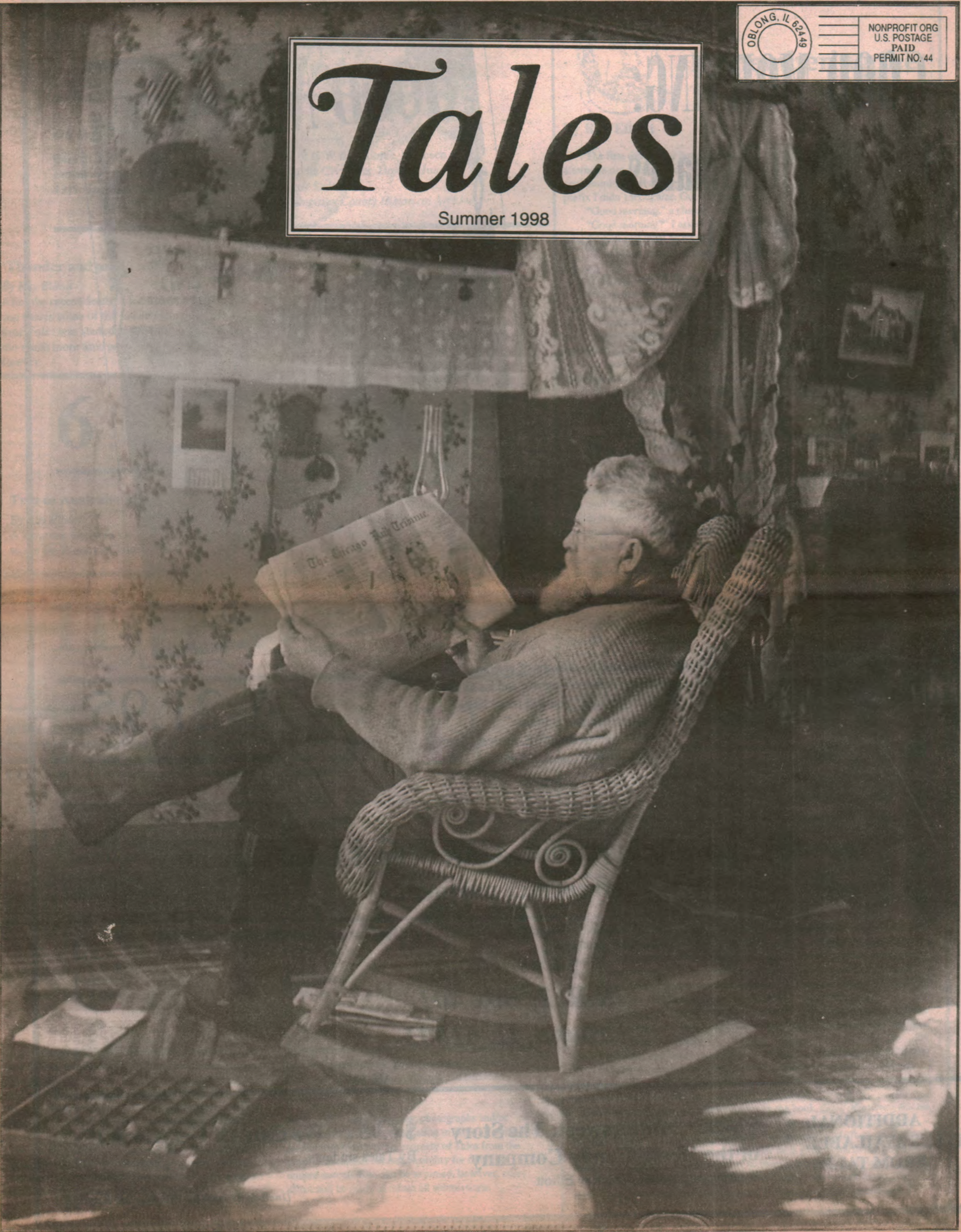


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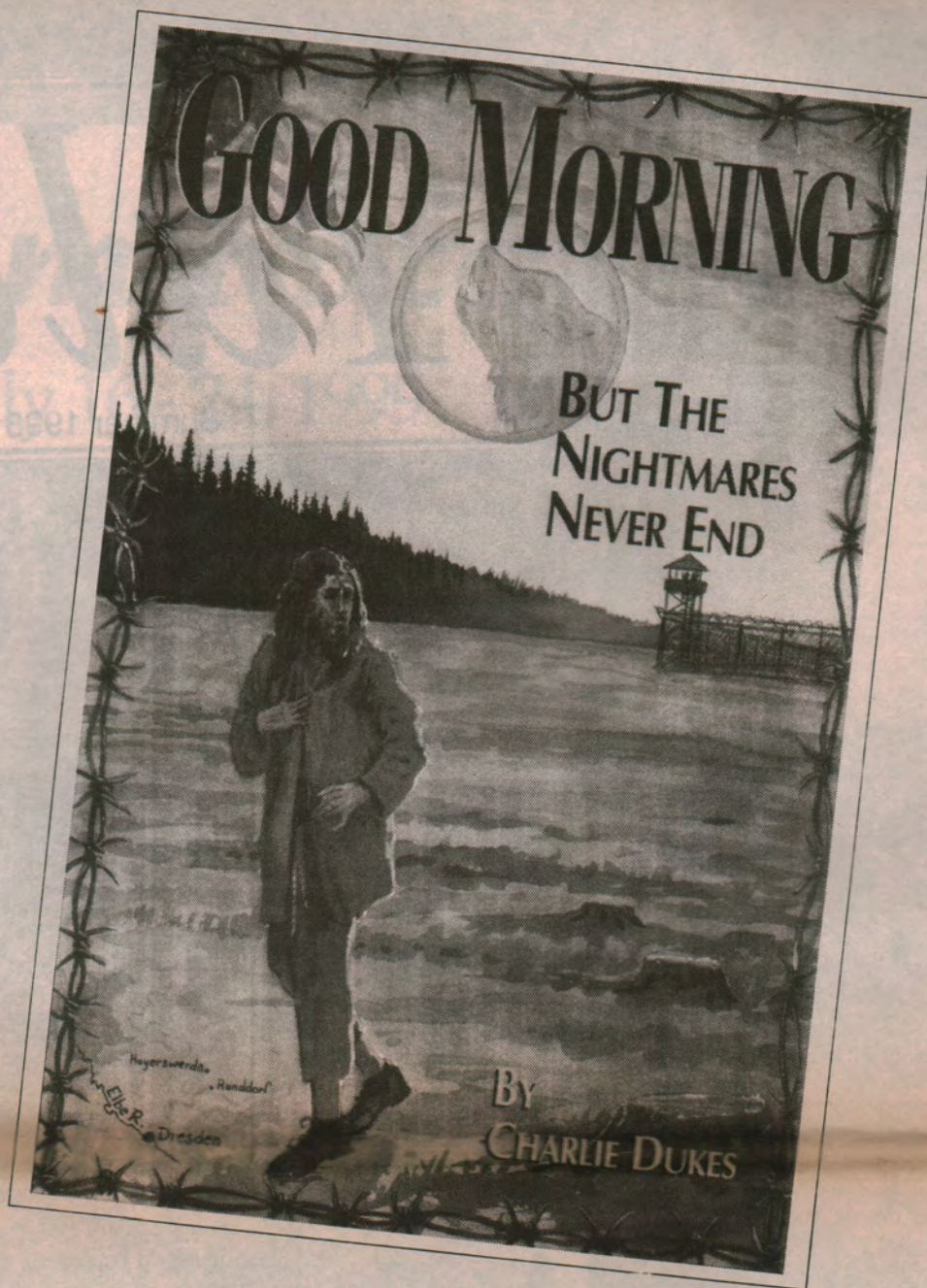
Tales

Summer 1998



GOOD MORNING: But The Nightmares Never End

This latest book from Tales Press is written by Georgetown resident Charlie Dukes, one of the last documented POWs from World War II in Europe to be repatriated to the West.



"Future generations of Americans need to know the sacrifices made by millions of veterans during World War II. This book tells the true story of one man's determination to survive and his ability to overcome the constant adversities of war and man's inhumanity to man. You will relive his desperation and salute Charlie Dukes' patriotism, courage and determination to live."

— Robert E. Foster, Director
Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs

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On the cover

George William Bacon Sadorus, usually known as G.W.B. Sadorus, had been a captain with the 125th Illinois Volunteers during the Civil War. He died June 17, 1911. The photograph was taken by his son, Frank Sadorus.

Courtesy of Champaign County Historical Archives



Remembering the costs of freedom

By Ray Elliott

The first time I ever heard of Charlie Dukes, I had just come in from an afternoon run and checked the messages on my answering machine. A noncommittal voice asked if I would call Charlie Dukes at a number whose prefix I didn't recognize. Out of curiosity, I dialed the number.

"Good morning," a cheerful male voice said in my ear.

"Good morning?" I asked, thinking he must have his days and nights mixed up, or just must be mixed up, period. "It's evening, isn't it?"

"It's always good morning to me," the voice said politely. "What can I do for you?"

I told him who I was and that I was returning his call.

"Oh, yeah," he said. "I saw a column you wrote about veterans. I was a POW in Germany during World War II."

He said his name was Charlie Dukes, that he was from Georgetown, Ill. And he explained that he often talked with students about his experiences and wondered if my classes at Urbana (IL) High School would be interested.

At first I thought he might be the man one of my students had told me about when we were working on the essay for the Veterans of Foreign War's annual "Voice of Democracy" contest. I asked if he was that man and if he had landed at Normandy.

"No, sir," he said, undoubtedly wondering what I was talking about. "We went in about D+80. I first saw combat in Belgium."

We arranged for a visit and although he didn't mention it until he spoke to my classes, it was in Belgium that Dukes had begun greeting everyone with a cheery good morning regardless of the time of day. Not long after his unit made contact with the Germans, he got pinned down one night by a machine gun crew that literally shot the pack off his back while he hugged the ground.

"I'm not really a religious man," Dukes told the students, "but I promised the man upstairs that if I ever saw the sun come up again, I'd say good morning for the rest of my life. When the sun came up, I said, 'Good morning.' I've been saying it ever since."

His company was overrun and captured on Thanksgiving Day 1944. Of the 78 casualties in the company, 12 others were taken prisoner with Dukes. Most were wounded and were taken to nearby hospitals and prison camps. Later, many POWs were loaded in boxcars for shipment to eastern Germany. Twelve men on Dukes' car died en route and were stacked against the wall until the destination was reached.

Dukes' feet were frozen so badly when he jumped off the boxcar that he immediately tumbled to the ground. Standing around a bonfire later, he heard the German guards singing *Stille Nacht* and realized it was Christmas.

For the next six months, Dukes was confined to a small prison camp near the Polish border. The prisoners sometimes were beaten, always given little to eat and often worked seven days a week. Dukes arrived in Europe weighing 178 pounds and was down to 110 at the end of the war.

After the war he said he always saved a piece of bread from his evening meal for the next morning. Years later at a reunion of the surviving men from the prison camp, their wives observed that all of the men did the same, a habit carried over from the POW time when a scrap of bread was the only thing besides a cup of weak coffee for breakfast.

Throughout the 50-minute class, the students sat spellbound as Dukes shared his experiences. He passed a tag that identified him as a POW while he told about watching the sky light up at night near the end of the war as Allied planes pounded Dresden, killing tens of thousands.

He spoke of the deal the American POWs made with their German guards for safe passage through Allied lines for safe passage through German lines when everybody knew the end of the war was coming. Russians soldiers killed the Germans when Dukes and his fellow prisoners refused.

Later, in Russian custody, rumors of Siberian gulags for the Allied prisoners influenced Dukes to escape and make his way to Allied lines 20 days after the war ended. More than 146,000 men were taken prisoner in World War II, he says. About 110,000 of them came were repatriated. That leaves more than 36,000 who didn't for one reason or another. He maintains that some 15,000 of his comrades in the Russian camps disappeared to those gulags.

