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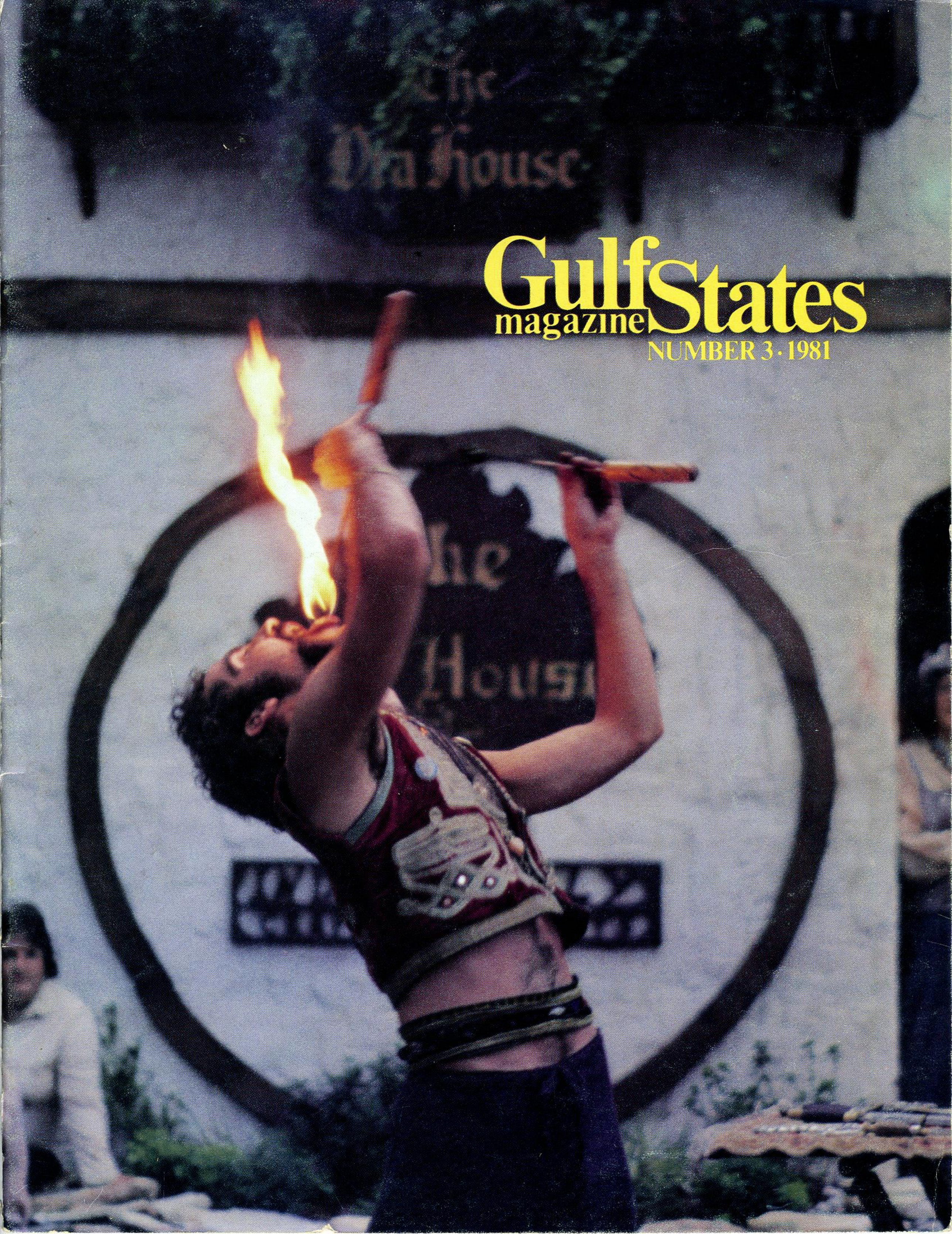

A Navajo woman demonstrates weaving for patrons of the Stark Museum. (Photo courtesy of The Orange Leader.)

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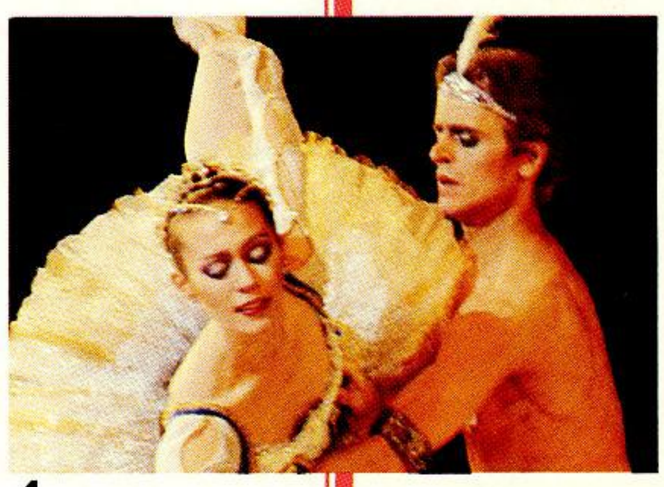
About the Cover:
A daring fire-eater performs for on-lookers at the Texas Renaissance Festival. (See related story on page 21.)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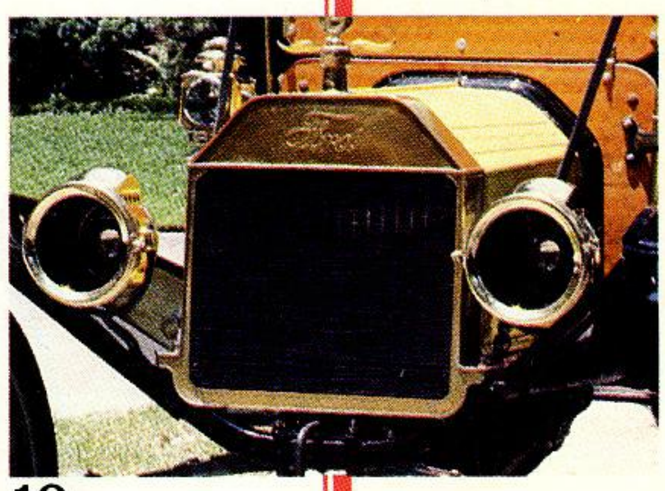
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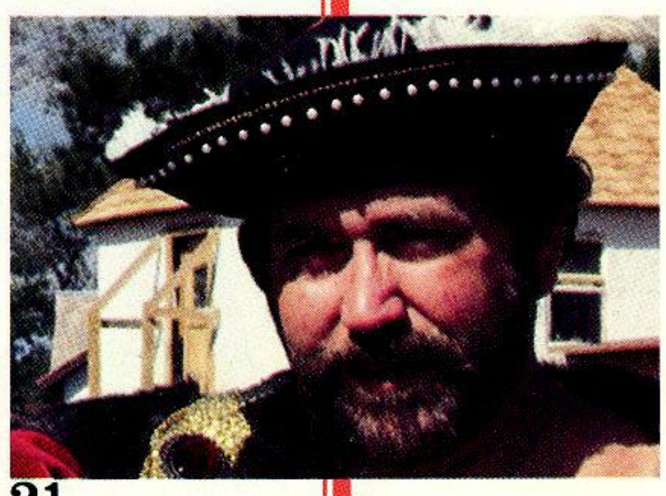
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From

A young Beaumont native has already sampled success as a professional dancer in New York City.

Robbie LaFosse, shown to the left background of Mickey Rooney, appeared in a recent Dr Pepper commercial.

Robert LaFosse has been described as someone "lucky enough to fall under that shining star — that wonderful ingredient that produces something outstanding."

The description was offered by his childhood ballet teacher, Marsha Woody of Beaumont, who points out that the blond, sinewy, blue-eyed 21-year-old can boast of both a Broadway address and Broadway credentials. The young man left Beaumont for the metropolis of New York in 1977, armed with a just-granted high school diploma and about 12 years' training in dance.

He signed with the American Ballet Theater shortly after his arrival in New York and, after the arrival of Mikhail Baryshnikov as the company's artistic director in late 1980, the youth was promoted from a *corps de ballet* position to that of soloist. (The *corps de ballet* is the ensemble of supporting dancers.)

LaFosse, whose family echoes Miss Woody's affectionate insistence that "He'll always be 'Robbie' to us," danced his first solo role with the company as the wayward son in George Balanchine's "Prodigal Son." Baryshnikov, Rudolph Nureyev and Edward Viella — foremost male ballet dancers — had been highly acclaimed in their interpretations of the same role. After Robbie's opening night performance in Washington, D.C.'s Kennedy Center, a reviewer commented, "Corps member Robert LaFosse seems singled out for special development."

Robbie has also danced in the Broadway musical, "Dancin'," and a recent Dr Pepper commercial.

Beaumont to Ballet, Baryshnikov and Broadway

by Susan Gilley

(His older brother, 27-year-old Edmund, has also made his mark as a professional dancer. Most recently, Edmund was a soloist in "Dancin'." He has also been a soloist with the National Ballet of Washington and principal dancer with the Feld Ballet.)

Robbie concedes that luck has played a role in his success story. "A dancer needs the right amount of training at the right age, the right body type, the right emotions and the right feet — that's all God's gift," he asserts. But the crucial difference between being "just a dancer" and being a truly professional dancer, he suggests, is what he terms "energy."

"If you put in a lot of positive energy, you'll be noticed," he insists.

Robbie may credit his early triumphs to his energy, but Miss Woody praises his "confidence and sense of command." His father, Harold LaFosse, a 33-year veteran of Gulf States Utilities Company, attributes his youngest son's accomplishments to the "spark of personality" that he reveals in his dancing.

But it took far more than luck for Robbie to make it to New York four years ago. Miss Woody reiterates that dancers "have to be born with a great deal of potential and with physical ability. The muscles and bones have to be right. To be a star, you have to have the body and the training," she continues.

It also required a great deal of determination and thousands of hours of sweaty, disciplined practice. Miss Woody says she was certain that Robbie possessed the necessary firmness of purpose as he entered his teen years. In a southeast Texas town that traditionally emphasizes sports over dance, the youngster was "willing to give up everything" to commit himself to dancing, she notes. Not only did he forfeit involvement in other extracurricular activities, but he also endured the almost-certain ridicule of being a male ballet dancer. "I'm sure that socially it was very hard for him at times, but he never really talked about it. He was very strong," she adds.

When he was 15, Robbie spent his first summer in New York as a scholarship student of David Howard of the Harkness Ballet. The experience prompted him to accelerate his school studies and take part-time jobs for living expenses for the time when he could go to New York permanently. By attending summer sessions, he graduated a year early.

Robbie always had the support of his family. And though the elder LaFosse admits that he was initially surprised when 12-year-old Edmund first asked if he might take dance lessons, the father says that the entire family has taken to bragging about the artistic accomplishments of the two middle brothers. (The family is also made up of his mother, Ida; 30-year-old Harold Jr., head baseball coach at a Houston high school; Theresa LaFosse Zummo, who lives in Dallas with her husband; and 14-year-old Lana.) The hardest part of having two young, dedicated dancers in the family, recalls their father, was "letting them go to New York when they were so young."

Edmund's request for dancing lessons probably made the way easier for then-preschool-age Robbie. Edmund's interest evolved from his participation in a fad of the time — he was the rollerskating partner of a young girl. Both boys received full scholarships to study at Marsha Woody's Academy of Dance, where they concentrated on tap, acrobatics and jazz before moving on to ballet. While Robbie confirms that his older brother inspired his interest in dance, he says that he discovered quite soon that "nothing else mattered."

By the time he was 7, Robbie was demonstrating his potential, Miss Woody recalls. "Besides being right physically, he showed a great deal of emotion for the part he played in a performance of 'Snow White'," she remembers.

Miss Woody admits that there were drawbacks to the self-assuredness that Robbie possessed even as a child. Affectionately, she explains, "He wasn't very shy. He was almost to the point that he was overly outward. There were times when he would walk in the studio and look so confident that I would ask him to hold his back straighter. I would have to look hard to find something to correct."

This past summer, Robbie was among a handful of soloists who accompanied their Russian-born artistic director on a whirlwind tour of several Southern cities, including New Orleans. His parents traveled to watch their son's performance — his first in the area since he turned professional. Unfortunately, illness prevented Robbie from performing in the Crescent City.

According to Robbie, the tour gave smaller cities "a chance to

Photo by Sonny Carter

Mikhail Baryshnikov dances with an ABT ballerina during the company's New Orleans performance.

be exposed to professional dance." It also benefited the dancers by "giving us a chance to do some more work. It gives these kids — the ones that are up-and-coming — things to do that they don't normally get to do."

The ABT also frequently performs in Washington, D.C., Los Angeles, Chicago and Miami Beach, in addition to New York. Every three years, the troupe of dancers goes on a European tour. The lifestyle, admits Robbie, is "very gypsy-like."

For Robbie, a typical work day in New York begins at 10 a.m., when he schedules a two-hour class. Rehearsals begin at about 1 p.m. If no performance is scheduled for that evening, the dancers may rehearse until about 8 p.m., taking just a few brief breaks.

Robbie feels that Baryshnikov's "main concentration is on the *corps de ballet* — improving their look and the style about the company."

Baryshnikov, who defected to the West in 1974 by simply walking away from his Toronto hotel, underwent the same training as all young Russian ballet dancers. American dancers, on the other hand, represent a diversity of training experiences, Robbie points out. "He has done a great amount of work in that area *(corps de ballet)*. It's very hard to get so many people to all do the same thing," he asserts. (Almost 150 dancers are with the ABT.)

Aside from his work, Robbie delves into the wealth of entertainment possibilities offered by the nation's largest city. "I enjoy musical comedy and I've seen a lot of films. I'm interested in doing some film work myself," he reveals.

He has also found the time to appear in a Dr Pepper commercial entitled "Whistling," which features comedian Mickey Rooney.

Could LaFosse's future career surpass his early successes?

Robbie combines modesty with realism as he mulls the question. "As for the future, you just never know. Things change here from day to day. It could turn around — I could break a leg or something."

Miss Woody, however, is more optimistic in predicting future accomplishments for her former student. "I can almost see his whole life laid out in front of me. When he is too old to dance, he'll make an excellent teacher or choreographer. He has that sense of command — he's not wishy-washy — and he's very artistically capable," she says.

