with little thought or consideration. Bial's photographs teach viewers to look, pause and appreciate what has been, whether it is an old storefront or a senior citizen. His blend of documentation and art skillfully shows not only what is here but what is disappearing.

Larry Kanfer and Raymond Bial are showing that the stereotype of the Midwest as an uninteresting and monotonous place is unfounded. Through Kanfer's search for the subtle beauties of the landscape and Bial's portraits of the people who arise from this land, the Midwest is revealed to be a uniquely beautiful place. Through their interpretation and presentation of the land and its people, we can more fully realize the meaning of the place in which we live.

Mehrdad Azemun, a graduate of Urbana High School, attends the University of Wisconsin-Madison.



Photo by Dwight Connelly

Jones' daughter, Kaylie, and former Writers Colony member Don Sackrider attended the dinner last November at which the James Jones Society was formed.

Jones

Continued from page 11

A Soldier's Daughter Never Cries, which was sold in the college book store as part of the celebration. The novel reportedly is going to be made into a movie.

Hendrick was also on hand for signing autographs, as well as Sangamon State English professor Mike Lennon and Northern Illinois University English professor James R. Giles, who wrote *James Jones*.

The afternoon session, "James Jones: The Works," brought together Steve Carter, visiting professor of English at Trenton State University; Mark Goldman, professor of English at the University of Rhode Island; Tom Wood, archivist at Sangamon State; Kaylie Jones; and George Hendrick.

If Jones were present in spirit, he no doubt would have liked what he heard from the panel. During his lifetime, Jones was not always so fortunate when it came to critics, especially concerning his books that did not deal with the military.

Kaylie Jones, in noting this, suggested that other great writers such as Melville had suffered the same fate. "We are still reading Melville," she pointed out, "and nobody remembers the critics."

"When somebody writes a really great first novel," she added, "the reviews for the second one are often bad. My father could have written *War and Peace*, which in a way I think *Some Came Running* was, and he would still have gotten bad reviews."

Mark Goldman said Jones also should be remembered for his short stories, some of which are collected in *The Ice-Cream Headache and Other Stories*.

"I think his short stories compare favorably with those of Stephen Crane and (John) Updike," Goldman said. "His civilian works have not been given their proper due. Taken as a whole, they are marvelous. My guess is that he is going to be recognized for his entire body of work."

George Hendrick added, "There is no doubt that the trilogy of *From Here To Eternity*, *The Thin Red Line* and *Whistle* will be read and studied for a hundred years. In addition, we all have our individual favorites outside this trilogy, such as *Go To The Widemaker*. I personally feel that *The Pistol* and *World War II* are two of the finest books I have read."

Mike Lennon concluded that, whatever critics may have said about Jones after his second novel, he proved he could bounce back from bad reviews and write *The Thin Red Line*, which received good reviews.

Was Jones a major literary figure? The critics, researchers and friends who participated in the first James Jones celebration certainly think so. They plan to return to Robinson next November 7 to continue the dialogue.

Dwight Connelly is a teacher at Marshall High School and is currently conducting research for a biography of Lowney Handy.

The Last Word

How a Japanese exchange student saw America

By Yoshimi Nishino

I was a Japanese high school student when I lived in Champaign for ten months from August 1990 to June 1991. I was a senior at Centennial High School.

Actually, that was my second year in Champaign-Urbana. About ten years ago, I lived in Urbana for a year—that time with my parents. But this most recent stay was a completely different experience for me because I was older. Spending my time among teenagers made it possible for me to see new aspects of the town. And by living with an American host family, I had access to the real lifestyle of Americans.

There are a lot of differences between the two countries, especially in school. A lot of people came up to me and said, "Oh, you are from Japan. Then all the classes are easy for you, aren't they?" I found out that there is a strong stereotype of Japanese here in the United States: Japanese students are smart.

