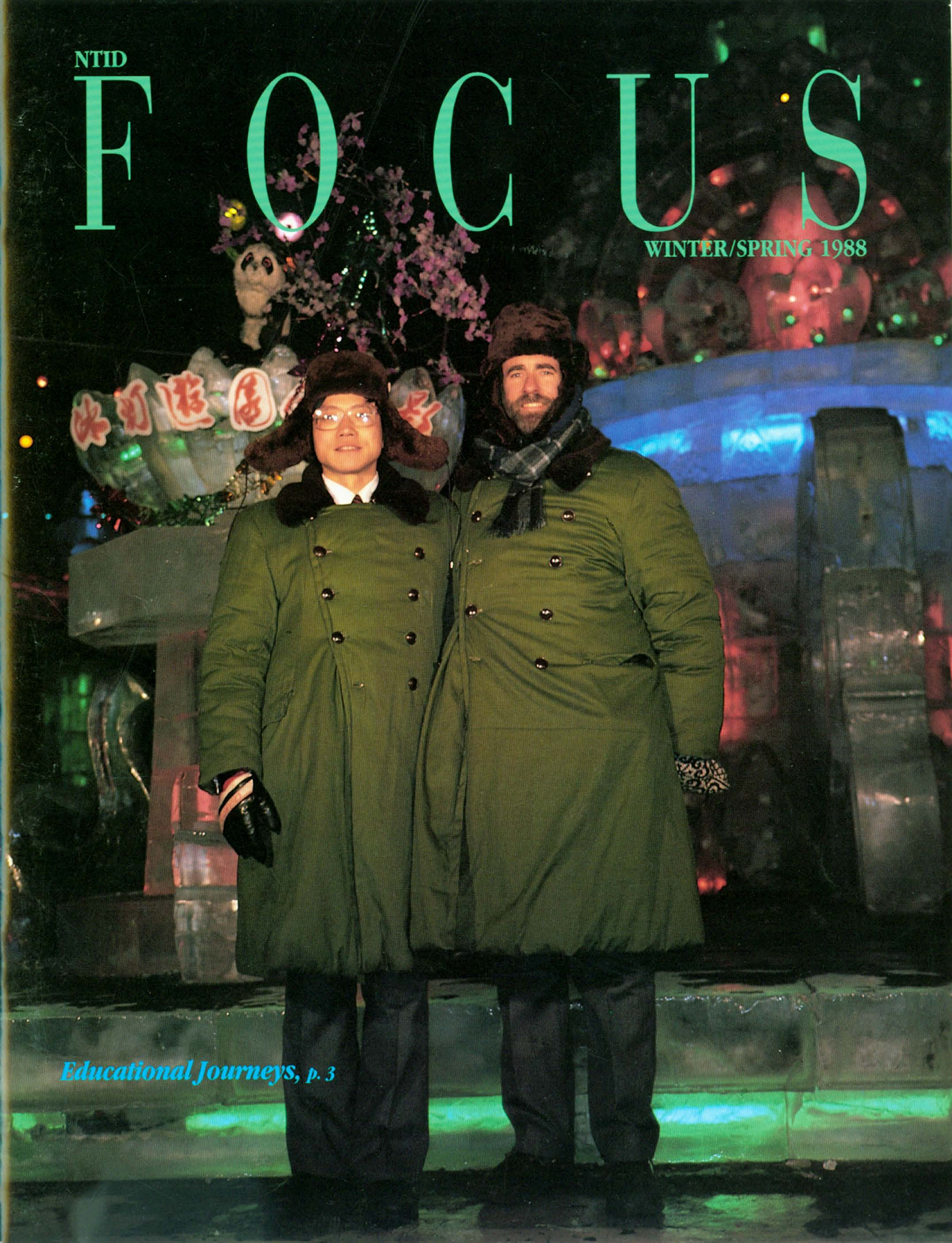
NTID

FOCUS

WINTER/SPRING 1988



Educational Journeys, p. 3

Posed for fun Joanne Raymond, a second-year student in NTID's interpreter training program, takes advantage of ideal cross-country skiing conditions.

Photography by A. Sue Weisler

NTID

FOCUS

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Winter/Spring 1988

NTID FOCUS is published by the Division of Public Affairs at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf and Communications at Rochester Institute of Technology, Rochester, New York.

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About the cover Assistant Professor Richard LeRoy and a friend enjoy an Ice Lantern Festival in Harbin, China.

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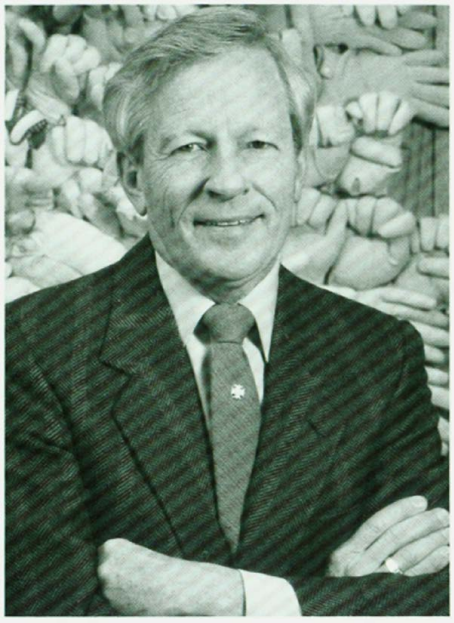
Information Exchange



NTID's reputation is international, and during the past year, several faculty members have helped enhance that reputation—in China, Mexico, and Israel. Our cover story examines the experiences and travels of two faculty members who participated in the RIT Faculty Exchange Scholar Program. Richard LeRoy, assistant professor in NTID's Liberal Arts Support Department, taught English to Chinese students who practiced their second language under a statue of Chairman Mao Tse-Tung. Half a world away, Jack Slutzky, professor in the Visual Communication Support Department, taught graphics and design in stark Mexican classrooms. Another traveling faculty member, Diana Pryntz, is featured in this issue. Pryntz, assistant professor in the Department of Business/Computer Science Support, brought NTID's educational philosophy to deaf educators in Israel.

Not only are faculty members taking word of NTID at RIT to the world beyond, but educators and counselors who work with deaf students in their part of the world are coming to the Institute to learn how better to serve students. Belen Herreros, vocational placement coordinator of the Special Education Unit of the Philippine Ministry of Education, spent the fall and winter at NTID studying job-placement marketing and training skills.

Other featured visitors have come to the Institute for shorter stays, and to impart special messages to their various audiences. Lou Ann Walker, author of the critically acclaimed *A Loss for Words: The Story of Deafness in a Family*, visited in August as keynote speaker at the second annual Children of Deaf Adults (CODA) Conference. Sharon Komlos, blinded tragically eight years ago, inspired students in September with her bright "can do" attitude. In November, Phyllis Frelich and Edmund Waterstreet, former National Theatre of the Deaf actors and stars in the Emmy Award-winning television movie *Love is Never Silent,* shared with students a sampling of the frustrations, challenges, and joys of working in a largely hearing profession.

And then there are those who come to NTID for longer periods—students who come to learn and to select careers. Stephanie Cloutier, an Industrial Drafting student who has a penchant for flying, and Mitchell Bilker, a first-year student who seems always to end up "on top," are but two examples, and they are featured within. Wally Harmasch and Mitchell Travers are graduates who have shaped successful careers in chemical testing and desktop publishing. Their stories also are in this issue of *Focus.*

Of course, our students are aided in their career quests by the support and services offered at NTID. The Eye and Ear Clinic screens every student who enters the Institute for visual problems, and counsels those in whom problems are detected. All of our students at one time or another receive support from the Department of Interpreting Services. The RIT campus would be far less accessible to deaf students without this vital communication link, also featured in this issue.

Another communication link on this campus is Dean Woolever, our *Focus On...* subject. Art director in the Department of Instructional Design and Evaluation, Woolever's work finds its way into many a classroom. Through his talents, students are able to learn more readily. Through the teaching and travel of our faculty members, the world learns about NTID; and through this issue of *Focus,* we hope that you learn a little more about what NTID is all about.

William E. Castle

Dr. William E. Castle

International Outreach

CHOPSTICKS & JALAPEÑOS

by Jean Ingham

To enhance faculty members' knowledge of other cultures and to further understanding of American educational systems by other countries, RIT five years ago initiated an International Faculty Exchange Scholar Program. Interested faculty members apply for exchange positions and their resumés are forwarded to participating universities. These universities then invite RIT faculty members to teach, based on their expertise.

In 1986, two NTID faculty members found themselves in two radically different environments. Richard LeRoy, assistant professor in NTID's Liberal Arts Support Department, and Jack Slutzky, professor in the Visual Communication Support Department, traveled as exchange professors to China and Mexico, respectively.

LeRoy spent the 1986-87 academic year teaching in Hangzhou on mainland China. Although at first he was dubious about spending the entire year away from home, friends, and family, he finally agreed to go with one stipulation.

"If it was dreadful, I could come home," he laughs. "It wasn't dreadful. It was the beginning of a love affair with China.

"I met Chinese people with values similar to my own," he says. "They have a sense of hospitality, generosity, curiosity, and comradery that is greater than any I've experienced."

The head of the Language Department at Zhejiang University assigned LeRoy to teach English to undergraduate and graduate students. Although LeRoy had sent, in mid-July, materials he wanted to use, he had to fall back on his ingenuity when they didn't arrive before classes began. The materials finally arrived in mid-November—just in time for winter break.

It's all a matter of perspective Richard LeRoy is dwarfed by a 70-meter Tibetan Buddha statue.

Because many students were reticent to speak out on issues during class, LeRoy asked them to keep journals. Through these, he gained a greater insight into their personal lives, feelings, and concerns. Individually and in small groups, he met with students to discuss their journal topics. While LeRoy learned more about Chinese culture and people, the students gained language, thinking, and presentation skills.

His favorite group of undergraduate students were third-year English majors. "Articulate speakers, wonderful writers, and fascinating students whom I shall always remember," is how he describes them.

LeRoy also taught two sections of doctoral candidates who needed to pass a qualifying English exam before receiving their degrees. It was "an energetic group, whose members wanted to discuss the unlikely combination of environmental issues, 'spiritual pollution,' and American short stories," LeRoy recalls.

Another group included advanced communication students and experienced teachers.

"Most of these teachers were over 30 and used the Cultural Revolution as a reference point for their lives and the life of China," says LeRoy.

In the University's hierarchy, LeRoy was considered the "head foreigner." As such, he acted as liaison between 12 fellow foreign teachers and University personnel. He arranged trips and helped with a variety of problems—both personal and academic.

He found that, for most educated Chinese people, learning to speak English was highly desirable. Each Tuesday evening during the academic year, the University presented a lecture in English. It was part of LeRoy's job to secure and introduce each speaker. The programs were so successful that everyone on campus soon recognized the "foreigner from RIT."

Many Sunday mornings he could be found at the "English Corner" in a lakeside park in Hangzhou.

"That's where the local citizens would come to practice their English," he explained. "I felt like an athletic coach with all the players huddled around me, hanging on my every word. The people are very aware of U.S. culture, history, and politics. They asked penetrating questions about Watergate, Iran-gate, and our economic policy toward Japan."

Additionally, every Thursday night, in the darkness, students gathered under the University's statue of Chairman Mao Tse-Tung, ironically to improve their spoken English. It also was not uncommon for people on the street to approach LeRoy and ask if they could "practice speaking English."

LeRoy taught in English, but he had wanted to learn to speak Chinese.

On top of the world LeRoy tours Tibet, often called the "roof of the world."

"However, upon arrival, I realized that everyone was more eager to speak English than help me practice my broken Chinese. I did manage to learn enough survival Chinese, which, with the body language and mime I learned from teaching hearing-impaired students, allowed me to communicate with non-English speakers."

During the academic breaks in January and July, LeRoy left the campus behind and traveled around China.

Unlike other foreigners in China, LeRoy got an insider's view of the people and culture by traveling with a Chinese colleague from the University. He found that the prerequisites for successful travel in China include being resourceful, diplomatic, and persistent. Even then, there are no guarantees that you'll be able to "negotiate" tickets on trains, buses, or planes.

In January, LeRoy was fortunate to fly to the northern city of Harbin, not far from the Russian border. There he lectured to students, and enjoyed an "Ice Lantern Festival."

"The festival was truly unique," LeRoy remembers. "The townspeople cut huge blocks of ice from the river and carved them into temples and sculptures of all kinds. Colored lights glowed from inside the ice, making a dazzling sight.

"But I've never been so cold," he adds. "It was 20 degrees below zero Celsius. I had on every article of clothing I'd brought with me, plus a huge green army overcoat and a fur hat that someone loaned me."

On the same academic break, LeRoy climbed the Great Wall of China near Beijing, then flew to Guangzhou. There the weather was warm and tropical, a pleasant change from the frigid north of Harbin.

LeRoy then ventured even farther south to Hainan Island, a sparsely populated area at the tip of China.

"Although the beaches were beautiful, I spent only part of one day walking in the sand. My colleague would never linger very long."

From the "roof of the world" in Tibet to the subtropical climes of the Mekong River, where a trail was cut into the jungle so that Great Britain's Prince Philip could view wild elephants, LeRoy saw it all.

"When I reflect on my year in China," he says, "I realize that my apprehensions were unfounded. It was gratifying when Zhejiang University asked me to stay for another year. Though impossible at this time, I would cherish the opportunity to return to my second homeland."

Jack Slutzky spent an equally stimulating 10 weeks teaching at two universities in Mexico—the Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana-Azcapotzalco (UAM) and the Universidad Nacional Autónoma Metropolitana (UNAM). He, too, would like to return to his host country to visit his extended family.

Slutzky recalls the January day he left Rochester. The skies were turbulent, reflecting the state of his "churning innards."

Although eager for a new challenge, Slutzky admits that he was apprehensive because few, if any, details of the trip had been worked out before his departure. He was entering a foreign culture whose language he didn't speak. Would there be anyone to pick him up at the Mexico City airport? Where was he to go, what was he supposed to be doing, and how would he communicate?

As it turned out, his fears were unfounded, for he was picked up at the airport and taken to his new "home away from home"—a room in a small hotel approximately 30 minutes from campus.

From a well-cared-for RIT campus of 13,000 hearing and deaf students, Slutzky found himself, with none of his former amenities, at a neglected university system of 320,000 students.

Education in Mexico is a "political stick of dynamite," according to Slutzky. An administration exists that wants to elevate the quality of education, yet students are fearful of "creeping elitism."

One day at UNAM, 240,000 students went on strike and made speeches.

"It was an awesome sight," Slutzky says. "Argumentative topics included tuition raises from 78 cents to $3.50 per year and minimum entrance requirements. Speakers were not interrupted—everyone had his 'day in the sun.'"

¿Comprendes? Jack Slutzky explains the concept of furniture design to a Mexican student.

The UAM campus, across the city from UNAM, was created after the 1968 riots. It's broken into different geographic units spread over a large area to discourage groups of students from gathering together.

Primary and secondary education is mandatory in Mexico. The problem is that with so large a population (currently more than 24 million people live in Mexico City) and so small a truant officer staff, monitoring attendance is close to impossible. Children can be seen in the parks at all times of the day.

"Of course, with the number of children already born and one being born every 22 seconds," Slutzky says, "there aren't enough schools to house them."

At UAM, Slutzky found the classrooms barren—no lights, no heat, and no blackboards. Until the sun came up and warmed the rooms a bit, students and faculty members kept warm by wearing

coats and gloves. There were so many students that two sessions with two complete faculties were needed each day. The first session ran from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. and the second from 1 to 7 p.m.

Faculty members work on a yearly contract and, because of Mexican inflation, their salary loses nearly 120 percent in buying power each year. The majority of faculty members must hold two jobs in order to survive.

"My office at the university was small and was shared by five people," says Slutzky. "Two people used it in the morning and three others in the afternoon. Space is at a premium."

Slutzky taught classes in computer graphics, corporate design, furniture design, and packaging. His students included teachers and design studio professionals, as well as typical college students.

Slutzky found one of his many challenges in the students.

"They couldn't follow directions, and never met deadlines. If the classes had been graded, I'd have flunked them all."

Although the students received no grades, they benefited from learning a goal-oriented process.

"Mexicans in general," explains Slutzky, "are creative and intuitive, but they need to add balance and learn that the product is the end result of process.