"I'm not bitter," Dukes said, "because that eats you up. But I'm mad as hell at my government for leaving those men there. And that's where I'd have been if I hadn't decided to escape."

After his visit, one female student said, "You hear about people like Charlie. You read about them in books, see them in movies or on television, but you forget that real people lived the horrible things Charlie told us about so we can have the freedom we take for granted."

That's why he comes, of course. And with the book, *Good Morning—But the Nightmares Never End* that he wrote to record his experiences, many more people will have the opportunity to make that realization. He feels an obligation to leave his story for young people after he is gone in much the same way he now feels obligated to tell his story to them in his classroom visits.

"I want to tell them the story they don't read in the history books," he said. "And I want them to know the price of Freedom and to appreciate it."

'Thunder and mud,' a way of life

By Ray Elliott

After the recent death of his father, longtime *Tales* friend Harold Elliott, a son shares some of the father's life that reflects the generation and the time *Tales* was started to highlight and preserve through writing before too much more time passes and the memories of this kind of life fade forever.

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An American veteran remembers what it was like to see a country in defeat when Japan surrendered to the United States in World War II.

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By Ronald Trigg

Juggling job responsibilities versus helping to care for his father, who was stricken with Alzheimer's, a Foreign Service officer retires and comes home for the last few months of his father's life and has no regrets.

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Tales from the general store, inc.

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Mail's Here

I wonder why we wait 50 years to rekindle comradeship that we had and needed so many years ago. (Charlie's book) brought back a lot of memories. I even found my name mentioned and a few other good buddies. By the book, (his) life as a POW was much worse than mine. I was with the NCOs. We didn't have to work, but we didn't eat either. But we made it, thank God.

— LOU VINDUSKA
MARION, KS
L. Co., 403RD REG., 104TH
TIMBERWOLF DIV., CAPTURED WITH
DUKES ON NOV. 23, 1944

(Charlie) had a very fascinating story to tell. The memories of the past will never be forgotten, but perhaps in telling his story, he will be a little more at peace with the world. I have heard him tell his story, and I have heard the stories of other ex-POWs, thanks to the meetings I attended with him.

Please (accept my check) to buy a book for the VA Library. If they have one, then any other library. This type of information should get out as far as possible so that people will never forget.

— DON RIEDL
PRESCOTT, AZ

I read every word printed in the book. Congratulations on a great accomplishment. Page after page of Charlie's life as a POW is very upsetting, especially to those of us who know and love him. We are thankful he had the stamina, mental stability and strong will to get him through that ordeal.

— VICK SCHWAB
CHESHIRE, CT

We felt honored to have Charlie Dukes stop in our community. He is a credit to our region, state and country. We who bought books will treasure them. It pleases me to learn that he shares his experiences with youth. He is living history to their generation.

— NADINE STROUD TREXLER
NEWTON, IL

(The book) is very interesting and informative. It brought back my old memories, and I learned a bit more about that "Thanksgiving" day in 1944.

— CHARLES D. WILLIAMS
LITTLE ROCK, MS
L. Co., 403RD REG., 104TH
TIMBERWOLF DIV. 1ST SGT., CAPTURED
WITH DUKES ON NOV. 23, 1944

When the book arrived, I opened it to take a quick look before giving it to my husband for his belated Christmas gift. He was at work, so I began to read.

I was so intrigued. After reading for an hour, I put the book down and started thinking about it. Then I picked it back up and read for another hour.

I finished the book in two and a half days. I haven't read any other book for more than 25 years. The things (Charlie) had to go through have sure stayed on my mind.

Thank you, Charlie, for helping to keep our freedom, and thank you for writing this book.

— LINDA WILSON
CAYUGA, IN

I found the book to be quite interesting. I suppose many people who read it are wondering how they would react if they were in the same situation.

— BOB DOERR
RANTOUL, IL
L. Co., 403RD REG., 104TH
TIMBERWOLF DIV. HISTORIAN

I purchased a copy of the book at the signing at the Georgetown Library. It was very interesting, but "interesting" is not the correct word. The book and the contents were fascinating. I know (Charlie), so I knew that he got home safely, but I agonized after each incident.

I want to compliment him for everything he did in World War II. He has much courage to survive his experiences and write a book about it. He is truly an American hero.

— JOHN H. SPENCER
DANVILLE, IL

I just completed reading the book. It will be one of my prized possessions. I want (Charlie) to know, even though he doesn't consider himself a hero, he'll always be one to me. Thank you for my freedom.

— DAN THOMEN
GEORGETOWN, IL

I have been unable to read the Danville Commercial-News or the Champaign-Urbana News-Gazette for the past few years without noticing the number of ex-service-men who are now passing away. I have often thought that among all of these men, there have to be a number who had a very interesting story to tell about his service during World War II, and I have felt some sense of loss in not knowing those stories. Then along comes Charlie Dukes.

All of us whose fathers or uncles were fortunate either not to have been placed in harm's way, or never even served during that important time for this country, will never be able to really understand just what Dukes has survived.

It is apparent that Dukes feels a high sense of obligation to share his experiences and insight. I read five or six books a week, and this book has been the most rewarding and meaningful of any that I have read in years. I urge that this book be pushed on as many citizens of this country as there is opportunity.

— RICHARD L. HARDMAN
FAIRMOUNT, IL

The book is the best I've read in a long time; I couldn't put it down.

Charlie told the story as if he were talking to me. I hope this writing helped him to turn loose at least some of the "ghosts."

Every time over the years when I have seen Charlie and talked with

him, he always was so upbeat and showed such kindness. Now I know why—he's seen the other side.

The children always had to read *The Red Badge of Courage* in school. I wish Charlie's book could be read by every high school student. I salute Charlie Dukes for his faith and courage.

— SONNA HESTER
RIDGE FARM, IL

I think Charlie did a terrific job telling a difficult story. I enjoyed all the anecdotes, and I have to believe that he didn't hold much back. Those were incredibly brutal times for him and for the other men. I have a very deep admiration for him, knowing how much he went through—both from the enemy and from our own



People in Georgetown, IL, line up to purchase *Good Morning: But The Nightmares Never End* and meet author Charlie Dukes at his first book signing. Some 196 books were purchased in four hours.

government.

I like the way he told the story in the past tense, then used a paragraph or two to tell us an out-come, an update on his later opinions on something.

— TOM KACICH
URBANA, IL

I stayed up until 4:30 a.m. to finish the book. What a story. It's hard to believe a man I know so well went through this torment. God had to have been with him all the way. He has my deepest respect and appreciation for his service. I am proud to call him my friend.

— JOE SANDERS
GEORGETOWN, IL

I just finished Charlie's book. It was very emotional. I cried a lot and didn't sleep well.

I know it was the grace of God that allowed him to come through it all. We all need to be reminded of the many men and women who have fought and sacrificed so much so we can have our freedom.

I'm glad he talks to high school students about his experiences. His self-discipline and the desire to live each day and be a fighter was a marvelous and motivational example for us all as we walk through our lives.

— VICKY HALL
TERRE HAUTE, IN

As I expected, many parts of (my father's) story were quite emotional for me. It was difficult to see through the tears at times. But this is a book you can't put down. The concept of this fascinating story is not at all what I anticipated.

Although there were some raw, gritty scenes depicting the gruesome facts of war, the more obvious message here is one of sheer survival. It is absolutely amazing to me the hardships and degradation one human being can and, most importantly, will endure in his burning quest for freedom.

— DEBRA SMALL
BLOOMINGTON, IL

We were moved in several places (in the book) and extremely

impressed with Charlie's memory, the coherent flow of the story and the extraordinary suffering human beings can lay on one another in the name of God knows what.

— JEAN AND PETER SMITH
PRINCETON, NJ

The article in the Robinson Argus about (Charlie's) book fascinated me. Once I started reading it, I couldn't put it down. Thanks to him for sharing his story and taking the time to talk to students.

— JOANNE PILAND
HOT SPRINGS VILLAGE, AR

I have finished reading "Good Morning" and found it challenging reading, very chilling but realistic. His experiences were certainly more than most could endure.

It was interesting reading with a meaningful message. I have been fortunate enough to know many who have lived through those terrible POW experiences, and I had special empathy for Charlie as I followed his experiences.

— T. PLAIN
EVANSVILLE, IN

I'm a student at Westville High. I just finished (Charlie's) book. It was the best book I've ever read. It touched my heart in so many ways. I cried at so many parts. I remember Charlie talking to my eighth-grade class. He told such a sad story.

Some of the things I read seemed unbelievable. And it shocks me so much (to know) that it's a true story. I'm sorry for the things he went through. He's a very strong man. I thank him for contributing to my freedom. He doesn't know me, but what he did for me and millions of others really touches my heart.

— MANDY SHANKS
WESTVILLE, IL

I finished the book in one sitting. I could not put it down once I started, I was so touched and moved by the story. This is really a tremendous book. I found myself in tears many times. I had no idea the conditions he and others endured to survive.

My dad was in World War I and was always reluctant to discuss it. How much we take for granted, this Freedom we have. And we owe so much to Charlie and boys like him. This should be required reading in every school.

— BETTY DUKES
BLOOMINGTON, IN

(The book) was an incredible story, and I am so happy Mr. Dukes decided to share it. I can appreciate so much more the hardships people had to endure to make my life what it is today.

— AMY REID
INDIANAPOLIS, IN

I finished reading the book and wanted to say how much I enjoyed it. I'm not sure "enjoyed" is the correct word because it was difficult to read. I can't imagine how difficult it was to live. Charlie's memory for detail is astounding and I really want to thank him for keeping alive such a critical time in our nation's history. I admire his courage in writing the book. While it must have been therapeutic, it must also have been painful.

— VAL SCHWAB
OCALA, FL

Charlie's words brought me closer to war than I ever want to be. I thank him for his part in my freedom, the freedom of those I love and the freedom of all Americans. May God bless him.

— CAROL NICCUM
GEORGETOWN, IL

Charlie is teaching history—something none of us wants anyone to have to go through. May he helped make a gentler generation in the years to come.

— JEAN C. BURD
LAVERNE, CA

Last Christmas, my mother bought me "Comanche Moon," Larry McMurtry's new book. It was on The New York Times' Best Seller List. It couldn't hold a candle to Charlie's book. Many nights I couldn't wait to get off work just so I could snuggle up in bed with his book. There was also one night when I had to put the book away because I was grossed out over his dealings with the lice.

— CHARLIE FRATICK
DENVER, CO

'Thunder and mud,' a way of life

By Ray Elliott

Starting *Tales* to use cultural journalism to teach writing, learn about country life in a hands-on way and preserve some of the rural Midwestern history and culture wasn't such a great idea to my father.

"I don't know about the writing," he said. "But don't you remember what you said about the old ways of doing things when you helped Roy and me shuck corn that time?"

I remembered all right. Because the fall had been particularly wet, we had had to shuck some of our corn by hand or leave it in the field. Instead of using a team of horses to pull the wagon, we used a tractor. That was the only difference he and my Uncle Roy, whose land we were farming, said there was from the way we were doing it from their corn-shucking days.

I was having trouble using the shucking peg, my hands were cold and my feet were wet. I was miserable and let them know it.

"Just think," Uncle Roy said in his booming voice, "when you get to be an old man, you can tell people that you shucked corn by hand when you were a boy."

"I don't see anything so great about it," I said and heard my father laugh as he trotted through the rows snapping off ears of corn and flipping them toward the wagon so there was always an ear or two in the air.

As a young man, he had shucked corn up north in the fall of the year for the larger corn farmers on the table-flat land of east-central Illinois as farm kids from his part of the country had for years. In those days, he said he could shuck and scoop more than 100 bushels of ear corn a day. I couldn't imagine scooping that much corn, let alone shucking it by hand or telling anybody I'd ever even shucked any.

Pop died last summer. And I look at things a little differently than I did in that corn field long ago. Before too much more time has passed and the memories of his kind of life fades forever, I wanted to share some of how he lived that reflects his generation and the time in which he grew up.

