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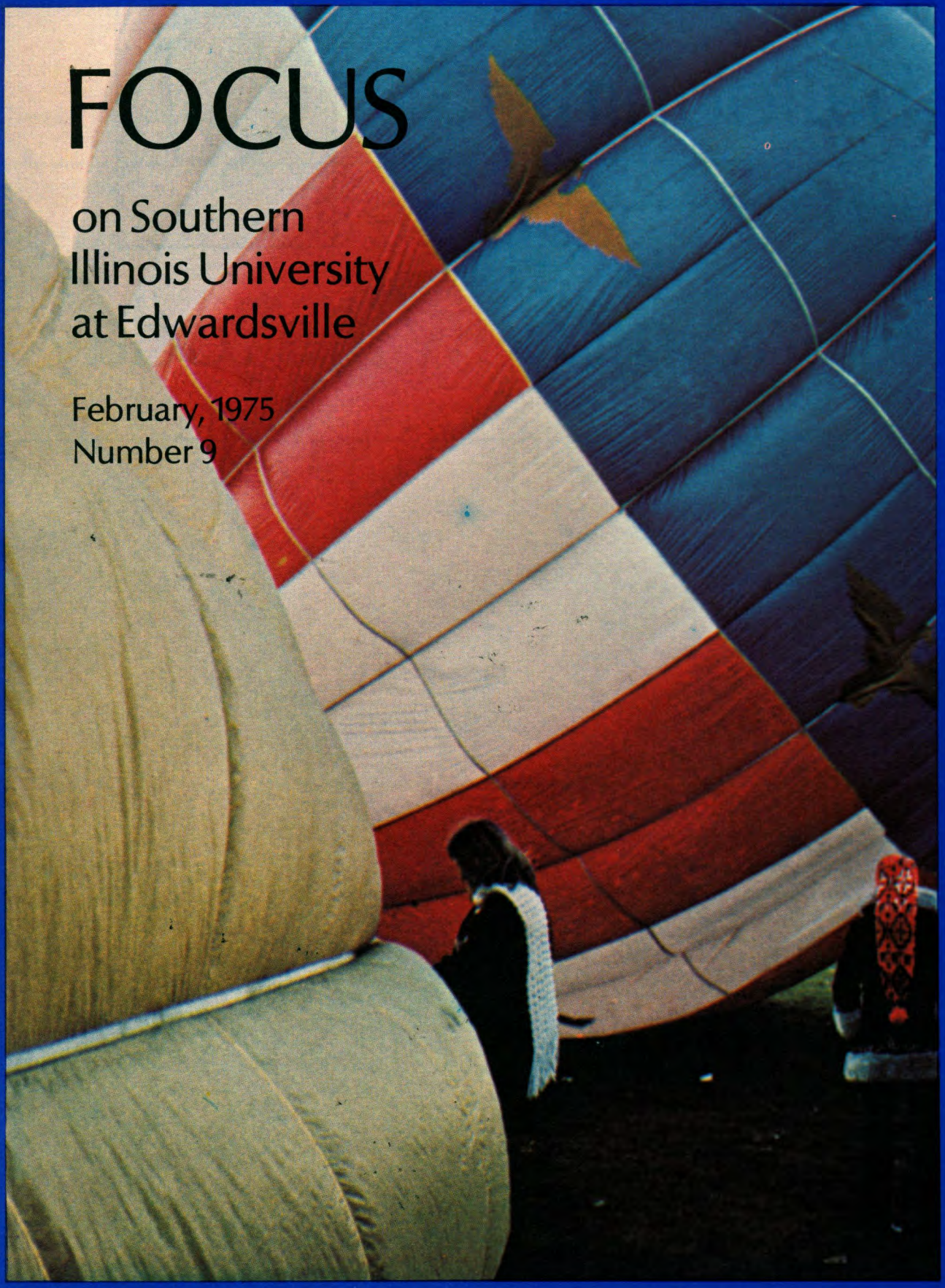
FOCUS

on Southern
Illinois University
at Edwardsville

February, 1975
Number 9



Hot air ballooning: an old pastime is finding new life today

Rita Rheinecker

The first steps for the balloonist are to spread the envelope flat on the ground, attach the gondola, and fill the envelope with cold air by using a small fan.

Text by Rita Rheinecker

Gary Bohn

In 1783 Joseph and Jacques Montgolfier produced the first hot air balloon. One year later, on June 23, 1784, the first air voyage in America was successfully completed. The French had proven to many skeptical Americans that man could fly!

His vehicle was a hydrogen-filled balloon. His flight lasted 45 minutes and ended in a farmer's field in Woodbury, N.J., 15 miles from his point of elevation, Philadelphia.

Jean Pierre Blanchard was one of the first voyagers in America. He wrote an account of his historic 1793 flight. In it he describes the unique beauty and sensations of ballooning. "What sweet ecstasies," he writes, "take possession of the soul of a mortal, who leaving the terrestrial abode, soars into the ethereal regions."

Today's aeronaut may not be as eloquent as Blanchard, but they do experience the same sensations he described in 1793. Bob Esch, a balloonist from Edwardsville says this lighter-than-air activity is "a far out feeling."

Esch and his wife, Candy, are licensed commercial balloon pilots. They own two hot air balloons and operate the Cottonwood Station Balloon Port just south of Edwardsville.

Both are proud of the balloon port, and they have every right to be. It was through their efforts that the port was established over ten months ago.

The area surrounding Cottonwood Station is a balloonist's dream. A balloon needs a large field to ascend from and land in. With the abundance of farmland in and around Edwardsville, Cottonwood Station is an ideal location.

So Candy and Bob met with Merrill Ottwein, part owner of the Cottonwood Station Corporation, and he agreed to rent two buildings to the Cottonwood Station Balloon Port. Ottwein feels the port is good advertising.

"It's different enough to be interesting," he said. "Our advertising and marketing theme is built around nostalgia, the balloons fit in. They also attract attention."

The balloon port consists of a clubhouse and hanger to store balloons in. It serves as a gathering

place for balloonists in the area and also houses a supply of propane gas. There are six balloons at Cottonwood Station and nine pilots use the balloon port.

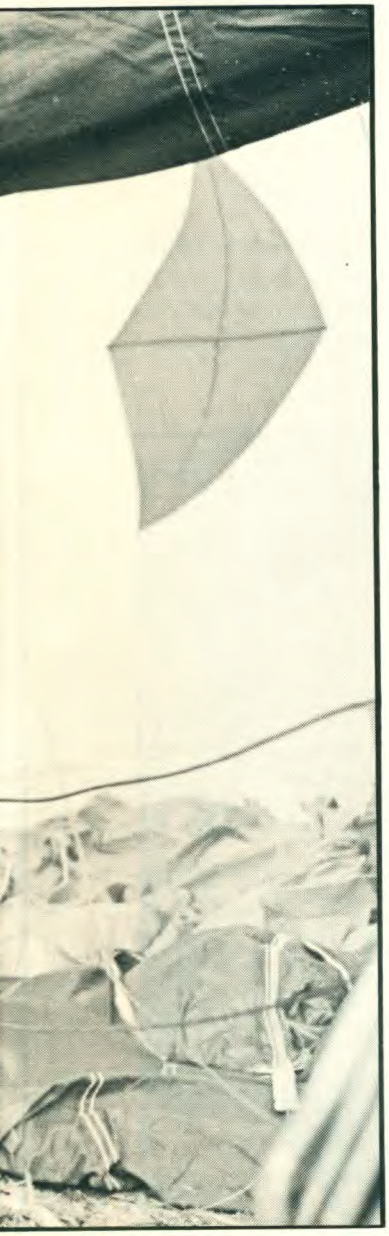
The sport of ballooning is growing in the United States, there are 450 balloons in the U.S. today compared to 250 a year ago. The number of licensed pilots has risen from 350 to 1,200 in the same amount of time. The Esch's feel that the balloon port is stirring local interest in ballooning and the number of St. Louis area balloons and balloonists will increase because of it.

Ballooning is a rather costly sport. Balloon prices range from $5,000 to $6,000. And expenses for a one to two hour flight run from $30 to $40. The costs include: propane gas, (10 gallons lasts about an hour); envelop depreciation of $10 per flight; and insurance, in case the balloon does damage to a utility line or lands in a farmer's crop (Once Esch landed in a field of horseradish and paid dearly for it. "I didn't realize horseradish was so expensive," he said.)

So Bob and Candy are letting their hobby support itself. Their commercial license permits them to give balloon piloting instructions, do promotional work and sell balloon rides.

A ride in their blue-and-white striped Piccard balloon costs $75 for one or $100 for two, but even

Once the envelope begins to fill with the use of the fan and cold air (below), the propane is turned-on and the air is heated.



Rita Rheinecker photos

At the end of the flight, Bob Esch begins dismantling the aircraft (photo at bottom) and packs the envelope into the gondola for the truck ride back to the Cottonwood Station balloon port.

at those prices, they do a good business.

"It's mostly older couples who can afford the rides," Bob said. "Some say they've wanted to do this for a long time."

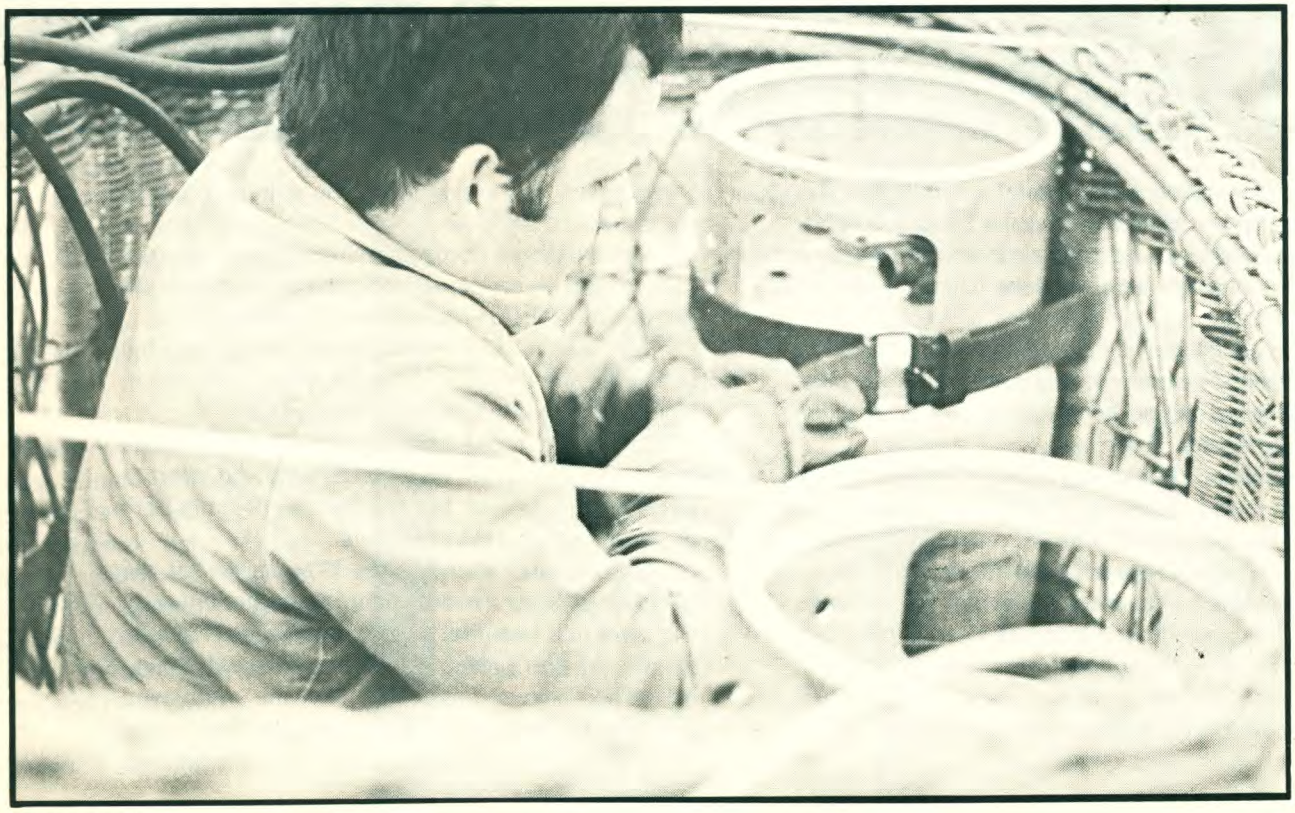
Bob gives piloting instructions and is currently working with his tenth student. He is also the Federal Aviation Administration's designated examiner for the St. Louis area. This is quite an honor for him and it proves his competence as a balloonist.

He stresses that a balloon is not a toy, but a licensed aircraft. "It's a lot of fun, but a whole lot of responsibility too," he said. "The pilot has sole control over what happens in the balloon."

In order to receive his license, a pilot must pass a flight and oral exam. The exam tests the applicant's knowledge of ballooning, FAA regulations, and weather conditions.

Ballooning also requires a considerable amount of work. The pilot must begin preparing for his flight 12 hours before take-off by checking the weather forecast. If weather conditions are right, he goes to bed and gets the rest he will need for the next day's flight.

The envelop of the balloon takes about an hour to prepare. First, it is spread our flat on the launching field. Then a five-horsepower fan fills it with



Rita Rheinecker photos

Gary Bohn

cold air. The propane burners attached to the gondola (basket) are started when the balloon is nearly full. This heats up the cold air inside the envelop and sucks in more hot air and the balloon begins to rise.

Once the balloon is inflated and the gondola has been attached securely to it, the aeronaut may take-off. The air is heated a little more and the balloon begins to ascend.

The balloon's height is regulated by heating up the air to raise it, or letting it cool off to lower it. The envelop is equipped with a maneuvering vent which the pilot can open for a faster descent.

While the balloonist is enjoying the "ethereal regions," a ground crew is busy following him. Since the balloon is lighter than air, there is no way of steering it. So a crew in the chase vehicle must keep an eye on the balloon and meet it when it lands.

Bob loves this facet of ballooning. "You don't know where you're going, so you're in no hurry to get there," he said.

After landing a bottle of champagne in often uncorked and the balloonist and crew share it with the farmer whose field was used as a landing site.

But there's still more work to do as the balloonist and crew fold up the envelop and pack it, along with the gondola, in the chase truck.

Ballooning today hasn't changed much since it's invention in 1783. It still takes time and effort to get it off the ground, but the balloon delights both the balloonist and the observers.

Anyone who attended the 1974 season of the Mississippi River Festival may remember enjoying the sight of a beautiful balloon overhead. That was Candy and Bob getting a look at the crowd. Candy especially enjoys this. "We like the wide-eyed disbelief and pleasure that we're able to bring to the faces of the people who watch us from the ground. Ballooning is like nothing else."