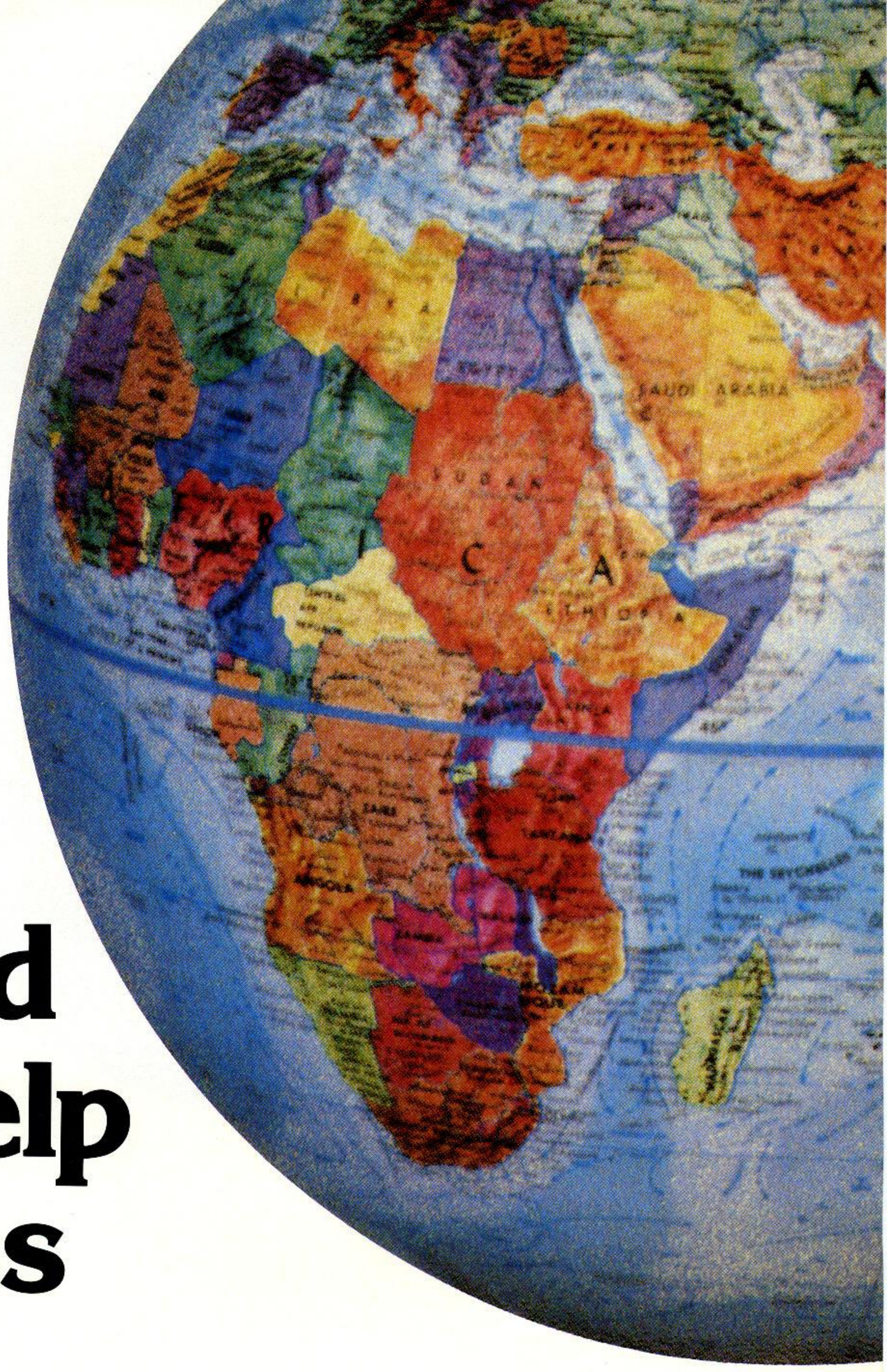
"If he has the desire, I can see him at 70 being a Balanchine (of the New York City Ballet)," declares Miss Woody.

Robbie does not deny that choreography may figure into his future, but, he notes, "You don't just make someone a choreographer or decide to be a choreographer. There has to be an idea or a concept first."

Since the flush of success could be overwhelming to some young adults, Robbie says he has to remember that "there are just gifts that some people have that I don't have. I have to just put some things in perspective and deal with them as they come."

But, with the air of relaxed confidence that is characteristic of the former Beaumont boy, Robbie asserts, "What I want most is to be the best possible dancer, whether it's on the ballet stage, on Broadway or in films. I'd like to try it all. I think if you want things badly enough, they'll come to you, and I'm ready!" □

By practicing energy conservation, more industrialized nations could be helping some of the underdeveloped countries take care of their own energy needs.



Helping Third World Nations Help Themselves

by W. Donham Crawford
Chairman of the Board,
Gulf States Utilities Co. and Chairman,
U. S. National Committee,
World Energy Conference

Many Americans view energy conservation largely as a way to save money. But from a global perspective, conservation holds far greater significance: For many of the less developed nations, it may be the key to their survival.

It strains the imagination to see a relationship between conserving energy in Louisiana and Texas and improving the standard of living in far-away nations of the Third World. But the connection is very real, as is often pointed out when the World Energy Conference meets.

Last fall some 5,000 delegates from 68 member nations met in Munich, West Germany, and a dominant theme was the need for industrialized nations to reduce their dependence on imported oil, not only to improve their own economies but also to leave more petroleum for the underdeveloped countries to use.

The world's population will increase by about 50 percent during the next two decades, and some 90 percent of this increase will occur in the developing countries. Oil will be required to meet the needs of these growing populations and to improve their standard of living. By the end of the year 2000, annual per capita use of oil in the Third World is likely to rise to 7.7 barrels, compared to the 1976 level of 4.2 barrels.

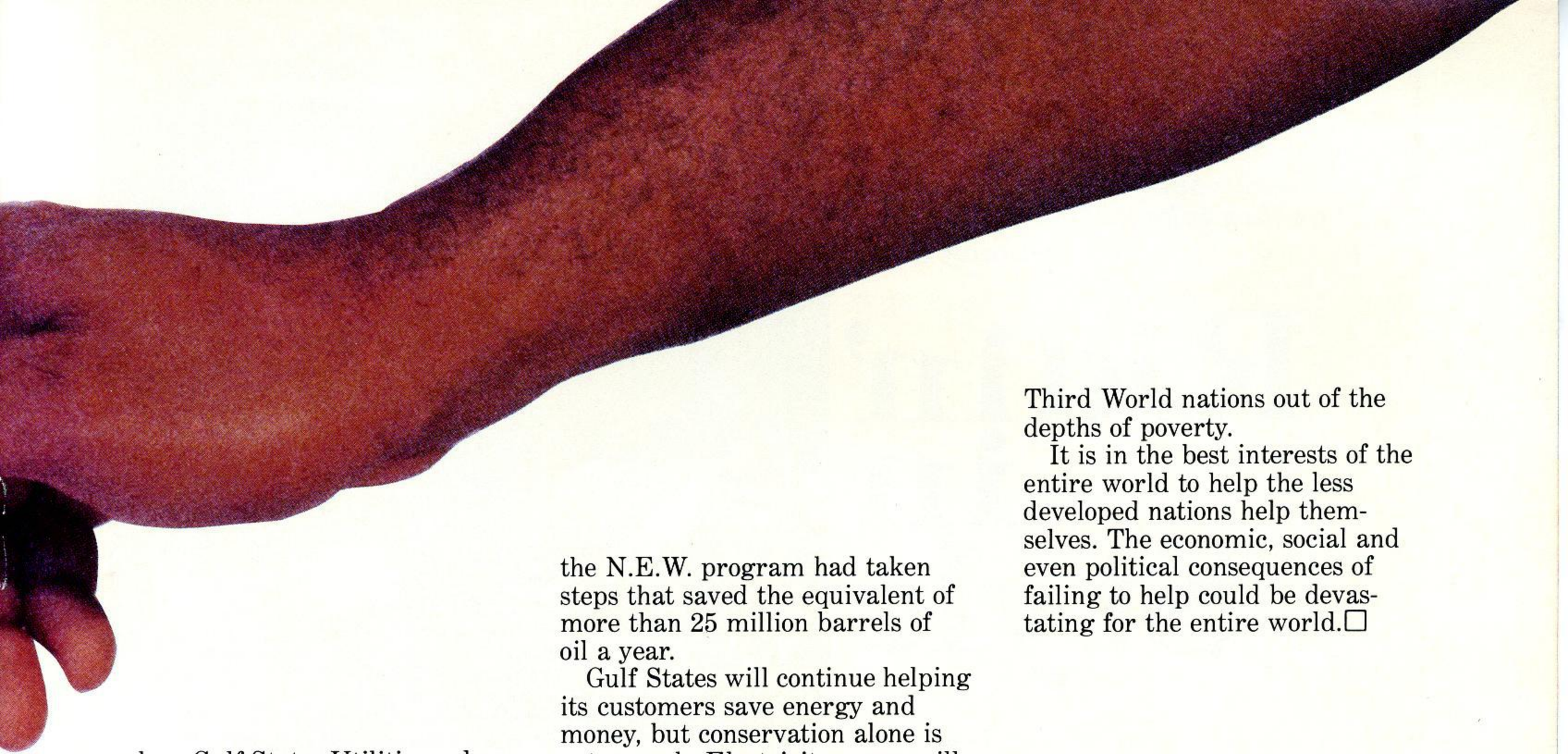
Most developing nations have no choice but to turn to oil because of its relatively simple technology and low investment requirements.

The industrialized world **does** have other options, however — a fact

that is often emphasized by the World Energy Conference. The United States and the other developed nations can utilize conservation, coal and nuclear energy to reduce their oil consumption. Even the oil-exporting nations are looking to nuclear and solar energy as they realize their petroleum supplies are not limitless.

There was general agreement at last fall's conference that the industrialized nations should vigorously pursue all three of these energy avenues.

Conservation is, of course, extremely important. Not only does conservation in the United States help reduce the need for imported oil, it also helps energy suppliers



such as Gulf States Utilities reduce demand at a fraction of what it would cost to meet that demand by building new generating units.

Since GSU initiated its National Energy Watch (N.E.W.) conservation program in August of 1978, energy audits have been conducted on 4,270 new homes, of which 3,716 were certified as meeting the program's conservation standards. Another 9,638 existing homes have been audited.

It is estimated that the savings to GSU is about two kilowatts per new home and about one kilowatt for each existing home that is retrofitted with energy-efficient equipment and materials. This means that GSU was able to defer the addition of 12,251 kilowatts of generating capacity as a direct result of the N.E.W. program.

The estimated cost of this generating capacity, had we been required to build it, would have been about $14.7 million at $1,200 per kilowatt. Thus, N.E.W. allowed GSU to serve about 2,900 new homes with no increase in capacity.

Not taken into account are the many dollars saved by GSU customers as a result of the program.

It is easy to see why N.E.W. has been the most effective national conservation program. It also has been expanded into the industrial and commercial sectors, which already had compiled an impressive record of energy conservation. The first 12 corporations to become members of this portion of the N.E.W. program had taken steps that saved the equivalent of more than 25 million barrels of oil a year.

Gulf States will continue helping its customers save energy and money, but conservation alone is not enough. Electricity usage will continue to increase — doubling or even tripling by the year 2000 — despite vigorous conservation, and companies such as GSU will be expected to provide the required generating capacity.

Provided we can finance new plant additions (a big question in today's climate of high interest rates and continuing inflation), the only kinds of generating facilities that we can build are coal and nuclear.

GSU is, of course, building a nuclear unit, River Bend 1, near St. Francisville. It is nearly 40 percent complete and is scheduled to be producing power in 1984. Our first coal plant, Nelson 6, is under construction near Lake Charles and should be in service by next summer.

Although the Reagan Administration has a realistic view of what is needed to solve the nation's energy dilemma, there are still many financial and regulatory roadblocks hampering the construction of new power plants.

Only when these obstacles are removed and the U.S. is able to implement a coherent and sensible national energy policy can we live up to the expectations of the developing nations who desperately need the petroleum that Americans are using for no good reason.

Unless the United States and the other industrialized nations step up their commitments to conservation, coal and nuclear, there will not be enough oil to lift the Third World nations out of the depths of poverty.

It is in the best interests of the entire world to help the less developed nations help themselves. The economic, social and even political consequences of failing to help could be devastating for the entire world.☐

They may not wear dusters and goggles, but a few Beaumonters are stylish indeed when they take their families for a Sunday drive.

Ridin' in Style

Photos and Story by Jerry Wall

In an earlier time, whole families would load up for a ride out in the country on a quiet Sunday afternoon. Youngsters would often be perched in the rumble seat of the still-new-fangled automobiles, and often they would balance a picnic basket on their laps.

Despite the whirling dust and the bumpy ride, those who participated in such Sunday drives relish the memory.

A few Beaumonters still enjoy that pastime, and at least one Beaumont businessman caters to just their hobby.

Jack Carlin, owner of the Carlin Manufacturing and Distributing Co., Inc., operates his business in the shadow of downtown Beaumont.

His unassuming buildings make up one of the few antique automobile parts manufacturing plants in the world. Made-in-Beaumont parts are not only shipped to more than 100 dealers throughout the United States, but to most countries in Europe and Asia as well as Australia and New Zealand.

Asked why he bothers to manufacture parts for outdated automobiles, Carlin replied, "It's because of the current considerable interest in antique cars. Interest in antique cars really started in the early 1950s, primarily in the northeast, then it spread."

Carlin continued, "Back then, it didn't take much money to fix up an antique car, but now, it's somewhat higher."

World War II had taken its toll of Model T and Model A Fords. During that era, parts were almost impossible to obtain and tires were virtually non-existent. Some of the old autos went into the scrap heap to provide metal for the war. Up to the beginning of World War II, many of the vehicles now classified as antiques were still in practical use.

In 1968, Carlin expanded his leisurely preoccupation with antique vehicles into a full-time occupation when he opened his first manufacturing plant. He moved to his present location in 1971.