"I'm a taskmaster, but I teach differently than most instructors," he says. "I pat a head, or put my hand on a shoulder, or maybe even 'beat up' on someone by hitting them on the arm. In essence, I try to establish rapport as I work.

"The students didn't know what to make of such a weird man. But I was able, by showing them that I can be a fool at times and as vulnerable as they are, to break down their resistance. Then the learning process began."

As part of that process, Slutzky asked his students to complete 200 concept sketches in 40 minutes.

"We call them 'thumbnail sketches' at NTID. But there's no equivalent in Spanish, so it became 'dibujito pequeño' or 'little drawing.' Because the term was foreign to the students, they interpreted it literally, and the ensuing drawings were very small—nearly microscopic," laughs Slutzky.

When he accepted the exchange appointment, Slutzky did not know Spanish, but was determined to communicate with people in their own language. He took Spanish lessons and often studied late into the night. He remembers falling asleep exhausted many nights, only to dream of his struggle to communicate.

Slutzky believes that he now understands much better how people who are deaf feel when confronting spoken English.

"It was an important experience for me, after 18 years of teaching deaf students, I discovered that I could feel a similar frustration that they have daily trying to communicate."

His desire to learn Spanish impressed his students, and others he met, because, he says, "Few Americans make any serious effort to talk to Mexicans in their own language. Mexicans are a gracious and hospitable people who become more so when you make an effort to understand them, just like all other people."

During his 10 weeks in Mexico, there was little time for sightseeing, but Slutzky did get to climb some pyramids. Long ago, in an attempt to destroy the Indian culture in Mexico, Spaniards had torn down most of the pyramids and erected churches in their place. But after Mexico won its independence, many were rebuilt.

"They are glorious structures," Slutzky notes.

Equally beautiful, in terms of architectural design, Slutzky believes, are the many churches. But as much as he loved the architecture and sculpture, he was not as enamored with the graphic design of Mexico City.

"Massive amounts of visual pollution" is how he describes the signage and general communication design of the capital.

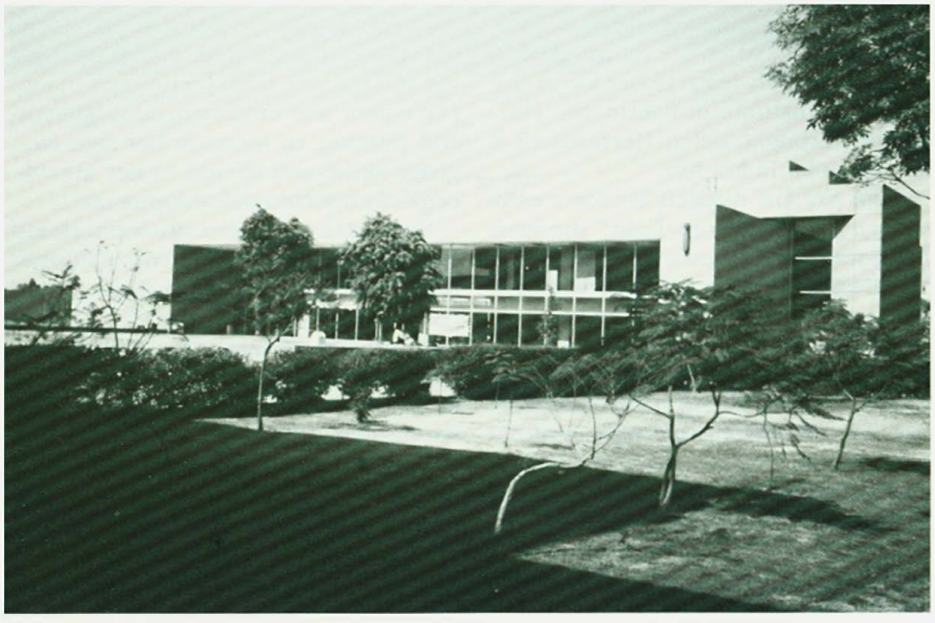
"The visuals of Mexico City are deafening—everything is vying for attention. The colors are thrown together with little or no understanding of negative space," he laments.

Slutzky explained in a speech to a national graphic designers association that graphic design in Mexico is "headed for disaster" unless some standards are created.

"Until graphic design is considered a profession, a legitimate career," he told his audience, "it will remain a lesser art form. The organization must take a leadership role if change is to be effected."

Slutzky would like the opportunity to go back to Mexico and work to establish these standards.

Until then, he says, "I live a wonderful, creative life. I have many joys. How fortunate I am to be here—how thankful I am to work at NTID—how glad I am to be American. You have to go through a variety of experiences to appreciate what you have."



What you see... Slutzky found the Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana-Azcapotzalco to be lacking many of the amenities he has at NTID.

Intern takes NCED skills home to the Philippines

Matchmaker

by Ann Kanter

A drastic cut in responsibilities and pay when she returned from maternity leave to her job at the Marineles Institute in Bataan, the Philippines, brought Belen Herreros to a turning point in her life.

"The pay cut meant I couldn't earn enough to feed my new baby," she says. "That was in 1960 and my husband was still alive, so the financial situation wasn't desperate; but still, it really hurt."

Thus, when she learned of an opening at the Philippine School for the Deaf in Pasay, one of four cities that comprise metropolitan Manila, Herreros took it, although the 375-kilometer trip meant taking an apartment for herself and her infant son in Pasay, then commuting on weekends to join her husband at the family home in Bataan, where he worked in the national shipyard.

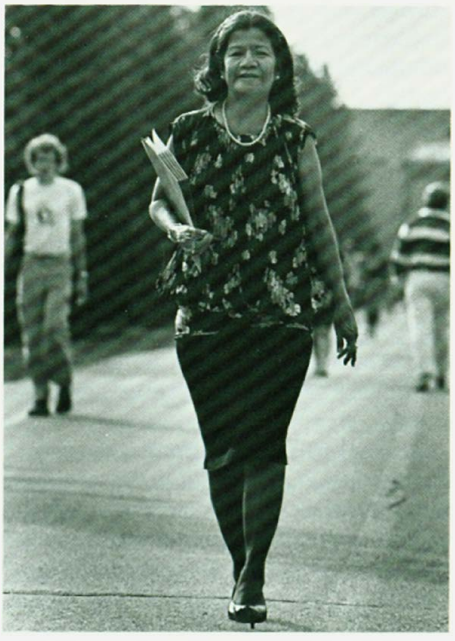
Although Herreros had had no previous contact with deaf people, she was to spend the next 25 years of her life at the school until, in 1985, she was named vocational placement coordinator of the Special Education Unit of the Philippine Ministry of Education, the position she holds today.

As a one-person marketing and employer development team, she is in charge of finding jobs for graduates from four high schools serving students who are blind, deaf, orthopedically disabled, educably mentally retarded, or with conditions such as cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, or emotional or behavioral problems.

From September to November, however, Herreros was on a professional leave of absence to participate in NTID's Internship Program in the area of Job Placement/Employer Development. Her mentor was Richard Elliott, senior Career Opportunities advisor in the National Center on Employment of the Deaf (NCED).

Herreros' goals in embarking on this internship were to study NCED marketing and training team techniques in job placement and employer development and training; to increase her sign language skills; and to add to her knowledge of curriculum development.

Because her placement responsibilities in the Philippine Ministry of Education involve placing high school graduates, her internship included visits to local schools and agencies such as the Board of Cooperative Educational Services, Rochester City School District Special Education Division, Edison Technical and Occupational Center, Association for the Blind, Association for Retarded Citizens, and the Al Sigl Center. There, she observed, talked with administrators, and inquired about curriculum and placement activities. She also joined first-year NTID students in a "Job Search Process" class.



Enjoying her "constitutional" Belen Herreros traverses the "quarter mile" that links RIT's residence halls and academic buildings.

In her internship studies, Herreros hoped to learn better strategies and techniques for doing her work.

"Dick tells me I've been doing the right things," she says, "but I've been doing them on a hit-or-miss basis. I had no training for my job."

Perhaps not. But what she lacked in training, she more than made up for in hands-on experience, which is why she was appointed to her position by the director of the Department of Education for the Philippine National Capital Region.

When Herreros was teaching at the Philippine School for the Deaf, parents would approach her after graduation and ask, "What will my son/daughter do now?"

"I would get on the phone and call local companies to tell them that we had a skilled seamstress, file clerk, welder, or carpenter—whatever type of worker I knew they needed."

Before long, she became a self-appointed job placement coordinator. Her skills were so much in demand that she had to miss classes to keep up with the work.

Then, although she had started out placing only graduates, her reputation grew to the point where alumni who had graduated five and 10 years earlier approached her for help also. She even got letters from government officials, asking her to place deaf young people that they knew.

Because of her passion for placing deaf students, in 1979 Herreros encouraged the Philippine School for the Deaf to add a postsecondary program that emphasized vocational training. Formerly, the school had included only kindergarten through high school.

Herreros also helped organize a Deaf Employees Association, which currently boasts a membership of approximately

400. In 1985, to celebrate its third anniversary, the association awarded plaques of appreciation to five companies that had hired deaf employees. The U.S. Embassy was one of the recipients, having hired seven employees through Herreros' intermediary services. She placed her clients in the Embassy's General Services Department, where they filled positions as file clerks, carpenters, electricians, and plumbers, most of them caring for the residences of Embassy personnel.

Herreros, who is 5 feet tall and weighs 100 pounds, smiles often and constantly pops out of her seat to act out the story she's telling. When she starts to tell about another of her placements, however, her attitude changes noticeably, as she searches her pockets for a tissue.

"I always cry when I talk about this one," she says apologetically. "It's a success story about one of the students I was able to place. José de la Cruz is very intelligent—he was valedictorian of his high school class in 1972.

"After graduation, he came to me and said, 'I want to go to college, but my parents are poor—they can't afford it. Please help me.'

"José was talented in the fine arts and had won many prizes in high school. He knew I had connections with people in civic organizations. I took his address, but at the time, there was nothing I could do."

One year later, Herreros received a call from the principal of the Philippine School for the Deaf, saying that the state had just opened its scholarships to hearing-impaired students. Immediately, she thought of de la Cruz, but couldn't find his address. To add to the urgency she felt, the phone call came at 11 a.m., and the principal said, "You must produce your candidate by 3 o'clock this afternoon."

Herreros called the vice president of the Pasay City Jaycees, who often volunteered to help with her activities, and said, "Do you feel like being a good Samaritan today? Then hurry and pick me up in your car."

It was lunch time, and she was starving, but there was no time to eat. They drove to Montalban Municipal Hall, where Herreros inquired about de la Cruz.

An employee provided directions to de la Cruz's house, and de la Cruz was there—on the verge of eating lunch—but he jumped into his best clothes and they drove straight to the State Scholarship Committee's office.

Strategy-planning conference Herreros and her mentor, Richard Elliott, discuss job placement techniques.

De la Cruz passed the exam, and today is a successful teacher at the Philippine School for the Deaf. He also is working toward his master's degree at the Technical University of the Philippines.

Herreros' own introduction to sign language came from her students at the Philippine School for the Deaf. When she started teaching there, the school was run in the oralist tradition, and sign language was forbidden.

She recalls conducting a lesson on *The Merchant of Venice* and attempting to bring the play to life by acting it out.

"I was all worked up, I really put my heart and soul into it," she says. "When I finished, I asked the students, 'Do you understand?'

" 'Oh yes,' they said. But when I gave them a test, not one knew even the name of the play. That was when I decided I had to learn their language."

She learned it well enough to become the school's much-sought-after interpreter. She also has served as court interpreter at criminal trials, and is certification chairman of the Philippine Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf. But she's still not satisfied with her skills.

"I can interpret what a hearing person says to a deaf audience," she states, "but when it comes to reverse interpreting—translating what a deaf person says for a hearing audience—I don't feel confident."

Increasing her reverse interpreting skills is one of the goals of her internship.

Herreros first learned about NTID in 1985 when Elizabeth Ewell, NCED manager, conducted a conference among directors of Philippine schools for the deaf.

"I had been successful in placing deaf students as well as students with other disabilities," says Herreros, "but I was doing it all myself with no system or organization. Then I heard Liz talk about NTID's marketing team—a group of employment advisors who develop strategies for marketing co-op students and graduates to employers. I thought to myself, 'I must go there and learn their techniques.' "

Once at NTID, the internship lived up to her expectations. Sharing space in the NCED offices was a luxury and an eye-opener for Herreros.

"Dick let me use an office next to his," she says, "and I even have my own telephone. Where I work in the Philippines, the phone I use is down the hall in another office. It rings, and by the time I get there, it's stopped ringing."

As her internship drew to a close, Herreros looked forward to returning home to share with her colleagues the fruits of her internship. She hoped to see them set up student marketing and employer development teams, and she'd like to see the establishment of a Philippine national technical institute for the disabled, modeled on NTID.

›

100 Megabytes of Energy

DESKTOP DYNAMO

by Jean Ingham

Great Expectations Realized might be the title of a novel that Mitchell Travers, a 1974 Business Administration graduate, will write someday.

"Expectations" is Travers' synonym for challenges and goals. His newest challenge, a desktop publishing business, is the result of his love for computers.

Although Travers graduated with a bachelor of science degree from RIT's College of Business, he explains that "If a degree in computer science had been offered at that time, I would have majored in that area."

He received his first taste of computers during co-op employment at Occidental Petroleum Company, Inc., in Hackensack, New Jersey. Computers were a challenge, and Travers thrives on challenges.

Although he couldn't major in computer science, Travers' enthusiasm for computers continued. Brookhaven National Laboratory, in Upton, New York, was the first company to benefit from this enthusiasm after his graduation.

He designed a program that allowed the company to use a different method of tracking and monitoring money that went beyond a single fiscal year. With this capability, the Department of Energy allowed Brookhaven to receive research money. Travers also designed and programmed an inventory subsystem for Brookhaven.

After five years, he left Brookhaven to design software for Software Design Associates, Inc., in New York City.

"I did this against my father's advice," he says. "Dad told me New York City was tough and why take a chance when I had a secure job."

While at Software Design Associates, he wrote and produced a five-day "Structured Programming" course for businesses.

Each time he changed jobs, Travers became more excited about the capabilities of computers.

"There is so much they can do," he says, "so much more than anyone realized when computers were first introduced."

In 1980, Travers, looking for new challenges, changed jobs again and worked for four years as a software engineer and manager at Manufacturer's Hanover Trust Company in New York City. In this position, he supervised managers of six satellite planning groups, including trust securities, money markets, and other investments.

"Services at Manufacturer's Hanover are 98 percent computer-based," he says. "I enjoyed the work and encouraged those I supervised to stretch their abilities and achieve.

"I played the part. I was a 'power man'—three-piece suits, ties, perfect posture. But I prefer my present lifestyle," he smiles.

His present lifestyle is open-necked shirt, casual slacks or blue jeans, and working more hours than he has ever worked before. Today he is self-employed—a desktop publisher and consultant.

As such, Travers sets up automated memory systems for directory listings and small business computer systems.

He is art editor for the *NAD Broadcaster* and *The Deaf American*, both published by the National Association of the Deaf. He also is designer and layout artist for *World Around You*, a Gallaudet University publication, and *Newsounds*, a newsletter produced by the Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf. In his "leisure" time, Travers is compiling a textbook on desktop design and layout.

He works out of the quiet confines of his townhouse in Seabrook, Maryland. His office quarters are slightly cramped, with a sofa, computer, printer, and chair vying for space. Built-in bookshelves are organized from top to bottom with work in progress, instruction manuals, and the residuals of subscriptions to 10 computer/desktop publishing-related magazines.

From his first tentative attempt at being his own boss—from August 1986 to January 1987—the business grew so fast that Travers had no free time. He worked every waking moment to keep up with his commitments. But he doesn't regret it for a minute, for it represents a dream come true. The business is so successful that now he can "make a profit" without exhausting himself.