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10 *There is a great thrill which goes along with learning the art of sky jumping. Three SIU-E employees, Vicki Heinemeier, Tom Paxson and Pat Riggins, have taken up the hobby. Jill Williams Uetz and Gail Purkey photographed one of their outings.*

14 *Richard Taylor is a young filmmaker now employed by University News Service where he is assistant director of motion picture productions. Taylor works on SIU-E related public relations projects at the university and at home works on personal projects. Now he is completing a feature film in his St. Louis home. Brian Keister photographed the story.*

22 *Trash. Tired of trash. There seems to be a problem with the stuff in the basement cafeteria of the University Center.*

24 *Portfolio. A collection of photos on soccer, kite fliers, senior citizens and more.*

40 *Where does the East St. Louis center of SIU-E go from here. Ishmael Lateef Ahmad takes a look at the problems facing the urban educational center.*

43 *Ruth Slenczynska Kerr is a world renowned pianist who makes her home in Edwardsville and is the teacher of piano at SIU-E.*

48 *The age of protest hit SIU-E in May of 1970 following the killings of students at Kent State. A look back at the "strike" which hit the campus after the controversial event.*

52 *Paul Owens is an artist. His medium is plants. He tries to decide where they should go, where they do some good, where they appear most attractive. He also tries to keep more from being taken away.*

56 *There are over 1,700 SIU-E students who are over the age of 30 years. What pulls this unique kind of student back to the classroom? Each has a reason of their own.*

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Focus magazine is a quarterly pictorial magazine produced by students of Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville.

The magazine is designed to be mainly pictorial in content.

The magazine is dedicated to providing an in-depth look at the SIU-E community.

SIU-E, as a commuter school, means much more than the boundaries of the campus. The nearby communities serve as homes for the majority of students. Because of this, Focus occasionally expands its reportage in to those areas for more complete coverage of life in and around the university.

Funds for Focus magazine are provided through the Department of Mass Communications.

The next issue of Focus is planned for April, 1975.

Jill Williams Uetz

Sky jumping:

An SIU-E professor, a secretary and a civil service worker went out seeking excitment during their leisure hours and ended up with a new hobby. They are jumping out of airplanes.

Vickie Heinemeier, Tom Paxson and Pat Riggins, all employees of SIU-E, recently began the hobby of sky jumping and none are thinking of quiting.

It seems that both Paxson and Riggins had ambitions of jumping but had not pursued the matter until they discovered the other was interested. That time came when the two saw a parachute jump exhibition during Bastille Day at last year's Mississippi River Festival. Later Ms. Riggins telephoned a St. Louis-based club and was directed to the Archway Parachute Center at Hunter Field in Sparta, Ill.

There were five and one-half hours of instruction, starting at noon, and upon completion the first jump was made. The chute is automatically deployed on the initial effort but the jumpers must practice as if they were on their own. They are instructed to count to seven and if the main chute is not deployed they must pull a reserve chute open.

They are also taught the jumping position, which involves particular positions to avoid being tangled in the chute on the way down.

Instructors locate themselves on the ground and with the use of a bullhorn instructs the students how to find their way to the surface. Toggle lines are attached to the chute and the jumper is learning how to operate them and steer the descent.

The initial training and equipment rental ran $40, but after one is completed the cost is $10 per jump. Included in the equipment necessary for the jump are boots, a jump suit, helmet, goggles and the chutes.

The first jump was made from the 2,800-foot level.

Riggins explained the feeling saying it felt as if she was falling very slowly. "You don't feel like you're floating down or falling. You can feel yourself turning, but not coming down."

She said she was confused initially because it turned out that when she jumped she could not locate the field immediately. She turned herself though, and located it with no problem.

The real surprise to Ms. Riggins was the

new excitement for SIU-E trio

silence. She explained that total silence occurred when the chute opened and the quiet created a very peaceful feeling. "I expected to hear the rushing of the wind," she said. "It was a total silence — like someone turned-off the sound."

Ms. Heinemeier has no problem remembering her first jump either. Her's was particularly exciting. She explained that she hesitated right before going out of the door the first time and her instructor gave her a small push of encouragement.

"Then I got scared and started hanging onto the wing of the plane," she said. "They were screaming out of the plane for me to jump, so I finally let go."

She said her feeling on the first jump was "complete fear." But after the difficult first effort, she said she wanted to try harder and now

Jill Williams Uetz photos

Above, Vickie Heinemeier (far left) and Tom Paxson (second from left) prepare to board the plane which will take them to their jumping point. The two SIU-E employees, along with a third, Pat Riggins, have undertaken the hobby of sky jumping at Sparta's Hunter Field.

Paxson (photo at right) watches activity in the air above as he waits for his turn.

The chutes are prepared for jumping students (photo at far left) who pay a $40 fee for their first lesson and for rental of equipment. After the first jump, each additional one costs $10.

Jill Williams Uetz photos

claims she really enjoys it.

The quiet also impressed Ms. Heinemeier. "You look out over miles and miles of country and it's absolutely quiet."

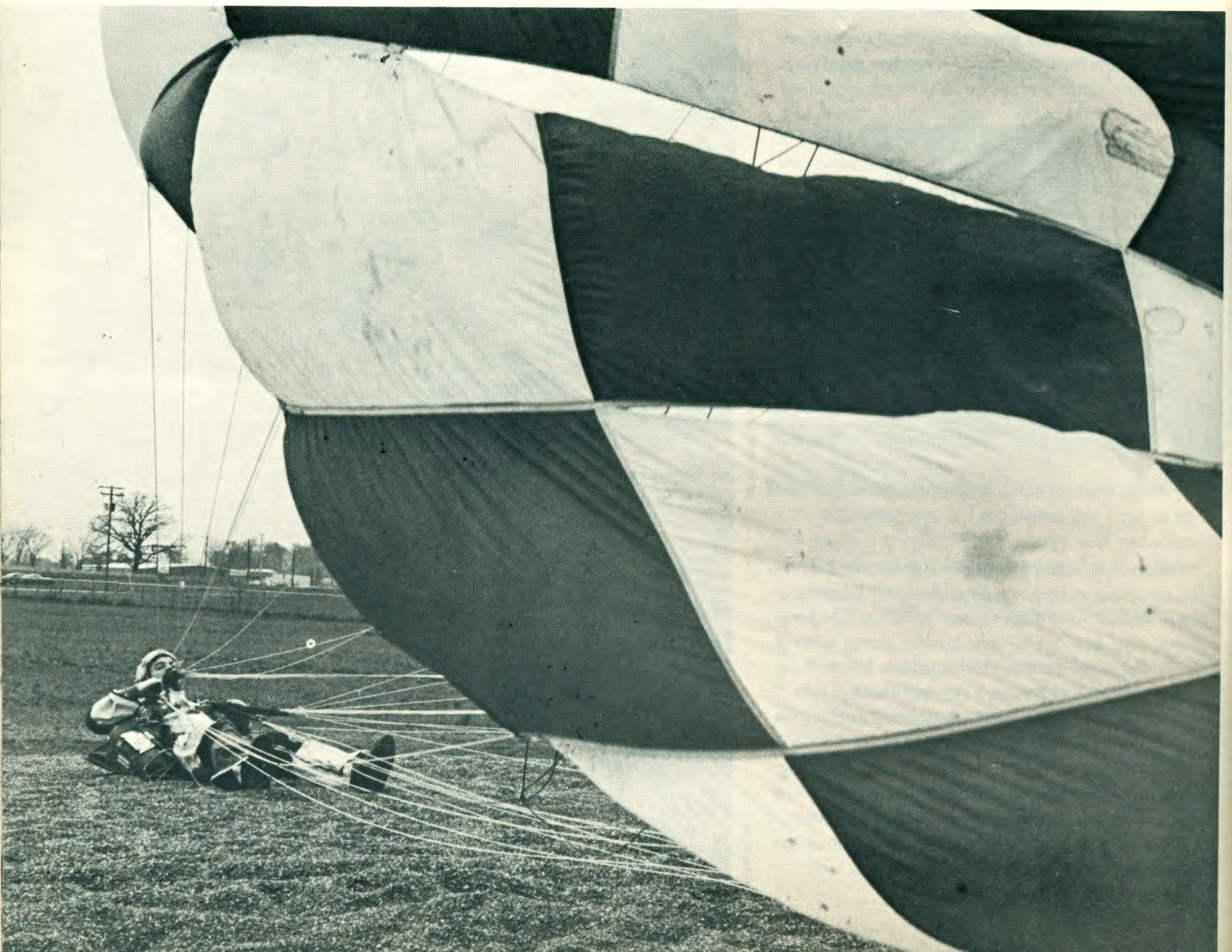
All three SIU-E jumpers say they will keep up their new hobby and say the feeling is completely unique. But in the meantime they have to listen to the people around them who teasingly question their sanity.

Paxson said before his first jump people were asking questions like, "How long have you had this death wish?" Now he says he laughs about it.

Jump instructor David Werner (below) finds the ground as he leads the way down in a demonstration effort for the jump students.

The excitement of the jump is shown on Vickie Heinemeier's face as she clutches her chute after jump number two (photo on opposite page).

Gail Purkey



Richard Taylor relying on visuals

Richard Taylor is a very visual person. He has to be. As a filmmaker, he relies on visuals to make a living.

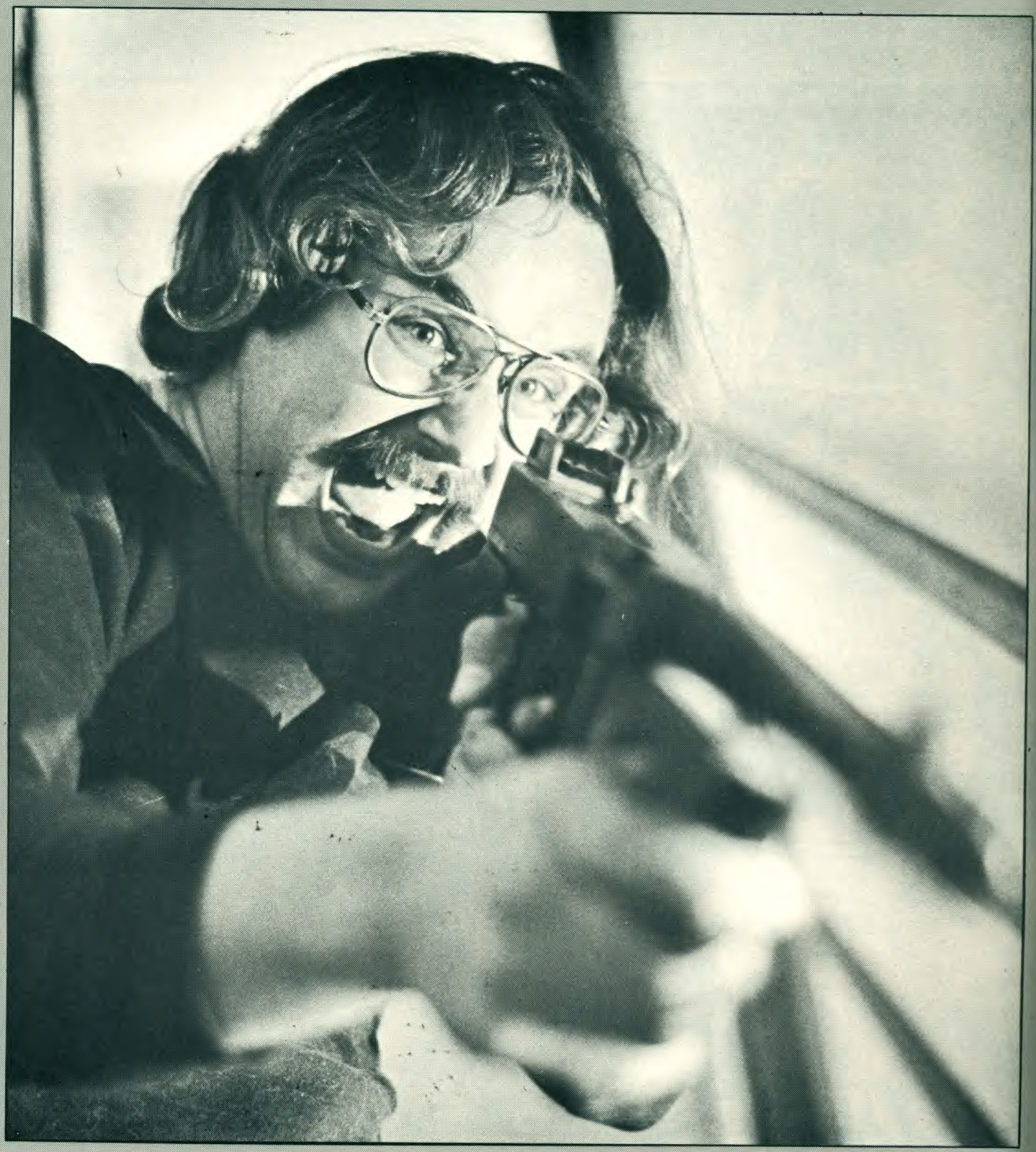
A filmmaker by both hobby and profession, Taylor works at Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville for University News Service where he is assistant director of motion picture productions. He also works in St. Louis, at his home, where he is cameraman, director, writer, actor, make-up artist, film editor and anything else that is necessary for him to produce his personal work in the medium of film.

Taylor works under Don Magary who is the director of motion picture productions for news service. What they do is produce documentaries, public service announcements and newsclips concerning the university and the university's programs.

Taylor filled the role of cinematographer for a Magary documentary on the off-campus business program at SIU-E and it proved to be an impressive start for his career at Southern. The film, "Design For Success," won a "Cindy" award during the fall in national competition for documentaries.

He is becoming accustomed to award-winning projects. Besides the "Cindy" award on Magary's

Photos and text by Brian Keister



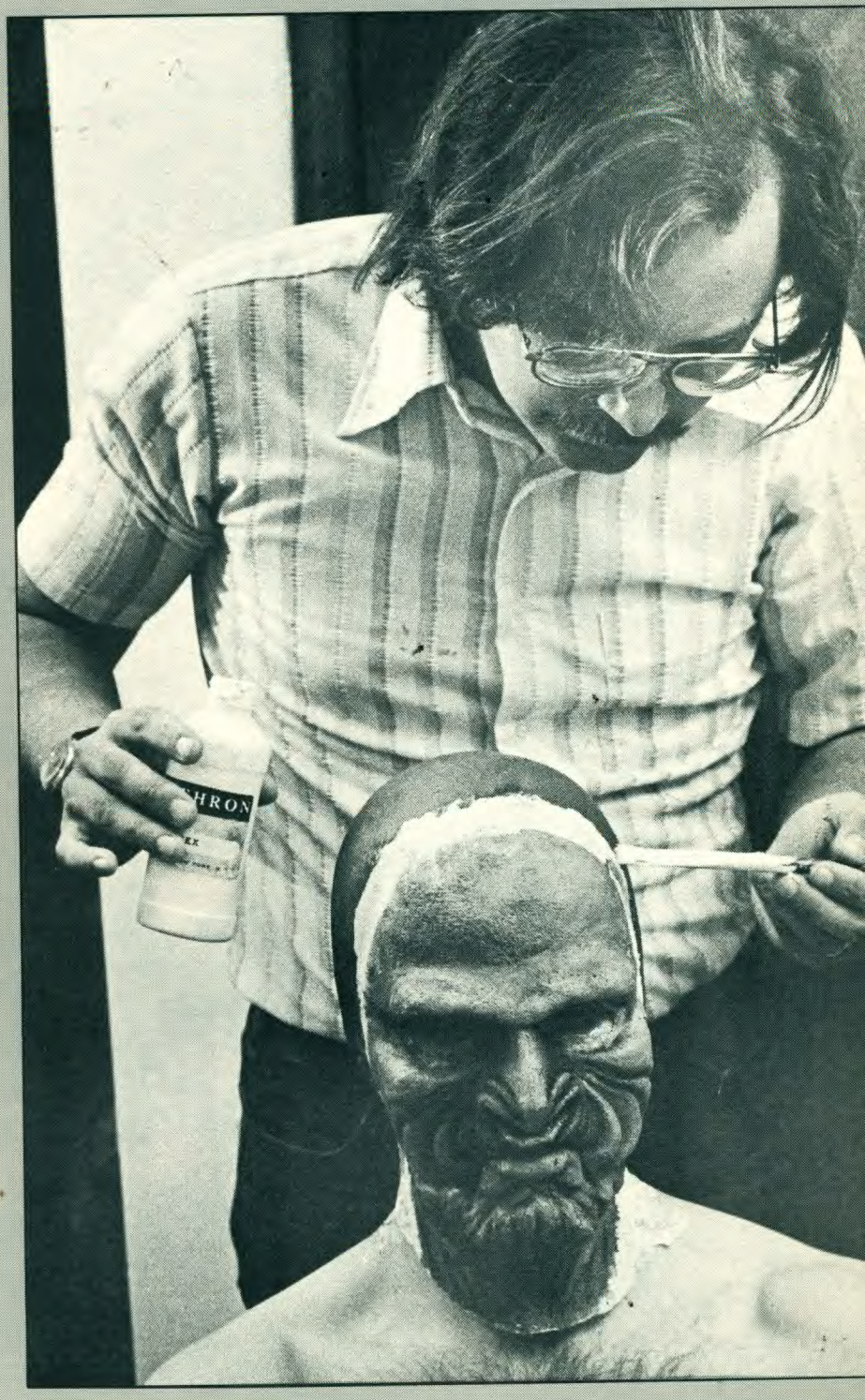
film, Taylor is the owner of two high awards from the Atlanta Film Festival for his own work.