"Thunder and mud. What in the Devil are you adoin' now?" I can hear him saying if he were alive and reading this. He was often apprehensive about what I'd say or write about him. Before my parents' 50th wedding anniversary, I told him I'd be speaking.

"I don't want to hear any silliness," he said. And the next day he sat up straight and a little on the edge of his chair for a while.

All the silliness I mentioned was about him hauling a mixed load of stock to Indianapolis and penning four head of lambs in the decking at the front of the truck and forgetting

to unload them at the stockyards.

At home the next morning, he woke up to the sound of bleating sheep outside his bedroom window and spent the rest of the day looking for another trucker who was going to Indianapolis that night.

Everybody laughed. He grinned sheepishly at that story and seemed to relax a little from then on.

For people who knew my father, they know he had a sense of humor and could laugh at himself as he did about that incident. They knew that "thunder and mud" could be used in jest—or in place of something stronger when he wasn't quite so jestful.

The term sort of became his trademark exclamation in his later years. It was one of those family ways of expression, handed down from generation to generation. John



Top: Harold Elliott and Mable Newberry in 1938.
Right: Harold, in the fall of 1959, beside one of the many Dodge trucks he owned in more than 40 years as a trucker.

Walter, Pop's father, said, "Thunder" or "Thundernation" together with "What the Sam Hill?" and a host of other regional and family sayings thrown in.

But Pop added the "mud" and became known in some circles as "Old Thunder and Mud"—a name I've always thought rather appropriate and worthy of his mother's family, the early days of the pioneers' move Westward and a murky history that was never fully explained to me.

My not-yet-3-year-old daughter, Jessica, would run up to Pop and say, "Thunder and mud," then turn away laughing and say, "Grandpa says, 'Thunder and mud.'" A grin would spread out over his face, his eyes would sparkle and he'd laugh, too.

He also was good at making up ominous-sounding words with obscure meanings. When some of his first grandchildren got old

enough to get loud and rowdy, he'd growl gently, "Here! You fellers want me to give you a scutchin'?"

Nobody knew what he meant. As far as I know, none of them ever got one. But because of the sound, they knew they didn't want one, either.

My parents had known each other ever since Mother tossed a few beans at him one Saturday night in the Needmore Store and he tossed them back. They were together virtually from then on.

About the first thing I remember in this life is Pop wheeling one of his big old long-nosed, red Dodge livestock trucks down the road, in a field or around a barnyard. Mother often helped him or went along to drive and keep him awake on his long days.

"Back then," he'd tell me, "a lot of times I didn't even pull my shoes off from Monday morning through Friday and would sleep in the truck."



He'd back up to a barn, set the loading chute and load cattle or hogs to haul to market in Indianapolis every day. If he needed another hog on the upper deck, he'd grab a 220-pounder around the middle and lift it over the walk-up board already securely fastened to keep the hogs on the upper deck.

They called him "Big Elit," "Big Un" or just "Big" in the early years of his more than 40 years in trucking. I always wondered why.

Jack Wade, an Oblong farmer who knew Pop since he was just a boy and my father was hauling livestock to Indianapolis for farmers around Bellair and Annapolis, always tells me a story about Pop coming to his family's farm to get a veal calf.

"I went out to open the barnyard gate when I saw him comin'," Wade says, explaining that he was 12 or 14 years old and had

been left to show Pop where the calf was and help load it. "Your dad hardly slowed down when he drove through the gate. 'Where's that calf, boy?' he said.

"I pointed to the barn door and started to go open it so he could back the truck up to it. But he swung the truck around by the door, stopped and got out. 'Ain't you goin' to back up and put the loading chute down?' I asked him. 'We don't need no loading chute for that calf,' Harold said and raised the end gate about half way up.

"He went and opened that barn door, scooped that calf, which weighed 300 or 400 pounds, up in his arms, carried it to the back of the truck and threw it in. It impressed the hell out of me, and I've never forgotten it."

Sometimes back in those days, Pop'd have a chaw in his mouth the size of a baseball starting to unravel, stretching his left cheek all out of

one late-spring night when we kept going up and down the field long after we usually called it a day. At a quarter 'til midnight, standing in the lights of his tractor so I could see him, he finally waved me in as I reached the end of the field. I was tempted to swing the tractor around and head back down the field again, but I shut down and stomped over to him, spoiling for a fight.

"Let's go," he said quietly.

"No," I said hotly. "Let's work all night. No use quitting now. There's farming to do."

"We'll go home and get some sleep," he said tiredly as we headed for the truck, "and get back over here in the morning so we can get this discing done early and move the tools over to Mom's by noon or a little after."

And sure enough, we were back at it by 6:30 the next morning. He was like that right up to that afternoon late last summer, working at something, visiting people who couldn't get out much, going to hospitals or nursing homes to see friends or relatives there and, for the last few years, taking care of my mother when she could no longer walk.

He still mowed his yard, and he put out a garden his last spring with a little help early on. He and my mother, who worked right alongside of him for more than 58 years, canned 100 quarts of tomato juice and some green beans last summer.

They were canning the day he died. Late that morning, he went to Moonshine to get my mother and him a hamburger for their dinner. The next-door neighbor came over and talked with them while they ate.

"I think I'll go mow Martha's yard," he said after she left. "She's been so good to us."

Mother agreed.

He was a good, plain-speaking man. You always knew where you stood with him. He lived his life his way as much as possible, and his home and family meant everything to him. Not officially, but figuratively, he was gone last summer when the medics wheeled him out of the living room of the house he'd lived in with my mother for the last 52 years and raised their family and enjoyed old age together.

And if it had to be, I know he wouldn't have wanted it any other way. With my mother there by his side, holding his hand and fanning him near the end, neither would I. It was a beautiful day—warm, clear, with just a hint of fall in the air. I think he would have liked that, too.

Maybe I won't tell anyone I shucked corn as a boy when I'm an old man. But I'll surely tell someone about my father, my mother and a generation who lived in a time and place that gave their children a home with love, a feeling of family and a sense of direction in life that showed the value of a vanishing way of life.

Just Haru

By Ruth Ellington

The dust hung like a thick cloud in the air as we turned off the main road and drove down the gravel lane. The August sun was beating down, making me dread giving up the air-conditioning of the car. A light breeze blew through 100-year-old maple trees and cooled the shaded yard. Harvey was propped against a hackberry tree in an old wooden chair—one of the same kitchen chairs I sat on some 30 years ago when I first met him. A friend had brought me out here for a Sunday afternoon of Euchre and cold beer, and I was still coming back.

Frances was sitting on the concrete well-curb, where she had just pumped a fresh bucket of water for a batch of Kool-Aid. Frances and Harvey had been married for more than 60 years. They had 13 kids and what seemed like a hundred grandkids.

Harvey's blue eyes narrowed, deepening the lines in his forehead, as his face broke into a smile when he saw us. His big frame bent slightly forward and lumbered toward me with that leathery, outstretched hand with the finger drawn back from arthritis. He pulled me close for a hug. I could feel the warmth of his big arm and smell the flannel of his shirt sleeve.

"How the heck have you been?" he said. "You sure stayed away long enough."

He took off his hat and ran his fingers through his already mussed gray, thinning hair. He said he hadn't shaved in a couple of days, hadn't felt like it, as he rubbed his stubby whiskers on the kids. His bibs were faded and ragged with the knees worn thin. The tattered blue flannel shirt had been patched several times. Harvey wore the same clothes year round. When the weather got cold, he just wore two or three pairs, depending on the temperature.

Harvey's old blue Plymouth station wagon was sitting partly in the barnyard. He didn't drive to town anymore, just to cut wood and to go hunting and to see his friend down the road. He usually barreled down the lane and would overshoot the driveway. Kids, dogs and chickens ran for cover when they heard him coming.

Grandkids were running all over the place. Three of them had just found a new litter of kittens in the loft of the old red barn.

"Don't you fall out of there!" he yelled, as they showed us their find through the hayloft door. "Better put 'em back before the old cat moves 'em."

A couple of other kids were chasing a guinea, trying to get it back into the chicken pen. Some of the older kids walked up from the woods carrying two squirrels and a turtle from their trip. Harvey had been out hunting early that morning and had gotten three squirrels. He could still shoot a squirrel out of the top of a tree at 75 yards.

Almost everyone was sitting outside because the house was really hot from Frances cooking dinner. There were a few watching baseball on TV, and there was always a Euchre game going at the kitchen table. The cards were so old, they were starting to fray on the end and some of the spots were wearing off. I made a mental note to pick up a new deck.

Harvey reached into his torn pocket and pulled out an old Zippo lighter with a loose top that rattled. The silver had worn off long ago, leaving it the shade of burnished brass.

"Can't beat these old lighters," he said, as his blue eyes sparkled in the flame. "The wind can't hardly blow 'em out."

He sucked hard to light his pipe. The veins on his neck stood out, and I could see the white wrinkles at the corner of his mouth. He looked old and tired sitting there. Life had not been gentle, but it had never dimmed his spirit.

"Have you eat dinner yet?" he asked. "Frances, get the food back out. These people haven't eaten yet."

I told him we had and that we didn't come for dinner, but he didn't want to believe me and kept telling me with a gleam in his eye about the blackberry cobbler sitting on the back of the stove.

The kids were all yelling, "Grandpa Harv," with stories to tell. He would catch one off guard and touch them on the arm or leg with the side of his pipe, which was rather hot, and then blame it on someone else.

"Let me get some chairs. You're all gonna stay for supper, aren't you? Sit down here and tell me what you been doing. You never have time for this old man anymore. Been doing any fishing lately? We caught one the other night, a big flathead, back at Brouillett's Creek. Weighed over 30 pounds. Took three of us to get him out!"

"Harvey, I brought some hotdogs and potato salad for a cookout later," I said. "It's hot in the house, and the kids will have fun out here."

"Sis, I don't know what this world is coming to. Just don't seem right when a man starts crapping in the house and eating outdoors. You coming over Tuesday? Frances is gonna make bread."

Again, his eyes twinkled as he spoke softly. It was well known all over St. Bernice, Ind., that Frances made the best light bread around. We would sit around the kitchen table all afternoon, playing Euchre and eating hot light bread just out of the oven.

"If the good Lord's willing, I'll be here," I answered.

Just about then my kids came running in.

"Grandpa! Grandpa! There's bees in the outhouse!"

Oh, he wasn't their real grandpa, but the only grandpa they ever knew—a possession of the heart. He was something solid that satisfied the soul. Through the 30 years of knowing him, I

knew what Harvey stood for and what he wouldn't stand for: like talking about your neighbor, sleeping around or taking anything that wasn't yours. He once made his son walk four miles into town to return a cigarette lighter he had stolen. Harsh, maybe, but it never happened again. Harvey didn't like cats in the house, unruly kids or cheating at Euchre. I've seen him borrow money on his word and feed half the county out of his huge garden in the summer.

Harvey said to the kids, "Hey, you guys wanna go see a little deer? Let's walk back to the woods. Frances, where's the powdered milk?" and began to pump a bucket of water.

The kids were jumping up and down, yelling to get started. One carried the bucket, the other, some apples from under the tree. When they came back, they were telling me how the deer came up and ate out of their hand. I didn't have the heart to tell them that was next winter's meat.

"How about a game of Euchre," Harvey said as we walked into the dark kitchen.

He pulled the chain on the bare light bulb hanging from the ceiling. Its reflecting glow made the smoked-up ceiling from the old wood stove look even worse. I thought to myself, I need to get over here and paint that before it gets cold.

"Sit down here, Sis. Want to deal?" he said.

"I'll pass," I said as he shuffled the old, worn deck and slapped the cards down on the table in front of me.

"Cut," he said.

"I'll pass. I trust you."

Harvey looked me in the eye, extended his long arm across the table, pointed his finger at me and said in a strong voice, "Cut the cards, Sis. And don't ever forget, no matter how dumb that so-and-so looks that's dealing, cut the cards."