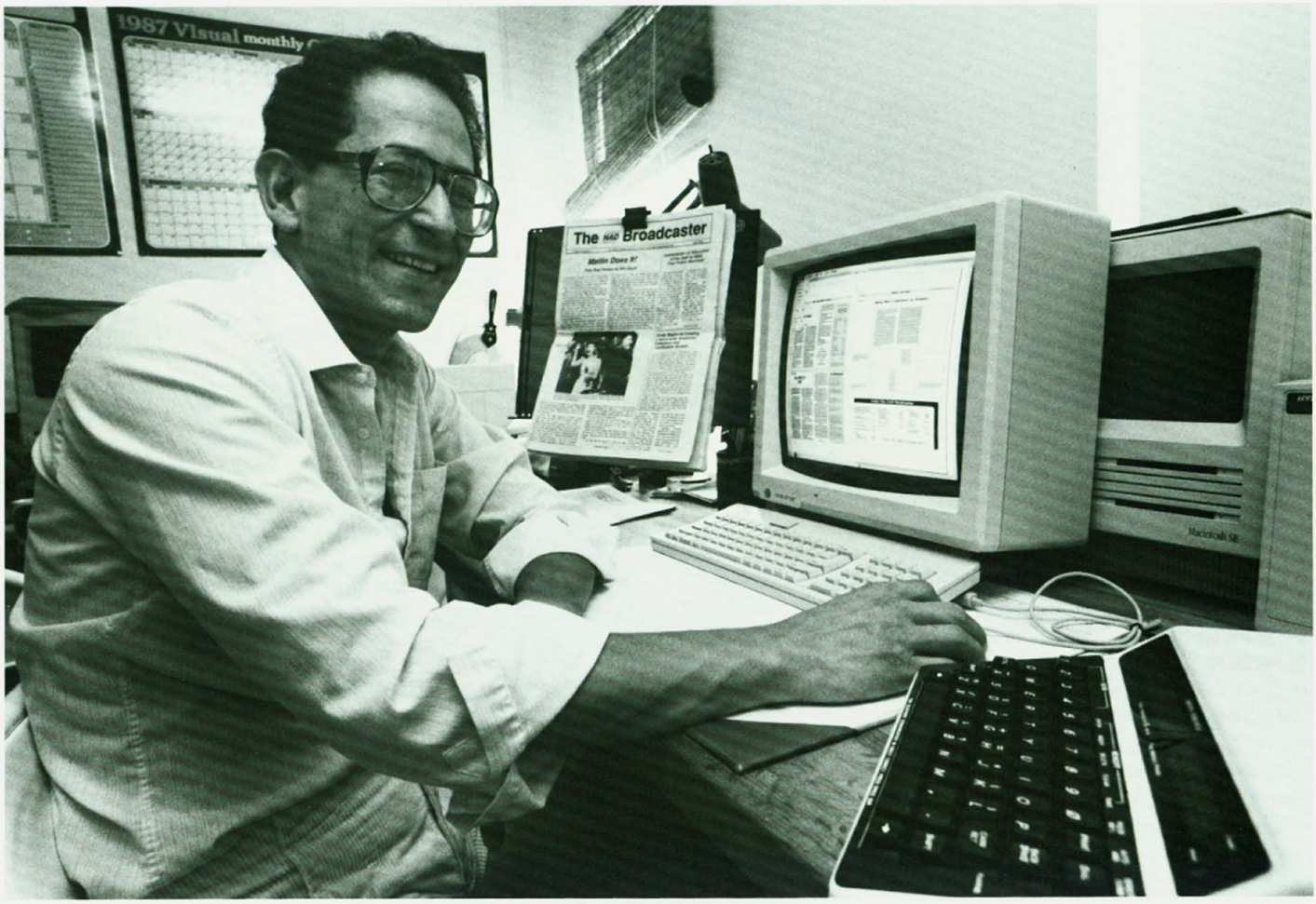
In fact, the business is doing so well that he has hired five people to help him. Two of his employees do desktop publishing on their home computers; one is his quality control person; one is backup quality control; and the fifth does color overlays for *The Deaf American*.

This energetic young man of 37 was born with normal hearing.

"He was speaking words and phrases by the time he was 2," says his mother, Marcia. "But when he didn't respond when spoken to, his grandmother suspected he was losing his hearing. However, doctors who examined him assured me that he could hear because he could speak."

When Travers was 3, the family moved to Puerto Rico. There, Travers' speech began to deteriorate and when his mother consulted another doctor, they discovered that Travers had lost his hearing.

Although no one is sure, doctors think the Rh negative factor that his mother carried may have been the cause.



Expectations come true*Mitchell Travers beams at the success of his desktop publishing business.*

With a 95 decibel loss in both ears, Travers wears behind-the-ear hearing aids. As a young child, he studied at the Lexington School for the Deaf, at its original New York City location, until he was old enough for junior high school. He then attended Junior High #189 in Queens, New York, a hearing school where his mother taught. He remained there for two years.

"I did terribly," he recalls. "Eventually, my parents transferred me to Dwight School for Boys, a private school, for my junior and senior years.

"This was before the concept of mainstreaming took on its current meaning," he says. "Until I reached RIT, I had no interpreters, no notetakers—zilch."

After high school graduation, Travers attended New York University for two years. But his parents felt that he would be happier in a more technical environment and recommended RIT, with its many support services available through NTID. Taking their advice, he transferred to study Biology, because he was interested in marine biology and wanted to become an oceanographer. But he did so poorly in chemistry class—"organic chemistry blew my mind"—that he changed to Business Administration "to see if I could succeed in the rat race—and I did."

The Rev. Lawrence Mothersell, a General Education Instruction Team professor, says, "Mitch was a joy to have in the classroom. He always was well prepared and liked to debate issues. He enjoyed arguing his point, but if he could be shown another valid one, he might concede.

"However," Mothersell continues, "any instructor with Mitch in his class needed to be right on his toes. He was extremely adept at derailing an instructor from a major topic."

Travers admits that he could be an assertive and aggressive student. As a one-man campaigner, he sought ways to help deaf persons help themselves.

To encourage deaf students to take part in different campus activities, Travers began publishing a weekly student newspaper, *The Eye*. Modeled after *The New York Times*, the paper's motto was "All the News Worth Eyeing."

"It was a good paper," he says, "four to six pages chock full of news. But it died after I graduated."

Although he admits to being a workaholic, Travers does take time out to play racquetball. He finds it a good way to "let off steam." He also discovered so many deaf racquetball teams in the United States that he began a *U.S.A. Deaf Racquetball Newsletter* to keep teams up-to-date on tournaments and upcoming events, and to provide tips on the sport.

Travers also has begun publishing *The MacDeaf Letter*, through which he encourages deaf people to use computer technology to advance their standard of living. He also has created "MacDeaf Shopper" a service that helps deaf Macintosh computer users become wise consumers of printers, software applications, and various equipment.

What's next for Travers? More challenges, no doubt. And he plans to conquer them all.

"I'm happy with my life," he says. "I love it."

SIGNING STARS

by Louise Hutchison

As seasoned performers, Phyllis Frelich and Edmund Waterstreet are accustomed to receiving accolades for the many roles they play.

In November 1987, however, when they shared the NTID Theatre stage to present their experiences to students as part of NTID's Special Speaker Series, the enthusiastic applause they received was for simply being themselves.

A dynamic pair, their signing styles provide a fascinating study in contrast. The slender, dark-haired Frelich signs quickly and intensely, hands flying and body shifting to make a point. Waterstreet, with his husky build and blond hair, is more relaxed. Quick to smile, his signs are slow and clear.

Frelich and Waterstreet first performed together as students at Gallaudet University, then worked together as company members of the National Theatre of the Deaf (NTD). Most recently, they appeared in the Emmy Award-winning television production of *Love is Never Silent*.

"I'm really lucky to know a great actress like Phyllis, and to have had the opportunity to grow with her all these years," says Waterstreet. Frelich returns the compliment.

Waterstreet's visit during NTID's and NTD's anniversaries brought back fond memories. "I'm reminded of the early years, 20 years ago, when NTD was still in its infancy," he says. "Both NTD and NTID have grown into great institutions."

Acting came easily to Waterstreet. He always acted out things for family members, all of whom are hearing. While attending the Wisconsin School for the Deaf, he was a member of the Drama Club, and continued to pursue his theatrical interests when he was a student at Gallaudet in the mid-1960s. There, he met Frelich and performed with her in a production of *The Threepenny Opera*.

Phyllis Frelich

The oldest of nine children in an entirely deaf family, Frelich never considered herself disabled. "Being deaf seemed quite natural," she says.

As a student at the North Dakota School for the Deaf, she enjoyed performing in classroom skits. In high school, she performed in a one-act play and was encouraged by her teacher to pursue acting. Later, while majoring in Library Science at Gallaudet, she "fell in love with theater." At that time, however, theater "wasn't an option for deaf people."

In 1967, after seeing her perform at Gallaudet, NTD founder David Hays invited Frelich to be a founding member of that fledgling group. With NTD, she traveled extensively throughout the United States and abroad.

Frelich and Waterstreet performed together in NTD for two years, appearing in several productions, including *Volpone* and *Woyzeck*.

Patrick Graybill, teacher/artist in NTID's Performing Arts Department, remembers the pair from their early days. "They've become so professional," he says proudly, "and it's important for our students to meet deaf role models."

In 1968 Frelich left NTD to raise her two sons. Waterstreet stayed on for 12 years. During that time, he also taught acting workshops and directed productions both for NTD and its Little Theatre of the Deaf (LTD), which stages productions for young audiences.

Frelich got her acting career back on track in 1978 when she met playwright Mark Medoff through her actor/set designer husband, Robert Steinberg, who had designed the sets for several of Medoff's shows. Medoff was so intrigued by Frelich, the first deaf person he had ever met, that he decided to write a play for her. The result was the critically acclaimed *Children of a Lesser God*, a story that examines the personal relationship between a young deaf cleaning woman and a male hearing teacher.

Children won the 1980 Tony Award for best Broadway play, and for her portrayal of the lead role of Sarah Norman Leeds, Frelich received a Tony for best actress. She was the first deaf performer to win such an award.

In *Love is Never Silent*, their next major project together, Frelich and Waterstreet played the deaf parents of a hearing daughter. The Hallmark Hall of Fame TV production was based on the novel, *In This Sign* by J. Greenberg. Set in the 1930s, *Love* is the story of a family in which the deaf parents are dependent on their hearing child for contact with the hearing world.

The show was well received and won 1986 Emmy Awards for best dramatic presentation and best director. Frelich and Waterstreet credit much of the show's success to deaf co-executive producer, Julianna Fjeld.

"She believed in the project for 10 years before it happened," says Waterstreet. The network wanted two well-known hearing actors to play the lead roles, but Fjeld insisted that deaf actors portray deaf characters.

Fjeld's persistence paid off, and for the first time, a TV network cast deaf actors in leading roles for a prime-time production.

Aside from the professional and financial rewards of TV work, both Frelich and Waterstreet feel strongly about doing more work in a medium that reaches such a wide audience.

"I feel a great responsibility to represent my people in my work," says Frelich.

Waterstreet, too, is confident that TV can be an effective tool for promoting deaf awareness. "We need to get more deaf actors mainstreamed into TV without dwelling on their deafness," he says. "We need to see deaf people managing to overcome communication difficulties in various ways."

Both actors have done much to promote the portrayal of deaf persons as ordinary individuals.

"Both Phyllis and Ed have demonstrated that acting is acting," says Dr. Bruce Halverson, chairperson of the Performing Arts Department. "It doesn't matter if you're deaf or hearing—good work is recognized by audiences. However, producers need to understand that deaf people should be represented on TV and in theater as everyday people. Then there would be more work for actors who happen to be deaf."

Frelich recently starred as a deaf playwright in another Medoff play, *The Hands of Its Enemy*. She also is collaborating with him on a one-woman show.

She has made several TV appearances, including one as a lonely hearts columnist on *Spenser for Hire*, a role unrelated to deafness.

"We should praise the network for showing a deaf character as a bright, capable woman who happens to be deaf," says Frelich. "It is an important step in helping the average person see deaf persons in a new way."

Edmund Waterstreet

Waterstreet tries to create opportunities to work with professional writers who, he acknowledges, have the power to originate good, deaf characters.

He has been featured regularly on all three seasons of the *Festival* children's series on the Silent Network Satellite Service.

Transmitted to more than 400 communities across the country, Silent Network provides programming in sign language, "open" captions, and sound. Because the captions can be seen without a special decoder, Waterstreet notes, hearing viewers can enjoy programs along with hearing-impaired audiences.

Waterstreet also often makes guest appearances on *Sesame Street*, playing the "friend" of deaf actress Linda Bove, his offscreen wife. "Maybe someday we'll get married on the show," he laughs.

He especially enjoys the opportunity to work with young children. "I'm glad that when the children who watch *Sesame Street* grow up, they will be more aware of deafness."

In addition to performing, Waterstreet teaches for the Visual Theatre Workshop (VTW) at the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles, and works on story "treatments" for producers to develop into TV movies. "You really have to create your own stories," he says.

His teaching experience has included both deaf and hearing students, and he has found that hearing actors are "very open, very accepting" of his direction and comments.

"I use the same strategies for directing deaf and hearing actors," he says. "I rely on the assistance of an interpreter who knows me 'through and through,' and a hearing assistant director who listens to how the voices sound."

Providing professional training and preparation for aspiring deaf actors is a rewarding experience for Waterstreet.

"I had to learn from hearing actors—I watched and copied them," he says. "Bernard Bragg, the renowned deaf actor, was my only deaf role model. Patrick Graybill and Bob Panara [recently retired professor in NTID's Liberal Arts Support Department] were among the few deaf theater teachers when I was young. All the deaf people I looked up to were teachers."

The concept of deaf theatrical role models is important to Frelich and Waterstreet, though neither thinks of herself or himself as one. Judging by the attentive crowds surrounding the pair following their presentation, however, NTID students clearly felt otherwise.

A Real Eye Opener

NTID's Eye and Ear Clinic

by Vincent Dollard

Students jam the hallway in various postures of noisy repose. Their boisterous greetings and lingering exits produce a discordant ebb and flow. It is the first week of NTID's orientation for new students, and each participant is receiving a visual screening exam.

All entering NTID students are tested for visual and distance clarity and color distinction. No other postsecondary educational facility in the country conducts as thorough a program to detect vision problems among its student population.

"We can't ignore the importance of visual screening," says Dr. Donald Johnson, senior research associate in NTID's Department of Communication Research and director of NTID's Eye and Ear Clinic.

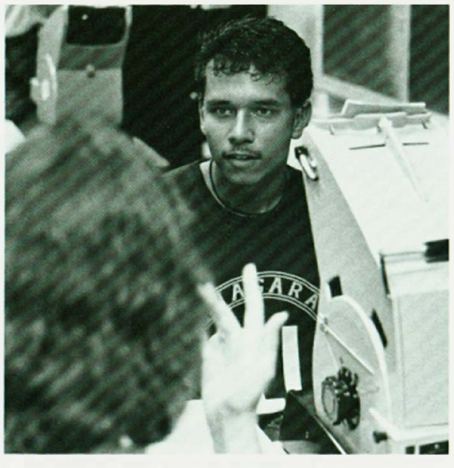
"It all begins with the Summer Vestibule Program (SVP)," says Johnson. "We screen every student who comes to the Institute. With the help of about a dozen assistants, we can see 50 students during a two-hour period. We run eight two-hour blocks in order to process all 325 students."

Johnson notes that of the 1987 SVP population, 51 percent had functional vision problems. This is approximately 50 percent higher than the national average, as reported in a study conducted by the National Society to Prevent Blindness.

Based on the results of the visual screening, as well as a "personal/family ocular history form" that each student fills out, 26 percent of those students reporting vision problems needed to be referred for further ophthalmological testing.

Because of the importance of visual clarity in the classroom, students who fail one or more parts of the visual acuity screening receive a complete ophthalmologic test, conducted in NTID's Eye and Ear Clinic. Drs. Scott Searl and Richard Seeger, ophthalmologists with Strong Memorial and St. Mary's Hospitals, respectively, conduct the tests and write any further prescriptions or referrals.

The tests are conducted in August, to allow time for prescriptions or further testing to be completed by the time classes begin in September.



Screening for the future *Michael Cangelosi receives a visual screening exam as part of NTID's orientation program for entering students. Fifty-one percent of NTID's 1987 entering students reported vision problems—twice the national average as reported by the National Society to Prevent Blindness.*

The vision screening program began in 1974 to determine if students who were taking speechreading courses were seeing clearly. Increased awareness of possible visual problems prompted NTID faculty members to refer students who had trouble seeing clearly or who had color distinction problems.

Johnson soon became chairperson of a task force that researched students' vision problems from 1976-79.

The group's mandate was to answer questions and develop guidelines in order to address the nature and incidence of vision problems among NTID students.