And while he has one award for a SIU-E related project, he is already busy completing two more informational films about the university. One is a campus information film and the other is documentary for the Dental School of SIU-E which is located in Alton.

Taylor, who is now 27, has been making films since the age of nine. He started with 8mm film work when he and a young friend found out that film could be a profitable hobby. Together the youngsters would make one film a month. Upon completion they would announce a Saturday matinee and their fellow students and playmates would be on hand to see the finished products.

With the profits of the Saturday showings Taylor went into more sophisticated film work and made a final project for his high school film class. He tackled Charlie Chan films and made a short spoof called, "Charlie Chan On The Empire State Building."

After completing his high school career, Taylor moved on to Syracuse University where he also studied film. While at Syracuse he made several



Taylor performs in almost every role necessary for his latest personal project, which is a film loaded with special and optical effects. The filmmaker is an actor in the film (left), a camerman (below), and a make-up artist (right). On top of these duties Taylor is the lighting technician, film editor, optical and special effects artist and director.

Brian Keister photos

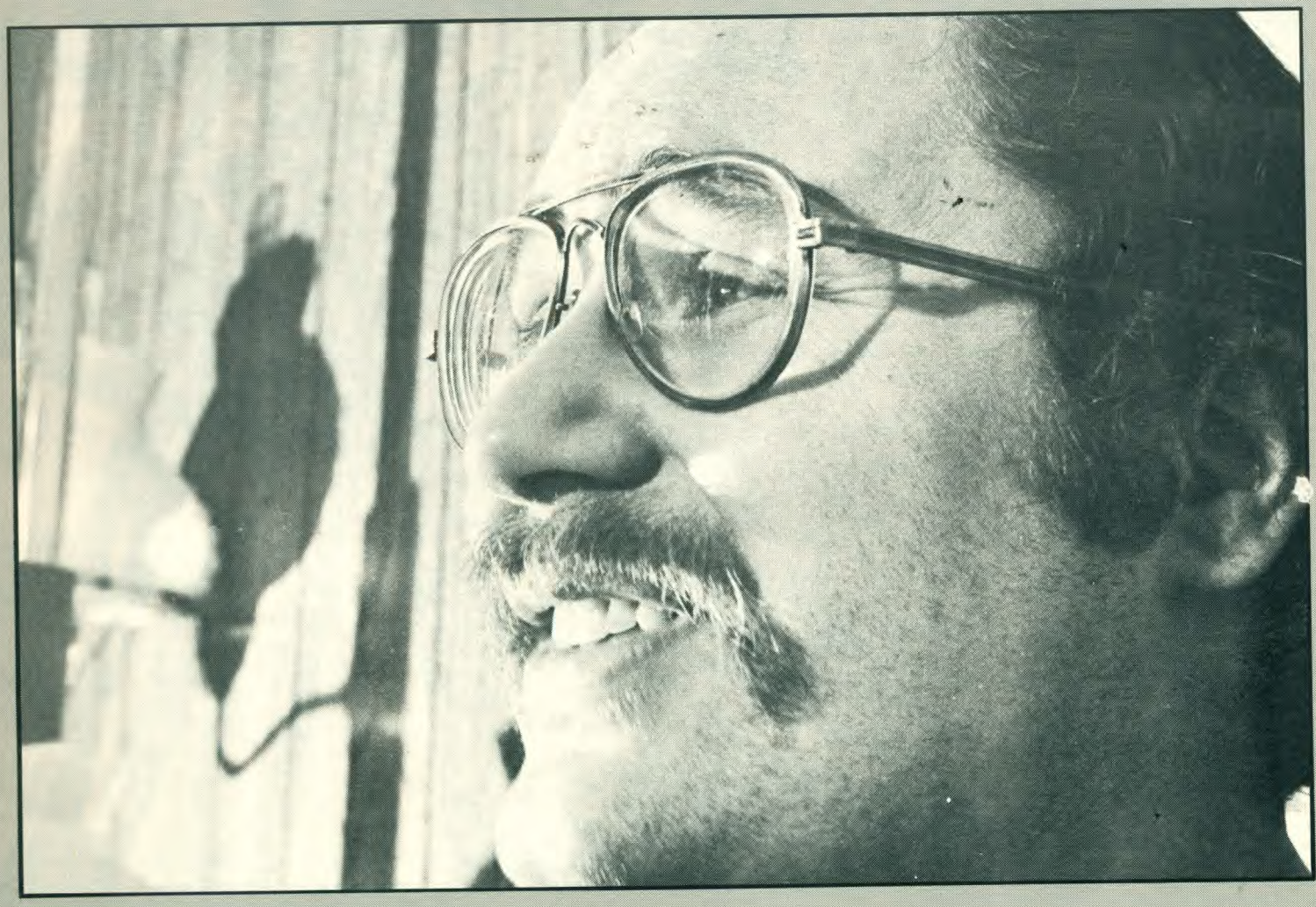
Brian Keister photos

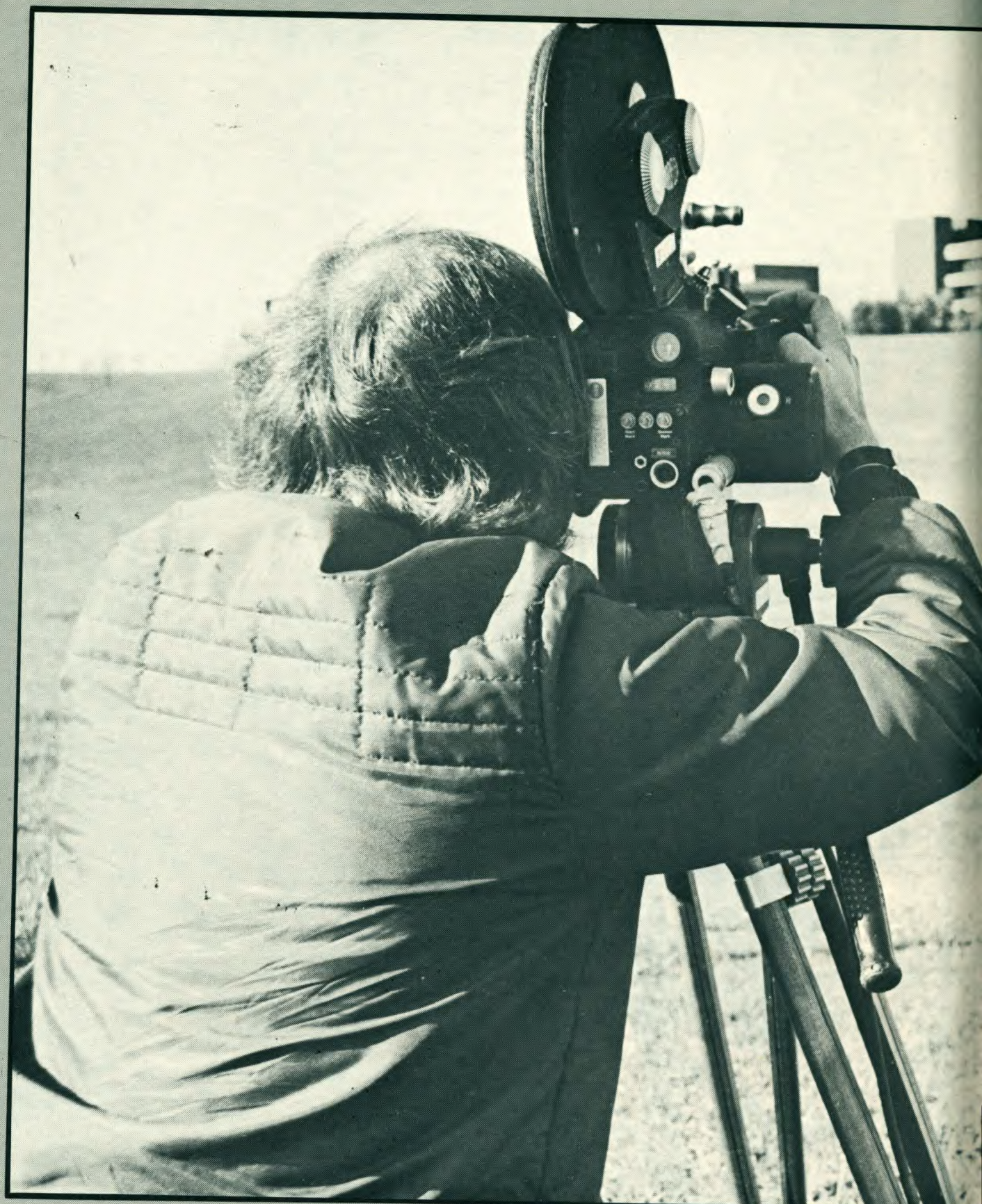
student films and also participated in the production of some television work. This led to a job at an Indiana television station.

While at WTIU in Indiana, Taylor applied for, and received, a grant from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. The corporation was financing a film series on American artists. Taylor pursued a documentary about Rudy Pozzati, a print artist. "Pozzati" won the highest award at the Atlanta Film Festival and was one of the few films of the series which the Public Broadcasting Service retained for their film library.

"Pozzati" led to yet another grant. This time

Dick Taylor spends a great deal of his time working with the film medium. Besides being his profession he works with film at home with projects of his own. Currently he is completing a new film called "The Thing In The Basement." Taylor is the editor of the new project (opposite page and photo at left).





Brian Keister

Taylor left the area of documentaries. Through the earlier films by Taylor there are only small instances of special effects, violence and animation, the visuals which are the most demanding on filmmakers. But with this grant Taylor could turn himself loose and did so.

The result was "Comic Book," a 30-minute, special effects-loaded laugh at the comic industry. "Comic Book" proved to be as successful as "Pozzati" and Taylor again found himself taking top honors with a first place award from the Atlanta festival. From that time, special effects have been a specialty for Taylor.

During the fall quarter of 1974, the filmmaker conducted a lecture and demonstration program on the special effects of film. "Comic Book" was used at the opening of the session, which was held in the University Center on the Edwardsville campus. After showing the short film Taylor lectured and demonstrated the arts of shooting, knifing and other tools to obtain special film visuals.

Together with "Pozzati," "Comic Book" makes good portfolio material. When Taylor came to SIUE he presented a showing of the films to Magary and immediately Taylor was put to work for the university. Magary claims that Taylor is as good as any cinematographer he has ever seen. And with that, the Taylor-Magary combination could lead to some special results for the university.

Taylor hopes to put his film experience together and break in to the area of features someday soon. He is currently completing a film called, "The Thing In The Basement." It is part drama and part documentary on special effects, make-up, optical effects and lighting. Taylor fills many of the demands of the film by performing in various roles. He is actor, director, camerman, special effects and optical effects artist, lighting supervisor, editor and he also does some of the make-up work.

In the first 15 minutes of the film, Taylor fills the screen with visuals. A space ship crashes through a house, a man is blasted away by some strange rays, another man is disintegrated, and an alien (with a complicated foam latex make-up job) is knifed, shotgunned and machine-gunned.

It is all very strong visually. But that is what film is all about. And film is what Dick Taylor is all about.

TRASH!!!

By Rita Rheinecker

Illustration by Bob Kratky

Within four feet of a trash can there are scattered newspapers, empty cardboard food containers, cigarette butts.

Sugar envelopes, paper napkins, milk cartons, half-eaten hamburgers, cupcakes, paper cups, silverware, straws, and empty cigarette packages are strewn on all the tables.

Tables have one chair, tables for four, others have ten chairs, some tables have no chairs.

All this trash, all this disarray, and no one seems to notice. It's as if the trash and chairs and tables belong where they are.

People on the "light side" of SIU's cafeteria just keep eating and leaving their garbage.

Over on the "dark side" it's not as bad. But a girl has just finished her pie and coffee and walked away leaving her table setting setting on the table. Why does she do this?

"I didn't know I had to clean it up," she answers.

Hasn't she seen the bussing racks?

"Yea, I've seen them, but never thought about using them."

What about the next person who wants to use this table?

She points, "There's not much there, they can push is aside."

Of course, she doesn't realize that all this pushing aside will have to stop somewhere.

Bob Kasprovich, a student worker who has been cleaning the cafeteria for the past two years, is a modern day Sisyphus. Sisyphus was the Greek doomed by the gods to spend the rest of his life pushing a boulder up the side of a mountain. Everytime he got it to the top, the rock rolled all the way back down.

Kasprovich takes a break for a moment, looks around and says, "You don't mind work when you can see the results, but here you never do."

He works on the dark side of the cafeteria, he hates the light side. "They're pigs over there," he says. "You can leave a rack over there all day long and it doesn't fill up."

"If I ran this place, I'd buy more racks," Kasporvich says. "Around lunchtime the racks fill up fast, and we can't keep them emptied fast enough."

"Some people may want to bus their tables," he thinks, "but there's no room on the racks."

SIU's food service spends thousands of dollars annually cleaning up after its sloppy patrons. If the diners were neater their food might cost less.

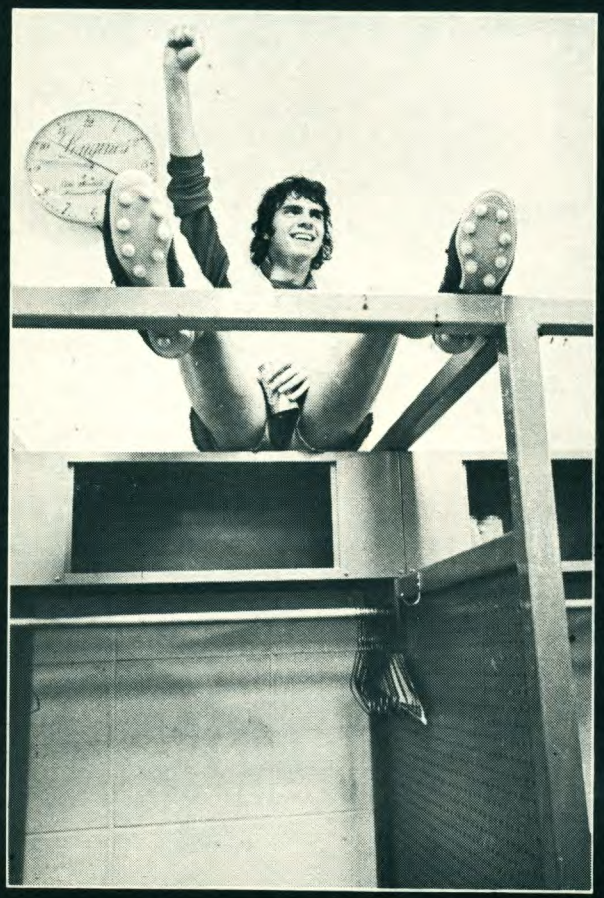
Over on the light side two girls decide to sit at a table full of plates, cups, uneaten food and cigarette butts. One of them, sophomore Brenda Randall, clears off the table before she sits down. Why did she do this?