Well, it is true that we study a lot during high school years and that our college entrance exams are extremely hard. But there is a big problem caused by this college-entrance-exam-oriented high school (and before that) education: We gain a lot of precise knowledge, but we lack creativity. This is what I strongly felt looking back at my own country compared with the

United States. I loved discussions in the classes at Centennial. At first, I was a little afraid of speaking out because of my English and because we don't have discussions in our classes in Japan. All of our classes consist of lectures, one-way from teacher to students. I learned the fun and importance of exchanging opinions among one another.

Another aspect I loved about Centennial was the big choice of activities. At most schools in Japan, we can choose only one club to belong to—usually a sport or music club—and we practice this same activity throughout the whole year. This kind of concentration, of course, will be followed by a big achievement, but I liked the system in the United States because it satisfied my curiosity. It gives you chances to find your hidden possibilities and talents.

Overall, I felt high school students in the United States are very fortunate to be given freedom of choice to an amazing degree. It is all up to you what classes you want to take, what activities you want to be involved in. Your high school life is not dominated by the pressure to study for college. Being back in Japan, my whole summer was dedicated to math, world history, geography and Japanese (in preparation for exams).

I also had a strong impression that the community itself shows a lot of interest in teenagers in the

United States. Through jobs and volunteer work, young people are actively involved in society and don't only stay among people in their own age group.

My purpose in studying abroad was to experience different cultures as well as training my English. I think Champaign was

It was the greatest year of my life. I was so fortunate to have been exposed to the sense of freedom and equality in the United States.

just right for this purpose because of the large variety of people living in the town. Growing up in an almost homogenous country, this melting-pot situation was sensational to me. The enthusiasm toward freedom and equality impressed me a lot. So did the independence and originality of people. In high school, it was amazing to see all kinds of

fashion: t-shirts and shorts, hippies, jeans, leather pants, dyed hair. ... Most of the high schools in Japan have uniforms, and we are never allowed to wear make-up or accessories.

American kids also are quite different from one another in their personal beliefs and viewpoints. They all seemed to have their own opinion to a certain point.

It was interesting to listen to students' debates concerning the Gulf Crisis. Everyone wanted to say something and they started shouting at each other. By the way, almost all of my friends who wrote to me during the war said they were opposed to the war and that that was the majority of opinions in Japan. It was in contrast with America's poll of 80 percent supporting the war. I think it is the result of Japanese education after World War II, which paid the most attention on destroying Japanese militarism. I got a feel for America's pride, "U.S. is No. 1!", during the crisis. I was very fortunate to have had the opportunity to experience wartime in the United States; it made me think a lot.

I truly envy the affluence of the United States, especially the vast, cheap land. Everything looked big when I arrived in the United States—houses, roads, malls, etc. (and people are taller, too!). But I also faced the over-consumption going on in the country and the economic problems because of it.

Waste of resources also caught my eye.