They chipped away at mountains of information and determined that support service was at the heart of determining policy.

"Of primary importance," says Johnson, "were the demands that would be made on existing support services over and above what was required for deafness.

"If the secondary impairment was mild enough that it didn't require extraordinary services," he says, "then NTID could handle the request."

In recent years, however, the advent of technological support services has increased the opportunities for students with vision problems. Large-print processors enable students to read from text books simply by passing the printed page under the processor. Also, by interfacing the processor to a personal computer, information being typed into the computer can appear on the screen in a large, bold typeface.

Johnson notes that the working philosophy for students with severe vision problems is to attempt to determine the appropriate support system before deciding if the student needs to be referred elsewhere.

"I'd rather try than tell a student that he or she cannot attend this school," says Johnson.

NTID assists students in obtaining large print processors and other low vision devices through their Vocational Rehabilitation counselors, and every six

months Johnson schedules tests to note any progression in those students diagnosed as having severe vision difficulties.

In addition to technological support, Johnson advises students based upon the type or severity of their vision problem. The standard procedure involves one hour of ophthalmological exams and whatever follow up Johnson and the ophthalmologist believe is necessary.

Follow up takes many forms, including educating and advising students or parents. This usually involves a slide show explaining the human eye structure, followed by a description of the various color or other vision defects as well as the type and degree of loss.

"I discuss the different eye tests," says Johnson. "We talk about why the student makes errors, what the errors mean, and the different classification systems of vision deficiencies."

One student who has benefited from the visual screening program is Edwin King, a first-year student from New York City. King, who has glaucoma, did well on the visual screening tests. However, he noted his condition on the "personal/family ocular history form."

Johnson points out that since King passed his screening tests, he would not have known about the glaucoma without the ocular history form.

King's condition had been diagnosed by his family's eye doctor who had prescribed medicine to keep the glaucoma from gradually eroding King's peripheral vision.

After further testing at NTID, Johnson took King to Strong Memorial Hospital for "fundus photos," or pictures of King's retina. Johnson will use these photos as a baseline against which to measure any changes in King's vision. When King graduates, he can take the pictures with him for use with another eye doctor.

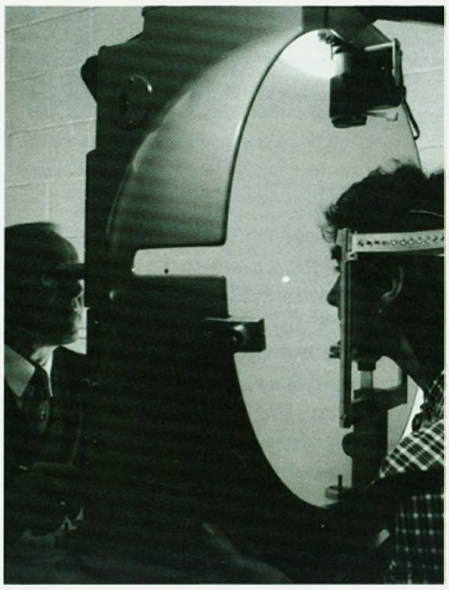
In addition, Johnson has set up periodic checkups for each year that King attends NTID.

"Dr. Johnson has given me a lot of information," says King. "I feel better about my glaucoma after talking with him."

For students with color vision problems, Johnson provides information about which colors will present problems and which careers these deficiencies will adversely affect. Students also receive a letter from Johnson describing the tests and their results so that they can discuss this information with their families or potential employers.

Johnson, with the students' permission, also sends parents a copy of each piece of information and always is willing to talk, either in person or over the telephone, with students or parents.

As the technical and educational support that Johnson provides has developed, he has noticed another group that needs information—RIT and NTID faculty members. To address the needs of professors who encounter students with vision deficiencies, NTID has implemented a vision liaison program with NTID's School of Business Careers and RIT's College of Business. Patricia Lago, NTID career development counselor in Business Careers, is the first vision liaison for the year-old program.



Look into my eyes Dr. Donald Johnson uses a projection perimeter to administer visual field tests on students. The tests help detect progressive retinal degeneration or other suspected retinal problems.

Lago, who has Usher's Syndrome, a gradually degenerative vision loss, says that her position as vision liaison is still evolving. Her current job description involves direct service in the form of counseling for all visually impaired RIT students and consulting with all RIT counselors and faculty members in the College of Business.

Lago's goals for her new role are built upon three basic premises: she encourages students to take responsibility for themselves; she provides support for RIT faculty members; and she is intent on creating an honest environment for students with these special needs.

Part of her responsibility is to identify with the students what their needs are and to lead them to the point where they take responsibility for themselves.

"I don't want students to say 'I have a vision problem,'" she notes. "They need to discuss it with their teachers and learn how to explain to others what's needed."

She says that in some cases, a student will refuse to accept the limitations that accompany a vision loss. And while Lago advocates a strong sense of independence and a solid work ethic as a means toward success, she also believes that students must realize what they will be up against in the world beyond RIT.

"Sometimes it means having to say some painful things," says Lago. "But if that's the only way to get a student to face reality, then it's my responsibility. It's important to understand whether a student is in a denial or acceptance stage of understanding his or her loss."

Lago's second priority is working with RIT faculty members to provide the support they need in working with visually impaired students. Lago last year assembled a panel of NTID students with vision problems and made a presentation to RIT faculty members.

In addition to the knowledge gained by those who attended, Lago says that the students involved also benefited.

"One student was shy and never had talked about his vision," she says. "He didn't know what he was going to say, but he did a wonderful job. He gained a lot of self-confidence in one morning."

Lago's third goal is to help the RIT community become more comfortable in dealing with students who have special needs.

Sally Hutteman, associate professor in NTID's School of Business Careers, appreciates Lago's efforts.

Hutteman points out that both Lago and Johnson have taken the time to attend her classes and offer advice and practical suggestions. And she notes that the need for a vision specialist is real, since most faculty members are not trained to deal with visually impaired students.

"Wherever there are visually impaired students," says Hutteman, "there should also be a vision specialist. Patti is empathetic, but she's also realistic. She wants nothing more than what's needed for the student to succeed."

"Don and I make a good team," Lago says. "We both care deeply about these students. However, there comes a time when you have to step back and let them make their own decisions."

MASTERING FATE

by Jean Ingham

Sharon Komlos is the type of person who inspires enthusiasm in those she meets. Facing an audience of deaf students, who daily confront a variety of communication challenges, Komlos used her charm to convince them that "Anything is possible."

"Everyone has problems," says Julie Cammeron, coordinator of the Special Speaker Series that brought Komlos to NTID in September. "I felt that when our students and faculty heard her story, they would be able to deal with life's problems, put their problems behind them, and move on with their lives. She is an excellent example of the adage, 'Strength comes with adversity.'"

The reaction to Komlos, who was blinded in 1980 by an attacker's bullet, was exactly what Cammeron predicted.

"Now that I've met her, I can get through the little things that I thought were big," a student commented.

"She showed such strength, it made my problems seem small and easier to handle," added another.

Komlos shared her "live-for-the-day" philosophy with an overflow crowd of students, faculty, and staff members in the NTID Theatre.

"When you look at the past," she advised, "give it a glance and wave goodbye. When you look at the future, greet it with hopes of good things to come. When you look at today, the day in which we live, look at it with excitement and enthusiasm, as through the eyes of a child."

Her life, before she was blinded, was normal. She had three children: Shawn, Marc, and Kristin. She was married and worked as an insurance adjuster in Boca Raton, Florida.

On a fateful night in 1980, Komlos drove home alone over a quiet stretch of Florida turnpike.

A car had been following her, but she didn't think that was unusual. Then, as the car pulled next to her, she saw a blinding flash of light and felt a searing pain. She was blinded instantly. She realized that she had been shot, and struggled to bring the car safely to the shoulder of the road.

"I had to," she says with a wry smile. "It was a new car and my first thought was, 'My husband will kill me if I dent the car.'"

She sounded the horn to attract attention. Within a few minutes, she says, a male voice said, "My God, who did this to you? I'll take you to the hospital."

Thinking she had been rescued, Komlos gratefully accepted. To stay alert, Komlos says, she concentrated on sounds—the car's engine, passing vehicles. When the man stopped the car and helped her out, she realized she was not at a hospital.

Instead, the man had taken her to his apartment, where he raped and stabbed her.

The next morning, Komlos heard her assailant moving around the apartment. Paralyzed with fear, she lay still and he, thinking she was dead, left. She heard an engine start—"the same engine I'd listened to the night before."

When the car drove off, she struggled to her feet and began groping around the room until she found an unlocked door. She stepped outside and screamed for help.

The first voice she heard was a man's. Instinctively, she withdrew, not knowing if he was her assailant. But after asking a few questions and listening to his voice, she allowed the man to take her to a hospital.

Doctors and nurses were amazed that Komlos was still alive. For seven hours they struggled to close her stab wounds. The bullet, however, had entered

A vision of hope Sharon Komlos reaches out to NTID students after her presentation.

cleanly through the corner of her left eye and exited her right eye at about the same point, leaving her permanently blind.

The next day, the doctor revealed the prognosis. Instead of being depressed and angry as the doctor expected, Komlos' reaction was "Okay, let's get on with life."

This attitude, and the fact that Komlos has never given in to anger, fear, or defeatism, puzzles many people.

"My life didn't stop just because I was shot," she says. "I had things to do, decisions to make about my family. That man took away eight hours of my life and my eyesight. I'll be darned if I'll give him a second more by harboring a lot of useless emotions."

A remarkable woman who looks younger than her 38 years, Komlos can laugh at some aspects of her disability. When she came home from the hospital, she recalls that her daughter, Kristin, then 3 years old, told her, "I'm blind like you, Mommy."

Komlos explained to Kristin she wasn't blind because she could see. But the child insisted. Finally—to make her point—Kristin pulled on her mother's blonde hair. "We're both blind."

"At the tender age of 3, blind and blonde sounded the same," Komlos laughs.

Komlos, who believes that, "You can be anything you want to be if you try, regardless of the obstacles you face," is living proof of her optimism.

She cites several times when, if she hadn't been determined, others would have categorized her as "handicapped."

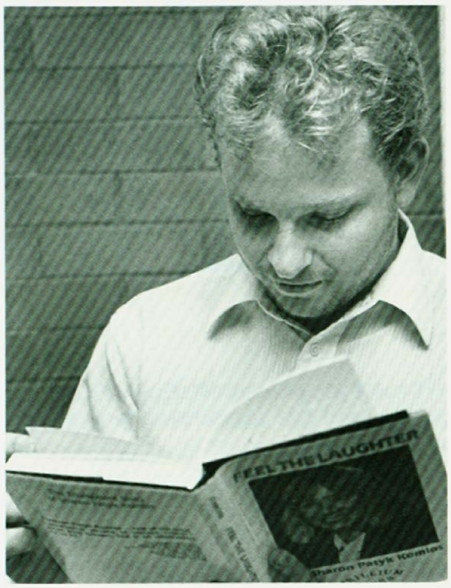
The first time was when the doctor told her she would never see again. Another was about six weeks after the attack, when a representative of the Association for the Blind came to her home and offered to teach her how to brush her teeth, take a shower, and fix her hair.

"If I hadn't taken a shower or brushed my teeth in all that time," Komlos grimaces, "no one would have stayed in the house with me!"

The Association was equally determined to teach Komlos to read braille, although Komlos had—and still has—no personal desire to do so.

"I have a talking clock, a talking calculator, and the use of my daughter's talking computer," she argues.

"I realize that many blind persons prefer braille and that's fine. I use talking books and listen to radio stations that feature reading for the blind—newspapers, magazines, even recipes."



Can't wait Many who purchased Komlos' book began reading immediately.

Frustrated by the inability "even of people experienced with handicaps" to understand her acceptance of her disability, Komlos continued to forge ahead on her own.

"It was—and still is—difficult for people to accept that I felt no anger, no depression," she says. "For the man who assaulted me, who is now in prison, I feel pity. And that is a lower feeling than anger—much more powerful. I have to pity him because he can't see life as positive.

"I'm still free to experience life," says Komlos. "I get frustrated over little things, and I have no patience, but I don't get depressed. There is too much to feel."

There are times, however, when she feels isolated by her disability.

Many people, Komlos explains, equate blindness with deafness—"If you are blind, you can't hear.

"I imagine deaf persons experience something similar—'If you can't hear, you can't think or talk,'" says Komlos.

During a question and answer period following Komlos' presentation, a student asked if it disturbed her to be so dependent on others. Her answer was affirmative, but she says she has learned to live with it.

"You see," she says, "I'm a realist. I look at my limitations, know what they are, and work within them—or rise above them."

Another student asked if she considered herself a role model. She laughed.

"Heavens no, I could never be that. Just because I approached my disability in a particular way doesn't mean that everyone should do the same thing. I'm saying, 'You can if you try.' I just try to motivate."

Students flocked to purchase Komlos' book, ***Feel the Laughter***, after her presentation, and crowded around her for autographs.

In addition to her monumental speaking schedule, Komlos spends much of her time helping other crime victims. She is on the board of directors of Crime Stoppers of Palm Beach (Florida) County, Inc. and on the advisory board of Crime Stoppers International. She also is a member of the Crime Prevention Officers of Palm Beach County and the International Association of Crime Prevention Practitioners.

In April 1985, President Ronald Reagan honored Komlos for outstanding service on behalf of crime victims. Later that year, her former hometown of Garfield Heights, Ohio, proclaimed July 8, "Sharon Komlos Day."

She has appeared on ABC's *20/20* with her family, which now includes her fiancé Raymond D'Eusanio.

Komlos feels that life has many different avenues, each with twists and turns.

"It's the way you deal with it," she says. "You can't expect someone to hand you answers on a silver platter. It doesn't happen that way. Your strength comes from within, and you do have it. You just either haven't known how to find it or haven't been challenged enough."

The twist that Fate handed Komlos eight years ago shifted the course of her life. She lost her job and got divorced, but has found a new avocation in speaking and writing. In her darkness, Komlos says, there are still discoveries to be made—and she is ready to make them.

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Managing the Message

by Lynne Bohlman

The scene is typical of college classrooms around the country—with one major difference.

The teacher paces in front of the room, lecturing, rubbing his hands, and posing questions. The students, slouched in their chairs, take notes, listen attentively, or daydream about the upcoming weekend.

In this classroom though, there is another role player. An interpreter sits straight with no space between his back and the black formica chair to the right of the pacing teacher, translating his words into a signed language that two deaf students in the classroom of about 35 can understand.

This interpreter is a member of NTID's Department of Interpreting Services (DIS), which provided RIT in fiscal year 1987 with nearly 60,000 hours of service. The department, comprised of 58 full-time and eight part-time interpreters, is the largest single employer of interpreters in the country; and yet, it is not enough.

DIS cannot meet the interpreting demands at RIT. In Rochester and throughout the country, the demand for qualified interpreters outstrips the supply. So sometimes, even at RIT, classes in which deaf students are enrolled proceed without an interpreter.

When the interpreter is absent and a replacement cannot be found, Edward Boyer III, a cross-registered student in RIT's College of Business, leaves the classroom.

"I feel like I'm left out," he says. "If I stayed I wouldn't understand what was being communicated. I'd become bored and restless."

Despite the occasional frustrations, says Michael Rizzolo, a DIS manager, "It would be a whole other ball game on this campus without the interpreters. We cover 95 percent of the needs. Interpreting Services is a vital part of NTID."

"Without interpreters," says Mary Walsh, a third-year Accounting student at NTID, "the classroom would be dead for me.

"I can't imagine not having interpreters around," she adds. "They're really a helping hand for deaf students."

Not only do interpreters help deaf students understand what's happening in the classroom, Walsh says, they also help provide understanding in social interactions between deaf and hearing students.

"Without interpreters," she says, "there would probably be a line between hearing and deaf students."

A variety of interpreting needs exists on campus. DIS receives requests for oral (without voice), reverse (voicing for the deaf person), manual (sign language only), and deaf-blind interpreting, but most requests are for simultaneous interpreting (sign language and oral).

Although DIS schedules are heavily academic, interpreters also can be found at student organization meetings, Institute-wide presentations and lectures, athletic events, on-campus job interviews, religious services, registration, on field trips, and in studios and laboratories.

"Education is the number one priority here," notes Interpreter Robert Barrett. "So most interpreters' energies are directed toward a classroom before a residence hall floor meeting."