"I just didn't want to sit and look at someone else's garbage."

PORT-
FOLIO

SIU-E Cougars vs. SLU Billikens

Photo above by John Locus *Photo below by Ron Counton*



It's about time!

It was bound to happen sooner or later. The SIU-E Cougars finally tasted victory over the nation's strongest soccer power, St. Louis University, in the annual battle for the Bronze Boot. On the evening of November 8, the Cougar squad slipped away with a 1-0 victory after going eight games against the Billikens without a win.

The Bronze Boot is a trophy awarded annually to the winner of the Cougar-Billiken match, and has become one of the most prestigious of all college soccer titles. Coach Bob Guelker's squad brought the trophy to Edwardsville on the strength of Mark Moran's first half goal and brilliant goaltending by Mark Keisewetter.

The sweet feeling of victory lasted but a short while as the Cougars went down to defeat to the Bills on November 29, only three weeks later. The Bills won a triple overtime contest in a battle which decided the Midwest's representative to the NCAA soccer finals.

But if nothing else was accomplished, the jinx was broken on November 8, and the Cougar athletes who participated in the event will be remembering that contest for a long time to come.

Cougar fans spell out their loyality. (Upper left photo by John Locus).

Coach Bob Guelker (above) finds himself surrounded by celebrating players as the Bronze Boot is presented to Mike Smallwood (far left photo) gives a victory salute from the top of a locker. (Photos by Carl Uetz).

Below, Cougars Gene Mishalow, Steve Elliot and Chris Carenza get together before going to the dressing room where SIU-E President John Rendleman (at right) joined the party. (Photos by Bill Brinson).

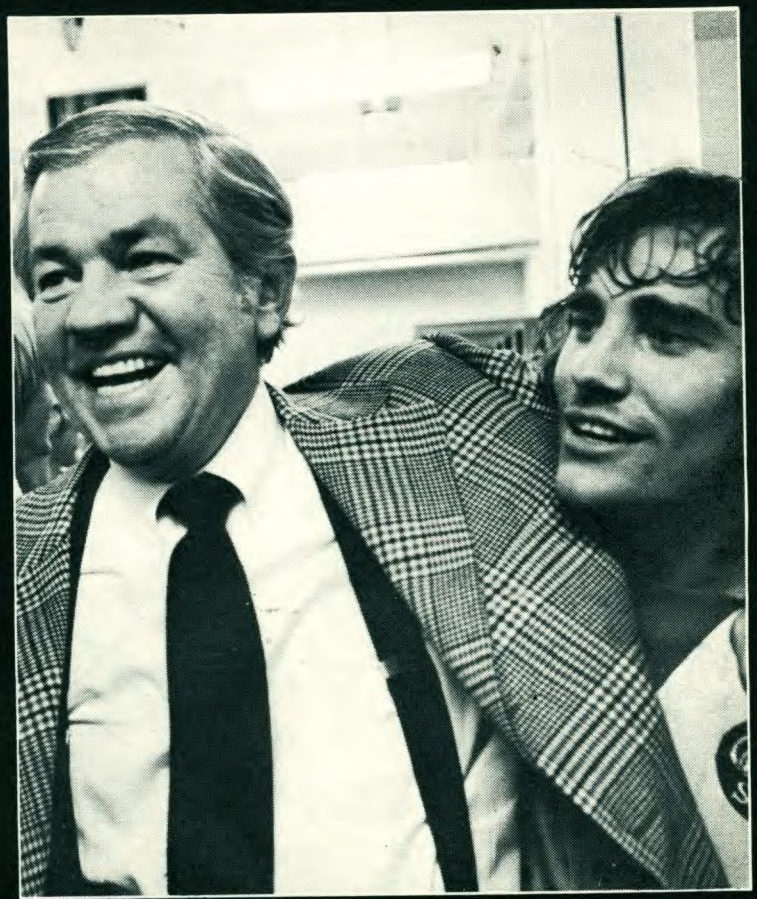
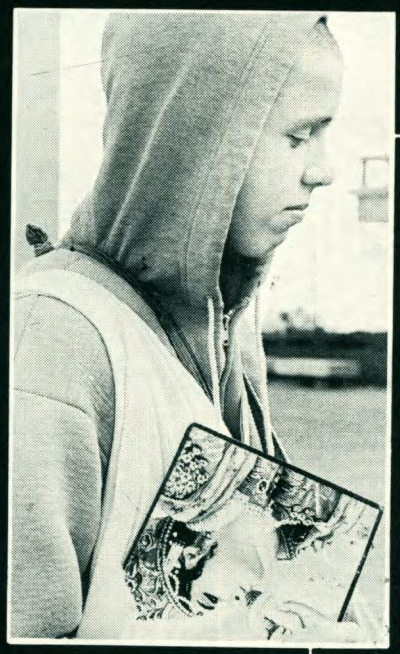
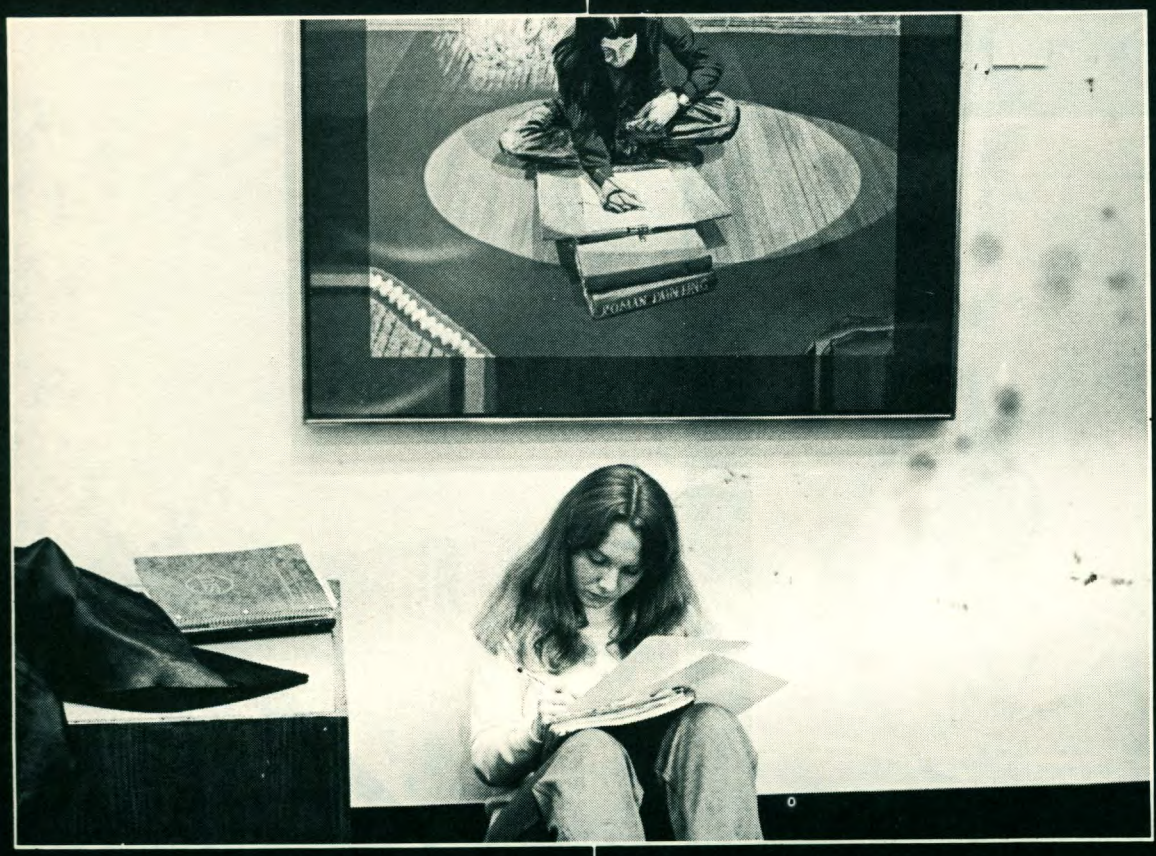


Photo at right by Mike Flanary. Clockwise from the top by Mike Flanary, Bill Vernor, Gilbert Engler, Dan Barger, Brian Keister, Dave Bauser and photo below by Jill Williams Uetz.





Delta Kite Club members Larry Flaig and Nick Christakos demonstrated the sport of hang gliding at Tower Lake on October 25. The two fliers left the surface of Tower Lake near Phase I of the campus housing project before a small crowd of students and children.

Flaig checks the line of his free-flying kite before taking-off into the air (upper left photo). After his flight (below) Flaig was followed by admiring children as he prepared to pack up his kite after a day of acrobatics.

Photos by Cathy Cullen and Steve Feldmann.

"Senior citizens: a wasted natural resource." Those words are on a poster in the main office of the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens in St. Louis.

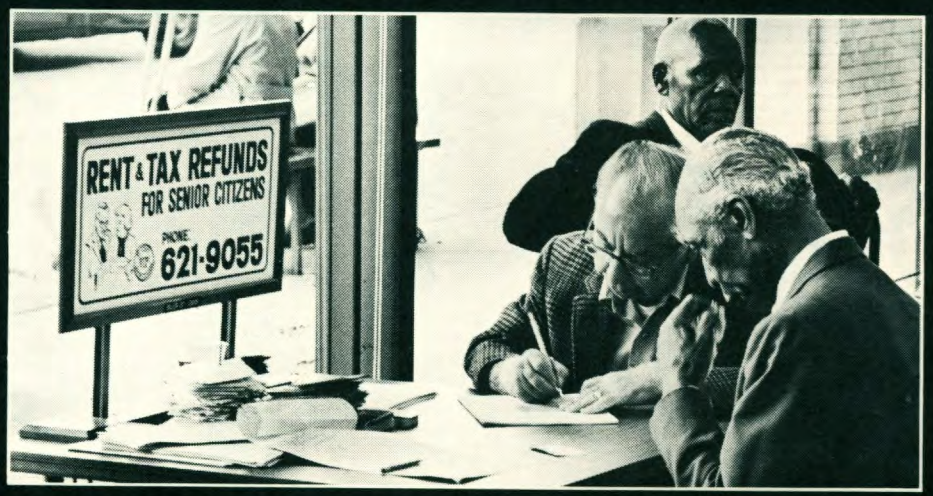
The St. Louis office is striving to make life more meaningful for senior citizens in the greater metropolitan area. It is both social and service-oriented

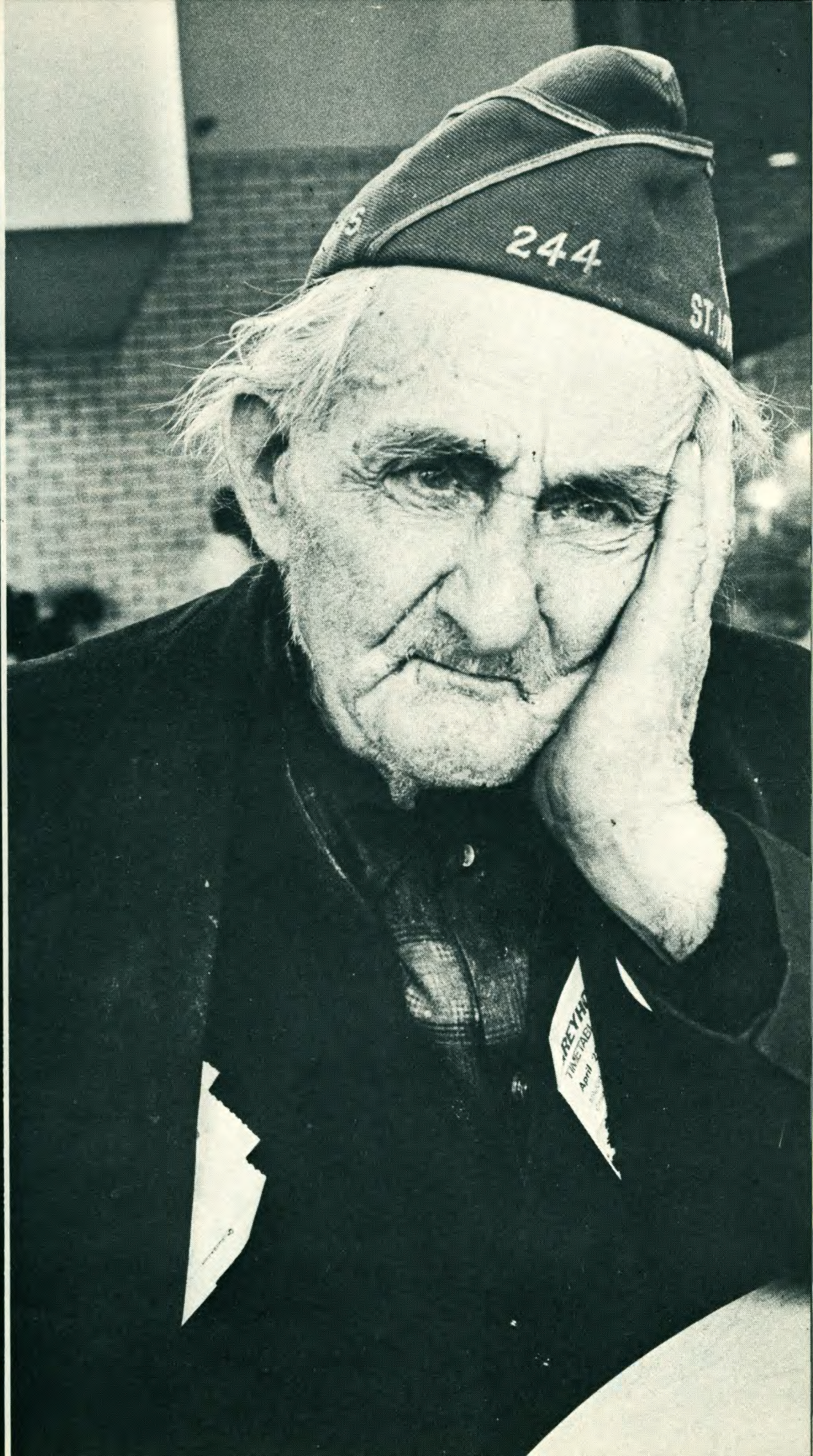
Elderly citizens come to the office to meet with friends and to make new friends. There are lounges where they can pass the time.

But the most popular reasons for visiting the center are the hot lunch program and the recreational or social aspects provided by the office. For the most part the senior citizens need some companionship. They need someone to help them pass their time. And by going to the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens, they are likely to find it. Because they know that other senior citizens, with the same type of need, will be there hunting. And with some luck they can find each other and make the time go by just a little bit easier.