"I came from a small German town west of Houston (Sealy), and, of course, Germans are known for not throwing anything away. The fields around Sealy were dotted with old abandoned cars. I liked to tinker with the cars, and that's how my interest began."

Carlin actually has two facilities — a 21,000-square-foot metal shop and a 10,000-square-foot wood shop. Both manufacture parts for old Ford cars only, including the Model T, Model A and early V-8s.

Why only Fords?

According to Carlin, Fords are the most popular and the easiest to acquire. Another reason is that cars require hundreds of patterns, and addition of another auto manufacturer would mean a serious space shortage for pattern storage and production of parts.

Metal parts manufactured by Carlin include running boards, hoods, door panels, fenders, floor pans and seat frames. They are stamped out on machines after pieces are cut and drilled. Several wooden pieces go into the old cars, so Carlin manufactures roof beams, various panels, dash boards, floor boards and other parts. Most are made from gum or kiln dried oak.

Carlin has devised hundreds of patterns simply by taking apart old cars and copying the part size and shape.

Ford began making V-8s in 1932, and the speedsters became the darlings of the desperados of the era. Even today, Ford Motor Company reportedly maintains files of unsolicited testimonial letters from gangsters who congratulated the auto maker for building such an effective getaway car.

As for modern-day collectors of vintage Fords, Carlin noted, "Antique car collectors are by nature highly discriminating people, and they want authentic parts."

Use of old car parts as patterns lends authenticity, as does the use of 20-gauge metal, which is far heavier than the material used in today's cars.

Carlin said it is fairly easy for a new collector to acquire an

antique car. "But you have to know the business and the people," he pointed out. "Of course, the rarer the car, the higher the price," he warned.

Carlin owns two antique cars. The older one is a 1928 Model A touring car, while the "new" one is a 1939 Ford V-8 convertible sedan.

Two other Beaumonters seem to be representative of antique car owners.

One is J. Winston Procter, who owns three working antiques, including a rare 1911 Model T. Dubbed the Torpedo roadster, that particular T was a relatively rare car even in its year of manufacture and is considered a classic automobile.

"I bought it a while back at an auction in Shreveport. The motor had been burned up because somebody ran it without oil. I rebuilt it myself," said Procter, who is in his late 60s. "I took it apart right down to the frame and put it in mint condition. It took six months."

According to Procter, that is how the typical collector gets a car in top shape.

The Torpedo was Henry Ford's first sports car, and it was sought after by the young men of the day. Equipped with carbide lights, it featured both an "ooahga" horn and a squeeze bulb horn. "That one got the neighbor's pigs out of the way," Procter commented.

He occasionally hand-cranks the bright yellow antique and drives it to his office at Jefferson Drug Company. "A whole lot of people crane their necks when I drive it," he chuckled.

Procter also owns a 1915 Model T (just like one his father once owned) and a 1929 Model A with a rumble seat. The businessman remembered an early lesson in mechanics on Model Ts.

"This was back in the '20s and any T owner had to know something about mechanics, because there were few garages," he recalled.

"The late W. O. (Bill) Cook and myself were traveling out of town when we had car trouble. Now, Bill was an honor engineering graduate of Rice. We were trying to adjust the brake bands, which are located in the transmission, but we dropped a nut down in it during the work."

After trying "just about everything," Procter continued, the young pair considered "removing the whole engine, turning it upside down and shaking the nut out."

But two farmers came to their rescue. Procter explained, "They sent each of us to a corner of the car, and the two of them got on the other two corners. 'Now turn the car over and shake it,' they said. We did, and the nut fell right out. Let me see you do something like that with today's cars!"

In 19 years of Model T production by the Ford Motor Company, more than 15 million were built for model years 1908 through 1926. Sixteen a week came off the line in 1909, and by 1926, 8,000 were produced weekly.

Another Beaumont collector is C. F. Chesnutt of Star Brake Company. The owner of four antiques, his favorite is a 1941 Chevrolet club coupe.

"This was the first year Chevy built a four-passenger club coupe, making it a special interest antique but not a classic," Chesnutt noted.

But Chesnutt had yet another reason for purchasing that Chevy.

"I bought this one for sentimental reasons. It's exactly like the one I courted my wife-to-be in. I even got the exact color of paint, and painted it the same two-tone colors."

Chesnutt scraped the car down to bare metal and applied an undercoat, followed by 15 coats of paint and then a coat of urethane. After all the layers had dried, he spent two weeks buffing and waxing the vehicle.

"It's valued around $8,000, but I'll never sell it," Chesnutt asserted. "It not only has sentimental value to me, but it's still roadworthy and it's ready to get on the road all day right now at a steady 60 miles an hour." □

Mr. Wall is a Beaumont-based freelance writer who has contributed to many national magazines.

A New Face on Mt. Rushmore?

by Smiley Anders

Like many of us, Ellis Sandoz and Cecil Crabb were confused about just how the 1980 election results came about.

"It had seemed like an election in which no one was interested," said Sandoz. "But after the voting it was hailed as a watershed election, possibly the most significant since Roosevelt's election in 1932."

But unlike many of us, Sandoz and Crabb are political scientists — both former heads of the political science department at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge and authors of books and articles in their field.

So while attending a Southern Political Science Association meeting in Atlanta just after the election, the pair had what Sandoz terms a "brainstorm."

"We decided to assemble a group of knowledgeable people to explain the election and its meaning — to share with the country the answers we were seeking ourselves," said Sandoz.

"We also wanted to do it with as much speed as possible," said Crabb. "We wanted to have the first significant book out that dealt with the election."

So they called Jean Woy of Congressional Quarterly Press in Washington, D.C. and obtained a contract to produce such a book — in 90 days.

"We sent in an outline and began calling the people we wanted to contribute the various chapters," said Sandoz. "We got out first choice in every case."

This was happening in mid-November, and the editors were shooting for Feb. 1 as their date to have the completed manuscript. April 20 was set as the actual publication date. And that's when "A Tide of Discontent" was published.

The two LSU political scientists weren't just editors — they each wrote one article (Sandoz did the introduction and Crabb dealt with his specialty, the foreign policy aspects of the election). They collaborated on a concluding essay, and edited each other's efforts. ("I couldn't keep Cecil from making admonitions," laughed Sandoz.) As if this wasn't enough, they compiled an index and bibliography. The book also contains several major speeches by President Reagan, charts dealing with the election results, and a collection of editorial cartoons.

"Remember, all our people were dealing with material that was so fresh it came primarily from newspapers — there were no books on the 1980 election to consult," said Sandoz.

Crabb says that despite the frantic pace to put the paperback out and the lack of detailed statistical information, the information presented in "A Tide of Discontent" has held up well so far.

"One author said it was unlikely we'd have a change in the Supreme Court early in the Reagan administration," he said. "Of course he couldn't foresee the resignation of Potter Stewart. And in Neil MacNeil's chapter on the House, he thought the honeymoon period with the Democrats would last longer than it has. But generally the findings have held up pretty well."

He said that the book is not presented as a "crystal ball" to foretell the future of the Reagan administration, and that the panel of experts generally stayed on the fence when it came to looking ahead.

"It's hard for primarily liberal political scientists to admit that the conservatives will succeed in the long run," says Crabb. "They imply that the election was an aberration, that America is off the track but will get back on — possibly by the 1982 Congressional elections."

However, he said, this may be "wishful thinking."

"They can't believe anyone but the liberal establishment can run the country," he said. "These people have been brought up on the New Deal, the Fair Deal, etc., where the thrust of government has

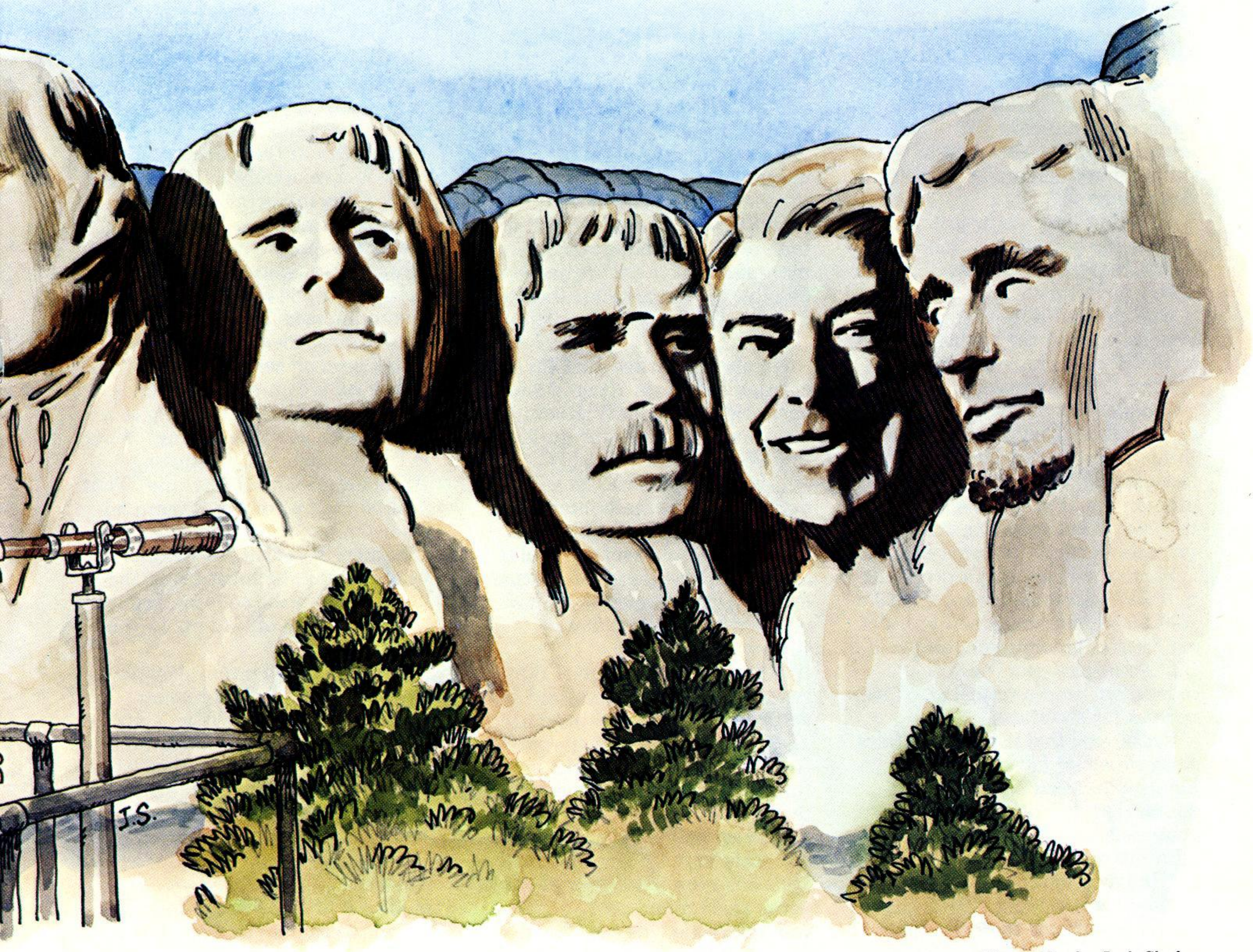


Illustration by Jack Shofner.

always been to supply goodies out of the federal treasury."

Sandoz said the problem facing the Reagan administration, as pointed out by so many of the writers in "A Tide of Discontent," is how to take back the "goodies" and remain in power.

Crabb says it comes down to such an intangible as leadership, "which has been a scarce quantity in our presidents since FDR." He said political scientists haven't clearly defined the difference between an "imperial" president and a strong and dynamic president.

They agreed that Ronald Reagan was a good communicator, and has a chance to become an outstanding president.

"It remains to be seen whether or not this election was an aberration," says Crabb. "It depends on how President Reagan comes to grip with the problems, and comes up with a package to meet the various challenges facing him."

"Reagan got in on what Russell Long calls a fluke," says Sandoz. "But if he draws on the talent of this country to solve its problems, and sticks to his guns — if he combines tenacity with intelligence — he can change a fluke into a national consensus."

He also saw the president moving from the right wing of the Republican Party toward the center, "where the political dialogue takes place."

One question the two are often asked is "What happened to the polls before the election?"

They point out that the polls were steady until the Friday or Saturday before the Tuesday election. At that time Pat Caddell, Jimmy Carter's pollster, noticed a 10 percent drop in Carter's percentage during a 48-hour period. The night before the election, the Carter pollster knew it was lost.

Last-minute polling on the eve of the election accurately reflected what was going to happen, they say. But, they add, the media may have been reluctant to publish or broadcast such polls for fear of influencing the outcome.

As it was, Carter's concession statement, with three hours of voting time left in Western states, may have influenced some Congressional races in favor of Republicans by keeping Democrats away from the polls.

They said some observers felt that Reagan's best feature was that he was not Carter — who came across as undependable to many

American voters.

"There was disenchantment with the Carter administration's leadership," said Sandoz, "and a desire for change, for somebody to restore our national self-respect and manage the economy to keep inflation and unemployment from destroying us."

He said there was a "gut feeling" among the people that "more government is not necessarily better government."

But he cited a "mosaic of motivations" among the voters that led to the Republican victory.

"The American people are ambivalent on public policy issues," said Crabb. "They want different things — more military spending but a tax cut, a balanced budget but utopian social programs, economy in general but spending on specific projects they're interested in."

Sandoz said Reagan's proposals to date indicate he meant what he said about changing the nature of the federal government, and said that amounted to a "new federalism" and a return to greater powers for the states.

Crabb said that in foreign affairs, Reagan would have to find a balance between being over-committed and being under-committed, as was the Carter administration.

"He has a tough job," said Crabb of the new president. "He'll have to figure out how to deal with foreign crises and take defense measures in the light of Vietnam, realizing that every crisis is not a new Vietnam."

"You could make a good argument that the hostages in Iran sank Carter," said Sandoz. "But the national humiliation over Vietnam was just compounded by the hostage issue."

He said that it might be true that to some extent, Iran manipulated the American election.