To cover the campus, interpreters are divided into five teams, each headed by a manager: business and computer science; campus life; fine and applied arts and graphic arts and photography; liberal arts and social work; and science and engineering.

The 10 to 15 staff members on each team spend at least half their interpreting time—25 hours per week—within their area. The rest of the interpreting time is spent gaining experience in other areas.

DIS divided into teams, says Rizzolo, to help interpreters become more effective and develop an area of expertise. Over time, team members gain a knowledge of technical terms used in a particular area. They also spend time interpreting in other areas to sample the variety that exists on campus.

The communication link Robert Barrett (left) interprets a "Science and Technology Policy" course for Edward Boyer III, a cross-registered student in RIT's College of Business.

"Before the core teams were established, interpreters were jacks-of-all-trades and masters of none," says Barrett, who has been a DIS staff member since 1974, longer than anyone else.

The people who make up DIS today are a bright, creative, and individual group. "The department," Barrett says, "is as diverse in personalities as it is in assignments."

And it is likely that these personalities chose interpreting for as many as 66 different reasons, including a desire to be of service, a concern for deafness, an interest in performing arts, and a fascination with sign language.

After completing his freshman year at RIT, Barrett needed a summer job.

"I knew I had to help support myself," he says, "and I didn't want to wash dishes."

He signed up in the summer of 1974 for NTID's then 10-week Basic Interpreter Training Program. After his junior year, he decided to stay on as a general staff interpreter, partly because he had lost interest in his Printing program.

Interpreters Colleen Freeman and Valarie Randleman both became interested in sign language while working in other areas at the Institute.

Secretary in NTID's Department of Professional Development seven years ago, Freeman became interested in deafness and the language deaf students and faculty members used.

"It really intrigued me that these people had spent their entire lives trying to learn my language, to communicate with me," she says. "I thought I could at least make an effort to communicate with them in their language."

In 1981, Randleman was working as a part-time security officer at RIT, in addition to her full-time job in a local insurance company's office.

"I got tired of taking out paper and pencil to communicate," she says. "The students were trying to communicate with me and I wasn't even meeting them halfway."

Both women signed up for sign language courses, and with the encouragement of their instructors and training at NTID, developed the skills necessary to become interpreters.

Barrett, Freeman, and Randleman came to DIS during different stages of the Department's development. DIS, like the profession of interpreting, has grown a great deal since it was established 20 years ago.

When Barrett joined DIS in 1974, the Department consisted mostly of students and general staff, who were paid hourly wages. Now, DIS is comprised primarily of a full-time professional staff that is salaried. Also, the minimum required skill level expected of staff members is much higher now.

Barrett remembers with chagrin one of his first interpreting assignments.

"I was interpreting a biology movie," he recalls. "My skills were really bad at that time. During the film, I saw one hearing-impaired student sign to another 'Lousy interpreter.' At first, I was surprised I understood her, and then I was disappointed that I had."

Today, Barrett, because of his seniority, skills, and professional development, is a highly respected "veteran."

All staff members are encouraged to improve their skills and technique, further their education, and participate in other professional development activities.

A career ladder recently was developed to give interpreters room for growth within the department.

"It's difficult for a practitioner to remain a practitioner, to move up, or to earn more money without going into interpreting training or administration," says Katharine Gillies, former DIS chairperson and now a part-time interpreter. "We developed the career ladder because we wanted to encourage interpreters to stay at NTID as practitioners."

Designed by a committee made up of department members, the career ladder has three levels and three areas of credential—educational degree, experience, and certification.

Certification of skills by a national board of the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID), is required within two years of employment in DIS.

Certification, those in the interpreting profession say, is a professional standard as important to an interpreter as a medical degree is to a doctor. In the same way that "You wouldn't go to a doctor who didn't have 'M.D.' after his name," says Randleman, echoing her colleagues, "those who use interpreters want to know they are certified."

"The market population," Gillies adds, "depends on certification to determine whether or not an interpreter is skilled."

Like DIS, the interpreting profession itself is young and is experiencing some growing pains, one of them centering on the issue of certification.

The professional interpreting organization, RID, was established in 1964 to make available throughout the country a resource of interpreters, set a standard of ethics, and develop and evaluate certification criteria.

One of the clearest challenges the field now faces, says Gillies, is to revamp certification standards to better reflect what truly is expected of interpreters. This process currently is underway.

Another challenge interpreters continually have faced during the past 20 years is the struggle to be viewed as professionals.

"We've come from a place where we were considered simply signers and helpers to a place where we are viewed as professionals," says Randleman, adding that, in some cases, there still is work to be done.

"We know we are professionals, but it is important for others to recognize us as such. If someone does not view us as professionals, then we need to be responsible for educating that person."

While these challenges face the profession as a whole, individual interpret-

"The best moments are when the communication is happening so well that they almost don't know you're there."

Valarie Randleman

ers encounter challenges every time they provide their service.

Responsible for ensuring that all parties have equal access to communication, the interpreter must convey the mood and intent of the message as well as the information.

"The interpreter has to convey the message physically, mentally, and linguistically," Rizzolo says.

Interpreting for a religion course one fall afternoon, Barrett interpreted an average of about 150 words per minute. Not only did he interpret a class discussion about what it would take to prove that God existed, he also interpreted the nuances of communication. Barrett indicated a question with raised eyebrows and hands held out to his side, a statement with a nod of his head, humor with a smile or chuckle, sarcasm with a shrug of his shoulders, emphasis by leaning forward and with exaggerated movements, and disbelief with wide eyes.

Emotions also become a part of the communication process. Rizzolo recalls crying along with a girl who called home to tell her mother she was pregnant, and sharing in the delight of a student who told his parents he had earned a 4.0 grade point average. Freeman remembers having to interpret from a hearing person to a deaf individual the message: "I don't have time to watch you wave your hands around and wait for the interpreter to figure out what you're saying."

Whatever the subtleties or emotions of a communication situation, Rizzolo says, it is the interpreter's responsibility to convey the message as a facilitator, not a participant.

"The best moments," he says, "are when the communication is happening so well that they almost don't know you're there."

In the early days of the profession, Gillies says, interpreters were considered helpers of deaf people. The field then went to the other extreme, and interpreters were seen as machines, mechanically dispensing communication. Today, Gillies adds, interpreters are trying to discover a comfortable middle ground.

"There's a fine line," she says, "between effectively getting the message across and becoming an equal participant."

Good interpreters, though, don't usually cross that line, she adds. Most are aware of the ethics of the situation as well as the different cultures involved in communication between hearing and hearing-impaired persons.

Most important, however, good interpreters have a strong command of English and sign language.

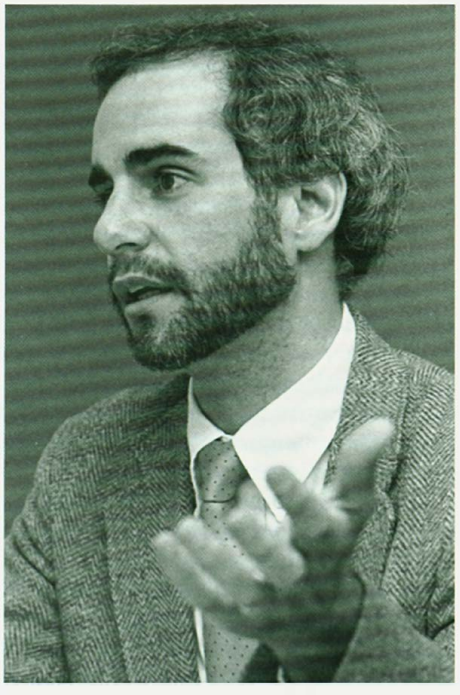
"If they don't have good skills," Gillies says, "they have nothing to build on. The attitude of an interpreter is also important. Deaf consumers often tell us that attitude is more important than language skills.

"It's hard to define what the right attitude is," she adds, "but it's easy to pick out who has it and who doesn't."

Interpreting, Rizzolo notes, is a demanding field, both physically and mentally. Interpreters take in information at the same time they are interpreting what was communicated only seconds earlier.

"The brain is working constantly," he says. "There are no mental breaks; you're continually processing information."

Because of the heavy demands, interpreters can sometimes suffer from burnout. A few years ago, Barrett was interpreting in an area that held no interest for him and his skills were not improving. He considered leaving the field, but instead changed teams and became rejuvenated. Today, in addition to his DIS responsibilities, Barrett is president of the local RID organization, the Genesee

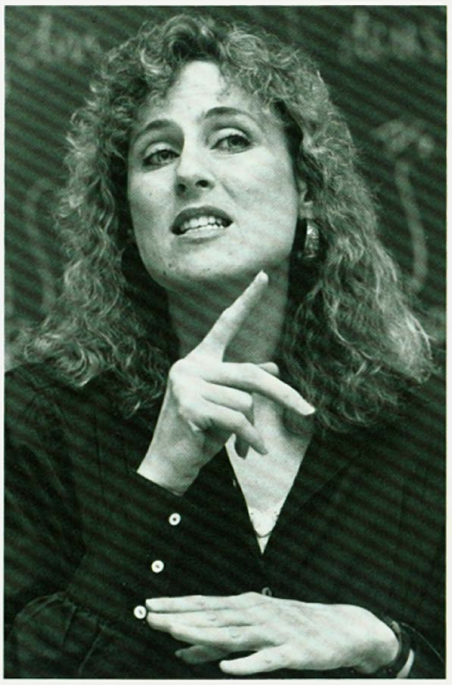


Michael Rizzolo

Valley Region Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf.

Other interpreters battle burnout by concentrating on professional development or other interests. Freeman, like some 50 of her DIS colleagues, also interprets on a freelance basis for the Interpreter Referral Service (IRS), a community-based service that is part of the Rochester Center for Independent Living.

Last year, 160 "contract" interpreters through the IRS provided people in the



Colleen Freeman

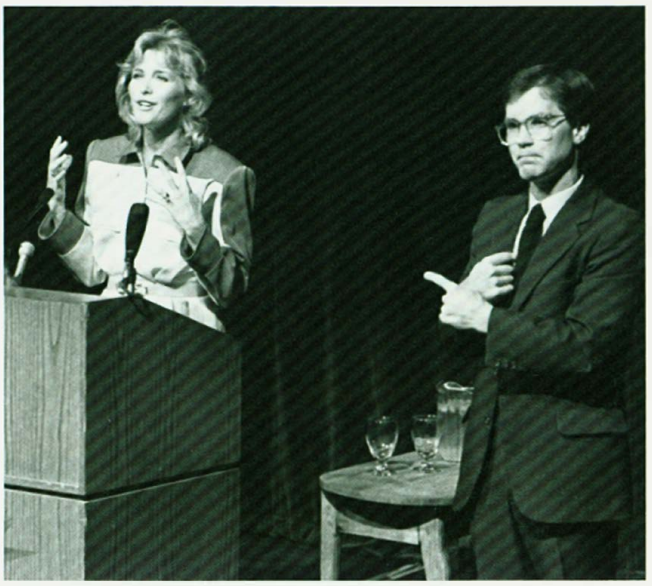
Rochester community with 30,000 hours of service. The IRS, established by a New York State agency in 1981, is the only local organization designed "to provide interpreting services for people who want to communicate but don't know how," says Rod Thomson, former IRS coordinator and past DIS staff member.

"We decided to go with a simple mandate," he adds, "and do the best we could with that."

In addition to serving people in the Rochester community, IRS also benefits DIS interpreters who contract there in ways other than a source of extra income.

"Interpreting local theater productions for IRS," Freeman says, "offers me the opportunity to further develop my skills, challenges me to convey concepts, and helps balance the academic interpreting I do."

In addition to interpreting a few hours a week for IRS, Randleman also does some "consumer education."



For interpreters, "all the world's a stage" Donald LaRock conveys actress Susan Howard's message to an NTID audience during her 1986 visit.

As part of her service outside the Institute, she has for the past three years interpreted gospel music performed during her church choir's fall concert.

"A lot of people in the black community," she says, "have no exposure to deafness. Their experiences with deafness are limited, so I do some consumer education. I tell them how to get involved in interpreting, where to find services in the community, and where they can take sign language courses if they're interested. I let the children know that interpreting is a career option."

In addition to burnout, physical disabilities also can be an occupational hazard. Carpal tunnel syndrome, inflammation of the carpal tunnel nerve in the wrist, is most common to people in fields where frequent use of the hands and arms is required. Secretaries, bakers, and interpreters, for example, are most susceptible to the disability.

While physical ailments such as carpal tunnel syndrome, which is treated by rest or surgery, certainly are a concern for those affected, they are not currently a widespread problem at RIT.

DIS has tried to minimize the potential for physical ailments, Rizzolo says, by instituting a 25-hour interpreting week, a required rest period between assignments, and a limit of two consecutive interpreting hours.

Despite the potential hazards, interpreters find satisfaction in their jobs for a variety of reasons.

Many enjoy the diversity.

"Every 10 weeks, my schedule changes," Freeman says.

Interpreters also are exposed to a variety of interesting people, both within and outside the profession. Barrett met Dick Rutan and Jeanna Yeager, who flew around the world nonstop last spring in a craft called Voyager, when he interpreted for them during their presentation at the University of Rochester.

"It was a real thrill to be on stage with them," he says.

"Interpreting," says Randleman, "is the only job I've ever had that I wanted to make into a career—in terms of the satisfaction I get from it and the growth and development I see in myself.

"I'll stay in interpreting," she adds, "until I no longer feel challenged, and I don't see that happening in the near future."

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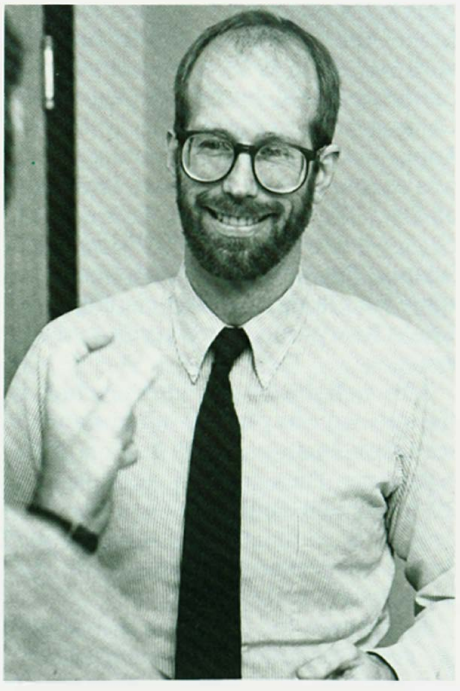


Rod Thomson

A Year in

ISRAEL

by Ann Kanter

"On the seventh day you shall cease from labor" (Exodus 34:21) After a hectic work week, Diana Pryntz relaxes in the buoyant waters of the Dead Sea.

A kibbutz wedding is nothing like the traditional Jewish ceremony, according to Diana Pryntz, assistant professor in NTID's Business/Computer Science Support Department, who recently returned from a year's study and research in Israel.

"All 200 kibbutz residents, children included, were invited to the ceremony as well as to the reception," she says. "Most of the children lined up in two rows to create an aisle for the bride and groom, while others carried the bridal veil. The children also performed a dance and honored the bride and groom with handmade gifts. Adult members put on a *This is Your Life*-type show, recalling highlights of the couple's courtship."

Pryntz's attendance at the wedding was a fringe benefit of her trip to Israel—the culmination of a dream she's nurtured since 1978. At that time, as a candidate for a bachelor's degree in Computer Science from RIT's College of Applied Science and Technology, she was encouraged by Associate Professor of Data Processing Paul Taylor, then chairperson of NTID's Computer Science/Engineering Support Team, to apply for a Rotary Club scholarship that would have earned her a year's study in Israel.

Although she did not win the scholarship, a seed was planted in her mind, a seed that finally reached fruition eight years later. Thus, in 1986, at the age of 29, her dream came true. Even after the passage of so much time, however, the dream was realized only after thorough investigation and planning.

To prepare for the work she would do, Pryntz conducted an extended correspondence with Israeli educators of deaf students. Based on her findings, she wrote a proposal for researching the use of computers in education. This included a nationwide computer survey of teachers' attitudes toward computer education as well as of resources available at Israeli schools with programs for deaf students.

On July 28, 1986, Pryntz, along with her husband, Brian Nadworny, and PeeWee, the 55-pound mixed breed dog who serves as her "hearing ear," boarded an El-Al plane at Kennedy International Airport for the 10-hour flight to Tel Aviv.