An office for senior citizens

John Harizal photos

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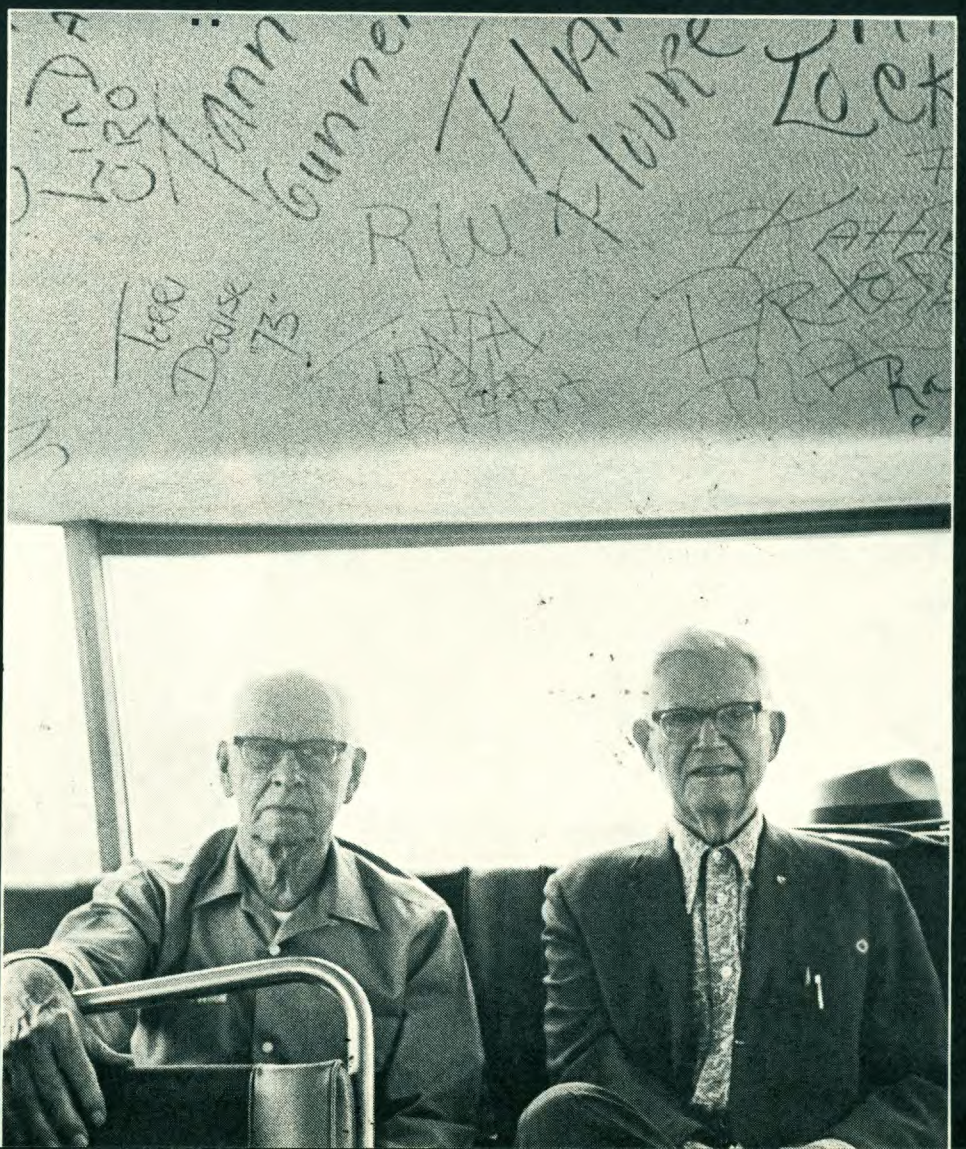
Senior Citizen's Day

at the ball park

Marty Heires photos



The Belleville Senior Citizen's Club makes the most out of Senior Citizen's Day at Busch Stadium. It is an activity which means a full day of fun for the members who participate.

An hour before the departure of the game bus and there are already 50 of the club's 1,700 members in attendance, awaiting the tip to the game and an outing at a restaurant nearby. After lunch, a Cardinal victory, and a short bus ride, the day is over and planning is under way for another activity which can make life a little more enjoyable for senior citizens of Belleville, Illinois.

Virgil Fletcher:
winning in Collinsville

Winning. That is nothing new for Virgil Fletcher, the coach of Collinsville's high school basketball team. His winning rate is over .800 per cent in the 26 seasons he has spent in the community. He has over 650 wins and less than 160 losses.

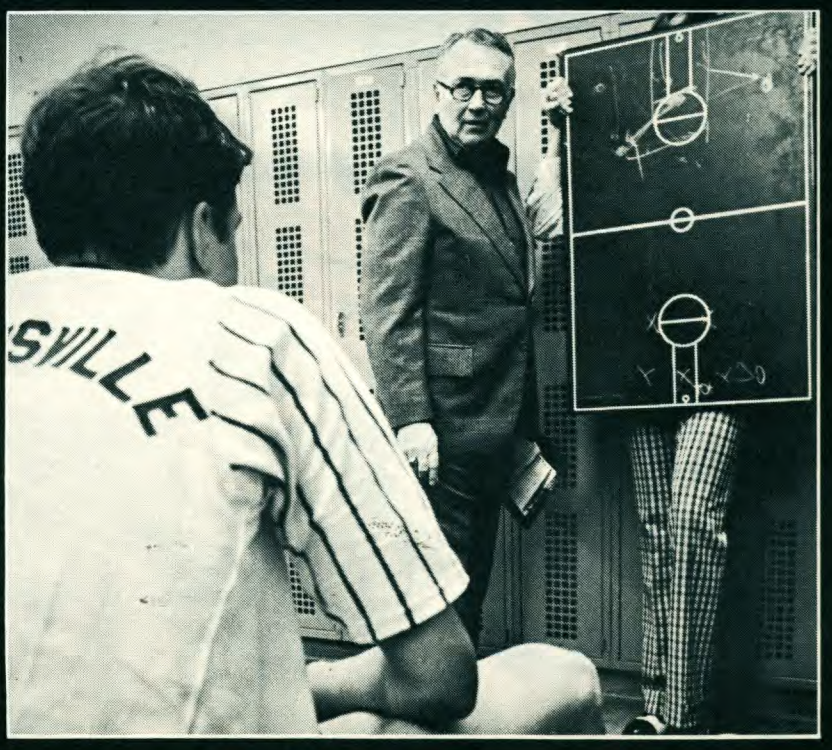
And if those are not convincing enough credentials, consider two Illinois state championships in a record 16 trips to the finals. You may also want to consider that four of his players have landed All-American honors and numerous others have been named to the All-Illinois teams.

Collinsville has gone basketball crazy since Fletcher arrived in 1948. In only his ninth year he took his Kahoks to the state finals but lost in the championship game. Collinsville came close to winning it all with the 1957 team which was led by All-American Terry Bethal. But the best was yet to come.

In 1961 another All-American, Bogie Redmon, led the Kahoks to the championship.

Only four seasons later, Fletcher pulled-off what looked like a miracle. That season he had an unusually small and inexperienced team. Only one starter returned from the previous year and none of his players were over six-feet three-inches tall. But that didn't matter. Again they brought Collinsville the biggest high school basketball trophy in the state.

Since 1965, the championship has evaded Collinsville, but the winning tradition has remained. The Kahoks have continued to dominate the very reputable Southwestern Conference of Southern Illinois and have made several trips to the post-season tournament for the state crown.



Virgil Fletcher stresses the fundamentals of the game. He watches the game calmly from the bench (right), reminds his team of the fundamentals during the breaks in action (above) and fills his half-time lectures with reminders of good, disciplined, basketball techniques (left).

Bill Brinson photos

A look at SIU in East St. Louis

Is the badly needed financial assistance around the corner?

By Ishmael Lateef Ahmad

Amid the poverty and problems of a city struggling for survival, SIU is trying to continue its East St. Louis program. Confronted with the dual task of offering quality education and improving the learning skills of underachieved men and women, SIU plans to continue its struggle in that city.

SIU first came to East St. Louis in 1941 when the Carbondale campus offered University Extension Services to local educators. Later the Edwardsville campus developed and matured to the point of offering courses the Extension Service once provided. And now the program has been modified and integrated into other programs.

Historically, East St. Louis has always lacked adequate educational facilities for post-secondary studies. When SIU was formally established in East St. Louis in 1957, more than 500 people registered at the East St. Louis Residence Center for classes. By 1963, two years before the Edwardsville campus opened, peak enrollment had neared the 3,000 mark, bearing out studies and surveys of the mid-fifties that showed the need for higher education in the area.

After the Edwardsville campus opened, the university determined to continue its East St. Louis Center to accommodate the needs of students unable to commute to the Edwardsville campus. Two years of college are guaranteed to students electing to study in East St. Louis.

Aside from academic courses, SIU began in 1956 to offer additional services to the community. The Division of Technical and Adult Education was created and offered short-term, non-credit courses for employees of small manufacturing concerns. A management program grew out of this service offering certificates for those who completed studies in managerial business. Associate degrees were also offered to those working in business, thus partially fulfilling the demand for better qualified workers in industry and management.

In 1965, an East St. Louis Manpower Training Center was opened, offering job and skilled training for the unemployed. By 1968, 1,916 persons had completed training at the center.

The Center for the Study of Crime, Delinquency and Corrections was founded in 1962 as one of 12 such centers in the nation sponsored by the federal government.

Because East St. Louis presented many of the problems and social conditions usually identified with delinquency, it was chosen as the focus of the metro-east study. Through organized study and research, the center's staff set an objective to gain as much knowledge as possible of the causes of crime and delinquency.

For the student who found high school difficult and college all the harder, the Experiment in Higher Education was founded to afford such youth an opportunity to achieve in college. EHE, as it is commonly called, seeks to prove that problems that hinder inner-city youth from top-notch performance in college, can be overcome through imaginative, specially-designed instructional techniques, along with intensive counseling and the use of work-study programs. Established nearly five years ago, some 450 students have completed the program.

Over the years, the East St. Louis Center of SIU has changed and taken on many different shapes, forms and personalities. Some of the programs have ceased to exist or have been modified or incorporated into other areas. But the purpose and reason for SIU's being in East St. Louis has remained the same. University President John Rendleman maintains that SIU is committed to the area and has no plans to vacate or abandon its programs there. The SIU Board of Trustees and the State of Illinois also seem committed to the concept of continuing the East St. Louis venture with the approval of some $315,000 for fiscal year 1975-76. This money is slated to improve the building which now houses the East St. Louis Center (the old Broadview Hotel in downtown East St. Louis).

Many constantly criticize the facilities at the center and as many others feel that those responsible have no intention of providing the necessary facilities to ensure a long and enduring future of higher education in that city.

But, aside from views held by anyone, it seems apparent that it would be good for SIU to remain in the urban environment and all that goes with it. It is communities like East St. Louis which need the services a vast and growing university can provide. As long as the community and the college work together, the quality of life can be improved and without a doubt East St. Louis, like many other cities can stand a great deal of improvement.

SIU has been involved in the metro-east area for over 30 years now. The presence can in some ways be measured and in other ways not, but the university is a viable presence. In the number of jobs alone, the university can be said to have made a sizable contribution.

With the prospect of badly needed financial assistance just around the corner, the people of East St. Louis and future students at SIU can look forward to learning and exchanging ideas in old but somewhat updated facilities.

The Performing Arts Training Center (PATC) for instance, an integral and nationally recognized part of the SIU program may soon find itself dancing on specially designed floors of wood, instead of the cold, unforgiving concrete of days past. Any other amount of improvements the center will see will no doubt boost the morale and the incentive of the students who attend classes there and the people in the community who will feel a deeper sense of pride and respect for SIU and what it is attempting to do.

East St. Louis, the city in the shadow of the Gateway Arch as the sun sets in the west, seems to have been by-passed in St. Louis' struggle to grow. But with young, ambitious leaders struggling to put their house in order, along with support from the academic leaders and the facilities at their disposal, it just maybe that after decades of slow decline and near-death, East St. Louis may be experiencing a re-birth. The ingredients are skimpy but the will is strong.

Possibly, in time, with strong and rooted academic support, whether in a renovated hotel or enclosed behind walls of mortor and brick, built to last until the 23rd century, the liaison between the city and the university can be strengthened and corded so that each will grow, having faith in the other that neither will desert the cause. The city and its people can become a vibrant and livable hub of the metro-east complex. Commitment is the name of the game.

Caution

Photos and text by Donna Lingle

Watching out for cars has become a daily habit for thousands of SIU students. Those who leave their cars in distant parking lots must cross at least two lanes of traffic to reach their classes.

Trudging across the campus, students must beware of drivers who speed through crosswalks, disregarding the yield signs posted in front of the walkways.

They must also watch out for drivers who do stop — but not long enough. Some inch their way through a throng of students in the crosswalk to avoid stopping for more than a few seconds.

Fortunately no car has seriously injured a student in the crosswalks. But the danger continues regardless of an Illinois law which requires drivers to yield the right-of-way to pedestrians within a crosswalk.

Another Illinois law prohibits drivers from switching lanes to avoid stopping behind other cars which have yielded to pedestrians. But right in front of the SIU campus, drivers swerve into the adjacent lane to avoid stopping at crosswalks.

Drivers who do not yield to pedestrians are not only dangerous and discourteous but also unlawful.

Ruth Slenczynska Kerr

a concert pianist in Illinois farmlands

Text by Tommye Walter
Joyce Norris photos

Ruth Slenczynska Kerr, world famous concert pianist, had her life turned around when she was asked, "What do you come back to when you return from a concert tour?"

The question was posed by Lloyd Blakely who was then trying to build a music department for the new campus of Southern Illinois University under construction at Edwardsville. The university needed an artist-in-residence.

1963 had been a busy year for Ms. Slenczynska. She had given more than 100 concerts. The performances had taken her from North America to South America, from Europe to Africa. There had been 22 concerts in Africa alone. The terrific pace was too much. Her doctor advised her to unwind. She would have to cancel her concert tours for at least a year.

When Blakely approached her, she was staying at home teaching an occasional lesson. She considered his question. "I came back to the walls of my room. I decided it would be nice to come back to something more," Ms. Slenczynska

Ruth Slenczynska Kerr has reduced the amount of concerts she gives and splits her life between being a wife, a teacher and is now enjoying more personal time. The world famous pianist spends many hours teaching (below and above right) and between practice sessions with students crams in a few hours of practice each day.

Joyce Norris photos

said. She decided to visit the campus.

The decision came from a diminutive woman who had spent most of her life traveling over the world performing before masses of people. Yet when the curtain came down on each performance, she was lonely.

The wooded hillside that greeted her did nothing to encourage her coming to the campus. Construction had just begun and consisted of bare foundations. "I thought they were premature in their thinking," she said, leaning forward and folding her hands carefully in her lap. "They had bought the campus, but there was nothing up here but holes."

Ms. Slenczynska considered the major changes that would be made in her life if she left the big city. She had never lived in a small town. She had never driven a car. Settle down on the bluffs of the Mississippi? How would she survive? "This is crazy, I told myself," she said.

But the vision of empty rooms haunted her. "I'll try anything," she thought. After all, the people at the university had seemed so interested in her coming. She decided to give it a try.

The lady of the keyboard found life flourishing on the prairie. She also found a companion. She met and married James Kerr, associate professor of government and public affairs at the university. She no longer comes home to an empty apartment. Jim is there waiting, in the house they both had a hand in designing, to hear about her experiences.