But Crabb warned, "Don't attribute to the Iranian government more rationality that it has — it's possible to over-estimate the degree in influence Iran had on the election."

He also remarked that the election of Ronald Reagan ended once and for all the Vietnam syndrome, with its war guilt and talk of a "crippled giant."

It is Reagan's task, he said, "to define the legitimate interests of the U.S. abroad, protect those interests and preserve a public consensus. The lesson of Vietnam is that a government can't have a policy without broad-based support."

Regarding Secretary of State Alexander Haig, Crabb said that while he might be a hindrance to the administration on the public front, "he gets plus marks in defining goals and implementing them."

He also pointed out that every secretary of state since Cordell Hull has been the center of controversy and contention.

Sandoz said this was due to the feeling of the American people that involvement in foreign affairs somehow corrupts American democracy.

"The American people still hang on to the idea of isolationism," Sandoz said. "They have a negative reaction to the State Department — there's always a crisis somewhere that it's dealing with — and the personality of the secretary of state is a relatively minor matter."

Of more importance, the two editors maintain, is how the American people perceive Ronald Reagan as president. As already pointed out, he is an expert communicator. But Sandoz observes that "the American people have common sense — no matter how good a communicator he is, sooner or later they're going to ask 'What is he communicating? What is the substance of his message? And how does it relate to me?' That will be the test of the Reagan administration."

Sandoz says that for Reagan to be successful, he must bring the best minds in the country, regardless of political affiliation, to bear on the issues.

"He also needs a considerable amount of luck," adds Sandoz.

And he admits that the "odds in Vegas" are "slim to none" that the president will succeed in his goal of changing the basic nature of the federal government.

"But the problems faced by this country are of such magnitude that if Ronald Reagan is successful in pulling it off, he will go down in history as one of our great presidents," says Sandoz.

Or, as Crabb says, "They'll carve a new face on Mount Rushmore." □

A Tide of Discontent: The 1980 Elections and Their Meanings.
Edited by Ellis Sandoz and Cecil V. Crabb Jr. (Congressional Quarterly Press, Washington, D.C.)

What happened in November of 1980?

As editors Sandoz and Crabb (both LSU political science professors) tell us, "A profoundly uninterested public, voting in a toss-up election, produced a landslide Republican Victory."

But why? And was the outcome a genuine conservative revolution or a "flash in the pan"? Was it a true electoral and policy realignment, destined to last for years, or an aberration, to be "corrected" in the congressional races of 1982 to some extent and more fully in the 1984 presidential race?

Working with unusual speed for this type of project, the two editors assembled a distinguished group of political scientists, added economists and a journalist, contributed some excellent essays themselves, and came up with the most enlightening study of the election results to date.

As might be expected, there are no clear-cut answers here. Indeed, the authors of the various articles disagree among themselves about the true meaning of the Reagan-Republican landslide, or even the use of the word "landslide" to describe what happened in the election. But for the thoughtful reader seeking to puzzle out the results of the November balloting, the insights offered here are both lucid and invaluable.

In his introductory essay, editor Sandoz reviews the dramatic outcome of the election, and tells how a "tide of discontent" swept Ronald Reagan into office and established a Republican Senate and a conservative, if Democratic-controlled, House. And he says a national consensus must be developed if the Reagan policies are to be implemented.

The convictions of the Reagan

administration (which include reducing government spending and interference, slowing the secular drift of the nation and combating international communism), "will have to translate into policies supported by a national consensus and moderated by the dictates of reason — if a grand coalition is to emerge. This adds up to a tall order indeed," says Sandoz.

James L. Sundquist, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institute in Washington, and Richard M. Scammon, director of the Elections Research Center, discuss the cyclical theory of American elections, seeing the Republican victory as merely a normal phase in the rhythm of our political system. But they also maintain that if the left wing dominates the Democratic party, "voter suspicion of Democratic policies that was so evident in 1980 may linger, and the return swing of the pendulum may be delayed."

Erwin C. Hargrove, a political science professor at Vanderbilt, and Michael Nelson, an assistant professor at the same institution, also discuss the cycles of political activity in this country, the swings from right to left and back again. But they have difficulty placing Ronald Reagan into a cyclical scheme (which in their analysis is built around three stages — preparation for reform, reform and the consolidation stage of the reform) because Reagan promises to "reform the reformers" by returning to pre-New Deal principles.

Neil MacNeil, chief congressional correspondent for *Time* magazine, narrows his view to the House of Representatives, telling how the outcome of the election (37 Democrats defeated, 27 of them incumbents, leaving 243 Democrats and 192 Republicans) shocked both parties. He tells how Rep. Guy Vander Jagt, chairman of the national Republican Congressional Committee, used enthusiasm and a $12 million budget to aid Republican hopefuls in their House races, and how the Democrats could come up with only a "feeble, ill-financed" effort because most funds and talent were channeled into the Carter re-election campaign.

Charles O. Jones, professor of politics at University of Pittsburgh, takes a similar look at the Senate, controlled by Republicans for the first time since the 83rd Congress of 1953-54. He says the Senate has shifted away from the "club-like" atmosphere, when it was dominated by senior members, and is now "younger, more Republican, more conservative, and more aggressive" than in the past.

Clifton McCleskey, professor of government and foreign affairs at the University of Virginia, sees no conservative mandate in his analysis of the election, maintaining that politics has become so de-institutionalized that any type of mandate is hard to come by these days. He sees traditional political parties in disarray, with the mass media and special interest groups taking over leadership roles, but voters becoming increasingly apathetic and alienated.

Stephen L. McDonald, professor of economics at the University of Texas at Austin, deals with economic issues in the campaign — a major reason for the defeat of Jimmy Carter. He says that while there are many factors at work to affect our economy, restraint by the Federal Reserve System is the key to significantly reducing inflation. This is especially important because, he says, some Reagan proposals will have a short-term inflationary effect.

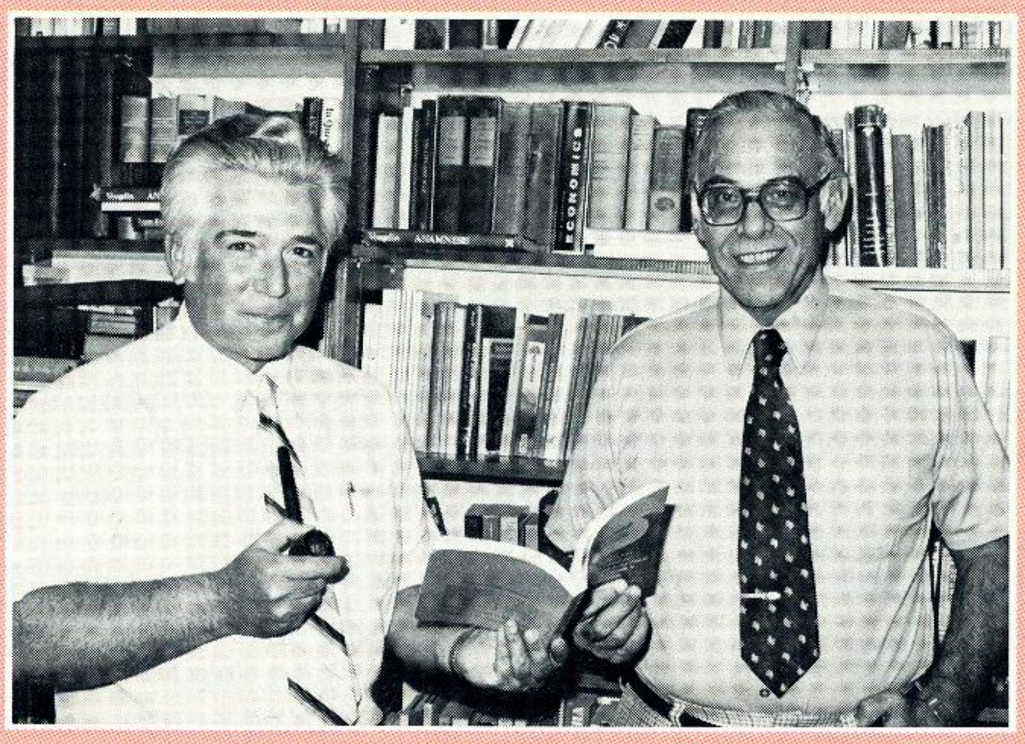
Editor Crabb contributes an essay dealing with the foreign policy problems of the Reagan administration in each of the world's major areas. He says such economic developments as OPEC oil price increases and the growing importation of Japanese consumer goods has made Americans more aware of foreign relations, an area often relegated to a minor role in elections. The voters, he says, were attracted by Reagan's "make America great again" pledge, after the obvious failure of Carter foreign policies. But there is a rough road ahead, he says. The aggressive nature of the Soviet Union, the unrest in the Third World, and the need for a "clear rationale for the application of American military power overseas" are all problems that must be dealt with.

The final essay is by both Sandoz and Crabb, and sums up the preceding chapters. The editors admit that it is far too early to come up with predictions about the success or failure of the Reagan administration, or the real meaning of the results of the 1980 election.

But they say that the Republicans do have a chance to use the election results as the base for a long-lasting and significant change in government. Unlike Carter, Reagan has good relations with Congress. His party is unified behind him, and he is an "ace communicator" in an electronic age.

The Republicans, say Sandoz and Crabb, have a chance to stem the "rising tide of discontent" that resulted in the Carter defeat: "If the Republicans can pass the test of their own shrewd devising in 1984, a "New Era" may well have begun: "Are you better off today than you were four years ago? Time will tell, in this land where the people are king." □

– Smiley Anders



Ellis Sandoz (left) and Cecil V. Crabb, authors of the study ***A Tide of Discontent: The 1980 Elections and Their Meanings,*** *inspect a copy of their book.*

One Beaumont inventor stays in hot water, along with the rest of his family. But that's just what he wants, because his solar collectors cut energy costs while warming the Peckham family's bath water!

Putting the Sun to Work

Photos and Story by John Roby

To the casual observer, the house at 4040 Bayou Road in Beaumont's west end blends in unobtrusively with its neighbors.

That is, unless you notice the solar collectors on the roof, which enable GSU's Jay Roy Peckham to tap the sun's rays for an average of 10 to 15 percent of his annual energy consumption.

Peckham, Beaumont Division section head in charge of right-of-way and maps, jumped on the solar bandwagon in 1979 when he installed the first solar collectors on his rooftop.

"I read an article in a magazine in 1977 about a flatplate solar collector designed at the University of Florida. At the time, I thought it was interesting and put the magazine away," he says.

Two years later, Peckham said he saw the handwriting on the wall about the increasing cost and decreasing supply of electricity and dug the magazine out and started building.

Now after two and a half years of building, testing and rebuilding, Peckham's solar system not only keeps his family in hot water for washing and bathing, it also boosts his home heating in the winter and provides all of the heat needed to keep his hot tub at a muscle-soothing 103 to 105 degrees year-round.

Best of all, the fact that Peckham is handy with tools and doesn't mind scrounging for materials has resulted in a system that fully paid for itself at the beginning of this summer.

"With the combination of solar credits from Gulf States, federal income tax credits and the savings off my electric bill from the times I didn't use my water heater, there are some months where I actually make money from this system," he says. He estimates that the solar system shaves about $200 a year from his monthly electricity bill for water heating alone. Next to heating and cooling, the water is the largest consumer of electricity in the average home.

Once he reached the pay-off point — which Peckham says arrives earlier when you build and install your own collectors rather than hire a contractor to do the work — he was not content to sit back and watch his electric meter turn slower. His latest efforts have been aimed at making his system work automatically, using a system of electric eyes and timers that shut down the system when the sun is not shining.

And earlier this year he took the big step of applying for a $10,000 research grant from the Department of Energy that will, if his application is successful, allow him to construct and install a fully active solar furnace that will concentrate the sun's rays to produce steam and turn a small turbine. That system, using a seven-foot microwave dish and 1,850 mirrors, could result in the production of 7,000 watts of electricity — enough to power his home heating and cooling systems.

"Of course, I am one of probably thousands of shade-tree do-it-yourselfers who are in the running for $450,000 in grant money," he says philosophically. "I may not get the grant. But just in case I do, I'm already cutting the mirrors and the microwave dish is in my backyard."

Peckham has jumped into the solar energy business in a small way. He has agreed with a Beaumont building contractor to design and construct a home water heating system based on his own proven design.

The contractor wants the system for his own new home now under construction. In typical fashion, Peckham has taken his own home system and made a few improvements designed to make the commercial set-up more centralized and more automatic.

If everything works the way it should, the prototype could become a commercial success and be marketed on a wider scale.

The beauty of Peckham's solar system is that it is composed entirely of readily-available, over-the counter parts and materials.

The heart of the system is a 300-gallon fiberglass septic tank which has been waterproofed. The tank, which sits in a flowerbed outside his home, contains the heat storage medium — water — and provides the environment where the heat transfer takes place via a heat exchanger salvaged from an old air conditioner.

Heat from the sun is captured in four flatplate collectors on the roof. Water from the storage tank is pumped to the collectors and through copper tubing soldered to the base of the rooftop units — the absorber.

When it passes over the absorber, the water in the copper tubing is heated, then returns to the BTU storage tank — the septic tank. There, the cold water from the house supply system is heated by transfer when it passes through the heat exchanger.

A 30-gallon water pump tank is also submerged in the storage tank and provides a reservoir of water that remains at a constant 125 to 135 degrees in the summer.

This heated water is piped into the house where it can either pass through the water heater for more heating or bypass the heater and go directly into the house hot water system.

Another pump comes into play during the winter months when some of the heated water is diverted to the home furnace.

There, a blower and another set of coils provide warm air for home heating through existing ducts.

Peckham said the home heating system was so efficient last year that he didn't turn on his heat pump until December 14.

A home water and space heating system like the one Peckham has built is one of the simplest, most economical and most flexible uses of solar energy for most people.

Because of the year-round need, the heating of home water alone can result in savings for most homeowners. And, if a person follows Peckham's lead — fabricating the system from materials easily and cheaply obtained — the savings can be even more substantial.

In order to achieve the best results from his system and make optimum use of every kilowatt of electricity consumed, Peckham first made his home as energy efficient as possible. He also takes advantage of such energy-saving devices as ceiling fans (his home has seven) and a wood-burning stove.