Nadworny had left his position as computer consultant with Eastman Kodak Company in Rochester and arranged to work as a consultant with an Israeli firm.

The threesome was met at Tel Aviv's Ben Gurion Airport by Pryntz's cousins, who live in Kfar Saba, about one hour from Tel Aviv. They stayed with the family long enough to find their way around and rent a nearby apartment.

Once settled into what would be their home for the next year, Pryntz began work with the Ministry of Education. At Tel Aviv University, she made presentations to students in the Hearing-Impairment Education Program, helped set up a speech training software package, and discussed value clarification and other deaf education issues.

She made similar presentations to groups such as Shema, an organization that works with preschool deaf children and their parents. She also worked with

At journey's end Pryntz in her office at NTID.

individual educators of deaf people, and through contacts with two deaf social clubs, she questioned deaf individuals themselves.

In addition, she served as a consultant on support services such as interpreting, tutoring, and notetaking—services for which NTID is known and which are nonexistent in Israel.

One result of Pryntz's study showed that deaf Israelis are interested in computer literacy. But although Israeli educators have computers, only recently have they developed programs for using them to teach deaf students.

Based on her research and data collection, Pryntz will write a report to the Israeli Ministry of Education and to Tel Aviv University, where it may be used as a guide to update computer education of deaf students.

Because Israel is a young nation, everything in the field of education for deaf students is a continuing experiment, and many of the techniques are borrowed from the United States and England.

Of Israel's day schools for deaf pupils, Pryntz says, "Some use total communication, while others provide oral environments. Many are up-to-date in their knowledge of teaching theories, but they're not involved in deaf culture, as we are in this country. Because of that, they're less understanding of the significant role that communication and deaf culture play in education.

"Education for young deaf Israeli children, such as it is, is improving," says Pryntz. "But there's no university for deaf students—not even a high school—so the youngsters are all mainstreamed, and there are no tutors or notetakers. Consequently, except for the exceptionally bright ones who would succeed anywhere, few deaf students continue their education beyond grade school."

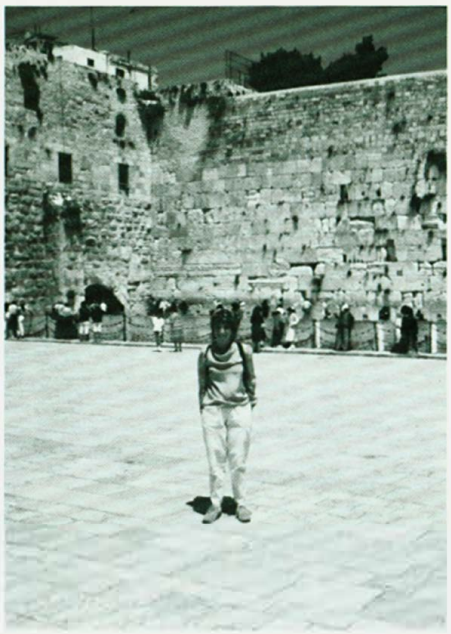
Pryntz thinks much of this will change.

"The younger teachers of deaf children have higher expectations than their predecessors," she says, "so they will accomplish more. In the past, teachers thought that deaf students had no chance at success, and often, that became a self-fulfilling prophecy."

One area in which Israel seems to be ahead of the United States is the early diagnosis of children with disabilities. Israeli children with hearing impairments usually are diagnosed by the end of their first year.

Thus, the education of deaf Israeli children, whether they are trained orally or in sign language, begins early. Parents also are advised on how to communicate with and raise their deaf youngsters.

Deaf Israelis, whether children or adults, were not familiar with hearing-ear dogs before the arrival of Pryntz and PeeWee. There was great interest, therefore, when Pryntz demonstrated PeeWee's skills to members of a deaf club and to participants at a conference on a variety of guide animals. She also gave lessons in training a hearing-ear dog to individual members of the deaf community.



Immersed in history Pryntz poses near Jerusalem's Wailing Wall, believed to be a remnant of Solomon's Temple and revered by Jews as a place of pilgrimage, lamentation, and prayer.

She showed how she trained PeeWee to alert her to many sounds, such as a ringing doorbell and telephone, alarm clock, and microwave oven. She described training him to attend to his personal needs on command, thus enabling him to remain with her in the plane's cabin during the long flight from Rochester to Israel.

The novelty of a hearing-ear dog attracted so much attention, in fact, that Pryntz was featured in *Mariv*, a leading Israeli newspaper.

In her free time, Pryntz and her husband toured the historic countryside, visiting various sites near the Kinneret (Sea of Galilee); Belvoir, a 12th-century crusader's castle; archeological ruins of the Roman theater of Beth She'an, reputed to be one of the larger cities of the Roman Empire in 200 A.D.; the sixth-century Beth Alpha Synagogue, known for its beautifully preserved mosaic floor; and the beach resort of Eilat. They also visited sites in Beersheva, Haifa, Jaffa, Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, and the Dead Sea, the lowest point on earth.

Once, when she heard that there was a large, modern supermarket on the outskirts of Tel Aviv, Pryntz decided to investigate, in hopes of finding a larger selection of food than was available locally. After a half hour's drive, she was disappointed to discover row upon row of identical merchandise.

Thus, despite the thrill of exploring Israel's culture and castles, Pryntz was glad to return to the comforts of home in Rochester. Born in Chicago, she grew up in the Bronx, New York, and moved to Rochester when she enrolled at RIT in 1975. In 1979, she received her bachelor's degree in Computer Science, and in 1983, received her master of science degree in Instructional Technology from RIT.

She met Nadworny in 1981 in an Israeli folk dance group at Rochester's Jewish Community Center. Pryntz thought "Brian looked nice," and approached him.

The irony of the situation was that but a few minutes before, out of curiosity, Nadworny had asked a woman to whom he was talking, who happened to be studying sign language, to teach him to spell his name. Thus, when Pryntz approached, he introduced himself by signing, "My name is Brian."

"I was so happy," recalls Pryntz. "I thought he was deaf. I began to sign at my normal speed until I realized that he didn't understand."

Subsequently, she taught him sign language, and three years later, on a beautiful July day, they were married in a Rochester park by a rabbi who conducted the ceremony in a combination of Hebrew and English sign language and voice.

Since their return from Israel, Nadworny has been working on the thesis for his master's program in Computer Science, while also performing the role of househusband. He and Pryntz enjoy sharing care for Avi, their son born in December.

As Pryntz looks back on her trip to Israel, she is happy in the belief that "I serve as living proof that a profoundly deaf person can succeed in the world of hearing professionals."

Almost ★ ALL ★ AMERICAN

by Lynne Bohlman

Wladimir "Wally" Harmasch may have a Russian name and heritage, but his job philosophy bears a close resemblance to the good ol' American work ethic.

Hard-working, conscientious, and eager to please, Harmasch is a senior laboratory technician in the Polyurethane Division of Mobay Corporation, a Bayer U.S.A., Inc. company that manufactures polyurethane chemical, animal health, and plastic and rubber products, as well as dyes and pigments, agricultural chemicals, fibers, coatings, and resins.

One of 1,300 employees at Mobay's corporate headquarters outside Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Harmasch's job involves testing the physical properties—strength, compressive deflection, dimensional stability, and thermal conductivity—of rigid and flexible foams used for insulation and in automobiles, respectively.

In a laboratory filled with machines that squeeze and stretch the polyurethane products, ovens that bake the samples, and cold boxes that age them at sub-zero temperatures, Harmasch enjoys the routine of his job—cutting, measuring, calculating, and analyzing.

"Wally's a good technician," says his supervisor, William Bartels. "He does a whale of a job."

Getting and doing a good job have always been important to Harmasch, which is why he came to NTID.

After graduating in 1969 from the Illinois School for the Deaf in Jacksonville, which he attended from kindergarten through 12th grade, Harmasch spent 18 months at Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C.

In 1971, however, he switched to NTID at RIT. "I wanted to learn the skills that would give me the best job," he says.

Harmasch became a pioneer at NTID as the first deaf student to graduate from the College of Science's Chemical Technology program. He is remembered fondly by members of the Science/Engineering Support staff because his success helped pave the way for other deaf students.

Family ties The Harmasch family: Wladimir, Carla, and daughters, Vicky and Amy.

The Chemical Technology program, which since has been discontinued, was good for deaf students, says Gail Binder, associate professor in the Science/Engineering Support Department, because it was a "hands-on course of study that gave students a highly specialized skill.

"Many NTID students who participated in the program went on to successful careers," Binder says. "Wally was the first of many."

Binder, along with other support staff members, helped Harmasch, who relies on sign language, receive support services, get through language-based theoretical courses such as physics and technical writing, and obtain a co-op position at Eastman Kodak Company.

As a laboratory technician at Kodak in 1973, Harmasch tested film for cleanliness.

"I was able to improve my skills and gain experience," Harmasch recalls. "I was impressed to see how well my NTID training had prepared me."

It was at Kodak that Harmasch proved to himself he could make it in the working world. Until then, he hadn't been sure.

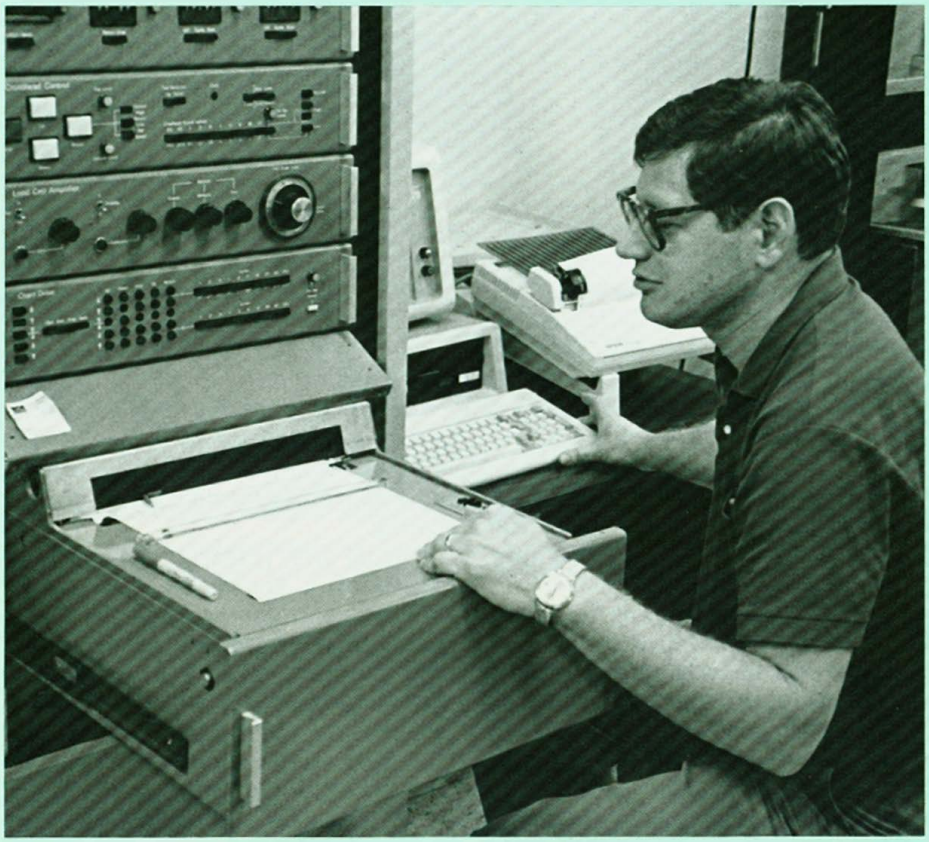
Although Kodak offered him a full-time position, Harmasch declined so that he could find work in Pittsburgh—his wife's hometown. In addition to the associate degree he earned in 1975, Harmasch also left NTID with the woman he would marry.

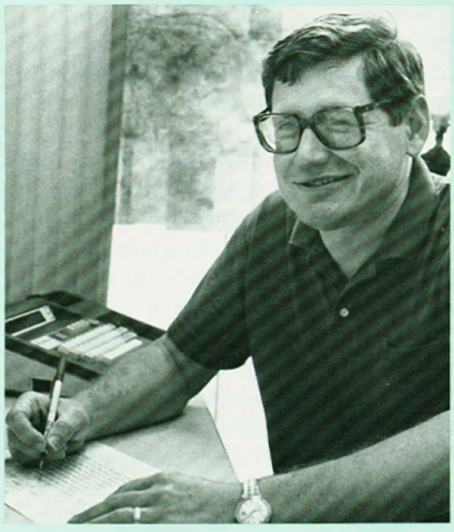
Even before coming to the Institute, Harmasch had his eyes on Carla Chris-

topher, a 1973 Visual Communication/Art graduate. When he was considering transferring, a high school friend who also attended NTID showed him an NTID Student/Faculty/Staff directory. Harmasch pointed out Christopher's picture and asked who she was. His friend assured him she was "a nice girl." When Harmasch arrived at NTID, his friend introduced the two.

They dated throughout Harmasch's four years at NTID and were married after he graduated. They now have two daughters: Vicky, 9, and Amy, 5. Both girls are hearing.

"I realize I have a difficult time communicating with my children," Harmasch says, adding, "I'm glad they're hearing. They'll have a lot of good opportunities, more so perhaps than do deaf people."





Charting success Top, Harmasch looks over a printout of test results; above, he relaxes in his office at Mobay Corporation in Pittsburgh.

The children understand that their parents are deaf, he says. Amy tells hearing people who attempt to talk to her father, "He can't hear you." Sometimes though, the girls, especially Vicky, seem a little uncomfortable about that.

At a recent open house at school, her father says, "Vicky was a bit shy about interpreting [between her parents and teacher]. I could tell by her face—but later she loosened up."

One of the Harmasch family's favorite activities is traveling. Harmasch has videotapes and pictures of the family at Disney World; Washington, D.C.; and Hershey, Pennsylvania.

A place Harmasch would like to visit, but hasn't yet, is the Soviet Union. His parents are Russian, and he has relatives in that country whom he has never met.

"Who knows?" Harmasch ponders. "Gorbachev says he's going to open things up. Maybe we'll visit there soon."

Harmasch's parents came to the United States after World War II. They met in Austria, where the Nazis had resettled them from Russia. Harmasch's Ukrainian father survived the Great Famine controlled by the Red Army which had, when he was a young boy, taken over the family farm and later sent him to work in Siberia.

Harmasch was born in Austria and came with his parents to this country about a year later.

It's unclear whether he was born deaf or became deaf later. His mother has told him that shortly after coming to the United States, he was attacked by a dog, fell and hit his head, and was deafened as a result.

"I don't know," Harmasch says doubtfully. "I think I was born deaf."

Growing up in Peoria, Illinois, in a household where Ukrainian and Russian, but not English or sign language, were used, often was lonely and frustrating.

Harmasch remembers being taught how to pronounce words in speech class.

"My teacher said I was pronouncing the words properly, but when I went home and asked for 'water,'" Harmasch says, "my parents didn't know what I wanted. Until then, I didn't realize they were speaking a different language."

Although he does not use spoken language, communication with his coworkers is no problem, says Harmasch. He taught them fingerspelling, "and," he quips, "I didn't charge them anything."

A Mobay employee since 1976, Harmasch has worked in the physical testing department for seven years and has received three promotions. As a senior laboratory technician, he now holds one of the higher-rated technician positions.

Harmasch credits his success in the workplace to his college experience.

"I needed that education," he says. "Without my NTID background, I don't think I'd have the job I have now."

Shared Memories

by Vincent Dollard

***Memories and dreams** Lou Ann Walker, author of* A Loss for Words, *delivers the keynote address at the second annual Children of Deaf Adults Conference held at NTID.*

Lou Ann Walker insists that the heroine's mantle she wears doesn't quite fit. Author of the critically acclaimed memoir *A Loss for Words: The Story of Deafness in a Family*, Walker has touched the lives of thousands of hearing children of deaf adults. In addition, her book has opened a new world to hearing people who have little or no exposure to deafness.

Walker, however, is quick to point out that her book is a personal family memoir, not meant to speak for all hearing children of deaf adults.

"My book," she says, "is a carefully distilled memoir which combines vignettes with interview and research techniques that I have learned as a journalist."

Walker, 34, was the keynote speaker at the second annual Children of Deaf Adults (CODA) Conference, held August 21-23, at NTID. During the conference, she spoke of her experiences growing up with deaf parents and how her life has changed since the publication of her book last year.