"When I went back to the concert stage, it was tentatively," she said. "It isn't an easy life; it is terribly demanding." Although she has cut the amount of concert tours down to 50 a year, she continues to live a rigorous life.

A concert pianist should have eight hours of practice a day. Ruth Slenczynska practices three hours each night, an hour during the day between lessons, and usually six hours on a weekend. "That's very, very little for a concert artist. It's a starvation diet," she said. She takes along a silent keyboard when she goes on tour. "When I get to my hotel, I spend most of my free time playing it," she said.

"It's the duty of the artist to create an entertaining evening for the audience. What happens to her on the way to the concert or how she feels is no concern of the audience. It's none of their business," she advises. The advice sounds like a message she might give her students. She reinforces the message: "Create a memorable evening for your audience."

During the month of October 1974, Ms. Slenczynska gave five concerts off campus and conducted workshops at the University of Maryland and at Southern Methodist University in Dallas. In May of last year she gave concerts all over South America.

Of her performance with the Delaware Symphony in October of last year, Bruce Laird, music reviewer for the Morning News, wrote: "The audience was so ecstatic that Miss Slenczynka set her bouquets at the edge of the stage, sat down at the piano, and polished off an encore that seemed to astonish even the members of the symphony itself. When she finally left the stage it seemed unlikely that anything could follow her performance with comparative success."

Although Ruth Slenczynska travels extensively, she sees little of the cities and countries she visits. "I see the airport,

Joyce Norris photos

the hotel, the auditorium and the route in between," she said. "When I went to Rio in 1958 I was a single lady. I was interested in hearing Brazilian music, but all I heard on the radio was Frank Sinatra. Late at night when I returned to my room I could catch the faint strains of South American music coming up from the hotel night club below," she said. In May of last year she returned to South America. The radio was still playing North American music.

Imagine a world-renown concert pianist who hasn't had a piano lesson since she was 14-years-old. "My family moved away from Paris in 1939 when the war broke out. My teachers were all there," Ms. Slenczynska said. When she stopped taking lessons, she no longer had concerts. The end of concerts meant the end of her earning money. "My father was not very happy about that," she said.

She finally broke her relationship with her father and did not play publicly for years. In 1952 when she turned again to the concert world, she changed the "i" on the end of her name to an "a."

In her book, "Forbidden Childhood," she described the early experiences with her tyrannical father. Josef Slenczynski, a Polish violinist whose own career was finished following a World War I injury, wanted his daughter to be a violinist. When she was less than two-weeks-old he told his friends that she would become the world's greatest violinist. She chose the piano. In Europe she studied under such greats as Sergei Rachmaninoff, Arthur Schnabel, Alfred Cortot, Egon Petri and Nadia Boulanger.

The pianist is still busy with concerts despite her recent cutback. At left she prepares for a December concert at Lewis and Clark Community College. Above, she takes a bow for the audience in the college's Hathaway Hall.

Today students from all over the world beat a path to her door. Ae Ree Kim came to Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville from Seoul, Korea, just to study under Ruth Slenczynska Kerr. "I'd have to be dead before I'd miss one of her classes," Kathleen Rountree, from Suffold, Virginia, said. Kathleen was coming down with the flu, but was on her way to class anyway. Kathryn Shank, in preparing for her college career, came from Peoria just for an evaluation. Mrs. Shank, who waited for her daughter under the trees on the mall, looked like a student herself. "We consider it an honor just for Ruth Slenczynska to listen to our daughter," she said. A journalist, waiting to see the pianist, is told by one of the students, "You'd better knock. She forgets to quit teaching when the lesson is over."

The woman who felt she was cheated out of her childhood by a rigid father feels she is living her childhood now. "Today I lead three lives, where one life was too much before," she said. One life she shares with her husband; one life she shares with her friends; and one life she shares with her students. interestingly, she doesn't include her life on the concert stage.

Not only has life in the Midwest changed Ruth Slenczynska, Ruth Slenczynka Kerr has changed the world of music. "Before, when anyone was any good, they ran away to New York instead of staying here and enriching the area culturally. The world thought that the Midwest wasn't culturally important. We had to change people's way of thinking," she said. Ruth Slenczynska Kerr has proven that it is possible to contain real talent in areas other than metropolitan New York.

"After all, St. Louis is equipped with the oldest orchestra in the country," she said.

1970

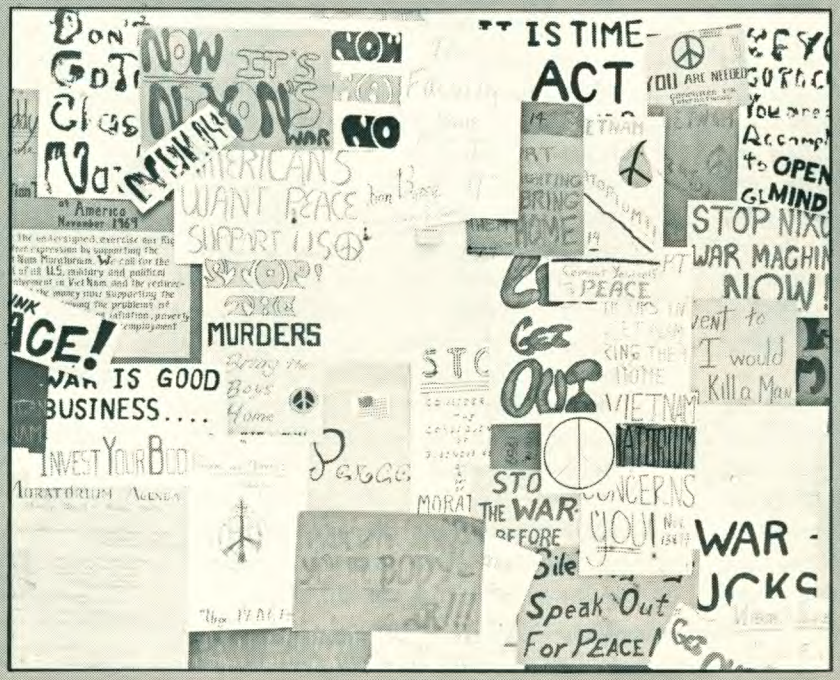
Age of protest

In the late sixties and very early seventies, college students nation-wide mobilized in an attempt to raise the consciousness of Americans involved in a war in Southeast Asia.

They traded in their books for signs of protest, posters and black armbands. They marched. They held sit-ins and walk-outs. Buildings crumbled into ashes, as did draft cards and American flags. Physical confrontations with police and national guards erupted. Students won some; they lost more.

On May 4, 1970 at Kent State in Ohio, the national guard fired into a throng of students demonstrating against the American incursion into Cambodia. When the tear gas and smoke had dissipated four students lay dead.

For students at Southern Illinois University the events had significant impact. A group of students and faculty met the evening of the deaths at Kent



Daily Alestle photos

The students put the University Center to use quickly following the shootings at Kent State. Protesters and supporters of the Cambodian invasion each used the Goshen Lounge forums and the bulletin boards for spreading their messages. It was the age of protest coming to the university.

Student picketed in front of the campus buildings. A strike was called, a moratorium on classes was announced. The war protesters were speaking out and the hawks were returning fire.

State to plan a moratorium and an attempt to close the university. Students and faculty were calling for a strike.

The campus was hardly unified in opinion over the Cambodian excursion and the Kent State killings. The two events caused great polarization.

Then Alestle editor Timothy Middleton, editorialized: "Active, non-violent protest earns the sympathy of anyone capable of sympathizing."

This somewhat moderate approach for the times was reproached by former student senator Eric Barnett. Barnett, who at the time was running for student body president, called for a stronger approach: "Rhetoric can be listened to without any attention being paid. If students here really want to be heard the best course of action for them is to have violent disturbances here on campus. Take over the adminsitration . . . have a real strike . . . block doors, not just carry signs."

On the other side of the fence was strong opposition to student uprisings. A letter writer to the Daily Alestle wrote: "Well it finally happened: the weekend warriors playing soldier met the diaper set playing at revolution, only it didn't come off like in the movies; and now our small time world changers are going to howl like so many stuck hogs."

Another writer commented, "It was with shock that I heard of the deaths of four students at Kent University in Ohio. Shock yes; remorse, sorrow, NO. This was merely the logical end for those who used violence in our civilization."

The first day of the planned strike began with leafleting and passing out of armbands at university entrances. A dialogue followed in the Goshen lounge. The day's events concluded at the Edwardsville draft board, where roughly 200 students and faculty took over the office. A photograph of Richard Nixon was taken from the wall and torn into pieces.

On Wednesday, a demonstration was held in the office of then University Chancellor John Rendleman. Later in the day, the moratorium climaxed when 2,000 students, faculty and staff gathered in the campus mall for a memorial service for the four dead Kent State students.

The University was never completely closed down and there were no violent disturbances.

Why? Middleton, who today is assistant broadcasting programmer for University News Service theorized: "Restraint was exercised on the part of students, the administration and faculty." Middleton also suggested that because the university is a commuter campus, students disenchanted with the university were more likely to go home than to stage violent demonstrations.

According to Middleton the moratorium leaders were hardline liberals who advocated non-violent protests. "A handful of lunatic radicals were never given much credibility," Middleton said.

Middleton in reflection does not feel the moratorium had much impact. Today he reflects, "The people who killed people at Kent State, got away with it. And the war in Vietnam is still going on."

1970

Paul Owens

Paul Owens, assistant superintendent of grounds at SIU, was busy planning the next day's work schedule for the 18 men under his supervision.

"I'm gonna gamble on wet tomorrow — Mother Nature takes care of me," Owens said as he shuffled through the stack of work orders, sorting through those to be scheduled for the next day. Each day a schedule must be planned for the next day, he explained, and it is strictly adhered to — if weather permits.

Owens, a big guy with a booming voice and a deep love of plants, is responsible for the landscape design for the SIU campus.

Those trees, plants, and shrubs adorning the campus core and housing areas didn't just happen. They were planned and plotted on large campus maps and shaded with green to designate plant sites.

Owens showed the plans he is currently working on — the landscape design of the new Single Student Housing Site on campus. He tries to design plans which will give beauty, shade, and comfort to the students, picking those trees that will keep with the surrounding environment and serve a useful purpose.

"We plant shrubs around doors and patios where students can come out and relax in the summer. We try to pick something that will blend with the buildings and beautify the atmosphere. People can't live without trees," Owens said.

He shrugs-off the suggestion that some people are born with a green thumb.

"It's my work and my hobby," he said. "It's because you love plants. I have loved plants since I was a child. I guess I came by it naturally."

Owens will have been with SIU for 10 years this spring.

Besides landscaping, the duties of his department include such things as road maintenance, athletic field maintenance, pest control, mowing and fertilizing lawns, and care of the university's 20-acre nursery.

Before coming to SIU, Owens worked for the city of Alton as a forester, and had operated his own landscaping and nursery business. He had also completed some courses in horticulture, green house

planning and plotting to keep SIU-E green

Text by Mary Delach
Jill Williams Uetz photos

management, and landscape design at the University of Illinois.

"You know, 20 or 25 years ago, if you taught a course in horticulture very few people would come. Now young people are really getting interested in it. It's a good hobby," he said.

Owens said that people are respecting plants more today and that vandalism of landscaping has declined in recent years. "This campus has been especially good in the low level of vandalism," he said.

More people are concerned with saving old trees during the construction of

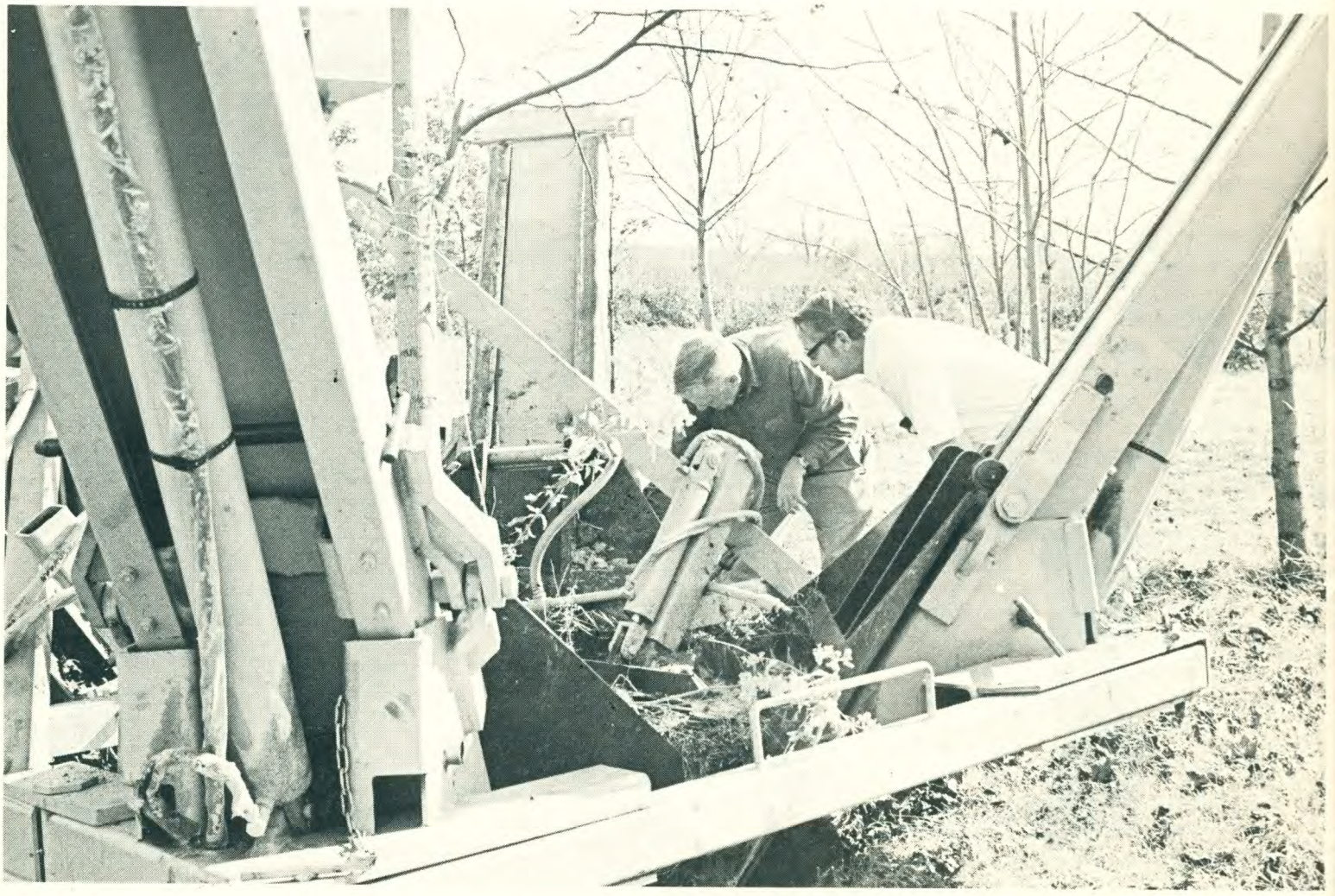
Paul Owens keeps himself busy maintaining the condition of landscaping on the campus of SIU-E. Besides planning and planting, Owens checks the condition of growing plants (far left) and checks with the work crew doing the planting. Below, Owens talks over some planting for Tower Lake II with the workers on location.