"Conserving energy is everybody's business," he says. "The way costs are rising and supplies are growing smaller, we all have to either try to conserve or just get used to paying bigger bills."

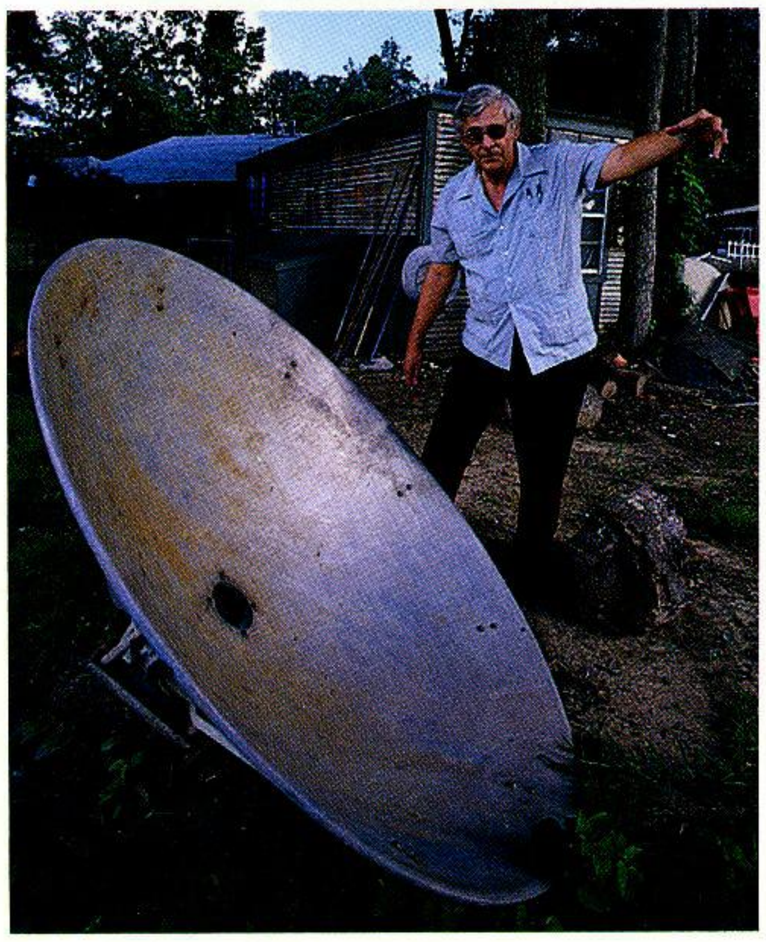
Peckham calculates that the use of the sun's rays saves his family about $200 per year for water heating alone. That plus his other conservation measures have resulted in an annual decrease of about 10 percent in electricity consumption for each of the past three years.

His hot tub is an added bonus.

A separate solar collector, a concentrator that uses polished surfaces to concentrate the sun's energy, provides heat for the hot tub. Although solar's future is potentially bright — the sun's power is inexhaustible, environmentally pure and free — one big potential drawback could be zoning statues.

Peckham says he has not been bothered by zoning laws, since the city of Beaumont does not prohibit the placement of solar collectors on rooftops as do some communities. In fact, city building officials have given his craftsmanship clean bills of health on all permit-required inspections.

"About the only drawback to solar collectors on my roof is that traffic sometimes backs up on the street in front because drivers stop to gawk at and wonder what is up



there," he says.

Peckham hopes to carry his personal solar commitment a few steps further when he and his wife, Pat, retire to a North Texas hideaway in a few years.

Up there, he will have his solar hot water and home heating systems in place. And, if the DOE approves his grant application, he'll be able to heat and cool his home with solar energy.

As part of his effort to achieve his dream of total energy self-sufficiency, the inventive Peckham has yet another solar project on the drawing boards: a windmill capable of harnessing the breeze to produce 12 volts of electricity.

That should be more than enough for cooking, refrigeration and lighting, he predicts.□

Passive Solar Design Saves Energy

Using solar energy to your advantage in a home does not necessarily call for buying expensive equipment. It can be as simple as properly shading the house from the sun, especially in the hot, humid Gulf Coast region.

An energy-research home in Baton Rouge, La., co-sponsored by Gulf States Utilities Company, illustrates how passive solar design can be easily incorporated into a home. And, it's one of the main reasons the attractive home costs 40 percent less to cool than the average home during summer months.

A common sense approach taken on the drawing board placed the ridgeline of the roof south of the house's center line, so less roof area faces due south. Deeply recessed windows on the north side of the house shade the bedrooms from the rising and setting sun. And, a covered entry porch, also facing north, helps block the sun late in the day. There are no east-west windows.

Featured in the summer issue of Better Homes and Gardens Home Plan Ideas magazine, the research home is shown to be attractive and comfortable. One of the most appealing aspects of the home — and the main energy-saving feature — is the shaded patio. A 7½-foot wide trellis shades the patio and sliding glass doors. The design allows plenty of light to fall on the patio without admitting too much sunlight into the house itself.

While still bright inside with natural light, the house — as the magazine article's title says — is shaded from the sun. But other conservation measures also were taken.

Heating and cooling of the home is done by a high-efficiency heat pump. To get the maximum efficiency from the heat pump, waste heat from the unit, generated year round, is used to preheat hot water.

Walls of the east and west sides of the home are of 2 x 6 construction, to allow maximum insulation. North and south walls are 2 x 4 stud construction. All exterior walls are tightly sealed against humidity with a polyethylene vapor barrier. To isolate the attic from the living areas, insulation was blown over the ceiling joists to an R-value of 38.

The home also was sponsored by the Homebuilders and Apartment Association of Greater Baton Rouge, Carrier Distributing Company and Rockwood Industries. GSU and Louisiana State University have closely monitored energy-conservation results of the home. It was designed by Joel Dietrich of LSU's architecture department. Utility bills for the home run about half the amount of those for an average home of equal size (about 2,000 square feet).

Building plans for the Baton Rouge home, as well as plans for the other energy-saving homes featured in the magazine, are available from Better Homes and Gardens. All funds from the sale of plans for the Gulf States-sponsored home will go to the LSU School of Architecture and the LSU School of Construction Technology for a scholarship fund.□

—Ilene Harral

What's cookin' under the sun?

Photos and Story by Sharon A. Calcote

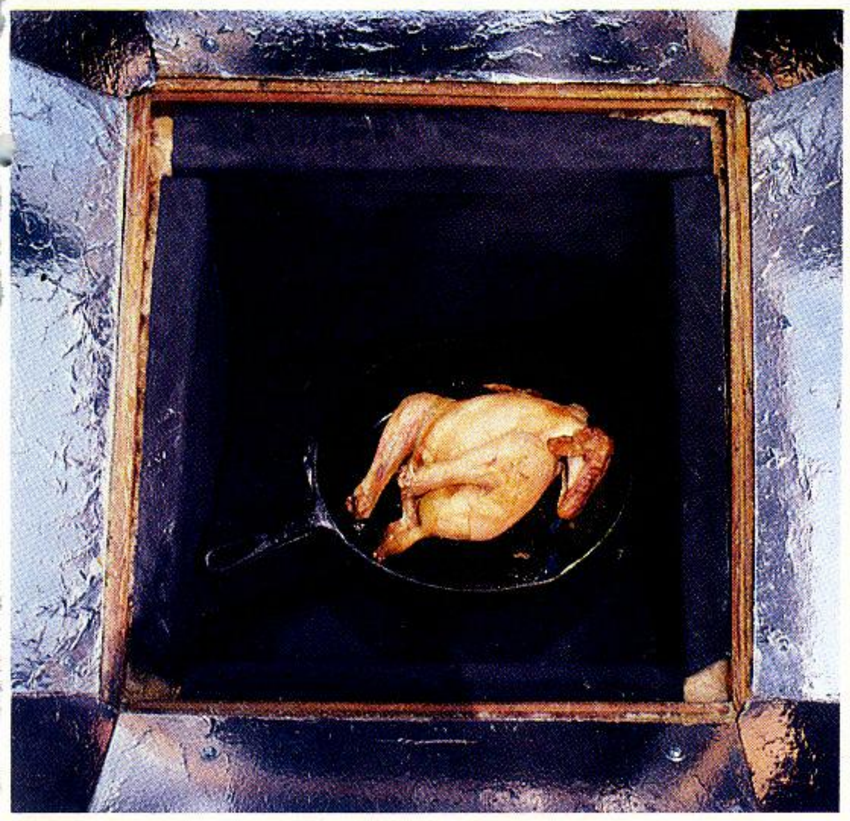
Supplemental forms of energy, including solar, have caught the fancy of many Americans with a bent for the unusual and a desire to cut home energy bills.

Solar cooking is yet another way innovators are attempting to combat rising utility bills, but the process has not evolved far beyond the days when youngsters would fry eggs on sizzling sidewalks.

Even so, solar cooking offers backpackers, campers, backyard cooks and weekend experimenters a chance to prepare meals without using a traditional range, stovetop or microwave oven. Instead of using the pavement, however, such chefs can roast, broil and bake inside a homemade insulated black box. (Ready-made versions of solar ovens are available in some areas.) A solar oven can cook almost anything, including meats, poultry, casseroles, vegetables and even cookies — all this without using gas or electricity. It heats itself by utilizing the sun's energy.

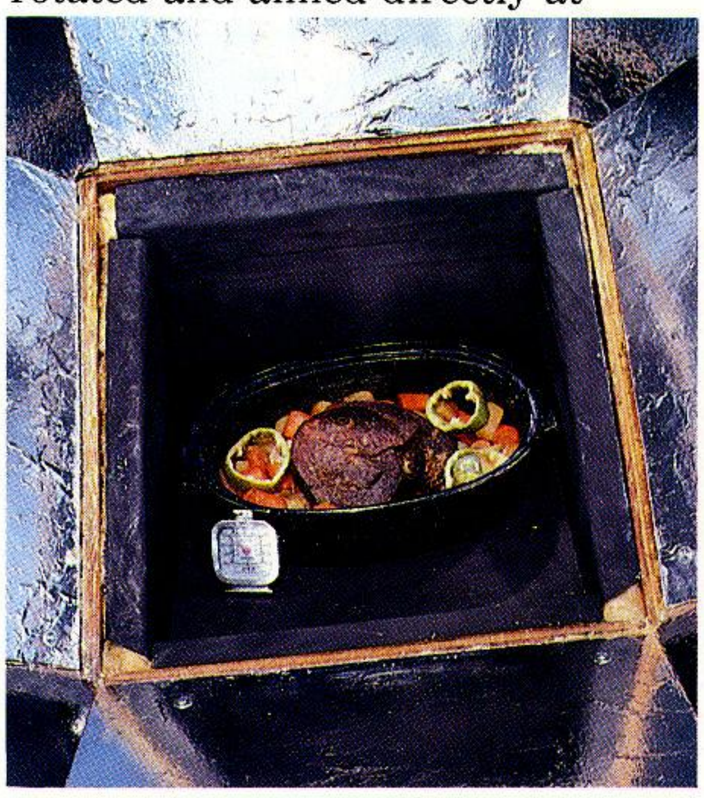
Among those who have experimented with solar cookery is Robert E. Calcote Jr. of Baton Rouge, who built a solar oven according to directions featured in the book, *Solar Cookery*, written by Don and Beth Hallacy.

Calcote prizes the oven as a cooking solution in areas where campfires are prohibited.



The oven has three essential parts — reflectors or mirrors which concentrate the sun's rays, the insulated black box where the food is placed and a glass shield which traps the heat. The shield allows the food to cook and prevents the easy escape of heat. Some term the relationship between the black box and the glass shield as the "greenhouse effect."

Temperature can be regulated, according to Calcote. "The oven temperature will climb and, in fact, peak if the oven is periodically rotated and aimed directly at

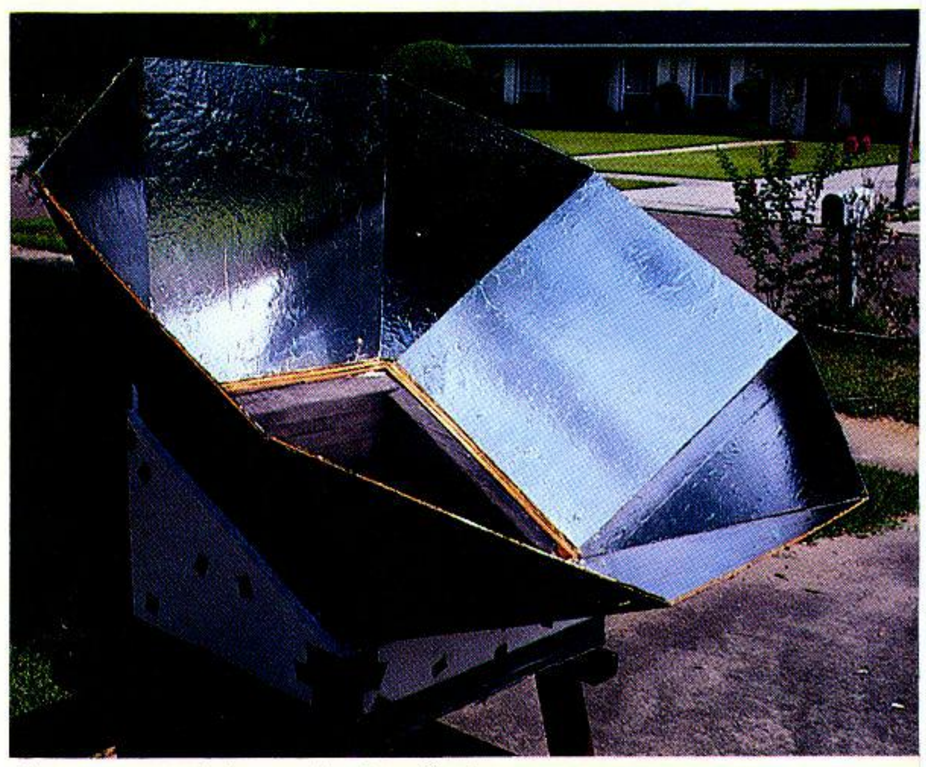


the sun," he noted. The process is known as "following the sun."