Their house was always full of people, coming and going. There was always room for

one more; and no one went away hungry. My parents had long been gone, and I thought he was a God-sent grandpa for my kids, a true example of being happy and content.

I held on to his beliefs with everything I had. I never got caught up in the materialism of the day. I never felt I needed to.

I didn't get back to Harvey's for a couple of months. The leaves were gone from the trees, leaving gray, bare branches. There was plastic on the windows, and the chicken house was fixed.

Harvey walked out to meet us when he heard the car. There sat his old blue station wagon, half in the barnyard again.

All smiles and hugs, he said, "Come on in. How 'bout a game of Euchre?"

Then he looked at me with a devilish grin. "Frances made light bread this morning."

"Harvey, it looks like you're ready for winter," I said.

He pointed at the pile of firewood half as big as the house.

"I cut wood all fall, and Frances canned all summer." Out of earshot of the kids he said, "A couple of weeks ago, I got a deer. Not too old. A nice buck. I hand fed him myself."

Harvey died that winter.

They couldn't get all the people who came to say goodbye in the little church. One grandson gave the eulogy, while another grandson, too stunned with grief, sat in a car outside the church, alone. The state police blocked the highway for 20 minutes while the three-mile-long funeral procession passed through.

He was buried in an old country cemetery alongside Brouillett's Creek. The cold December wind froze the tears on my face. I thought about what I had lost and what I had gained. Gone now was the love and integrity of a man who had given me a sense of belonging through the most simple things in life. My world would never be the same. But by knowing him, maybe I can make my way through it.

Ellington of Carmargo, IL, wrote this story as part of an Urbana School District Adult Education writing class.

*Cut the cards, Sis.
And don't ever forget,
no matter how dumb that
so-and-so looks that's dealing,
cut the cards.'*



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A group of young newsboys pose for a photo as seen in "The Irish In America: Long Journey Home," an epic, six-hour film documenting the Irish immigration to the United States and their experience in America.

Did You Know ...

Gwinn to attend international meeting about organic crops

Urbana attorney and Tales Community Advisory Board member John Gwinn was named the Illinois delegate to the international meeting of the Organic Crop Improvement Association International. He incorporated the Illinois chapter in 1990 and has served as its president and on the board of directors. The association has been instrumental in the formation of new U.S. organic food standards.

Epic film documents Irish in America

A historic film that chronicles the Irish experience in America debuted in January 1998. The special, "The Irish in America: Long Journey Home," contains six hours of historic adventure of how Irish immigrants impacted both Ireland and the new land of America. The film's four chapters follow the Irish from early immigration

through Ireland's infamous potato famine, examines how the Irish contributed to the building of a young America, rose to new heights in big-city politics and became one of the most successful ethnic groups in the United States.

The film weaves storied of families, workers, churches, athletes, entertainers and many more into a portrait of Irish achievement.

Created by documentary filmmaker Thomas Lennon, "The Irish in America: Long Journey Home" was made in association with The Walt Disney Studios and WGBH-Boston. The film also has a companion book and CD.

Writer depicts teaching in one-room schools

A past contributor to *Tales*, Mildred L. Barrett, has published a new book called, "Readin' n' Ritin' 'n' Rithmetic."

It tells of her experiences teaching in one-room schools from 1928 until the early 1940s, including two schoolhouses in

Jasper County and three in Crawford County. The book also includes photographs of students, the recitation bench, students' desks and the outdoor pump where children lined up to get a drink at recess.

Barrett has published two other books—a collection of students' letters and one of mystery stories.

A native of Bellair born in 1906, Barrett and a friend bought the bi-weekly newspaper, the Annapolis News, and published it for a year when she was only 19 years old. She wrote about that experience in the last issue of *Tales*.

She also taught in California for many years and retired after 34 years and moved to New Hampshire. She now resides in Tucson, Ariz.

Two groups promote historic rail-trail projects

The path Paul Revere made famous on his midnight ride heralding the outbreak of the American Revolution ... a stretch

along the banks of the Missouri River followed by explorers Lewis and Clark ... and the train tracks traveled by notorious outlaws en route to the Old West hub of Santa Fe, N.M. These are just a few of the "10 Historic Rail-Trails" now being singled out for special attention this summer by the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy and the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Trails in California, Connecticut, Georgia, Iowa, Massachusetts, Missouri, New Mexico, New York, Virginia and Wisconsin are being recognized by these two groups.

The joint effort is intended to call attention to the rail-trail projects that are either historically significant in and of themselves or are in direct proximity to historic sites. Creating a pathway that may be used by bicyclists, walkers, joggers, the disabled, equestrians and others, a rail-trail gives a second life to an abandoned railroad corridor that would otherwise be lost for transportation purposes.

Look for more information on the Web at www.railtrails.org.

Book features Indian ledger book artwork

In the spring of 1875, the U.S. government imprisoned 72 militant Indians, deporting them to Fort Marion, Fla.—half a continent from their homeland on the Great Plains. The U.S. Army could never have anticipated that this internment would create an extraordinary artistic community, Indians in prison creating a striking visual history of a vanishing way of life.

National Geographic Books has reproduced for the first time an authentic ledger book featuring the work of two of the most gifted of these captive artists—Making Medicine, a Cheyenne, and Zotom, a Kiowa—in "Warrior Artists: Historic Cheyenne and Kiowa Ledger Art."

The book showcases the artists' pencil-and-ink depictions of their lives before and during captivity.

This type of artwork is called "ledger art" because Indians used the large, lined accounting books used by traders and military officers of the period.

TRIP TO AUSTRALIA MADE WITH

CURIOSITY

By *RAY ELLIOTT*

While I was working as a turnkey in a Marine Corps brig in the Philippines, several sailors were sentenced to do their time there after jumping ship and going over the hill in Australia. Some of them simply got drunk and missed their ship's departure or found a woman they hated to leave. But most of them genuinely liked the country and had stayed for that reason.

"I turned myself in to get this off my back," one sailor, who had been AWOL for nearly a year, told me one day. He had been sentenced to six months in the brig, forfeiture of all pay and allowances, busted to the seaman rank and given a bad conduct discharge at the conclusion of his sentence.

"It was worth it," he said. "When I get out of here, they'll ship me back to the States for discharge. But I'm going back to Australia just as soon as I can. You oughta go sometime. It's a great country: The people are friendly and the women are beautiful."

Throughout those months I worked in the brig, I heard the same thing from other prisoners. After I got back to the States and out of the military, I heard more of the same from World War II veterans who had been in Australia during the war. With that perspective, I always kept it in the back of my mind that I would get there someday. I just didn't know when or how.

But like everything else in life, things have a way of coming around if you want them to come around. Legendary director Terrence Malick (*Badlands* and *Days of Heaven*) had been hired to write the screenplay for novelist James Jones' Guadalcanal novel *The Thin Red Line* several years ago and later to direct the film. Filming was scheduled to begin in Queensland, Australia, which has a topography and climate similar to Guadalcanal, in June 1997. Malick had invited board members of the James Jones Literary Society to the set to observe the filming. As a board member, I could go but was restricted to only writing about my visit for the literary society newsletter, which my wife and I edit.

A visit of that nature didn't present much of a reason for going in and of itself. But it gave me enough. I've got a traveling bug and have gone places with less reason. So I started planning the trip. Hong Kong was being turned back over to the Chinese on June 30. When I had been there in the early '60s, I had planned to go back again as a civilian before control reverted to the Chinese. The trip to Australia would be my final opportunity.

At the same time, I could stop in the Philippines where I had been stationed for 18 months and had always planned to revisit. And I could stop in Vietnam and Thailand and any other place I could squeeze in on the way that I'd always wanted to visit.

Because of the celebration in Hong Kong as the British turned over control to the Chinese, hotels

were booked solid and priced out of sight for my pocket book. But that never concerned me much. I'd gone other places and rarely had had to sleep on the ground. I knew something would come up when I got there. And I wasn't worried about finding something wherever I stopped, even sleeping on the ground if it came to that.

As it happened, though, I had to forgo Hong Kong because filming wasn't going to be in full swing until mid-July. So I ended up missing all those other places I wanted to visit in the Far East and South Pacific and waiting until August to go to Australia.

Even that made the scheduling rather tight. My school was scheduled to start ungodly early, nearly 10 days before the first of September. And I knew I wouldn't want to miss a day of those fun-filled first days of school merely to travel. So I headed out, knowing that I would have to begin teaching almost immediately upon my return.

To prepare for my visit to the set of *The Thin Red Line*, I started reading the Jones novel. I hadn't read it for years, and it held my attention throughout my waking hours from the time I left the Midwest and the author's roots until I finished it somewhere over the Pacific during the endless night of a flight from the United States to Australia and near that part of the world where the Allies began their island-hopping march to Japan more than 50 years ago.

Stopping only to eat, drink, sleep and go to the toilet as scheduled or necessary, I reacquainted myself with the horrors of war as seen through the eyes of the quintessential war novelist of our time. Other war novelists may have been better wordsmiths and other war novels may be fine novels about war and its absurdity, but no writer or novel have captured the essence and absurdity of war any better than Jones did in his Guadalcanal novel.

I was mildly surprised and

quite pleased to see what a good, well-written novel *The Thin Red Line* actually is, at how well it has stood the test of time. In my opinion, it is Jones' best novel. By this time in his life, he was a more mature writer and crafted a literary novel that has no major main characters but looks at the men of Charlie Company troops as they lived and died in the hell of Guadalcanal and the first campaign in the three-year long island-hopping invasions necessary to ultimately invade Japan.

Knowing the actors playing the parts and being familiar with both the novel and the history made the re-reading more interesting than other times I had read the book. And hurtling through the night toward a destination like the set of the movie gave me a sense of urgency to finish the story that made me feel a bit closer to the members of Charlie Company as they anchored off the coast of Guadalcanal on that November night so long ago.

I wanted to be secure in my knowledge of the novel by the time I arrived and knew the security the pistol Cpl. Doll stole before his outfit left the ship must have given him. The cover of the novel stuck out over the outside pocket of my briefcase when I walked into the movie production office in Port Douglas, Australia, to make arrangements to visit the

location and observe the filming.

"Oh, you have a copy of *The Thin Red Line*?" the scheduler I'd talked with from the States about the visit asked me. "I've been trying to get ahold of one for quite a while now. Do you want to sell that one?"

"Not particularly," I said, thinking how incredulous it was that somebody hadn't made sure copies of the novel were available. But after hearing they were virtually non-existent, I gave the novel to the woman. It was a Book-of-the-Month selection I'd had around for years, and I no longer needed it for security the way Doll needed the pistol.

When I'd talked to her about making the trip, she had asked me where I would like to stay. I had told her that I wanted to stay in a typical Australian hotel rather than some chain that was more typical of the United States. The Central Hotel where I'd been dropped off just up the street from the production office in the center of the relatively small town didn't disappoint me.

The bar looked like something out of *Crocodile Dundee*, and I halfway expected Mick Dundee to walk in any time to have a glass of beer as I looked the place over. The locals setting around the bar looked as though they might be friends of his. I thought of the sailor in the brig back in the Philippines years ago

and knew a bit more of what he was talking about then.

After making arrangements for my visits to the movie set, I went back to the Central Hotel bar and had a beer myself. With a short draft to fortify me, I walked down the main street that seemed to divide the town toward the ocean and the movie production office. The scheduler in the office had made arrangements for a driver to pick me up the next day to go out to the set about an hour's drive north of town. For the rest of the day, I exchanged some American dollars for Australian dollars and walked around the town.

Since I could only write about the movie for the James Jones Literary Society newsletter and the trip was going to be so short, I wanted to see what I could in the area before heading back to the States and another year of teaching. Across the street from the production company was the local tourist information office. I had planned to be on the set for only a couple of days, so I wanted to schedule my time to take advantage of other sights.