"Being a hearing child of deaf parents is a delicate position," she says. "I feel it keenly now. I wrote about both the painful and positive things that happened in our family."

Walker notes that the catalyst for her book was a brief moment one Christmas, which she now refers to as the "Christmas of Missed Connections."

Her grandfather, a tight-lipped man who had never learned sign language, took her mother aside during a family gathering and told her, as clearly as he could, that he loved her, that he always had, and that he was very proud of her. On the ride home that night, her mother turned around and asked, "What was Grandpa saying in the kitchen?"

Walker's words state simply and directly the impact of the question.

"My heart froze.

In the dim light of streetlamps, I signed to her what I'd overheard. 'Mom, he said he loves you.'

In the country, leaving the lamps behind, it was too dark to see any more hand signs. Mom turned back around, clasping her hands in her lap. She sat with her head bent, contemplating something in those hands. I turned my face to the window, hoping she wouldn't turn around again and catch the glimmer of tears welling up in my eyes.

So much had been lost."

That moment had a lasting impact on Walker and served to represent much of what she had learned about deafness and about her parents.

It also illustrates Walker's sensibilities as a writer and journalist. She is true to her craft, her story, and her family. She is able to describe a moment or an event and impart to it a deeper meaning with a style that recalls E.B. White—without verbiage, yet warm and gentle in tone.

Her intention was not simply to tell her family's story, but to provide insight into deaf culture, the delicate balance between deafness and the hearing world, and the wealth of love and support she received from her family.

"I've seen plenty of families where there was more communication and less love," she says.

"If writing is communicating, then that's why I wrote this book. This was a cathartic experience for me."

Walker notes that digging up old stories and events—often funny, sometimes painful—was a difficult process. However, while carefully juxtaposing memories and events, she was able to come to terms with her childhood and with many of the memories she wrote about.

"It's complicated," she says. "It's about family, how families have to look at each other as individuals."

A Loss for Words took 2½ years of actual writing. In her prologue, Walker recalls typing the same pages over and over again.

It was as if, in the writing, the words had to come through my fingers for me to understand them, just as the meaning had to come through my fingers in signing.

During her research, which was funded by a Rockefeller Foundation Humanities Grant awarded in 1983, Walker dug up notes she had written to herself as a teenager. She says she'd always dreamed of being a writer, though as a youngster, she told her friends that she wanted to be a teacher.

"In a small town," she says, "there are some professions you just don't tell your friends about."

Walker says that when she showed the first draft to her parents, their main concern was for the feelings of others in the family. While at first, they were reluctant to have their private lives become, literally, an open book, her parents consented, saying that it might do some good for others.

"I had no intention of pointing a finger," she says. "I simply and gently wanted to show how things are."

In spite of the pains Walker takes to emphasize that her story is about her family, she often hears comments from other hearing children of deaf adults about how true to life her book is.

"It's amazing how many shared characteristics exist among hearing children of deaf adults," says Walker. "I think much of it comes from the logistics of sign language. In the book, I looked at sign language and its affect on my life—its poetry and how it made me feel."

A note of encouragement *Walker signs copies of her acclaimed memoir, writing a note to each person. "There are portions of her book that all of us can relate to," says one conference participant. "Her book was a catalyst that helped us come together."*

Walker, like many hearing children of deaf adults, is a certified interpreter and, before the success of *A Loss for Words*, supplemented her writing income with interpreting jobs.

She feels that hearing children of deaf adults have much to offer both the hearing and deaf worlds. As a bridge between two cultures, they possess an intimate knowledge of deafness that can be used by educators, social workers, and deaf people themselves.

This philosophy is part of the reason that CODA exists. Millie Brother, a hearing child of deaf parents, formed the organization in her home state of California primarily as a way for hearing children of deaf adults to socialize and share their experiences.

The first national conference took place in Fremont, California, in 1986. The 1987 conference at NTID attracted approximately 75 people from 19 states, Canada, and Belgium.

James Stangarone, associate professor of English in NTID's Technical and Integrative Communication Studies Department and himself a hearing child of deaf parents, notes that this conference was different in structure and content.

"This meeting was smaller and consisted of many small group discussions," says Stangarone. "The feedback that we received was positive. For many, this was the first time they were able to socialize with other CODAs."

Aside from the opportunity to share experiences, Stangarone says that this conference provided the spark for the establishment of smaller, statewide CODA groups. He points out that the organization itself is struggling for identity and direction.

"CODAs want to take stock of what they've experienced and find common ground," he says. "Then we can determine our direction."

Possible directions include providing scholarships for young CODAs, becoming an information resource for deaf education, and conducting demographic research on the CODA organization itself to survey ages, incomes, and professions.

Elizabeth O'Brien, a fellow associate professor of English and CODA, says that since deaf adults now enjoy greater participation in society than they did 20 years ago, their hearing children are not relied upon as heavily.

"Deaf parents today are much less dependent on their hearing children," she says. "Resources such as closed captioning and professional interpreters have reduced the hearing child's responsibility to facilitate communication. However, there always will be interpreting situations, and other kids will make fun of deaf parents; people will continue to stare."

O'Brien says that Walker's book put "in black and white what many of us feel. There are portions of her book that all of us can relate to."

She notes that *A Loss for Words* also sparked interest from psychologists and psychiatrists regarding the emotional impact of deafness and of living in two cultures.

"There's been little research in that area," O'Brien says. "It's just now beginning to come into focus."

Such research will serve to help future generations of hearing children of deaf adults in much the same way that Walker's memoir has helped this generation.

"Lou Ann's book created a turning point for CODAs," says O'Brien. "It was the catalyst that helped us come together and begin to deal with significant issues in our lives."

Mitch Bilker: ONE OF A PAIR

by Ann Kanter

Mitchell "Mitch" and Lawrence "Larry" Bilker speak warmly of their close relationship as twin brothers, but after attending the same junior and senior high schools, they swore they'd attend separate colleges. They do, but little did the 19-year-old brothers from Marple-Newtown, Pennsylvania, guess at the time that they would both end up in Rochester, New York, at colleges barely 10 minutes apart. Larry is a student at the University of Rochester (U of R) and Mitch at RIT.

Larry, an engineering major, made his choice first; and Mitch, who is hearing impaired, had been seriously considering two eastern Pennsylvania area colleges when he first learned about the support services available at RIT through NTID. Quickly switching gears, he and his father came to the campus on Veterans Day 1986, to sit in on classes and see what life at NTID was like.

"The college impressed us," says Michael Bilker, the twins' father, who estimates that "NTID probably has the best program in the country for a student with a hearing impairment." He speaks enthusiastically about "the attitude of the administrators and faculty and staff members, all of whom demonstrated their interest in helping students reach their maximum potential."

Jacqueline Bilker says she was further impressed by her son's description of feeling at ease in his classes.

"That's important to us," she says. "Mitch feels he belongs, his roommates are great, he's found a home away from home. He's fortunate to be at NTID with all its wonderful facilities and people to help him succeed. That makes us feel happy and confident."

Bilker is delighted at the opportunity to learn sign language and to practice it with his two roommates, one of whom grew up in a strictly manual tradition. Although Bilker was raised in an oral environment, his mother is happy with the experience he's getting.

"Learning sign language is like learning a foreign language," she says. "And he's having a wonderful opportunity to live with it."

At home away from home Proudly sporting his RIT jacket, Mitch Bilker poses outside the College Union.

Bilker, a first-year student in RIT's College of Business, is specializing in Business Administration, with a concentration in Accounting. He is delighted with the interpreters, tutors, and notetakers that are available to him through NTID.

A notable achiever in high school, Bilker was in the top quintile of his class, was elected to the National Honor Society, and was chosen Newtown Square Rotary Club Student of the Month. He also was senior class treasurer; senior editor of *What's Happening*, a newsletter for hearing-impaired students; and a member of the student council, as well as of various academic, athletic, and special interest clubs.

In May 1987, he received an award from the Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf for outstanding achievement in work in a hearing-impaired environment. The award was given, he says, because of his contributions as editor of *What's Happening*.

In the short time that he has been at RIT, Bilker already has been elected vice president of programming for the Hillel Society and floor representative for the Ellingson Tower A Residence Hall. He also has signed up to participate in Students Against Drunk Driving and intramural bowling.

He tried out for the RIT Bowling Team and didn't make it, but judging by past performance, he probably will do so before long.

The first time he ran for high school class treasurer, he didn't win either, but that didn't signal defeat for Bilker.

"Persistence is Mitch's most outstanding quality," says John Nagle, Bilker's high school guidance counselor. In Bilker's own words, "It's better to try and fail, than not to try at all. What have you got to lose?"

Much of Bilker's attitude may be attributed to the emotional climate in which he and his brother and their 16-year-old sister, Lori, grew up. It provided a supportive, nourishing environment for the three children of Jacqueline and Michael Bilker, a junior high school math teacher and accountant, respectively.

"We always treated Mitch just like his brother and sister," says his father, adding that the one time he might have been extra protective was when Mitch was playing Little League baseball.

The brothers started out playing at the lowest level; Bilker senior was a coach and later became a manager. In the beginning, Mitch and Larry both were players on the team.

When it was time to move up to the middle level, the boys' father didn't want Mitch to continue as a regular, because he's blind in one eye. Since he's a right-handed batter, and his left eye is bad, he would have had to look directly at the pitcher.

"He tried batting left-handed," says Michael Bilker, "and it didn't work out. So instead of playing, he helped out coaching first base. He understood."

Although many hearing parents find their child's deafness difficult to accept, the Bilkers did not.

"When the boys were toddlers, the family doctor suspected that Mitch might have a minimal brain dysfunction," recalls his mother. "Larry had begun to speak earlier than Mitch," she continues, "but at the time we weren't concerned, because we'd heard that one twin often does things before the other."

Despite the fact that the twins had been born seven weeks early and had received oxygen—at that time a customary treatment for premature babies, but one that sometimes caused blindness or deafness—the possibility of Mitch having a brain dysfunction never made sense to Jacqueline Bilker. Nonetheless, once the suspicion had been aroused, she was vastly relieved when tests revealed that his only disabilities were deafness and an almost complete loss of vision in one eye.

"At least we knew he could be helped," she says. "That was all we cared about."

What's the score? Mitch and Larry Bilker enjoy a brotherly game of bowling at the RIT alleys.

As soon as his deafness was diagnosed, Bilker was fitted with a hearing aid and enrolled in intensive speech therapy classes.

"At first, I hated the hearing aids," he recalls. "I thought they looked silly, and I couldn't understand why I had to have them when Larry didn't. But my parents explained how they would help me hear, and eventually I got used to them."

From second through fourth grades, Bilker attended special classes provided by the Delaware County Intermediate Unit for hearing-impaired students. During this time, he also was partially mainstreamed at various public and private schools. By fifth grade, he was enrolled into an entirely mainstreamed setting within the Marple-Newtown School District.

"The transition was difficult," he says. "The pace was faster, and in addition, everyone talked much faster."

Although he says it took more than a year to adjust to the new environment, he also admits that his grades were good from the beginning and that his teachers were surprised at how much he knew.

Socially, Larry was a big help, introducing his brother to his own friends and showing him the ropes in his new surroundings. In his later years of high school, Bilker often found himself in a position to tutor hearing students.

"It gives me a feeling of satisfaction to help others do well," he says. "But I didn't help by giving them the answers—I made them tell me."

In his junior year of high school, when Mitch joined a fund-raising committee to run a computer dating service, Larry contributed a specially created computer program. The brothers' joint venture produced $1,500 and $2,000 in their junior and senior years, respectively.

During the summer after his high school graduation, Bilker worked as a tennis counselor at a day camp for 7- to 12-year-olds, which included five deaf campers in its enrollment of 800.

"I made it a point to talk to those kids," says Bilker. "I wanted to encourage them in terms of their potential. I guess even the idea of a hearing-impaired counselor at a camp for hearing kids had to be a hopeful message for them."

A desire to help others is just one of the traits shared by the Bilker brothers. Larry gained special attention when he agreed to spend two hours per week for 10 weeks teaching a group of high school teachers to use computerized speech synthesizers as learning tools for students with disabilities.

"Many people have a fear of computers," he says. "By giving them this hands-on exposure, they became adept and were able to conquer their fears."

Mitch and Larry like many of the same activities, but each has his own personality, according to their mother, who says, "For example, they both were active in the drama club, but Mitch likes to perform, while Larry enjoys doing behind-the-scenes work."

Because his love for working with numbers made him think he'd enjoy being an accountant like his father, Bilker wanted to "test the waters." During tax season, accounting firms always have an extra load of work, so from December 1986 through May 1987, Bilker arranged to spend several months working Saturdays at the Exton, Pennsylvania, accounting firm where his father is a partner.

As an accounting clerk, he did filing and general office work, as well as computer inputting on a network of personal computers. At times, he helped the certified public accountants (CPAs) analyze their clients' balance sheets. He enjoyed the work and the atmosphere, which strengthened his desire to become a CPA.

Bilker plans to graduate from RIT in May 1992, and would like to work either with an accounting firm or in the accounting department of a large company.

In his spare time, he likes to listen to his tape collection, which includes selections from Billy Joel, Genesis, and Bruce Springsteen.

Another pastime is writing poetry and "proverbs." In the latter category, one of his most recent is "Always point your feet in the right direction, and your life will follow."

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Head in the Clouds, Feet on the Ground

by Lynne Bohlman

Like the barnstorming pilot Douglas "Wrong Way" Corrigan, Stephanie Cloutier has a passion for flying and anything related to airplanes. However, unlike the famous flier, who earned his nickname in 1938 when he filed a flight plan from New York to Los Angeles but flew instead to Ireland, Cloutier's path is clear and direct.

"She's a woman with definite goals," says Warren Goldmann, her Career Opportunities advisor. "She has a knowledge of self and a good idea of what she wants to do with her life."

Cloutier's goals include earning her private pilot's license and becoming an aeronautics engineer—an ambition she is working to fulfill as a second-year student in NTID's Industrial Drafting Technology program and as a co-op student this past summer in the drafting department of L. S. Starrett Company in Athol, Massachusetts.

Her career path has not always been so certain, however.

After graduating in 1984 from Arizona's Phoenix Day School for the Deaf, where she was valedictorian and president of the student council and her junior and senior classes, Cloutier entered the general education program at Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C. She withdrew twice because she was not satisfied with her academic program and felt a lack of enthusiasm for the extracurricular offerings.

The following fall, Cloutier enrolled in the Medical Laboratory Technology program at Phoenix College. That lasted three months.

"I did well," she says, "but I realized that I didn't want to work with blood every day of my life."

By returning to childhood interests, Cloutier, who was born deaf because of rubella, finally discovered the field that was right for her.

Computer- and teacher-aided design Second-year student Stephanie Cloutier struggles to understand the instructions of her teacher Eder Benati, assistant professor of Industrial Technologies.

As a child growing up in Old Sturbridge Village, Massachusetts, a beautiful and popular site for campers and tourists, Cloutier spent hours each weekend watching her older brothers work on cars and her father service outdoor equipment, including lawn mowers, campers, boats, and Cloutier's favorite, snowmobiles.

"Stephanie was very curious, and she seemed to catch on quickly," says her father, Armand. "She understood how things worked more than other kids; she just seemed to have a feel for things mechanical."

Probably Cloutier's favorite mechanical "thing" is the airplane. As a child, she traveled frequently by plane to family vacation spots. After her parents were divorced in 1975, she flew from Phoenix, where she lived with her mother, to visit her father and other family members in Massachusetts.

"I love the way flying feels," she says. "Looking out the window, I'm always inspired by the beauty God has created.

"I often feel that I'm flying the plane myself. I'm fascinated by the way that airplanes work."

After ensuring herself that drafting was a good field for the future, and that in it she could design car and airplane engine parts, Cloutier incorporated another childhood enthusiasm—drawing—and signed up for the Industrial Drafting program at GateWay Community College (formerly Maricopa Technical Community College) in Phoenix. She "fell in love" with the program.

"It's fascinating to me," she says, "to draw different mechanical parts, and I like to work with science and math.

When I draw, it makes me think that I'm successful.

"I just made the determination to do it," she adds, "and my mother supports that. Whatever I have decided to study, my mother says 'Go for it.'"