If a lower temperature is desired, the oven need only be moved slightly from the full sun position.

When a cook "leads the sun," he simply places the oven ahead of the sun — a practice that permits solar cooks to leave their ovens for awhile and still receive the benefits of the full sun.

In our area, the best time to use a solar oven is between 11:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. on clear and sunny days. High noon is considered to be 1:30 p.m., when the oven should reach its hottest temperature. Calcote used the example of a clear, sunny day with a high temperature of 75 degrees. By placing his solar oven in the full sun position at 12 noon, when its interior was 100



degrees Fahrenheit, Calcote was able to bring the oven to a temperature of 360 degrees Fahrenheit by 1:30 p.m. Almost any food will cook at this temperature, he asserted.

For those willing to make an investment in solar cooking, it can be an entertaining way to practice energy conservation.

However, since the weather varies and families must eat at night and on low-sun days, the typical cook cannot just discard the traditional oven.

There are certain advantages to solar cookery, according to Calcote, who cites crisper vegetables and juicier, more tender meats. For the food to cook properly, it should be placed in dark or black pots, he cautioned.

The best advantage may be the fact that the food cooks evenly, so the outside does not cook faster than the inside.

Building a Solar Oven

Do-it-yourself solar oven models range from those that consist of a cardboard box and aluminum foil (the kind favored by Boy Scouts) to more complicated models that cost more.

Since he used materials already on hand, Calcote estimated that his model ended up costing about $3. The cost would be considerably higher for anyone who had to purchase all of the items, which are

listed below.

Materials

6-8 square feet of 3/4-inch plywood
6-8 square feet of 3½-inch fiberglass insulation
6-8 square feet of galvanized metal (old roof flashing)
12-16 square feet of 3/32-inch paneling
one roll of 18-inch-wide heavyduty aluminum foil
one 18¾-inch square piece of single-thickness glass
one knob and nail
12 ¾-inch wood screws
50 eight-penny finishing nails
flat black paint
glue
duct tape
stove bolts (1/2 inch by 3/16 inch)
spacers

Measuring the Temperature

The actual temperature of the oven is measured with an oven thermometer. The oven temperature increases for each level of solar heat input. Known as insolation, the term refers to the rate of delivery of all direct solar energy per unit of horizontal surface.

The heat gained from the sun is lost by conduction through the box and radiation and convection through the glass. The heat loss is proportional to the difference in the temperature of the oven and the outside air. The oven will get hotter in the summer than in the winter by the difference in the outside air temperature, though insolation is somewhat higher in the winter than the summer months.

Detailed instructions for building a solar oven such as the one built by Calcote may be found in the Hallacys' book, *Solar Cookery.* A 1978 publication of Peace Press, the book is 105 pages long and costs $6.95.

Solar as Free Fuel: Still a Dream

Utilizing sunshine as a free fuel for generating large amounts of electric power sounds like some sort of a pleasant dream. It is, for now. But Gulf States Utilities company is participating in an experiment to help determine whether solar power generators will be a technically viable option in the future.

The aim of the experiment is to overcome one of the problems with solar generators, which is the lack of power when the sun is not shining. Gulf States is one of 13 utilities involved in a project to demonstrate a hydrid system that generates electricity from solar energy when the sun is shining and from fossil fuel during cloudy or dark periods.

The experiment will be conducted near Albuquerque, N.M., at the Department of Energy's Central Receiver Test Facility. The lead utility for the project is Public Service Company of New Mexico. GSU and the other participating utilities are members of the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI), which is funding the solar experiment.

EPRI has contracted with Boeing Engineering and Construction Company of Seattle, Wash., to design, contruct and operate the 100-kilowatt turbo-generator. The solar-fossil system being tested will be the first of its kind in the United States. When the sun is shining, its concentrated energy will heat air to 1,500 degrees Fahrenheit to turn a turbine and generate electricity.

At night or whenever the sun is not shining, the same turbine will run on clean-burning liquid fossil fuel. Another unique aspect of the system is that air, rather than the more-standard water, will be the heat transfer medium.

The hybrid system will be designed to switch "fuels" instantaneiously. For instance, on a sunny day the generator's primary fuel or heat input will be solar. If a cloud passes over, the automatic system will instantly supplement the fossil fuel to maintain the same level of output.

"Solar power alone cannot supply energy for a utility's generating system simply because the sun doesn't shine all of the time," Roy West of Gulf States said when describing the dual system. As manager of special programs, West looks after the company's interests in supplemental sources of energy such as wind and solar power.

West explained the results GSU and the other utilities are expecting from the experimental hybrid solar system. "First, we want to prove that a generator can be operated using solar alone. Then, we want to see if the generator will work under the hybrid system, supplementing solar power with fossil fuels. Third, we will determine whether the solar-fossil unit can operate using fuel alone."

Power generated during the testing will be fed into the test site's electric distribution grid. Actual operation of the solar generator is scheduled to begin in 1983. If the solar-fossil generator proves to be a feasible choice, West said it "may become a supplemental source of energy with a fuel cost of zero — when the sun is shining."

King of the Renaissance Festival

by Helen Sohlinger

For six weekends each fall, he is King George, reigning monarch of a band of knights and beggars, monks and wenches.

The rest of the year, he is George Coulam, a modern Renaissance Man. An artist, scientist and self-styled romantic, he lives his life according to a master plan that looks to the past via a Renaissance festival and to the future via a planned energy-related theme park.

Coulam, 44, founded the Texas Renaissance Festival in 1975, and has seen it grow more popular each year, from a gate of 30,000 the first year to 210,000 last year. The annual event is a recreation of festivals held in England, France and Italy during Renaissance times, when gypsies, farmers and nobles would gather to race horses and to buy and sell horses and other livestock.

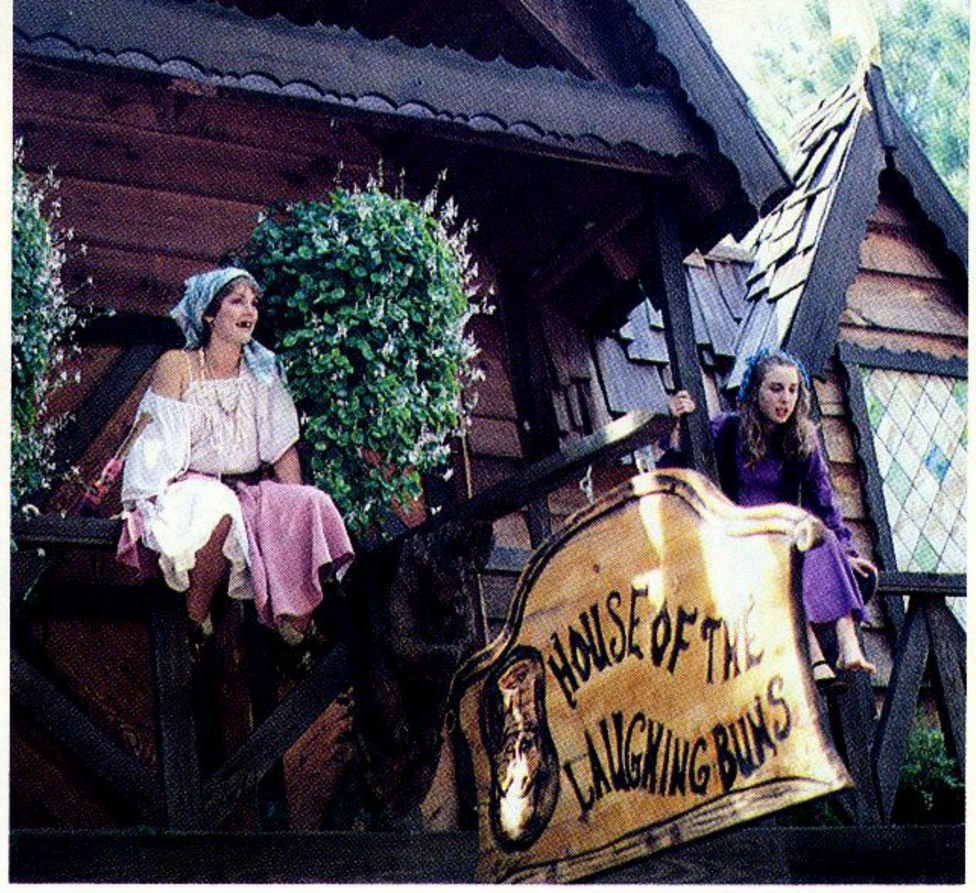
In his jeweled costume and red fur-trimmed cloak, Coulam looks every inch the king as he poses for tourists' snapshots, but the eyes looking out of the photos suggest something unexpected: that the king of the Texas Renaissance Festival is a quiet, private man who doesn't really enjoy being onstage, for fairgoers or interviewers.

"When I put on a costume, I become a different person," he says from his perch behind a work-table in his new stone and glass offices. "I try to pattern my actions on King Henry. I become a little more . . ."

Boisterous?

"Yes." His voice is so soft it's almost inaudible.

Asked for an example, he obliges, but his gaze slides away as if in embarrassment. "Come, lords and



Photos by Helen and Jim Sohlinger

ladies, gather around," he says, raising a hand in a regal gesture. He still speaks quietly, but for just a second he looks a king, even in faded cut-offs and a gauze work-shirt.

"I don't like to be onstage," he says. "When an actor gets into a character, well, that's hard for me to do. The main reason I do it is to show other artists and craftsmen that I can do it too, just like they do. In the grand march every day, I gesture and speak to them, to get their spirits up and get them going."

Coulam says performing as king is his least favorite part of the Renaissance Festival. "I like most the planning and designing," he says.

His penchant for careful planning, as well as his varied interests, is reflected in the books behind his worktable. On shelves built, naturally, in handhewn Renaissance style, books with such titles as "Gargoyles & Grotesques" or "Living in a Medieval City" share space with a bio-energy directory, a history of gardening, and travel books on Tahiti and Costa Rica.

Planning and designing the festival grounds has been a continous job, with a new attraction being added each year. Last year it was a gypsy camp, the year before a Japanese village. This year's addition is Robin Hood Village, where scenes from Erroll Flynn's 1938 movie will be re-enacted.

Next year, when construction of a new entrance leaves the grounds "basically complete," Coulam plans to turn his attention to an ambitious new project — a Texas Energy Park and Gardens, which he hopes to open in 1984 on a site adjacent to the Renaissance Festival grounds.

Coulam describes the park as a sort of outdoors Smithsonian Institution, in a setting reminiscent of the idyllic Hodges Garden in Louisiana.

"The theme is becoming totally self-sufficient in energy and food production," he says. "The garden will show how to use French intensive gardening methods to increase production, and also how to grow plants without soil. It will be a theme park, but all the things in there will be machines people can make themselves to produce their own energy."

The park is an outgrowth of Coulam's college career. After a brief hitch in the army, he attended the University of California at Northridge "for about six years, off and on," earning a bachelor's degree in art and a master's in environmental science.

"One of the things I studied in school was how to develop architecture suited to conserving and producing energy," Coulam says. "A house would be a machine to produce energy."

He estimates that a person who is "handy" and likes to garden could become virtually self-sufficient on as little as a fourth of an acre of land.

Does he live that way, himself?

"No," he answers, flashing an unexpected smile. "I don't like to do those things. I like to hire gardeners."

Coulam can well afford to hire the helpers he needs, probably due in part to his adherence to a 20-year master plan he drew up for himself when he was in college.

"One of the things in the plan was to begin a Renaissance Festival," he says. "In the twentieth year, my goal is to be worth $100 million."

Now in the thirteenth year of his master plan, Coulam says his worth is about $15 million, all earned through Renaissance festivals. The Texas festival, his third, generates about $5 million on admissions, concessions and crafts sales during its 12 days of operation each year, he says.

While the Renaissance was his favorite period in art, Coulam says, his interest in creating a festival began when he took part in a California Renaissance festival as a craftsman working in stained glass.

After college, Coulam, with his brother David, started a Renaissance festival in their hometown of Salt Lake City, Utah, on an initial investment of about $3,000.

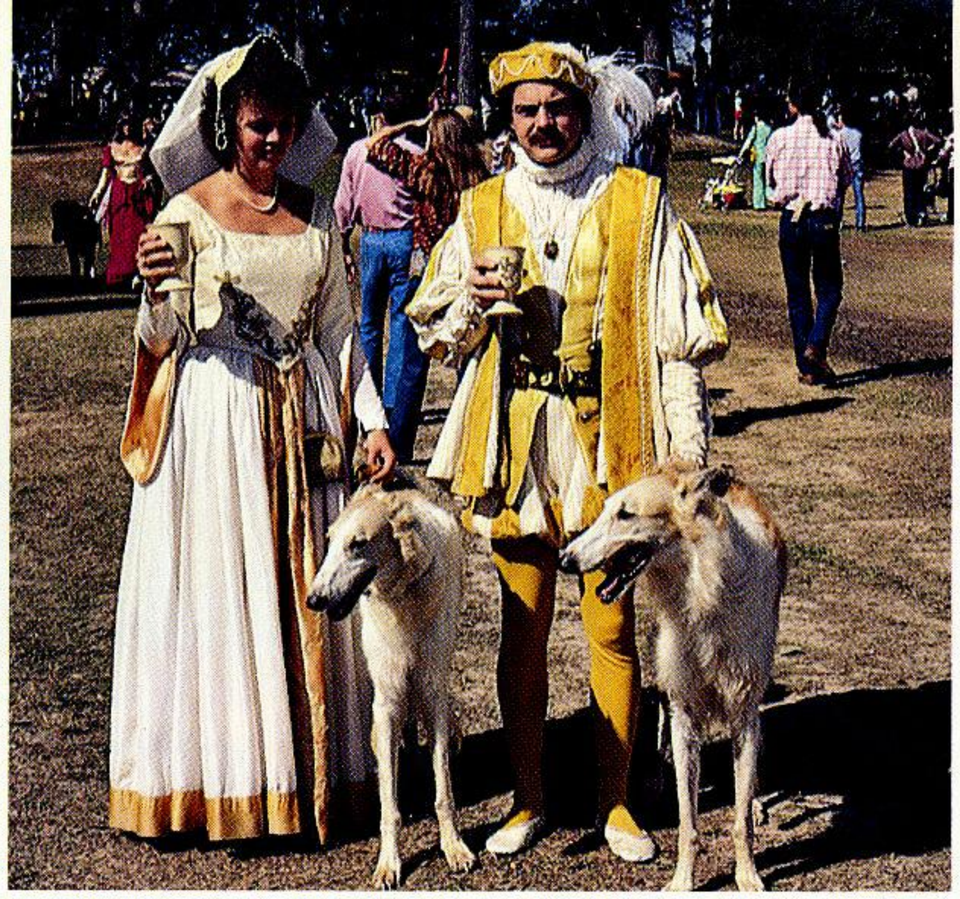
"It made money right off the bat," he says. "People liked it, but the Mormon Church didn't like it. We did two festivals there, then we met a fellow who said we ought to go to Minneapolis, and we did."