The first thing I knew I wanted to do was take a boat out to the Great Barrier Reef on the weekend. I scheduled that for Saturday, two days later. An excursion through the rainforest was recommended, too, but I figured I would be in that part of



TY N MIND

the country on the movie location and didn't want to take the time. So I decided not to take the trip and planned to hang around town on Sunday and go to the beach.

For the next two days, I met the drivers at the production office about 9 a.m. and made the drive out to the set, spent the day and got back to town well after 6 p.m. Coming back after a long day in the sun and having had a big meal on the movie set the first day, I didn't want much for dinner and walked down the street from my hotel to a small open-air restaurant that advertised fish sandwiches.

"I'll take a fish to go," I finally said to the man looking patiently at me across the counter after he'd tried several times to explain what the menu said.

"You mean to take away?" he asked, smiling a bit.

"Yeah," I said, smiling, too, "I want it to go, and I'll take it away. I'll also take some chips."

Only an occasional customer drifted in or asked either he or the woman helping him for something. I looked around to see who all the fish he was frying was for and saw nobody else who had ordered anything for the deep fryer. While the fish was frying, he asked me where I was from in the States.

"Illinois," I told him.

"Chicago?" he asked, turning to look at me.



The Port Douglas beach, looking north to the Daintree rainforest—location for the filming of *The Thin Red Line*.

Photos by Ray Elliott

"South of Chicago," I said. From then on, I was the man from Illinois when I walked in to have a sandwich, a bite for breakfast or just a cup of coffee.

All the while that first evening, I watched the fish fry and wondered who was going to get it all. There were two huge pieces of fresh fish that stuck far out over the edge of the bun after he'd spread some tartar-like sauce on it and put the fish on the bun.

"What do you want on it, mate?" he asked, looking down in the case between us.

"Whatever you usually put on it," I said, unsure of myself.

He said something I didn't catch and started dressing the sandwich up with shredded lettuce, carrots, other vegetables I didn't recognize and topped it off with a couple of sliced cucumbers. I took away the huge sandwich and the chips, a mound

of long, thickly-sliced fries, together enough for a meal for two normal people.

On the days I went to the set, I'd leave my room early, grab a bite of breakfast and meet a driver for a ride out to Daintree country an hour north of Port Douglas. After driving through the small towns of Mossman and Daintree and passing a few scattered houses, we drove along the mountainous road overlooking the Coral Sea and headed off

Continued on page 10



Australia

Continued from page 9

into the country doubling for Guadalcanal.

As we crossed a bridge over a stream near the Daintree River National Park, I looked upstream into the increasingly rougher-looking terrain. The driver must have been reading my mind.

"You'll see some crocks in there," he said. "On the tours through the Daintree rainforest, you go up the river by boat. At certain spots, they'll stop and you can see crocks. It's actually a quite interesting place."

Walking along the tropical beach in Port Douglas and looking north toward the Daintree and the mountains, I could only imagine why the area had been chosen to shoot much of the battle scenes of Guadalcanal. But driving off the main road and onto the private, undeveloped land, I could see why the location was chosen.

Although the Solomon Islands were more than 1,000 miles out across the Coral Sea, the topography of this section of Queensland, Australia, was much like I had imagined Guadalcanal to be from reading Jones' fine descriptions of the island. Looking at the area from the deck of the boat taking a group of travelers out to the Great Barrier Reef, I could almost imagine the invasion of the island in the Jones novel that had started the long allied march from the South Pacific to Japan.

On the trip out to the reef, I met a young German and his family who had just joined up with him for a family trip. His father was on his way back to Germany after three years with a German airlines in Jakarta, Indonesia. The young man's girlfriend, mother and young brother joined them in Australia. I listened with fascination and envy as the young man told me about his travels across part of the Asian continent and hitchhiking across the great outback in Australia.

"What are you going to do when you get back to Germany?" I asked after I'd found that he was going to end his five-month period of travel this time.

"I'd like to go back to Germany, get rid of my apartment and go traveling again," he said, looking over his shoulder at his family as he spoke quietly. "But I haven't told my girlfriend or my parents yet. They don't know."

With that he went back to his family and I went down to the galley to get a drink. The captain also served as bartender with a man and a British woman who had been living in Australia for a couple of years.

"What kind of beer would you like, mate?" the captain asked.

"I usually drink Foster's when I drink Australian beer in the States," I said. "Give me—"

"We don't drink that stuff here," the captain said. "We export it."

"Give me what you drink then," I said and took the XXXX he handed me.

Not long afterwards we approached a small island with an authentic Scottish lighthouse sitting on the highest part of the island. The lighthouse had been built in Scotland 100 years ago and shipped to Australia where it had been put together and served as a functioning lighthouse on the reef, a few miles off of the coast.

I could see the coast in the distance as I heard the British woman call to me to get ready to jump in the water behind the boat where she had cast a net so the swimmers could frolic along behind the boat as it crawled toward the island.

"I'll pass," I said and watched the kids and a few of their parents jump out into the water. I'd already seen signs on the beaches as I walked from downtown Port Douglas warning swimmers that they were in tropical waters and would swim at their own risk. And I was supposed to jump in that water.

Before taking a small boat out to the island to lie on the beach and try our hand at snorkling, we loaded in two glass-bottom boats and motored around the water to see the colorful tropical fish and giant clams in the shallow water just below our boat. The sea was bright and beautiful. I was almost sorry that I didn't go on out to the Outer Reef and see more of the sea life.

But there wasn't time to do all I wanted to. Back on the boat, we had a lunch of about all the prawns I could eat and a few other things I didn't eat and don't remember. Enough prawns were left over that we threw quite a few of them to the colorful tropical fish that would jump high out of the water, fighting for the prawns among themselves.

The days passed much too quickly. On the day I was supposed to leave, I meet the driver and a stunt man who was also leaving for a flight out of Cairns. Both Australians saw me looking at dogs along the beach as we drove south along the coast.

"We swim with dogs a lot here in Australia," the driver said.

"People swim with dogs in the States, too," I said, thinking both the people and the dogs seemed to be enjoying themselves.

"Yeah," the driver said. "Here, we let the dogs in first. If the salt-water crocks don't get them, we know it's safe to swim there."

I laughed with the Australians. It is quite a country. The sailor from the brig back in the Philippines was right about the country. It is beautiful, the people are friendly, and I can't wait until I can go again.

The Culture of Traveling

Editor's Note: Michael Kiesling met Tales editor Ray Elliott on a boat to the reef in Port Douglas, Australia, in August 1997. The traveler returned to Germany in October and got a new job. "It is good and interesting work," he says, "but I like to go away again."

"On the boat I asked you if you are interested about what I have seen on my trip. Well, here it is. But it is not easy for me to write in English."

By Michael Kiesling

To some people, I am a little strange. One reason may be that I do not have a television. It is not that I don't like a good movie or an interesting documentation. No, it is the 99.9 percent of the rest of the programming that bothers me. Television is a mirror of that part of our culture, which I cannot identify myself with. Soap operas, advertising, sex, violence and too much fantasy. I know how I want to live, how to look and what I need for life. But let me tell you about something different.

I received an apprenticeship as an aircraft mechanic at the German Lufthansa and joined the Army for one year. After that, I finished my studies in mechanical engineering with diploma. I have been traveling in Europe, North America, Africa, Asia and Australia in the last 20 years. My most recent trip for took me for five months to the Indian subcontinent, Southeast Asia and Australia.

Let me tell you about traveling and the culture of traveling.

Bangkok, or Krung Thep as it is known to the Thais, is one of the strongest pumping hearts in Southeast Asia. It is a very impressive city, grown with time and not only with money like many other cities in that region. In this metropolis you find everything that makes traveling so interesting: people, culture, history, life.

Culinary it ranges from hundreds of varieties of rice to roasted grasshoppers, or for me, after six weeks in India and Nepal, a cheeseburger. I am enthusiastic about Bangkok. Only a very small part of the city is responsible for its reputation as a sin-city. In the city map it is hard to find the 150-meter-long Patpong Road where most of the

brothels and go-go bars are located. In Bangkok some of the biggest and most impressive Buddhist temples of the world can be seen. The markets, the people, the palaces, the khlongs (canals), colors and smells will stay forever in my memory.

Despite the hectic atmosphere and the anonymity of a big city, the people are friendly. Even if few bus drivers understand English, they help as much as possible that you really reach your



Kiesling

destination. People joke and laugh with you. You are accepted, and you are not just a tourist with money.

If you go to Bangkok for the first time, Khao San Road is probably the place you go to. Here are the most of the cheaper hostels and hotels. I have to admit that after India and Nepal, I was glad to be back in civilization. But Khao San Road was a little too much.

While looking for a room, I couldn't believe my eyes. There were so many familiar faces in the hotel lounge: Arnold Schwarzenegger as the Terminator and Wesley Snipes and Mel Gibson on another big television screen. In another lounge, there were no faces of Hollywood, but rather, Turin versus Manchester United, live via satellite from Europe. In the first hotel there was a tense silence in the audience, which you hardly dared to disturb. In the second, one needed a loud voice to drown the bawling fans, all armed with beer bottles and naked from the waist up.

The scenes repeat along the

road.

Travelers from Europe, North America and Australia form the bulk of travelers in Khao San Road. A lot of the men were bearded in Cobain style and girls wore tight skirts and tops that show more than they conceal. Some of the men and women were in native dress, wearing wide cotton trousers, batik shirts and sandals. Cool, cool, cool. Don't talk too much. Smoke. Drink. Who's got the most provocative shirt, who has the coolest, the biggest earring or the most exiting tattoo.

The catwalk is everywhere. You are model, audience and judge at the same time.

Native businessmen try to satisfy the demands of all sorts of travelers. Nothing is impossible: Wiener Schnitzel, Budweiser, drugs, girls.

I was in Bangkok, Thailand, but it could have been Jakarta, Indonesia, or Pushkar in India.

Back in the hotel, I met Peter. He stutters a little, he is around 40 years old and has been on the road since he was 19. He has known Bangkok for a long time.

"There is less communication between people," he says. "In earlier times, the community was closer. There was more than watching television together."

I got some tips from Peter for Indonesia, where he had been the prior week and where I was going after my stay in Thailand.

What is the current state of the culture of traveling? Well, there will be no valuation from my side, good or bad, right or wrong. But we must not forget that we are representatives of our countries, our cultures and our societies. Even if our behavior seems so minor, it has its effects on the future—our future and the future of other countries' people. As travelers, we have a responsibility, and not just for ourselves but for the society, for all countries of a world that gets smaller and smaller.

When native people asked me what my country is, there was always an, "Aahh, Germany good," or something similar said. I heard these sentences also in reference to other Western countries.

Wouldn't it be nice if our children could have this experience, too?

REMEMBERING

V-J DAY

By Jim Baum

"Send that pilot boat out here right now, or we'll blow your goddamn lighthouse to dust."

The blast of sound from the loudspeaker echoed across the glassy smooth water of the inlet to Tokyo Bay. Our little mine sweeper was dead still in the water while we waited for the Japanese to send a pilot out to our ship. We waited nervously, all guns manned, because we had no idea what to expect. The Japanese still had not surrendered, even though the United States had dropped two atomic bombs on them and killed tens of thousands of their people.

"Train your guns on that lighthouse, men. Stand ready."

The commodore's amplified voice could be heard for two miles in every direction over the water. We knew that there was an interpreter at the lighthouse, and we all cringed at the bold words. Our arrival here had been

prearranged by the Japanese High Command and Gen. Douglas MacArthur. We were supposed to be allowed to enter the bay and sweep it for mines, but there were still 2 million Japanese soldiers on the home islands, defiant and unbeaten. We didn't know what they would do when they saw us in their backyard.

The Japanese response to our ultimatum came immediately. The steep, forested hills on both sides of the inlet appeared to come alive. Trees, boulders and bushes slowly shifted to the right and left, uphill and down. The ugly snouts of heavy artillery poked out at us. We were suddenly staring down the barrels of hundreds of cannons. Doors slid open in the hillside, and the really big guns were revealed.