"People can't live without trees," Owens claims. So with the construction of new apartment units on campus, Owens supervises the planting of some large trees from the campus nursery (below).

Owens spends a great deal of his time over blueprints, planning the location of new plants and checking the location of older plants in an effort to save them when new construction takes place (below right).

Jill Williams Uetz photos

Jill Williams Uetz photos



buildings than had been the case several years ago, said Owens.

"When I first came here, construction was making a wholesale slaughter of trees on this campus. My first idea was not make a lot of noise, but to save some of the larger trees. Things have changed now," he said.

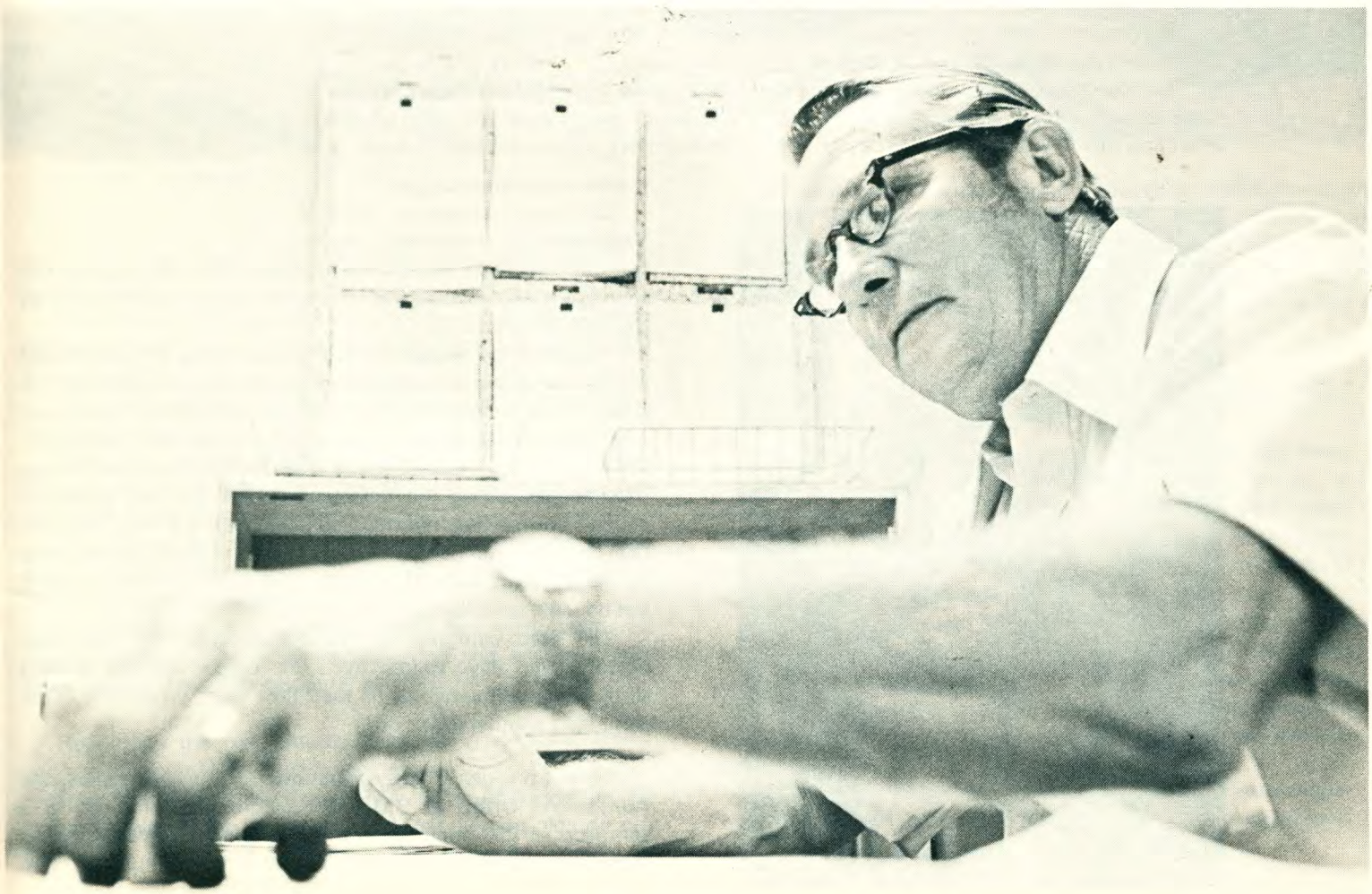
Owens praised the SIU engineering and architectural departments who are also making great efforts to save older trees. Sometimes all that is necessary is to move the sidewalk or road over just a little, Owens said. He cited the sugar maples at the junction of the new housing area as a recent example of team efforts to save old trees.

Owens and his wife have a large collection of plants in their Alton home. They raise many tropical plants and give some to their friends as gifts. Besides his interest in plants, he is an avid golfer, bird and nature watcher, and wild-life photographer.

One of Owen's favorite plants is the holly and he has been planting it in various locations on the campus.

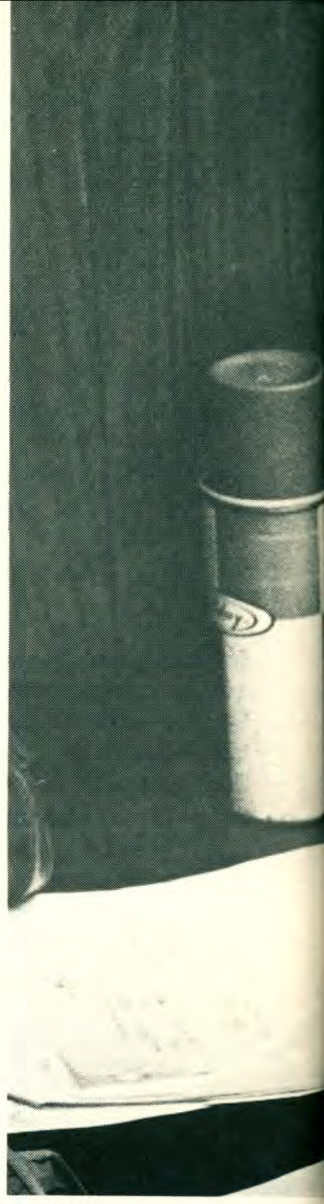
"Come on, I'll show you some," he said. Near the door of the personnel office of the Supporting Services building were several tall holly plants — complete with bright red berries.

"We're planting it all around the campus," he said, gesturing toward the campus core area. "Come back in about 20 years and then you'll see some holly."



Over-30 students find way back to school

Text by Connie Braundmeier and Mark Rogers



Gary Suhl

Mrs. Ruth Carter is the mother of three children, the grandmother of four, and works full-time as an assistant librarian at Assumption High School in East St. Louis. She is also an SIU-E night student working toward a degree in English with a minor in library science.

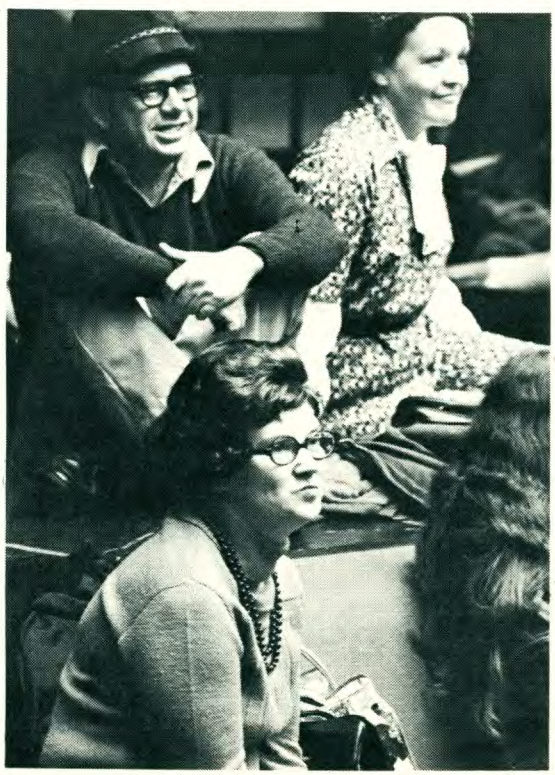
Tom Hammond is a divorced father who works full-time as a deputy sheriff in Madison County. He realizes the need for law enforcement officers to have more than a desire to enforce the law. That is why he is a part-time student at SIU-E majoring in Human Services. He wants to understand the sociological and psychological motivations of crime, so he can work more effectively with criminal situations.

Like Hammond and Carter, about 1700 SIU-E students are over the age of 30. Of this number a little over half are women, according to the registrar's office.

The over-30 student returns to or begins college for three general reasons.

One group is made up of persons who feel a need to return to college because they find themselves at an impasse in their careers.

They can go no higher on the promotion or money scale and find they must seek other, more opportune job possibilities. This group makes up the majority of night students attending SIU-E. They hold full-time jobs, often have families, and spend two to four nights a week attending classes.



Gary Suhl

Changing careers is often a heartbreaking, desperate move, but the majority of older students fitting into this category find the return an enlightening, even refreshing venture for their general outlook on life.

Probably the largest over-30 group is the housewife and mother returning to school after a long absence raising children. These mothers do not return out of boredom due to children attending school; they return to fulfill their own potential.

A University News Service article which appeared in area newspapers during the fall quarter 1974 told the stories of several housewives returning to school after a long absence. One woman interviewed from St. Louis County looking back on her 28 years as a "household engineer" said, 'I enjoyed it, but now it's time for me."

The third category of over-30 students includes those persons who have retired from one career and are seeking something worthwhile to fill their time with, whether it is the aim to get another job or not.

To get an idea of the breakdown of over-30 majors, the Admissions Office at SIUE ran a computer print-out of a sampling of 859 students in this category. The vast majority listed their major as undecided. Most of these students were

Nursing major Camilla Laughlin (above) studies in the library. Older students listen to a Goshen Lounge debate (opposite page). Mary Anne Tillman (foreground) is leaning toward a mass communication major. Behind her is Verlin Smith, also a mass comm student. Next to Smith is his wife Doras who is not an SIU-E student.

taking less than eleven hours, the amount required for a full-time student.

From there the majors broke down into much smaller fragments with the greatest concentration in elementary education (60).

The two nearest to this were business administration (51) and accounting (46).

These two concentrations are most ideally suited for over-30 students, according to the departments, because age has little impact on job opportunities.

From these major concentrations the number decreases rapidly. Psychology numbers 32, nursing 29, special education 27 and management science 23.

After these the concentrations break down into scattered groups. Mathematics, music, engineering and art each have small groups of over-30 students.

How does the older student get along with his fellow younger students? Very well, it seems.

From the older point of view, Mrs. Rena Altenritter, in the University News Service article, said that 19-year-olds do not look down on mature students in the university classroom. "Young people are much more encouraging for us to do our own thing that our own peers," she said.

From the regular college-aged student, much the same opinion is expressed. Mrs. Vickie Heinemeier, a 20-year-old civil service worker who takes courses on campus, said "Older students are not shy, they speak out when they have an idea or an answer. I think they care more than younger students do about learning. They want to learn."

Larry McNamara is a 21-year-old senior majoring in business administration. He sees many older students in his classes and believes they have advantages over the younger students. "In business the older students have a big advantage because they are already out in the business world and know what is going on."

Many reasons bring the over-30 student back to college, but all the reasons eventually focus on the essential purpose of SIU-E — learning.

Everett Davis: back to school after 40 year break

Text by Marty Heires

Sitting behind a desk in the reference section of the library, 56-year-old Everett Davis looks more like an instructor than a student.

He is attired in a green turtleneck sweater and dress slacks, and his checked sportcoat and overcoat are draped over a study desk behind him.

He studies a book on the desk in front, which makes his dark, heavy-framed glasses all the more pronounced and does little to hide his sparsely covered pate.

But Davis is not a teacher, and on this Monday morning he is doing what other conscientious students are doing, researching a term paper.

Even though he has been away from college for years, education is not new to him. He comes from a large family of eight children who were very academically inclined.

"I have two brothers and two sisters who have retired out of the school system," he says.

Indeed, if it were not for World War II, Davis himself might now be a teacher, playing the part which he, appearance-wise, is so well suited to.

He began studying for the teaching profession at SIU-C in the 1930's before enlisting in the Illinois National Guard. He served in the guard for five years, working his way up to the rank of captain at the close of the war.

He and his wife, Kathryn, had already had their first son, Mike, by the time Davis completed his service. He then did not consider the teaching profession a very promising vocation.

"I was not too impressed with the income teachers were making at the time."

But Davis has always regretted not finishing his education and now, after an interlude of over 40 years, he is back, really back, 24 hours-a-day worth.

Until the fall quarter, 1974, he had only been able to attend SIU-E on a part time basis and in so doing picked up eight classes.

After fall quarter he now finds himself just a few hours away from a B.A. in English.

Of course 40 years is a long time to wait before returning to school, and no one knows this better than Davis. Certain things always held him back. One of the most important was money.

"I could not take off and go to school without any money coming in," he says. "The reason I am able to do this now is because my wife is working. She has been for the last 15 years."

Davis says that he is also at a stage in life where most major financial predicaments are behind him. For instance, he has only his 21-year-old daughter, Mary Kay, at home. She attends McKendree College in Lebanon on a music scholarship.

Son Mike, 29, works for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in Naples, Italy. Bruce, 27, is working on a master's degree at the University of Missouri at Kansas City. Bob, who is 19 and married, attends the Gateway Bible College in St. Louis.

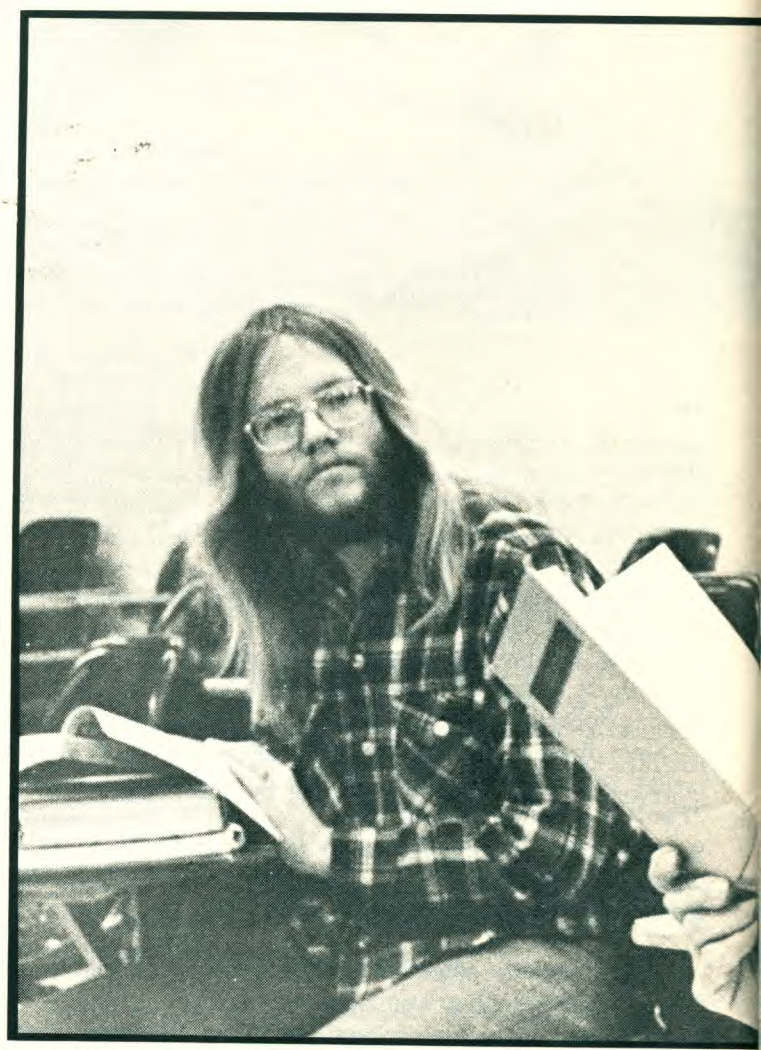
Davis, a longtime insurance agent and resident of Collinsville, says he has just recently been able to take the time to complete his education. "My wife has thought all along that I should go back and get a degree," he says, "but you get caught up in the stream of life and any thought of jumping out and going back to school is out of the question."