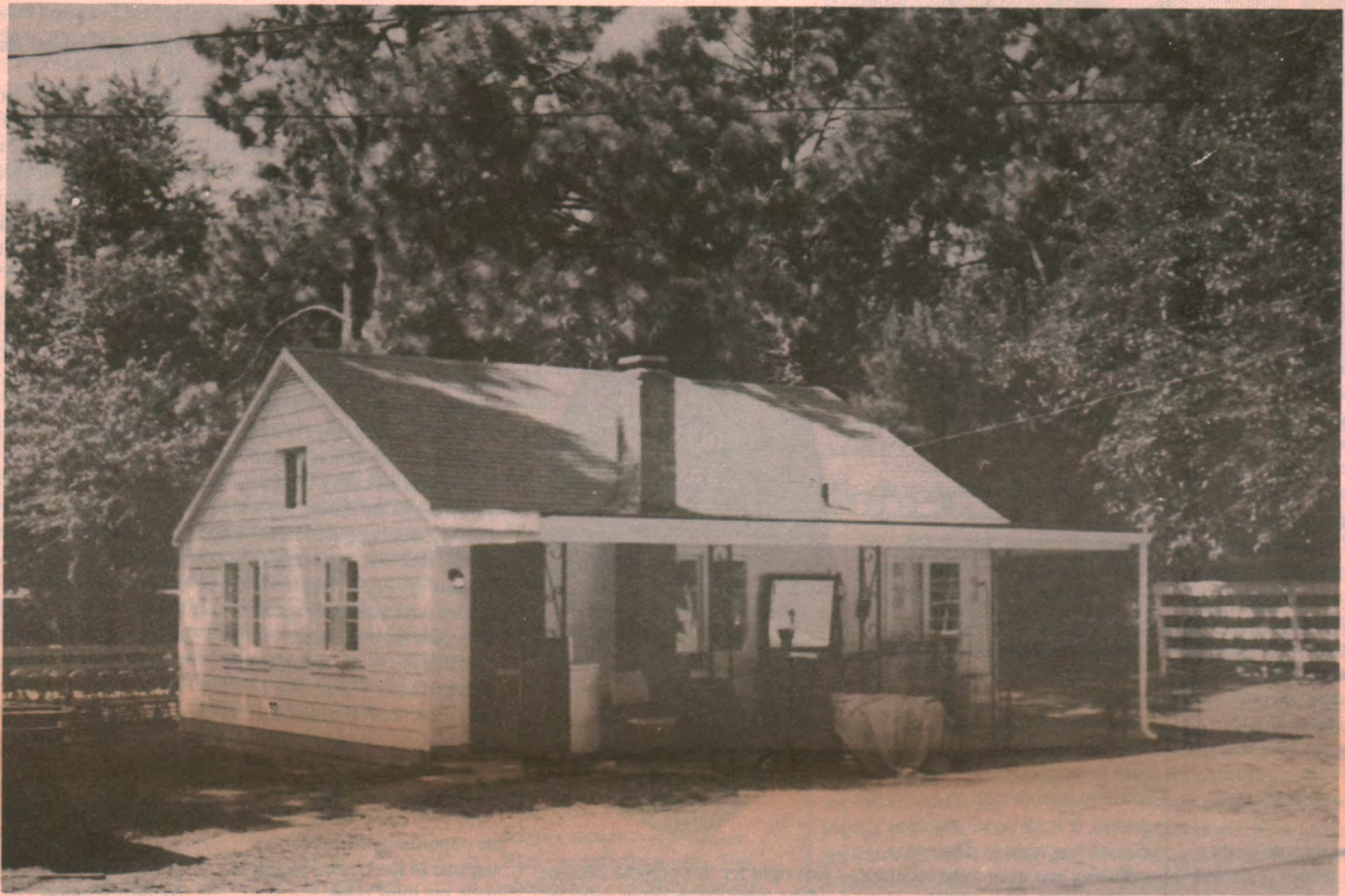
I had the impression that the United States is based extensively on individualism. As I said earlier about people's independence and originality, I learned much from the attitude of the society to value a person's individual talent and skill. But on the other hand, I had a feeling that people seem to be a little too indifferent to each other's relations compared to Japanese traditional society. It is probably because the sense of dependence on one another is still strong in feudalistic character, which Japan still bears.

It was the greatest year of my life. I was so fortunate to have been exposed to the sense of freedom and equality in the United States. There are severe rivalries and friction between the United States and Japan. But polls show that the United States is still considered in Japan as the friendliest country. I hope you Americans will have opportunities to learn more about Japan, as I did about the United States last year, so that we will have better understanding and a long-lasting, friendly relation.

Yoshimi Nishino also participated in a ten-day exchange trip to Estonia and Russia in Spring 1991 during her year in the United States, along with other Champaign-Urbana high school students.



*Need a place to stay
during your visit to Urbana-Champaign?*



Stay in The Enchanted Cottage, a two-bedroom, fully furnished home in a peaceful country setting, just outside of the Urbana city limits. The best part about it is that the proceeds from your stay will go to support the Tales project.

Urbana-Champaign, home of the University of Illinois, has a lot to offer when you want to treat yourself to a weekend getaway: theatrical performances, fine dining, U. of I. sporting events, etc.

Call Tales at 217/384-5820 for details and availability.