My life froze at that instant. Instinctively, I tightened the belt on my life vest. My puny little 20-millimeter machine gun was small comfort as I stared at the enemy artillery. From my battle station atop the bridge, I looked down to the deck at the other crew members. All were frozen in place, like me. I was terrified. I could almost feel the awesome weight of all the shells the Japanese were about to shoot at us. There was nothing we could do but wait. We were at their mercy.

We knew them to be terrible adversaries. Our ships had suffered greatly from the attacks of their "Kamikaze" planes loaded with dynamite. There were several American warships driven up on the beach at Okinawa to keep them from sinking. We had heard, unofficially, that we would be allowed to escape this trap alive. I fervently prayed that the commodore would keep his big mouth shut.

The deadly silence of the standoff was abruptly broken by the puny sputtering of an outboard motor as a tiny boat pulled away from the lighthouse. It came slowly out to meet us and pulled alongside our ladder. The interpreter and the pilot climbed our ladder and came aboard with much bowing and saluting. Our deck crew had crowded around the top of the boatswain's ladder and a low growl came from their throats. We had never seen a Japanese person before, but the sight of these tiny men dressed in their ugly, khaki brown uniforms aroused a bestial anger in the crew. I couldn't believe that these strange-looking little men had killed so many of us.

We knew that they were fearless fighters. They had died, almost to the last man, on Iwo Jima, and thousands of their soldiers had died in hopeless suicide attacks in the fighting on Okinawa. I felt that I should have murderous feelings toward these men, but I did not. I felt the wrong emotion. I felt sorry for them. They looked hungry. Their faces were gaunt and haggard from malnutrition, and their eyes were frightened. The gut-wrenching war effort of their nation had only delivered them to our quarter deck and absolute humiliation. Now they trembled



with fear as the angry ring of crewmen closed around them, their growls growing louder, changing to a roar of curses and threats, arms and fists reaching out.

Our captain suddenly appeared on the wing of the bridge, imperiously raising his arm and seizing control of the situation. "You men, back to your posts," he said. "Chief petty officers, escort these men to the bridge."

The chief boatswain's mate herded the two frightened Japanese to the bridge. The growling, cursing sailors parted their ranks as years of military discipline overrode their anger, and the crisis quickly defused itself.

There were four mine sweepers in our group, all in line. Symbolically, the first ship to enter Tokyo Bay was named Revenge. We were next on the Token, then came Tumult and Rebel.

We spread crept slowly ahead. The Japanese artillery remaining silent as we passed by. We passed up the eastern shore which led to Tokyo, past the ruins of the huge city of Yokohama, then Yokosuka, where the main Japanese naval base was located. We were watching the many large buildings going by which miraculously had been spared

destruction, when suddenly I realized that some of them were moving in the same direction that we were. Impossible, but here they came.

It soon became apparent that we were looking at a ship, not a group of buildings but a huge battleship. Japanese ship designers favored massive, pagoda-like super structures on their capital ships, which is why

we did not recognize this monster at first. Our biggest battleships weighed 40,000 tons, but we knew that Japan had battleships of more than 80,000 tons. This monster made our battleships look like rowboats. And it wasn't supposed to be here. But here it came, moving right at us with black smoke rolling out its funnels.

After a few heart-stopping moments, we could see that the battleship was only moving to another mooring spot.

We continued moving up the coast and soon the outskirts of Tokyo appeared. Or rather, what was left of Tokyo began to appear. All the way to the distant horizon we saw soot-blackened ruins. What had been the largest city in the world was gone. Our air force had carpet-bombed Tokyo with magnesium-incendiary bombs. My mind was filled with horror and revulsion as I stared at the ruins where more than 100,000 civilians had been cremated in just a few hours.

Nearly all the buildings had been built entirely of wood. The resulting firestorm had produced air currents of more than 500 miles per hour. There was nothing left standing more than 10 feet tall. In the downtown area, there remained the charred skeletons of a few multi-storied

buildings with steel frames, standing as lonely sentinels over the jumbled remains of the city. Nothing else.

Even the commodore was stunned by the enormity of the disaster which had occurred here. He ordered all ships to stop and all hands came topside. No one made a sound. The ship tossed gently in the still water. Gulls made obscene screeching noises as they swooped around us. There was the overpowering silence of the grave, and I could hear, quite clearly, tiny wavelets slapping against our hull. One hundred thousand people had died in this charnel house in just a few hours. We found ourselves speaking in whispers. Suddenly, I no longer felt anger toward the Japanese, only sorrow. I thought, "My God, what have we done?"

These casualties were all civilians.

The commodore finally ordered our ships to move slowly ahead, keeping close to the shore. After moving about a mile, we came abreast of one of the few remaining steel-framed buildings, close to the beach. There was an American flag hanging from a gaping hole, in the side of the building about 10 stories up.

Abruptly, a small group of men broke away from the building and ran frantically towards the ruins of the city. Then another group came out and ran across the beach to us. Incredibly, these men had a radio. They were American prisoners of war and the building had been their prison. Three American paratroopers had dropped near the prison only an hour before and demanded their release. The men we saw running away had been the Japanese guards, fleeing for their lives.

The prisoners came boiling out of the wreckage of the building and ran to the water's edge. We could hear their voices as they screamed and begged to be taken aboard, but we had strict orders not to take aboard any of the prisoners. My stomach churned as I looked at their emaciated bodies. Hundreds of other prisoners began to stream from the building.

Continued on page 14

TRAGEDY AT HOME

By Ronald Trigg

Author's Note: The following article chronicles the final days of my father, Donald E. Trigg, a native of Bellair, IL, who died at his home in Munster, IN, on Jan. 25, 1997. Donald was the son of Roscoe and Clara Trigg of Bellair. After leaving school, he traveled around the Midwest, looking for work. Eventually he took up residence in Hammond, IN, where he met his wife, Helen Rapacz. They raised a family of two children during a marriage that spanned 55 years.

During World War II, Donald served in an engineering unit in the U.S. Army, attaining the rank of staff sergeant. Overseas, he was originally based in England, and then his unit followed the D-Day invasion forces across France and ultimately to Germany.

After the war, Donald returned home to resume a career with the Indiana Harbor Belt Railroad that lasted 40 years. Donald died at age 76, following a long struggle against Alzheimer's disease. He is survived by his widow, a daughter, a son, two granddaughters and two great granddaughters.

This article, which originally appeared in a slightly different form in the March 1998 issue of Foreign Service Journal, was written in his memory.



Donald and Helen Trigg, about 1990

Photos courtesy of Ronald Trigg

Dad shuffled into the living room while I sat alone reading the newspaper. Stopping in front of a basket of artificial flowers, he wagged his finger at the lifeless blossoms: "I've told you kids time and again not to bring food in here."

As he left the room he stopped again in front of a wall decoration and shouted at the imaginary person his mind told him was there: "Why don't you get out of my house and leave us alone?"

I was the only "real" person in the room, but Dad never noticed my presence.

It was clear that something had gone terribly wrong with my father, even though doctors had failed to diagnose anything more serious than the "slowing down" and "forgetfulness" that one might expect of a man in his mid-70s. The very next day, however, I was to leave to take up a diplomatic assignment half a world away in Bangkok, leaving my 76-year-old mother and my sister, who lived nearby, to cope somehow with the terrifying new circumstances that had come to dominate our lives.

Weighing family responsibilities against career goals is nothing new for foreign affairs professionals who spend much of their time overseas, separated by many time zones from the daily crises that affect those dearest to us, but in the past, for me, everything at home had always seemed pretty much in order.

The prospects of going abroad, learning to live in a new

culture, and taking on the challenges of a new position had always seemed adequate compensation for leaving family and friends behind. Now, for the first time, I began to wonder if I wasn't needed more at home.

I didn't realize it then, but I was about to join a growing trend in the United States. The Family Caregiver Alliance estimated that between 16 and 23 percent of families across the country may be caring for an adult with a cognitive impairment, which includes Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, stroke, head injuries and AIDS.

Fifteen percent of the adult U.S. population are providing care for seriously ill or disabled relatives, and at least 7 million Americans are involved in caring for a parent at any given time, with 85 percent of home care provided by family members and friends.

With our population aging, the problems of caregiving will only increase. There were 31.1 million Americans age 65 and over in 1990, or 1 in every 8 people. That proportion is expected to increase to 1 in 5 by the year 2030.

In the end, I got on that plane to Bangkok because there was no reason to believe that my being at home would make a real difference. Soon after my arrival in Thailand, the situation at home took a surprising turn for the better. A new and simple treatment, vitamin B-12 shots, seemed to have reversed Dad's mental deterioration. The

confused stranger on the other end of the long-distance phone line had suddenly been transformed into someone newly alert and fully contributing to the conversation. The improvement, however, proved to be short-lived. After about a week, the effects of the vitamin treatment began to fade, and Dad drifted slowly back into confusion.

I began to dread telephone calls to and from home. They had become updates on the new horrors that had occurred since we last talked. Dad's hallucinations had become terrifying, often violent, episodes in the middle of the night. He slept only briefly, frequently getting up to do battle with the imaginary interlopers who had taken over his house. His visions had become more and more bizarre: Snakes and other creatures invaded his room, dead babies appeared nightly in his bed, a mysterious giant man blocked his access to the bathroom, a troop of prostitutes patrolled the hallway outside his room.

Furthermore, when these fantastic hallucinations had a grip on his mind, his physical strength seemed to increase. My mother, outweighed by some 70 pounds, had her hands full when Dad, often dressed only in pajamas, decided he had to go out in the sub-freezing cold to defend his house against unseen foes.

Given the new circum-

stances, Dad's doctors offered anti-hallucinatory drugs in an attempt to quiet his troubled nights. Tragically, however, each new drug seemed to have an effect just the opposite of what was intended. The hallucinations worsened, and the drugs caused such stiffness in Dad's joints that he was sometimes rendered virtually unmovable—160 pounds of dead weight. Every moment of the day and night, he had to be watched, requiring Mom or some other family member to stay up all night making sure he didn't hurt himself.

About this time, the doctors finally announced the diagnosis we had all long suspected: Dad had Alzheimer's disease. His symptoms, we were told, might change, but he would never get better. Dad had become a statistic. According to the Alzheimer's Association, five to six percent of older people—approximately 3 million to 4 million Americans—are affected by the disease. It is the fourth leading cause of death among adults, affecting mainly those over age 65. Seventy percent of Alzheimer's patients live at home, where it costs an average of \$47,000 a year to care for them, with only \$12,000 on average covered by insurance.

We had to steel ourselves to the possibility that he would linger in this diminished state for

five, maybe 10, years, requiring constant care and putting a tremendous strain on our physical and financial resources. With the holidays coming soon, I decided to make an unscheduled trip home to spend Christmas with my family. Fortunately, my embassy colleagues, who had all along been providing sympathetic ears for tales of my family's travails, readily agreed to adjust their own plans and bend policies to accommodate my needs.

At first things didn't seem too bad at home. Dad had no problem recognizing who I was, and he was on his best "normal" behavior, a role he seemed capable of assuming in the presence of guests. Only occasionally would he say something a little "off the wall" that hinted at the extent of his illness. The 12-hour time difference from Bangkok made me the perfect choice to look after Dad on the night shift, giving Mom an opportunity for some much-deserved sleep.

The first night, an hour after bedtime, as I sat reading in the kitchen, a wide-eyed Dad rushed into the room and asked: "Did that hog come through here?" I told him that the offending beast had departed, and thus reassured, he allowed me to escort him back to bed. An hour later, Dad's mind led him back to some long-past hunting trip, and he emerged

to ask if I thought we might bag a moose the following day. I convinced him to return to bed with the promise that I would wake him in time to have breakfast before we went out hunting.