The brothers operated their Minneapolis Renaissance Festival for five years, with attendance reaching the 200,000 mark in the fifth year. Encouraged by their success, they decided to expand to a southern market.

"We picked Dallas, Houston and Atlanta as possible sites," Coulam says. "The first place we came to was Houston, and we liked it so much we bought 275 acres here and started drawing up a plot plan."

Their dream of having two festivals was cut short, however, by financial problems. "Because we spent so much money developing this place, we almost went broke," he says. "We had a choice of abandoning this one or selling the one in Minneapolis. So we sold that one, and it's still being operated successfully today."

The original investment in the



Texas site was half a million dollars, Coulam says, but continous additions and improvements have raised the tab to about $5 million to date. He owns 64 percent of the operation and his brother owns most of the rest, with a few longtime employees also owning stock.

Despite the wealth he has accumulated, Coulam appears to live conservatively, dressing casually, driving a modest red station wagon, and living in a mobile home just outside the festival grounds. He does indulge two favorite hobbies, however — traveling and collecting exotic plants. Behind his trailer, greenhouses hold, among other plants, hundreds of hanging baskets to be used during the festival.

"I have four greenhouses and seven gardeners," he says. "That is, I have a head gardener and he has his seven dwarves."

In his travels around the world, Coulam has collected unusual plants, with the help of a special permit allowing him to import exotic species. This year he traveled to Sri Lanka, Tahiti and Costa Rica.

There's only one element missing in the world Coulam dreams of creating for himself — someone to be lady of the glass house. He was married once for three years, but that was 18 years ago, and these days the king of the Texas Renaissance Festival has no one to share his throne except for the actresses who audition for the role of queen each year.

It's the old story," he says. "I spent all my years trying to build the damned business, and didn't spend any time looking for ladies. Now, I'm taking the time. I'd like to find a nice lady and get married, and travel a couple of months out of the year and spend the rest of the year building and designing."

Coulam has obviously chosen a path radically different from that of most people, but he is at a loss explaining how it happened. He had a traditional Morman upbringing, with close family ties to his parents and his two sisters and three brothers. There was nothing in his background, he says, that inspired his current lifestyle.

Where, then, did it all come from?

"I think I just got tired of being a loser," he says. "In high school I wasn't successful in all the traditional ways. I wasn't good in sports, I wasn't any good with the ladies, and I just made passing marks."

That all began to change for him in college, he says, where he "fell in love" with the work he was doing. Then, he drew up his master plan and was off and running.

How did he happen to draw up a master plan for his life? He seems surprised at the question.

"Everybody does," he says. "Everybody wants to be happy, and they sit down and say, 'What would make me happy?' It was like I was let loose in a giant store and told to pick out anything I wanted to be for the rest of my life.'

Did he ever doubt his ability to make his plan happen? Again, the surprised look and the soft reply.

"No."

Not ever?

"No."

He doesn't doubt, either, that the remainder of his plan will proceed as successfully as the first 13 years. In fact, he is looking beyond the 20 years in his plan.

"It will take me seven years to complete the energy park," he says. "And, it will take me 30 years to build my island, because I'll be constantly refining it."

He has no doubts, either, about the rewards of his unique lifestyle.

"I have the satisfaction of being in a profession that I absolutely love," he says. "I can't even fathom being in another profession. In fact, I don't know what I would do, if I weren't doing this." □

Directions to Another Era

The seventh annual Texas Renaissance Festival is being held each weekend in October and the first two weekends in November.

The theme park, nestled in the pine woods north of Houston, takes the visitor back in time to the 16th century, when nobles and beggars mingle to enjoy lusty fun and hearty food.

Shakespearean actors, magicians and belly dancers perform. Falconers and glass blowers demonstrate their ancient arts while craftsmen and food vendors hawk their wares. It is a world of knights and chariot races and wandering minstrels, where any visitor unlucky enough to offend a passing noble may find himself summarily thrown in the stocks.

Admission is $8.95 for adults; $4.95 for children 5 to 12; and free for children under 5. All entertainment is included, but games are extra.

The festival site is located on FM 1774 between Magnolia and Plantersville. Hours are 9 a.m. to dark each Saturday and Sunday.

Helen Sohlinger is a free-lance writer based in Beaumont.

Photo by Winston Lewis

STARK MUSEUM FEATURES NAVAJO WEAVINGS

by Sarah E. Boehme, Curator, Stark Museum

The bold visual power of the weavings of the American Southwest can be seen in a special exhibition currently at the Stark Museum of Art in Orange, Texas. "Southwestern Weaving" features 36 examples selected from the Museum's collection of nearly 200 American Indian textiles.

The three major weaving traditions of the Southwest, Pueblo, Spanish colonial and Navajo, are represented in the exhibition with an emphasis on the blankets and rugs of the Navajo, the most celebrated weavers of the Southwest. Spanning over 150 years in the history of weaving, the pieces trace developments in style and technique from rare nineteenth century examples through contemporary tapestries.

The designs range from the simple striped blankets of the early, classic period to the complex geometric patterns of the reservation period and include the pictorial designs which became popular items of trade. Subtle combinations of the natural colors of wool, softly muted shades from vegetable dyes, and the vibrant colors of commercial dyes are all different approaches which reveal the strong sense of color in the Southwest.

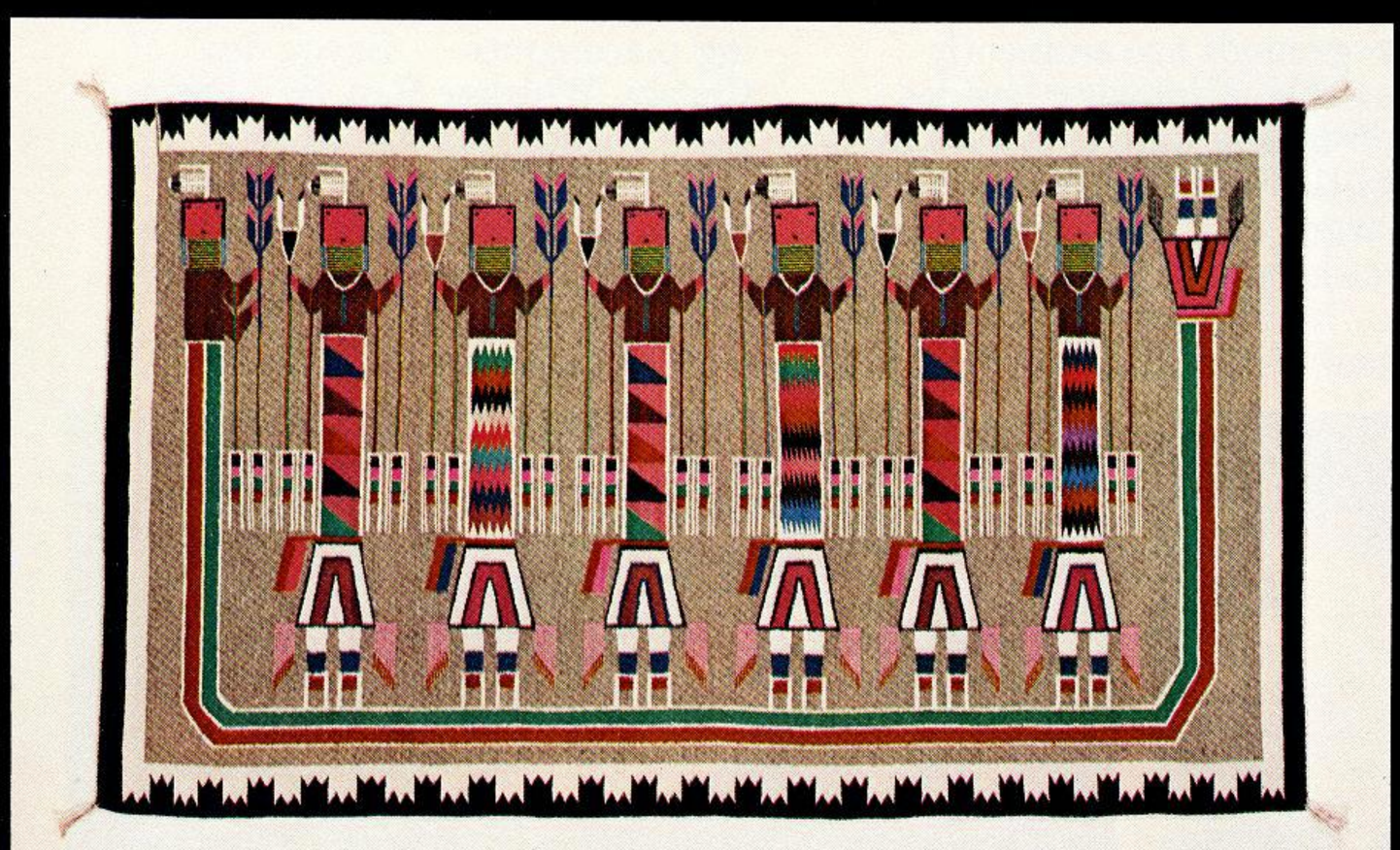
"Southwestern Weaving" will be on view through November 8. The Museum also features permanent exhibits of its collections of Western paintings and sculpture, American Indian art, porcelain and glass. Admission to the Stark Museum of Art is free, and it is open to the public Wednesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, call 883-6661.

Photos courtesy of Stark Museum and photographer David Allison.

A

B

C



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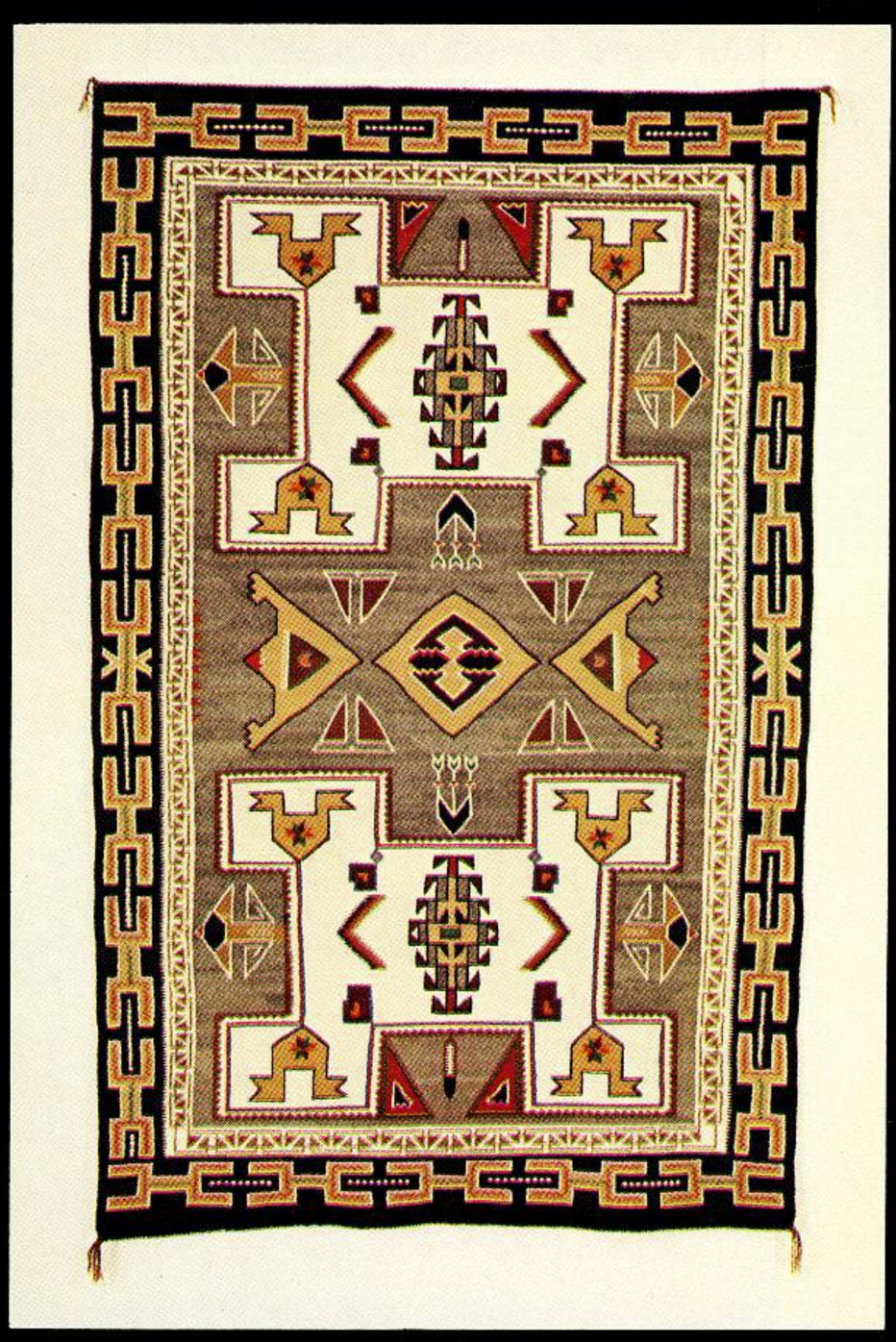
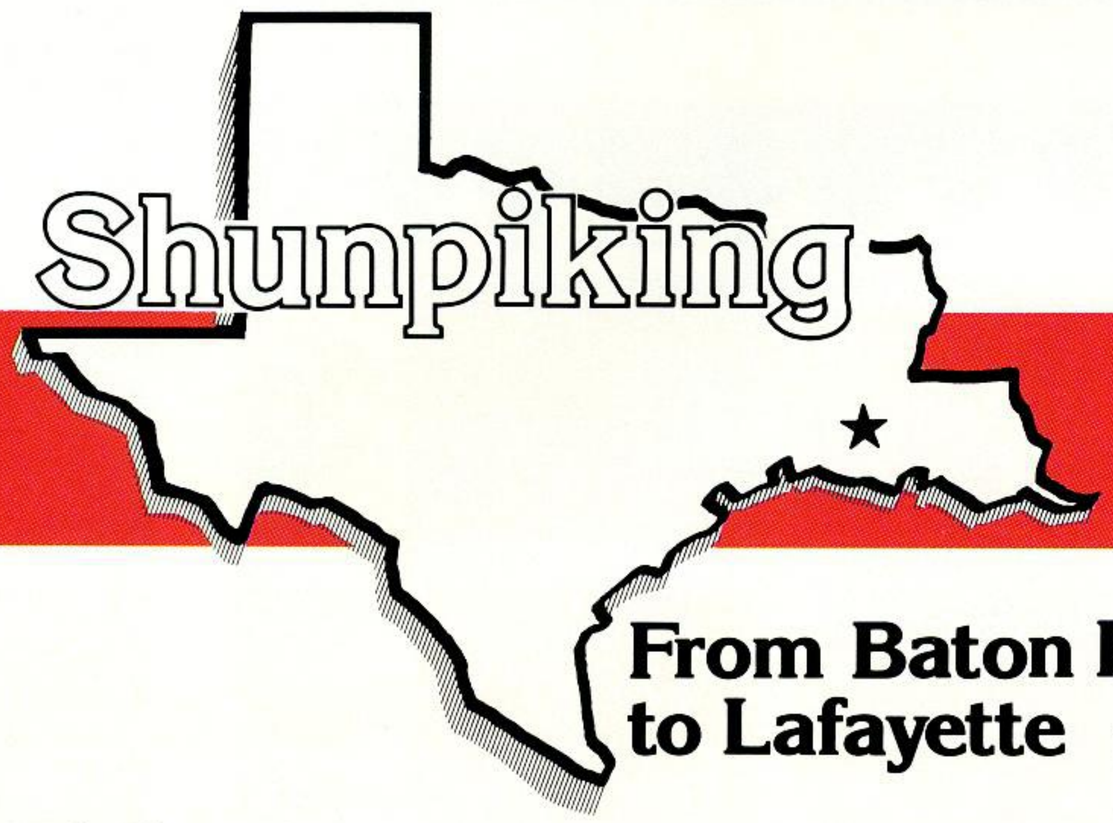