"No one thing made me come back. The urge is there and then you go."

Davis says he felt he owed it to himself to finish his college education because his four brothers and sisters have master's degrees while his son Mike is nearing completion of his B.A. and Bruce is getting close to his master's.

Now that he is back, Davis has not only experienced little difficulty, but is enjoying himself immensely.

"I do not think anybody with a reasonably active mind should have any trouble going back to school. It has always been easy for me to learn. I have a quick mind and a good memory."



Gary Suhl photos

Davis thinks the only trouble a returning student might have is when a course he is taking is based on a prerequisite course which he might have taken years ago.

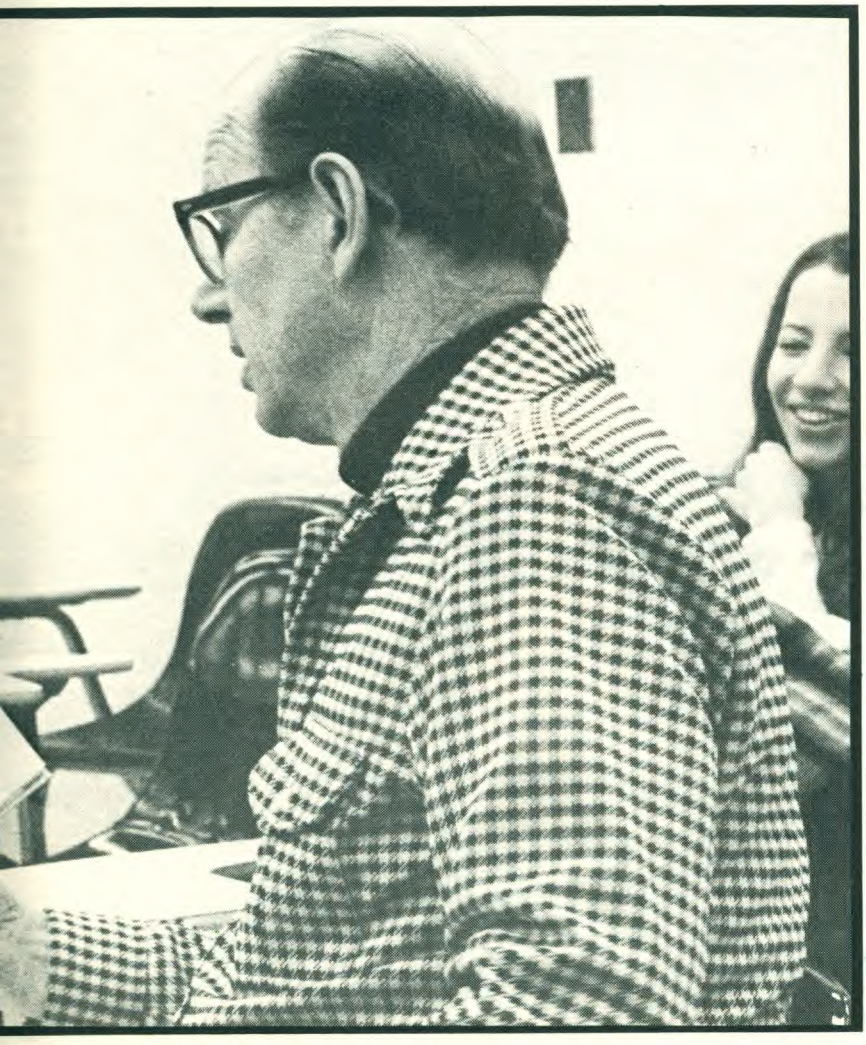
The only trouble Davis has had was when he was attending classes on a part time basis, he occasionally did not have time to complete all of his reading assignments. That's not a problem now. "I climb right into the pages of a good book," he says. "I get much more pleasure from reading than I do from watching movies or television. My ultimate hope is that I get a chance to read all the great books that I have never had a chance to read."

But it is also this great ability that Davis has in literature that he feels is not one of his more endearing qualities.

He sometimes feels that he is talking too much in class and that the younger students are just waiting for him to make the first move. He is not afraid to make a mistake, but feels the same is not true of most other students.

Davis is also aware that his viewpoints are sometimes in direct contrast to those of the other students in the class. On several occasions, he says, he felt like a real outsider whom the other students considered a reactionary, while he considered the other students too liberal.

"In my years I have found that people have to accommodate themselves, to some degree, to the world as it is," he says. "This is the main area of difference between my viewpoint and that of the other students."



But all-in-all Davis is really excited to be with and around young people, and even though his opinions are sometimes opposed by the younger students, he says such clashes do not occur very often.

Have students given him any trouble because of his age? "Hell no. Most people have been very considerate of me and have appreciated being in class with me as I have appreciated being with them."

Then too, Davis is in senior level classes and most of the students he comes in contact with mean business because graduation is near for them. Davis freely admits that he is pretty impressed with his classmates.

As for developing friendships with those classmates, Davis has really not had the time to get to know anybody very well. When he was going to school part time he was kept busy by his insurance business. Now with a huge class load he has little time for anything but studying.

He describes his relationship with students in his classes as "a little bit like the fleeting friendships I made in the military during World War II. I met many wonderful guys during the war and I used to correspond with about 20 of them. Now I get Christmas cards from two of them."

He attributes this difficulty in getting to know people to the metropolitan flavor of this campus, and to the way people tend to go around as a "sort of faceless group."

It is from his four children that Davis says he has been albe to get what he considers a good insight into the way younger people think.

Indeed this insight must have increased Davis' enjoyment of the educational experience. He loves both people and ideas and says, "In my present state of mind I can't visualize that I would ever quit going to school."

Everett Davis finds little difference between students regardless of age. Davis (above) discusses an assignment with some of his younger classmates. At top of page, Davis relaxes with his piano at home.

George Gregory

A 73-year-old SIU-E student

Text by Janice Law

After 56 years of working for the railroad, George Gregory switched tracks and took on another role — that of a full-time student. Not just as another student, mind you, but as the oldest student attending SIU-E. George Gregory is 73-years-old. Or is it 73 years young?

Gregory is a junior at SIU-E and plans to graduate with a bachelor's degree in anthropology after the spring quarter of 1976.

"After graduation, I may go on for my master's. SIU-E does not have a master's program in anthropology, so I will probably do my graduate work in history which is my minor," he said with pride.

A resident of Litchfield, Ill., Gregory retired from the railroad in 1972, and in the spring of the same year registered at SIU-E.

"I always wanted to go to college, but never had the opportunity as a young man," he said. He had to quit high school in 1916 due to his father's death. His older brother was with the Army in France at the time, so as the second oldest in a family of six he took his first job at the age of 15 as a railroad agent.

"Within a few months after my retirement from the railroad my wife died and this left me at loose ends. My daughter then suggested that I begin college since I had always said that I wanted to. This sounded like a good idea, so I did just that."

The Assistant to the Director of Admissions at SIU-E, D. W. Wilton, was Gregory's first contact. Wilton said that one day in March, 1972, Gregory walked into his office and told him that he was 71-years-old and wanted something to do with all of his time, so he had decided to come to SIU-E to study archeology.

George Gregory, an anthropology major at SIU-E, is 73-years-old. Here he is shown relaxing at his Litchfield, Ill. home. Davis recently joined a car pool so he would not have to continue driving 40 miles to class each day.

Ed Giganti

Wilton was both amazed and impressed. He explained to Gregory the procedure to follow regarding his admission and registration at the university.

Since Gregory had never completed high school, he was required to take the General Educational Development Test (GED), which is accepted as a substitute for the high school diploma. Gregory passed the GED test with high scores and then, with some hesitation, registered for 11 quarter hours of General Studies classes.

Wilton said that though Gregory was a bit apprehensive at first, he adjusted beautifully within a few weeks, and he remains a very energetic student.

Gregory has made straight A's several times and maintains an overall grade point average of 4.23 with 116 hours completed. When choosing his major in the spring of last year, Gregory had to settle for anthropology since SIU-E does not offer a major in archeology.

Born December 26, 1901 at Karnell, Ill., Gregory has lived most of his life in the state. While working as an agent and operator for the Wabash, and the Norfolk and Western railroads, he travelled extensively in Illinois. His travelling has provided interesting background for his anthropology studies.

"I had to choose anthropology as a major in order to study archeology. I've always been interested in archeology, and I had read a lot about it before I ever started studying at SIU," explains Gregory.

He has worked at the excavating sites in an Indian Village near Cottage Hills, Ill. for the last two summers with fellow anthropology students and Dr. Sid Denny, an SIU-E anthropology professor.

Gregory's main interest lies with North and South American anthropology. He especially enjoyed the research he did for a class paper he wrote on the problems of the Brazilian Indians.

When asked about his reaction to the young kids of today, he commented, "I don't think there is any basic difference between the young kids of today and the young kids I grew up with. There are some that have habits that I don't like, but there were also kids with habits I didn't like when I was growing up."

Gregory has felt at home at SIU-E almost since his first day on campus. "The kids at school treat me just like another kid, and that's fine with me."

He attributes his success as an elderly college student to his vast amount of previous reading. "I read my whole life, and college is just more reading," Gregory said.

Although Gregory claims reading as his favorite pastime, books do not monopolize his time. Occassionally his evenings are spent working as a desk clerk at a motel near his home, and many of his weekends are busy with fishing or hunting trips.

Litchfield is located 40 miles north of the Edwardsville campus, and until last quarter when he began riding in a carpool, he drove himself every day regardless of the weather. It was reported that during last winter's ice and snow, he did not miss one single day of classes.

Distinguished as the oldest student ever at SIU-E Gregory is described as a delightfully interesting individual by fellow students and friends.

Return to school is worth the trouble

By Nora Baker

A few dozen people applauded. I had just been elected president of a local women's liberation organization. I made a brief speech about women moving into the mainstream of life, about them fulfilling their potential to the best of their abilities. As I spoke, I felt decidedly uneasy. What was I doing to live up to my words?

Earlier that same day, a dozen different people had applauded my winning fifth prize in a local bridge competition. What was the difference? I thought. I didn't deserve applause for either event.

While I truly believed in the cause of women's liberation, I was not an outstanding member. Most of the other women possessed multiple degrees and were working at challenging, worthwhile careers. I was a college dropout twenty years ago.

For a long time, I had been killing time, aimlessly drifting. I had held a variety of jobs whenever times were lean, but mostly I stayed home, prepared gourmet meals, and did needlework. I nurtured lovely potted plants. I bought antique bric-a-brac.

When we moved to Edwardsville three years ago, I was impressed by the number of older women who were enthusiastically taking courses at SIU. These were mostly on the graduate level, but the preponderance of women my age who were getting out of club and volunteer activities because of the pressures of education was impressive.

One day, half as a joke, I suggested to my husband that I, too, might go back to school. To my amazement, he was enthusiastic. I abruptly changed the subject and said nothing more for the next few months.

I had always wanted to be a journalist. When I first entered college in 1951, I was discouraged from this on the grounds that it was no career for a lady. I was steered into a liberal arts program.

After I married, I discovered at the local employment agency just how valuable a year of college with a concentration in liberal arts was. They put me to work in a factory.

I always wrote. At one time, I supported my family by churning out true confessions under a number of pseudonyms. My ego was boosted when I wrote for little magazines. I got nowhere.

The immediate catalyst for my return to college was a visit from my nephew. He had made plans to enter SIU-E and I helped him with the preliminaries. At the last minute, however, he changed his mind and returned to his home on the east coast. The idea of college had now become fixed in my mind.

My major fears were of ridicule and hostility. How would young students react to me? Could I compete? Was my mind so stagnant after twenty years of nothing more challenging than balancing the family budget and reading cookbooks, that I would be unable to concentrate, to memorize, to absorb? Would younger students resent me? Laugh at me? I prayed they would simply ignore me.

From the beginning, the encouragement of my family has been a major factor in my continuing education. Without them, I could not have gone to school. My husband and teenage sons have been truly supportive, making tremendous sacrifices and changing their way of life to help me.

My fears about fellow students were unfounded. From the first day, I met nothing but friendliness and help. I needed help that first day, literally having to be led by the hand through the confusion of registration and textbook rental.

During that quarter, I didn't know many people. I never set foot inside the University Center, feeling too alien and out-of-place. I realize now this was in my own mind.

I was embarrassed because I was older than most of my professors. I was secretive of the fact that I was friendly, socially, with many faculty wives . . . afraid of seeming pushy or seeking favoritism.

I was right about mind stagnation. I had to read everything four and five times before it remained fixed in my brain. I developed an ulcer. I lost a lot of sleep. Memorizing facts became a traumatic experience.

My second quarter, I met a lot of people I had been in classes with the first quarter. We now had something in common . . . survival. I began to make a few friends. I saw people to say "hi" to.

We now use a lot of TV dinners and frozen pizzas at our house. Beds don't get made unless the owner wants the bed made and does it. I used to turn socks inside out for the laundry so lint wouldn't show on them; now, we all have linty socks.

My sons brag to their friends about my activities, their friends' mothers have told me so. My husband admits he's "proud of my guts." My mother does not complain so much that "at your age, you should forget all that nonsense and concentrate on my welfare." Our house is no longer a hotel for every relative in the continental United States.

I haven't had a decent night's sleep since I started all this over a year ago. I've dropped out of a lot of clubs and I don't go to church very much any more. I don't attend PTA meetings. I've developed a second ulcer and I'm a vitamin junkie. I've lost seventeen pounds.

But, when I graduate, when all the worries, pressures, frustrations, aggravations, bad food, long hikes from the parking lot in incredible blizzards, deadlines, exams, crises are finally over . . . I'm going to miss it.

Feedback

For the third consecutive year Focus Magazine has been rated as an "All-American" publication by the Associated Collegiate Press in Minneapolis, Minn. Focus has been rated on three occasions and received the highest possible rating in each critique.

In the critique of the March and June 1974 issues, the judge, Helen Gonzalez wrote:

"Focus is a unique publication that does not fit neatly into newsmagazine, newspaper or any other category our organization has for rating purposes. It is a most interesting and attractive hybrid.

"It fulfills its stated function of 'pictorial as well as in-depth and investigative coverage' of SIU, with the possible exception of departmental and curriculum developments. Sports, editorials and reviews are also not a part of Focus, but this does not appreciably weaken it.

"Pictorial excellence is its most impressive feature. 'Portfolio' is fascinating and is filled with so many beautiful, eye-stopping photographs that it is useless to even attempt to cite the best. Features are well written and the human interest values are strong. Investigative reporting is factual and complete.

"Congratulations on a fine publication."

Back cover photo by Dennis Calhoun