Not long afterwards, he woke again, but now he imagined himself in the railroad yards where he had worked for 40 years. We were both trapped in a boxcar at the far end of the yard, and Dad couldn't understand why I refused to allow him to go out and seek help. Several times I had to physically bar him from opening the door, and, more than once, as the level of his frustration grew, I dodged his flailing fists. Finally, he grew weary, slumped into an armchair, and dozed off. He woke up periodically through the night, but he could never be convinced to go back to the bedroom. This, I soon learned, was a typical night with Dad.

My time at home was filled with more than just caregiving activities: many legal matters had to be taken care of while Dad still had the ability to understand what he was signing. We adjusted the ownership of bank accounts and property, and we all drew up new wills, removing Dad's name where it had appeared as executor. We were fortunate to have a sympathetic family lawyer who guided us through a quick course on living wills, estate planning and the like.

After a tearful farewell, I again boarded a plane to Bangkok. After my return to the office, however, the situation back home only got worse—much worse. I quickly learned to call home only during the morning; evening calls simply guaranteed that I would have a sleepless night. Each new day seemed to bring a new tale of horrors. After Dad suffered a painful fall in the bathroom, my mother and two neighbor women struggled for 30 minutes to life him from the floor. After finding a mass of congealed blood in his colon, doctors reported that Dad was suffering from colon cancer. That diagnosis, thankfully, turned out to be incorrect, but during subsequent hospital tests, doctors discovered yet another ailment—an aortic aneurysm.

In an attempt to discourage Dad's middle-of-the-night screaming and ramblings during that hospital stay, nurses administered the very same anti-hallucinatory drugs that had earlier caused a bad reaction. As a

result, once he was released, he was in such a zombie-like state that he literally had to be dragged up the stairs and into his bedroom. It was weeks before the effect of the drugs had completely dissipated.

For me, that was the turning point. With 20-plus years of federal service already under my belt, I was, for the first time, prepared to view my upcoming 50th birthday as an opportunity for early retirement. Before making up my mind, I found good advice and support from the embassy's administrative section, and was quickly able to ascertain, via e-mail from the State Department, what paperwork needed to be completed and—of no little concern—how much money I could expect in my monthly annuity checks. My work was suffering, and furthermore, the enthusiasm I had always felt for living and working abroad just wasn't there any more.

Shortly before Thanksgiving, I arrived home for good, a newly retired Foreign Service Officer. Dad greeted me with a memo-

orable teary embrace, and I settled into a routine that would prove to be more taxing than any I had previously endured. In the beginning, I found that Dad's hallucinations were less frequent and less violent, and he slept in his bed most of the night. But I also quickly observed that his mental state had declined considerably.

Still, during that first month at home, there were many opportunities for communication with Dad. He couldn't hold a conversation for long, but he enjoyed the long drives we would take together, often going back to places that held special memories for our family. Dealing with Dad's illness was a tremendous strain on us all, but our family faced the tragedy with hands joined together.

A month after my return, on the day after Christmas, Dad suffered a fall that set off a rapid decline in his condition. Although he had sustained no serious injury, he complained of terrible pain and soon returned to

his old pattern of sleepless nights. Only now, he was unable to get out of the bed by himself, and he spent much of the

nance the thought.

Eventually, Dad was released to go home under hospice care.

We anticipated he would survive in this deteriorated state for months or even years, but within days his brain could no longer tell him even how to swallow. In a week he was dead.

In retrospect, my decision to retire still seems like the right thing to have done. I was able to spend Dad's last two months by his side, and after his death, I was at home—rather than 10,000 miles away—to help take care of the gruesome details of funeral planning and all the legal paperwork that follows a death. And now I'm close by at a time when my remaining parent needs me the most. There's no question in my mind that my presence here at home during those very difficult times has served a useful purpose.

In our increasingly mobile society, few families remain intact, as members spread across the country, and indeed around the world. Most people, at some point in their lives, are likely to face a situation somewhat similar to mine. There is no real way to plan in advance how to deal with family tragedy from afar. Most of us suffer under the general human tendency to resist addressing unpleasant future possibilities until they actually occur. It is no easy matter to balance the needs of dependents, career aspirations, family finances, and personal priorities. And it is many times tougher when you are miles away from home.

Now I am looking forward to a new existence under circumstances vastly different from those that have defined my life in the past. My new posting is back to my native Midwest. It's not nearly as exotic as other places I've been, but you can drink the water, the phones always work, and the television news is in English. All good things, I'd say.

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Donald Trigg with his youngest great-granddaughter in 1994

night slinging verbal abuse at us for being unable to see the terrors that were tormenting him. Soon he became incontinent and started losing the ability to walk, feed himself, and even keep his eyes open.

This alarming deterioration led us to admit him to the hospital for tests. His doctors clearly anticipated that Dad would be transferred to a nursing home after his hospital stay. It was a prospect that I thought deserved serious consideration, but my mother, who had so heroically cared for Dad all these months, and my sister could not counte-



Above: Donald and Helen Trigg in Bellair, around 1940



Above right: Donald in his Army uniform during World War II



Right: Roscoe and Clara Trigg and their four children in Bellair in the late 1930s. Donald is at the top right in the picture.

V-J Day

Continued from page 11

Some were barely able to walk. All were dressed in rags.

Our ship came in as close as we could get to the shore, and the prisoners began to wade into the water, thinking that we were going to pick them up. They wouldn't believe us when we shouted and told them that other units would rescue them in a few hours. We didn't know if this was true, but we hoped that it was. Some of them waded out neck deep in the water and begged us for help. We couldn't take them on board because there were hundreds of them and we didn't have space for them. We also didn't have extra drinking water or any doctors. We told them by radio that help was on the way. Finally we moved away, and they screamed and cursed us as we left. This affair was one of the worst emotional ordeals of my life, and I have never forgotten it.

We had reported to Okinawa everything we saw along the coast, and then we started mine-sweeping operations. It was our responsibility to clear a safe path for the U.S.S. Missouri, where the actual surrender of the Japanese forces was to take place, symbolically, in the middle of Tokyo Bay.

Two weeks later, we were busy sweeping mines at a coastal city named Sendai, about 300 miles north of Tokyo, when the surrender took place. The Allied commanders had decided that the Japanese people needed one final

reminder of the balance of military power in Asia: They had prepared a little surprise.

We began hearing a low, growling thunder before dawn on V-J Day. As the glorious Japanese sunrise blossomed in the east, we could see hundreds, thousands, then tens of thousands of airplanes glistening in the sky, flying at every altitude, in every direction. The allies had put every plane available in Asia into the air over Tokyo. They were all wheeling in a 600-mile wide circle with Tokyo as the center of the circle. We were 300 miles north of Tokyo, on the fringe of the action and our sky was filled with airplanes.

The thunder increased as the sun rose higher, coming to a crescendo at 12 o'clock, when the signing took place. I had never known that there were as many airplanes in the entire world. Our deck crew had difficulty handling the mine-sweeping gear because they couldn't hear each other's voices. Our heads throbbed and our ears ached. This tremendous display of air power both impressed and frightened me. I wondered how Americans would feel if those were Japanese airplanes over a devastated Washington, D.C.

Sherman was right. War is hell.

Baum of Champaign, IL, wrote this story as part of an Urbana School District Adult Education writing class. It also was one of five winners in last winter's Readers Writing Contest sponsored by The News-Gazette and Barnes & Noble Booksellers.

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WHAT IS A JOURNALIST?

"As a journalist, I am a fact-finder, a gate-keeper, a story-teller. Most of all, I am a truth-seeker.

"As a journalist, I am most decidedly not a cynic. Far from it. Instead, I am a romantic, for I believe—viscerally as well as cerebrally—that all I have to do is tell my stories, deliver the facts, and if I do that well and often, then the citizens of democracy will do the right thing. Teaching, it seems to me, is about the only other institution in our society that shows as much faith in the people."

— Paul McMasters

Freedom Forum First Amendment Center, 1996

1998 VFW VOICE OF DEMOCRACY ANNUAL AUDIO/ESSAY CONTEST

My Voice In Our Democracy

By Kelly A. McCusker

Shhh. Can you hear it? It's voices. If you listen very carefully, you can hear individuals speaking. Each and every one of them is a voice spoken by a person who is trying to be heard. Some are heard more often than others. Some of them are never heard at all.

I believe that we are given the right to hear those voices through democracy. A democracy is defined as a government by the people. We have this democracy in order for people to voice their thoughts. We, the people, have the right and ability to be heard and listened to. It says in the First Amendment that "Congress shall make no law abridging the freedom of speech." We have the right to speak, and no one should be able to take that right away. Your voice can make a difference in our lives even as you speak them, so don't be afraid of using your right to voice your thoughts.

My voice is an important one in our democracy. I can make a difference. My voice may not be heard as often as others, but maybe it's because I haven't found it yet. Everyone has to find his voice, determine the method in which he can make his voice heard and then develop it.

My voice may become as important as some of the people who have already found their voices. I have to determine how I shall make my voice heard, before I start expressing my beliefs as others have done. Authors, politicians, activists, artists and ordinary people each day use their right of voice to express their beliefs. They influence others by using their voice in their unique way. Each individual has a unique way of making his voice heard among the commotion of the world.

Emily Dickinson once

wrote a poem about how important spoken words can be in life, including in our democracy. The poem is one that probably many people have heard, but might not have connected it to the ability of having a voice be heard.

*A word is dead
When it is said
Some say.
I say it just
Begins to live
That day.*

This poem can be interpreted to mean that words are always alive. The words that one speaks do not die when they are said, but rather, they are spread. All individuals can pass along their words to others. When these words get around, they can make a difference to many people who weren't even there when they were said.

Charlie Dukes, one of the last documented POWs who came out of World War II Europe, and The Rev. Ben Cox, one of the original 13 Freedom Fighters, came into my English class to talk about their voice in our democracy. Both talked about their experiences while fighting for a cause they believed in. As I looked over the notes I took during their presentations, I noticed that though Mr. Dukes was fighting for his country in another continent and Reverend Cox was fighting against the prejudices within his own country, they mentioned many of the same points—such as, speaking up for your own beliefs and making your voice heard.

Dukes felt from his experiences as a prisoner of war that you have to take action yourself or it won't get done. If you want an event to occur, you have to voice your opinion and then activate your movement. I once read a saying that sums up what one has to perform in order to make one's voice heard. "Don't be afraid to go out on a limb—that's where the fruit is." You can't sit around and listen to

everybody else, you have to take chances to make yourself be heard.

Cox was an activist for the civil rights movement during the late 1950s and early '60s. He put his life on the line to voice what he believed in, but as he says "stomping, fussing and cussing doesn't get you anywhere" and so he executed his beliefs in a quiet, yet strong way. Even now, after what he has been through, he still thinks our country is "the greatest country on the face of the earth," and he noted that "people stand in line to get into our country, but there are none standing in line to get out."

I believe one of the reasons why people stand in line to get into our country is our ability to make our voices heard in our democracy. We have the right to voice our opinions, and we should utilize this right because few countries in the world have this privilege.

My voice may not be as loud or as strong as my neighbors', but it is still a voice that should be heard among all of the voices which are stronger or louder. Everyone has a voice that should be heard, no matter who or where he is. With your one voice you can make things happen. You can make a difference. All you have to do is get up there on the platform, use your right of freedom of speech and speak your beliefs.

As Shel Silverstein once wrote:

*Listen to the mustn'ts child,
Listen to the don'ts.
Listen to the shouldn'ts
The impossibles, the won'ts.
Listen to the never haves,
Then listen close to me.
Anything can happen child,
Anything can be.*

McCusker's essay was one of five VFW Post #630 winners from Urbana High School. She is a 1998 graduate from UHS.

The Last Word

Advising high school newspapers no easy job today

By Ray Elliott

The first time I interviewed for a position advising a high school newspaper, I knew it wasn't going to be an easy job. And nothing that's happened in the last 25 years or so has led me to believe differently.

At the time of that first interview, I needed a job so badly I would have taken about anything. The interview was going well when the principal asked me what I thought about him seeing the paper before it went to press. My heart skipped a beat as I saw the job floating away.

Wanting to be as honest as possible without totally committing myself, I said, sputtering, "I wouldn't feel too comfortable."