(A) The subtle variations in the colors in this blanket come from combinations of the natural colors of the wool — white and black. The light and dark wools are carded (combed) together to create the various gray shades.
(B) Pictorial blankets, produced for sale at the trading posts, sometimes feature representations of Navajo deities, such as this Yei blanket.
(C) Although pictorial rugs are made throughout the Navajo reservation, this Yei (deity) tapestry is more apt to be produced in the Farmington-Shiprock portion of the reservation.
(D) Outlines of contrasting, bright colors on geometric elements are characteristic of the weavings from the Teec Nos Pos area of the Navajo reservation.



shun·pik·ing \ ˈshən-ˌpī-kin\ *n*: the practice of avoiding superhighways esp. for the pleasure of driving on back roads —

From Baton Rouge to Lafayette

by Gus Cranow

Heading west out of Baton Rouge over Interstate 10, you might eschew the superhighway for change-of-pace driving along nearby back roads. Here one can discover the unexpected — or, as they say hereabouts — "lagniappe."

Traversing I-10 west over the 50-mile "Swamp Expressway," is, in and of itself, uncommonly scenic. But for more than meets the eye on I-10, try exiting here and there for oft-bypassed, little-touted, but no less memorable, experiences.

For starters, turn off I-10 at Gross Tete exit, then drive along La. Hwy. 77 to such picturesque communities as Rosedale, Maringouin and Gross Tete.

Bayou Gross Tete is the consummate Louisiana bayou — placid, mirror-like, framed by massive, mossy oaks. On its left bank is Live Oaks Plantation (circa 1838), open for tour by appointment. A classic Louisiana former sugar plantation home with gardens, the interior is enhanced by heirloom furniture and furnishings, as well as a rare French circular staircase.

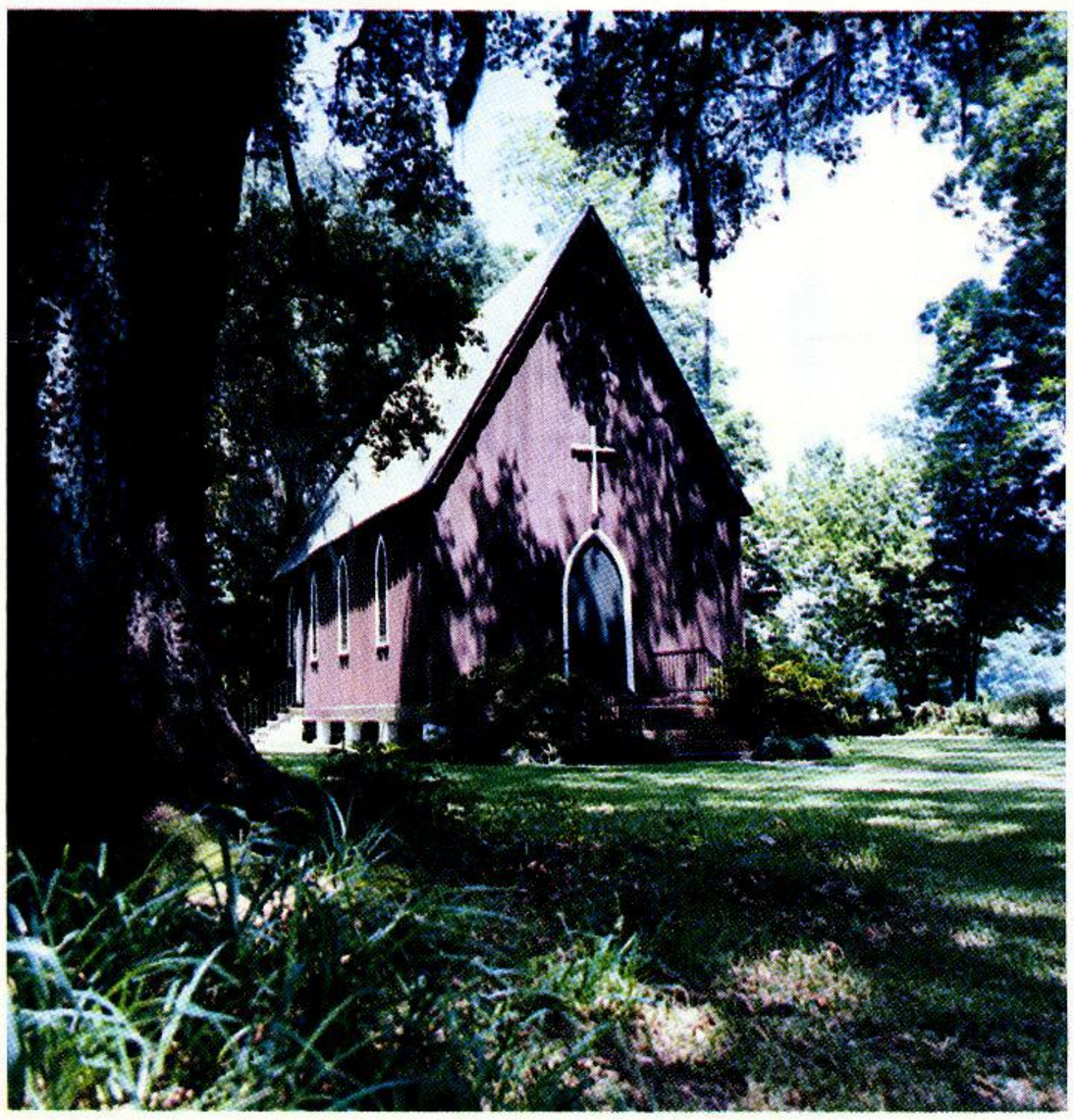
The grounds are eminently browseable, displaying besides the gardens, a unique brick slave chapel (1840), to the rear of which is a large brick tomb with unusual iron caskets, said to be of European origin. Nearby, is a huge live oak, reputedly fifth largest in America.

Other nearby plantation homes, while private and not open to the public, may be viewed from the highway.

In Rosedale, too, is historic Episcopal Church of the Nativity (1859), a small frame cypress structure, with an unusual steep roof and Gothic windows, graced by three ancient live oaks.

After visting these historic sites, it's back to I-10 at Gross Tete, and "westward ho." Via the Swamp Expressway, you cross the sprawling Atchafalaya Basin, America's greatest river-swamp. From the convenience of your car seat, feast on swamp scenery, all the while mulling over unique, exotic-sounding placenames — Bayou des Glaises, Whiskey Bay, Bay Patin, Lake Bigeux, among others.

Turn off at Butte la Rose exit and head south, passing Good Sam Park (also known as Frenchman's Wilderness), a camping retreat, with complete facilities for



Photos courtesy of Louisiana Office of Tourism.

campers and RV families. Then, venture further along a winding blacktop leveeside road to the hamlet known as Butte la Rose. An archetypal swamp-accessible village, this melange of camps, cabins and mobile homes centers about a vintage general store, chapel and volunteer fire station.

At this point, continue via blacktop road from Butte la Rose to Henderson — past several miles of weekend fishing camps, primitive to near-posh, many of which sport flamboyant titles, bestowed by humorous owners ("Caesar's Palace," "Ma and Pa," and others equally provocative).

Nearing Henderson, you cross an old pontoon bridge, one of only two such extant in the state. From atop the high levee road that skirts Lake Henderson, you can see a score of fishing landings, some primitive in appearance, others neat-'n'trim. Major ones include Pat's Landing, Wiltz', McGee's, Atchafalaya Landing. Serving as supply and launching points for anglers, many are worth stopping at for snacks, drinks, or, for the sport of "swamp-dweller" watching.

McGee's Landing provides excursion boat service for guided sightseeing tours through Henderson Swamp. From small pleasure craft, you can observe area flora and fauna at eye-and-water level.

As the levee road winds down, past Bayou Peyronnet, you enter the main drag of Henderson, "Gateway to Atchafalaya Swamp." Unofficially, it is also known as "Seafood Dining Capitol of Louisiana."

Along Henderson's main street is a veritable parade of seafood restaurants (Pat's, Las's, Robin's, Kris's and, not far away, Landry's, as well as others) — specializing in catfish and crawfish, harvested

not many hours previously from bountiful Atchafalaya waters. Henderson area restauranteurs claim that the number of sit-down diners that can be accommodated here, exceeds the village's total resident population.

Now, it's back to I-10, where, at this point, you can opt to go on to Lafayette, or continue shunpiking. Should the spirit move you, turn off here to Breaux Bridge, the town that bills itself as "Crawfish Capitol of the World." Within its town limits are other cafes and seafood restaurants, highlighted by Naquin's Carwfish Kitchen, located at the I-10 exit.

If travels bring you this way of a Saturday evening, ask directions to "La Pousierre," a popular local *fais do do* dance hall. ("La Pousierre" translates to "The Dust," and a "fais do do" is an old Cajun folkoric tradition, derived from a term, meaning "make go to sleep," which was the old practice of bringing infants in with the family to attend weekend dances, and putting the little ones to sleep in back rooms of the dance hall). Located just out of Breaux Bridge toward Henderson, La Pousierre is an unprepossessing lounge-cum-dance floor that features old-time

dancing to authentic Cajun folk music.

After the ball, it's "Bon Soir, Ladies," then a short drive to Lafayette for a perfect end to a day of shunpiking diversion. □

For additional information, times and admission fees for attractions listed, write: Baton Rouge Area Convention & Visitors Bureau, Old State Capitol, Baton Rouge, La. 70821; (504) 383-1825.

***Shunpiking** will become a regular travel feature of Gulf States Magazine. In each issue we will explore the backroads and byways of our area of Texas and Louisiana to see interesting sites and meet interesting people. If you have a suggestion for future excursions, please send them to us.*
Editor

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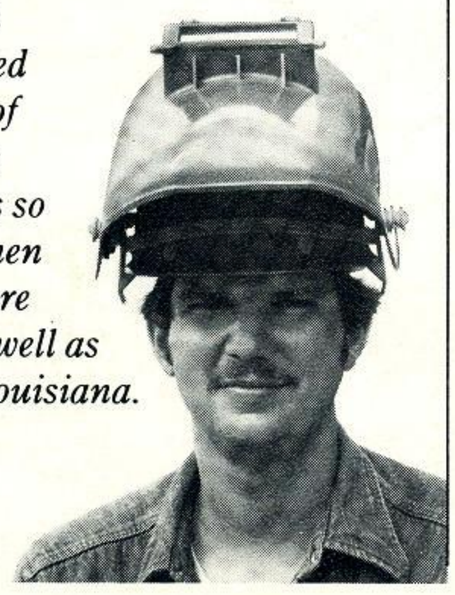
Bill Phipps is building his family's future.

It takes a lot of very special people to build GSU's River Bend nuclear plant . . . people like boilermaker Bill Phipps.

When Bill leaves for work each morning, he knows he's not going to just another good job. Because everyday, and with every weld Bill makes, he's literally helping to build his family's future . . . an energy future with electricity generated without one drop of foreign oil. That's why River Bend is so important to the men and women who are working on it, as well as everyone else in Louisiana.



When River Bend is completed over 3,000 members of the construction trades will have worked on the project . . . pipefitters, laborers, teamsters, ironworkers, concrete finishers, carpenters, electricians, operators, painters, surveyors and boilermakers. They're the best you'll find anywhere, highly skilled and talented workers who all take a lot of pride in the job they're doing. And it shows—they're building River Bend right.

THE ENERGY PEOPLE

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