"Oh, I know you might not feel comfortable," he said, wearing one of the best poker faces I'd seen in a while. "But could you work under those circumstances?"

"I don't think so," I said, watching the job sliding farther out of reach. "Would you have time?"

"Probably not," he said. "But could you work here if I had to see the paper before it goes to press?"

"I guess I could," I said, weighing my response, "if I agreed going in. But I wouldn't agree to work under those circumstances."

The principal's face relaxed, a smile tugging at the corners of his mouth and a glint lighting up his eyes. "I just wanted to see how strong you were in your convictions," he said and later offered me the position.

That was more than 15 years before the Supreme Court's 1988 *Hazelwood School vs. Kuhlmeier* decision that gave school administrators the legal right of prior review.

As a newspaper adviser, I disagree with the court's decision and believe the paper is for students to learn journalistic fundamentals and experience the necessary work ethic to apply them. Students report the news, edit it and take positions on issues. Mistakes and differences of opinion result in the process.

In the *Hazelwood (MO)* case, the principal impounded an issue of the paper in which its reporters had interviewed three pregnant girls about how difficult it was to have a baby and continue attending school. Although the girls' names weren't used, the principal felt they could be recognized and didn't think other students were mature enough for the story or would benefit from it.

I don't know how many students were pregnant at Hazelwood High at the time, but students in my classes at Urbana (IL) High School (UHS) reported in class projects that there were 34 pregnant girls. And that was only about halfway through the year and only known cases.

Student journalism changed after the *Hazelwood* decision. To their credit, many administrators still

believed First Amendment rights guaranteed by the Constitution don't stop at the schoolhouse doors. But many school officials exercised their legal right to censor the school newspaper. Cases where the heavy hand of an overzealous administrator thwarted student rights are legion.

In my own tenure as an adviser of *The Echo*, the UHS newspaper, I've had more than my share of unpleasant situations where faculty members stop me in the middle of the hall and chastise me for something they haven't liked in the paper.

In one incident, the principal and a faculty member demanded that the staff reprint an article and run an apology for the way it was edited. Although I was ordered to make the staff do so, I left it up to the vote of the editorial board. While it voted, I unloaded fruit the staff sells to help support newspaper production costs.

I don't recall the exact vote, but it was close in favor of not meeting the demand. I was told I couldn't take the paper to the printer. The staff called a university journalism professor and the Student Press Law Center in Washington, D.C.

Based on those calls, a decision was made to change the nameplate from *The Echo* to *The Flame*, to use different information on the paper's masthead and to assume responsibility for the printing costs. The editor asked if my name could be listed as adviser in the masthead.

"Not if you want me to keep my job," I said. "But you can list me as the Former Adviser."

After the issue came out, the school board attorney advised the principal that the school could charge the students with theft of school property since the paper had been produced on school equipment under my supervision.

"That's going to look good," I said, "when the story hits the wire: 'UHS students charged with theft for exercising First Amendment rights in school paper.'"

Of course that never happened, and the incident died down. But others popped up, and my reputation as some half-crazed idiot who refused to "put kids in their place" and had no control over them when it came to what went into the newspaper was firmly cemented in place.

Truth be known, there's probably something to the reputation. I try to teach journalistic principles, select the staff, advise a student-run newspaper and let the students learn by experience through their hard work. Sometimes that's a hard lesson—hard for me, too. And you have to be a little crazy to subject yourself to that year in and year out.

One of the most difficult lessons took place last year. During production week, editors and reporters get to school at 6:30 a.m. and work after school, too. On Thursday afternoon, camera-ready copy is taken to the printer for circulation on Friday.

On Wednesday evening of the March issue, the managing editor and the sports editor didn't show up or make any arrangements for missing the evening layout session. At 5 p.m. I saw the managing editor in the hallway and told her she was supposed to be helping with layout.

"I've got other things to do," she said, walking away.

"The paper goes to press tomorrow afternoon," I said, feeling the color rise in my face. "We'll be here at 6:30 in the morning, too."

The next morning, neither she nor the sports editor showed up for

spirit of the hard-work ethic I require. I went about my business as I had in similar past situations.

The sports editor seemed upset but wrote a last-minute news story and helped out where and when she was needed. In the end, she had two front-page stories and two sports stories. The managing editor did nothing more and reportedly told one staff member that she was glad she was relieved because she didn't have to worry about the paper anymore.

But just before I left for the printer that afternoon, the principal asked me to call the young woman's mother. I did after I arrived at the printer and was waiting for the paper to be printed. She was upset. With Spring Break beginning the next day, I suggested we meet after the break.

"This is too important to wait that long," the woman said. "We need to meet tomorrow."

Reluctantly, I agreed. When I arrived in the principal's office the next day, both parents and the young woman were there with her counselor. The principal was busy and unable to be there. After an hour of hearing the mother tell her point of view with little input from the father and the student and with little regard

for my side of the story, I was told I had offended the student, was accused of racism in my treatment of her and was asked to apologize for my "offensive manner."

"I can do that," I said. "If I've offended anyone, I'm sorry."

The mother looked at me and glared. "That's a lie," she said without any hesitation.

And without a word I stood and walked out of the room. I didn't know where the situation was going from that point, but I had no intention of listening to more accusations or verbal abuse. Nor did I plan to go to jail. Perhaps Spring Break would cool things down, I thought.

No such luck. The mother called the principal and demanded that I reinstate the student to her position. The principal refused, not wanting to be put in a position to be asked to tell a coach who to play at quarterback or start on the basketball team.

The drama continued for the next several days while the woman continued her attack at the district office. By Thursday of the first week after break, the situation reached an impasse. The principal told me that if I wasn't prepared to reinstate the

student by the next day that I should see the superintendent. So I met with him for the first time.

"A lot of people think a school superintendent is primarily concerned with educating children," he said as soon as I was seated across from him. "But that's not the case. A superintendent is a politician."

It didn't take much imagination or insight to see where the conversation was headed. He had worked with the mother of the student, he said, and knew her to be concerned with her children and their welfare.

I tried to state my case. But his mind was set. If I didn't reinstate the student by the next day, he said, the mother would file charges with the Office of Civil Rights (OCR).

"The Champaign district has chosen to go that direction," the superintendent said, apparently referring to a complaint filed with the U.S. Department of Education on behalf of African-American students who were allegedly being "bused disproportionately" to Champaign schools. "Urbana chooses not to."

"And if I chose not to reinstate her?" I asked, knowing his answer.

"Then I'll have to file insubordination charges against you," he said, "for disobeying my order."

He can't do that if I resign as adviser, I thought. And any insubordination charge can be appealed because I've had no hearing nor has any set policy been followed.

Leaving his office, I had every intention of resigning or disobeying his order. Under the circumstances, I couldn't see how there would be any possible case for the OCR. Racism wasn't an issue and never had been.

But my attorney advised me, and I decided, that neither option would be best for the rest of the staff. With the reinstatement, I thought we could get on with the year. I was wrong again. The mother demanded that I apologize to the student in the presence of the rest of the staff, came to my classroom several times and disrupted the class before I finally did apologize. Not yet finished, the woman demanded and was granted that her daughter be allowed to read a resignation statement to the class and withdraw with a passing grade.

Throughout the summer, the board ignored my formal complaint about how the matter was handled. Then in September, the board president wrote me a patronizing letter to let me know I was a "valued employee."

The superintendent said he "would have done some things differently" had he been more aware of the situation at the time of his decision. Which was beside the point.

But then I knew advising a high school newspaper wasn't going to be an easy job when I took that first one. It is still a worthwhile job, though.

I try to teach journalistic principles, select the staff, advise a student-run newspaper and let the students learn by experience through their hard work. Sometimes that's a hard lesson—hard for me, too. And you have to be a little crazy to subject yourself to that year in and year out.

the final layout session necessary to get the paper to the printer on time. Without my knowledge, one of the staff members already had asked the managing editor to step down and was told that she was going to after the March issue. But when neither young woman came in that morning, I replaced them with the people who were dependable and there to work.

And when both of the former editors showed up at five minutes before eight and were being ignored by the rest of the staff, one of them asked me what was going on. I called both of them, one a European-American junior and one an African-American senior, to the podium in front of the classroom and rather rudely, but quietly and unceremoniously told them I had replaced them.

Other than a few heated words between the managing editor and me, I thought no more about it. In the

Panorama Italiano

July 16 - 24, 1999
(approximate dates)

Includes air fare from Chicago, hotels, two meals per day, ground transportation and fees.

Grand Canal

St. Mark's Square

Florence

Michelangelo's David

Siena

Isle of Capri

Pompeii

Colosseum

St. Peter's

Sistine Chapel

Overnights

**Venice 2
Montecatini 2
Sorrento 2
Rome 2**

**Optional
One extra day in Rome
(\$125)**

DAY 1
Departure from Chicago.

DAY 2: Venice
Arrive in Milan and drive to Venice. Free time to acquaint yourself with the "Queen of the Adriatic."

DAY 3: Venice
Take the boat to incredible St. Mark's Square. The Byzantine architecture reminds you that Venice was Europe's gateway to the East. Enjoy the ACIS walking tour. In the evening, try a serenaded gondola ride.

DAY 4:
Florence-Montecatini
Morning drive across the Veneto plains to Renaissance Florence. Sightseeing includes Ghiberti's Baptistry doors, Santa Croce, Piazza della Signoria and Michelangelo's *David*. Continue to the nearby world-famous spa resort of Montecatini for the night.

DAY 5:
Florence-Montecatini
Morning drive to Florence to search for your own treasures on the Ponte Vecchio. Continue to the beautiful Tuscan city of Siena to see the cathedral and the Piazza del Campo, where the famous Palio is held.

Return to Montecatini for dinner and overnight.

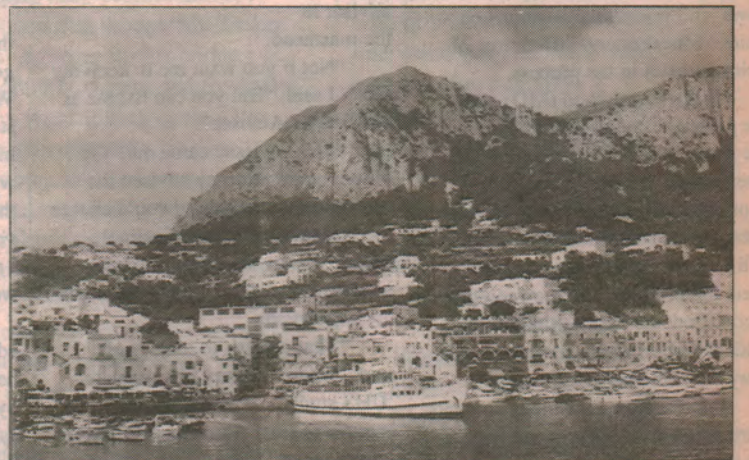
DAY 6: Sorrento
Drive to Sorrento, situated in the sheltered Bay of Naples under the shadow of Mt. Vesuvius. Orange and lemon trees abound.

DAY 7: Capri-Sorrento
Visit Capri, the "Island of Dreams." Arriving on the island, you take the funicular to the main piazza and pass by subtropical gardens.

DAY 8: Pompeii-Rome
Excursion to Pompeii for sightseeing with a local guide. Enjoy wandering the ancient streets of this archaeological treasure. Continue to Rome for dinner.

DAY 9: Rome
Morning sightseeing with a local guide introduces you to every phase of Rome's history, from the Colosseum to St. Peter's, mother church of the Catholic world. Included are the Vatican Museums, where you will see the Sistine Chapel and the magnificent Raphael rooms. This evening enjoy a pizza dinner, Roman style.

DAY 10:
Depart for the USA.



"Panorama Italiano was my first trip to Italy after many trips to other countries, and this one to Italy was the best of the best: a fabulous trip, an outstanding courier, a great bus driver and my favorite cities. ACIS does it right."

--Ray Elliott