Raising Cloutier, reports her mother, Sandra Snow, was sometimes a tug-of-war between a mother's need to protect her child and a daughter's desire for independence.

"I was overprotective," says Snow, "and yet I was pushing her to do what she wanted. I was always willing to help her push and push and push."

After two semesters at Maricopa, Cloutier transferred to NTID because it offered more advanced mathematics and science courses and because she knew that the program included a cooperative work experience (co-op).

Actually, Industrial Drafting Technology, a three-year, associate-degree level program, requires two co-ops. Cloutier completed her first last summer at L. S. Starrett Company, the country's largest manufacturer of hand measuring tools and precision instruments.

Located off Route 2 in the hilly town of Athol, the manufacturing company produces more than 3,000 different tools and instruments.

Cloutier worked in a room located up narrow, winding stairs in an old, but well-equipped and maintained factory building on the Millers River. She was one of two women among 25 drafters in the department. She redrew old designs, made drawings from sketches, and changed the dimensions in some designs.

"Stephanie found that not everything is as she learned it in school," says Harold Bacon, drafting supervisor. "She often said to me in the early days, 'That's not how I learned it in college.' She found out that every company has its own way of doing things."

Working in Athol offered Cloutier the opportunity to return to the New England she loved as a child—the four seasons, the flowers, and the history. During her co-op, Cloutier rented a room in a home across the street from the junior high school. There, she shared quarters with Barbara Linker, a nurse, and two of Linker's children.

"I don't think Stephanie realizes how dynamic she is," says Linker. "I hope she continues to open up to people and keeps growing.

"Sometimes," Linker adds, "she becomes too wrapped up in her work. She has talked about the difficulty of balancing a social life and school work. I think she studies too much sometimes and forgets there's a life to live."

"I love the way flying feels.... I'm always inspired by the beauty God has created."

A designing woman Cloutier works at a drafting table.

Cloutier does like to keep busy.

"I hate to stay home," she says.

This summer, Cloutier kept busy visiting family members and friends in nearby towns, being the only woman on the company softball team, and participating in a deaf Baptist congregation.

She also was busy when she was a high school student at the Phoenix Day School for the Deaf, where, says her principal James Osborn, now principal of the Colorado School for the Deaf and Blind, she stood out not so much for her academic skills, although she had good capabilities, but for "her great desire to achieve."

When she first entered the school, Cloutier suffered culture shock because she had been raised orally and everyone else used sign language.

"I refused to learn sign for two months; then I learned it and I liked it.

"I refused," Cloutier says, "because when I grew up in an oral environment, I thought it would be better than learning sign language. And I was afraid everyone would make fun of me when I signed, but no one did."

Indeed, many, including President Ronald Reagan, came to respect Cloutier for her academic achievements.

One spring morning, Cloutier arrived early at school as usual and found her principal waiting outside. He asked her to accompany him to his office.

"I thought I was in big trouble," Cloutier says.

But if she was, then why was Osborn smiling?

"What's going on?" Cloutier asked.

"Would you like to meet the President?" Osborn answered a question with a question.

"Are you kidding?"

"No, I'm serious."

On May 10, 1984 (Cloutier remembers the date because 10 is her favorite number and 1984 is the year she graduated), Cloutier represented all Arizona high school students at a ceremony honoring outstanding students from all 50 states. Later that same day at another ceremony, she received from Reagan the Presidential Academic Fitness Award.

"I was happy to receive the award and meet the President," Cloutier says, "and I was surprised that God planned that for me."

God plays an important role in her life. Cloutier is secretary and treasurer of the RIT Baptist Student Union and is an active member of the Metropolitan Baptist Church in Rochester. While in Athol, she traveled two hours one way to Manchester, Connecticut, every week to be part of a deaf congregation.

"I think it's important for everybody to learn God's Word," Cloutier explains, "and I had a lot of energy and motivation to be part of a deaf ministry."

Cloutier isn't worried about earning the nickname "Wrong Way." Whether she's in a plane or firmly on the ground, she's certain that she'll always find the right direction.

"God will tell me," Cloutier says. "He will open my eyes so that I can see the right way."

FOCUS On...

Dean Woolever

by Emily Andreano

There is something sweetly familiar about Dean Woolever's tale of how he grew to have an interest in art and design. Woolever, art director in NTID's Instructional Design and Evaluation Department (ID&E), spent the Saturday afternoons of his youth crouched in a darkened movie theater nestled in a small town on New York's Southern Tier.

The town was Hornell, which at the time boasted a population of 22,000 and four movie theaters from which to choose. Woolever's choice was usually a film or cartoon generated by Walt Disney Studios.

Other *wunderkinder* of his generation tell the same story. But what captured Woolever's imagination was not the familiar stories or the thought of making films himself, but rather the notion that he too might create designs as enchanting and evocative as those populating the wide screen before him.

By the time Woolever reached adolescence, his fascination with Disney's art and artifice was full blown. He had amassed a startling collection of memorabilia, beginning with movie posters that he wheedled out of kindly theater owners and escalating to several of the now highly prized Disney production celluloids, or "cels," the individual drawings that, collectively, became the animated films.

His high school yearbook prediction even envisioned him toiling as an animator in the Disney studios, a not unlikely scenario considering that a lengthy correspondence with the company had produced, on Woolever's 12th birthday, a telephone call from Walt Disney himself.

However, two forces combined to impel Woolever to seek a different direction. First was Disney's death, which left a void in company management subsequently filled by more conventional businessmen. Their preoccupation with turning a profit, in Woolever's opinion, precipitated a run of inferior offerings and put an end to the studio's greatness. Second, and perhaps more important, was Woolever's realization that his true interest lay not in the area of animation, but in the field of graphic design.

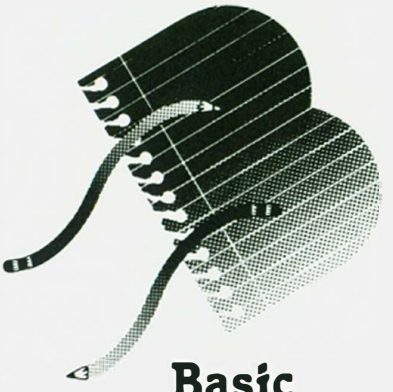
A self-described indifferent student, he had been encouraged by his schoolteacher mother to attend college, and did so at Syracuse University, where he earned bachelor's and master offine arts degrees in Advertising Design.

Facing the prospect of being drafted and sent to Vietnam upon graduation, he chose to enlist for a hitch in the Air Force instead, where he pulled four years of duty at the former Sewart Air Force Base in Smyrna, Tennessee, on the outskirts of Nashville.

His tour of duty in the military at an end, Woolever found work as a designer for a Rochester printer, where he worked for seven years. When job cutbacks forced him to seek employment elsewhere, he learned of an opening at RIT.

Undaunted by a form rejection letter, nor by the information that 800 applications had been filed for that particular job, Woolever made an appearance on campus. His initial contact was unproductive, but a friend working at the Institute told him of another opening, at NTID, and suggested that Woolever speak with Frank Argento, now associate professor of Photo/Media Technologies.

Woolever simultaneously was being pursued by an advertising agency, but Argento made a convincing case for NTID. Clearly, it was a happy choice, for Woolever has been at the Institute for 15 years.



Basic Strategies

Like many NTID employees, Woolever is reluctant to portray himself as a good Samaritan simply because his work is for the benefit of deaf students. But he does admit that he is "not an ad agency person," and that his comfort level at work derives at least in part from his sense that his efforts are "doing some good."

According to Manager of Special Projects Thomas Castle, former associate director of ID&E, "Dean's overall responsibility at NTID is to facilitate the teaching of deaf students. ID&E investigates problems that teachers encounter in the classroom, and Dean's role is to apply his creative and artistic energies to helping solve them.

"For example," he continues, "if students aren't wearing hearing aids in the classroom, and it is determined that

they would derive more benefit from instruction if they did, Dean's job is to work with an instructional developer to come up with ideas on how to improve the situation. The result in this case was a curriculum that included a handsome set of self-instructional booklets [designed by Woolever] that provides both basic understanding of hearing aids, and motivates students to use them."

About Woolever, Castle says, "He's the best graphic designer I've ever met. Dean has the intelligence to understand abstract technical concepts, and the confidence needed to attack the problems incurred in communicating these concepts to deaf learners. He goes beyond merely decorating the content."

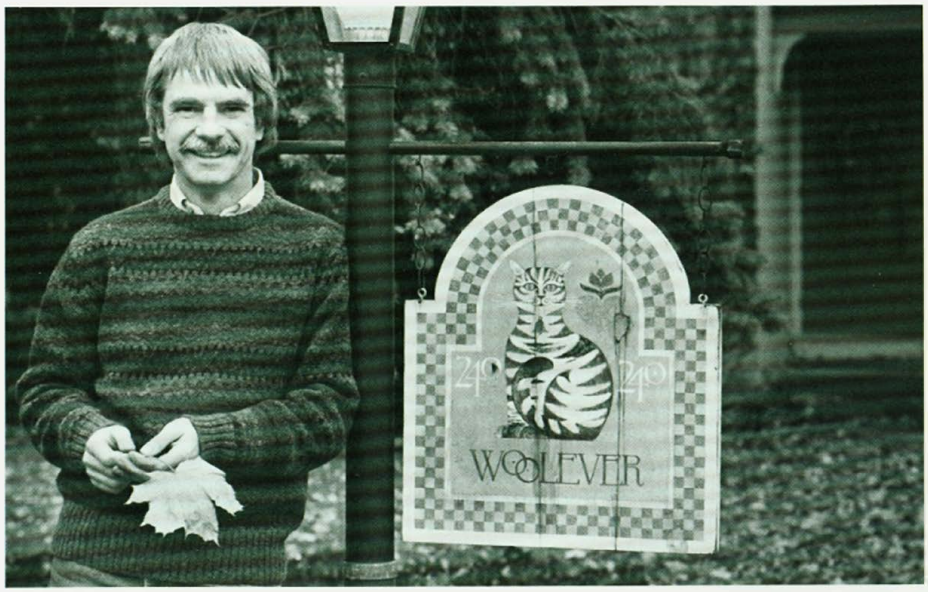
The content to which Castle refers often is destined for classrooms at NTID and for other schools for deaf students around the country. Woolever's work has captured many national awards usually reserved for art directors in leading advertising agencies.

Sias is probably Woolever's closest friend.

The two met through their wives, who taught at the same elementary school. Additionally, they are neighbors whose children attend the same schools. Coincidentally, after they had met, both found jobs at NTID, although Sias later moved to CFAA.

Sias characterizes Woolever, with whom he has worked in a consulting business, as "one of the most talented graphic designers around. He could command any salary he chose," Sias continues, "but I think he enjoys doing work that is clearly beneficial and of some social significance. He would walk many a mile to help a friend do a job, even if he didn't really care to do it. His life abounds with good deeds."

Woolever is involved in a second side business, with ID&E Photographer/Cinematographer Mark Benjamin. Benjamin is another neighbor of Woolever. They live, in fact, on the same street, but did not meet until they began working together.



Signs of his times This charming handpainted sign welcomes visitors to Dean Woolever's city home; opposite page, Woolever designed the concept and logo for a series of booklets describing "Basic Strategies" for hearing-impaired people to use in everyday communication situations. Artist Cathleen Chou contributed the silhouette illustrations that represent those situations: going to a fast food restaurant; renting an apartment; flying; visiting the dentist; going to the bank; buying a car; visiting the post office; and dining out.

"Everyone likes to be a hero, a pioneer," says Woolever. "I enjoy being in a field where, until recently, no one even thought about graphic design."

Several of Woolever's co-workers, who also count themselves as friends, echo the feeling that he would be dissatisfied with a life that revolved purely around the pursuit of money.

It is certainly the contention of James Sias, associate professor of Industrial Design at RIT's College of Fine and Applied Arts (CFAA). On or off campus,

"My wife and I had always enjoyed history and antiques," explains Benjamin, "although we didn't know too much about the latter. Dean taught me a great deal, by lending me books and introducing me to antique shows and museums."

Woolever and his wife Elizabeth, who is now a librarian, had an antique business of their own, Catchpenny Antiques. (The name is drawn from the small drawings of familiar objects sold from a peddler's cart to English children for a penny during the 19th century.) As the Benjamins' interest in antiques grew, so did their collection, and they turned to the Woolevers to sell items for which they no longer had space. Eventually, Benjamin joined Woolever in business.

As with Sias, theirs is both a personal and professional friendship, although Benjamin, at 36, is several years Woolever's junior (neither will say how many).

"Dean," quips Benjamin, "is very young for his age."

Another ID&E colleague who has formed a special working relationship with Woolever is Artist Cathleen Chou, who began at NTID in 1981.

"When I came here I was afraid of him at first," she remembers, "because he was the head designer. I was intimidated because I felt as if I didn't know anything, so for a few months we didn't have much to say to one another."

What broke the ice for Chou was being assigned to work with Woolever on a project.

"We clicked immediately," she says. "He seemed to be able to explain to me very clearly the kind of illustrations he needed for whatever design work he was doing without describing it to me very literally. When I would present him with the finished product, he would tell me that it was even better than he imagined. It was the beginning of a beautiful working relationship and a perfectly wonderful friendship."

Clients of Woolever are equally enthusiastic about his contributions. Dr. Judy Egelston-Dodd, a former instructional developer in ID&E now serving as director of the RIT/University of Rochester Joint Educational Specialist Program, was a frequent client.

Egelston-Dodd reveals that she "knew Dean for years, but in the most superficial way. It was not," she says, "until he was assigned to design a project of mine that I discovered the depth of his personality and his devotion to his family and friends, religion, and work. He's a joy to work with, and brings out the best in all of us."

For Woolever's part, he allows that "they seem to like me here, so I guess that's why I stay on," and that the ID&E environment is "set up so you can be your best, so that's what I'm trying to be."

Come to the United States for Two of 1990's Most Important International Gatherings

Important international gatherings of organizations concerned with deaf people will be held in the United States in 1990.

Rochester will be the host city for the 1990 International Congress on Education of the Deaf (ICED). It will be held July 29-August 3. Co-hosts for the event are: NTID, Gallaudet University, Rochester School for the Deaf, University of Rochester Graduate School of Education and Human Development, Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf, Conference of Educational Administrators Serving the Deaf, Convention of American Instructors of the Deaf, and National Association of the Deaf.

Dr. William Castle, vice president for Government Relations, RIT, and director of NTID, will serve as secretary general for the Congress. Dr. Ross Stuckless, director of NTID's Integrative Research Department, will serve as chairperson of the Program Planning Committee.

The first ICED was held in Paris, France, in 1878 with 27 delegates from Europe and one non-delegate from the United States attending. Attendance over the years has continued to rise and the scope of participation and presentation necessitates interpreting and translating into the many languages of attendees. Translation for English, Spanish, German, French, and perhaps Japanese will be provided at the 1990 Congress. In addition, International Signs, American Sign Language, a signed form of English, and oral interpreting will be available for deaf participants.

The timing of the Congress coincides with the Centennial International Convention of the Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf, which will be held in Washington, D.C., from July 24-28, 1990.

20-Year Celebration for NTID and NTD *For 20 years, NTID has provided postsecondary education to deaf students. For an equal number of years, the National Theatre of the Deaf (NTD) has proven that deaf people can become professional actors. As a celebration of the combination, NTID alumni Charles Baird, Adrian Blue, Elena Blue, Michael Lamitola, Perry Conley, and Charles Struppmann performed at NTID November 14, in NTD's production of* The Dybbuk. *The play is a revival of a European folk tale first performed by NTD in 1974. Joining NTID alumni in the performance were John Eisner, Sandi Inches, Lewis Merkin, Edward Porter, Cathleen Riddley, and Andy Vasnick.*

May Means Better Hearing and Speech Month *President Ronald Reagan and actor Norm Crosby are featured in the 1988 Better Hearing and Speech Month campaign, which in May kicks off a national effort to promote awareness about getting help for speech and hearing problems. Reagan teamed with 5-year-old Jessica Riley of New London, Connecticut, for a poster produced by NTID's Instructional Design and Evaluation Department. The Institute's Instructional Television Department also got "into the act" by producing a 30-second public service announcement featuring comedian Crosby. Both efforts will be distributed nationally over the next several months, and represent NTID's commitment to the Council for Better Hearing and Speech Month.*

CNN Films NTID Research

Cable News Network (CNN) was at NTID in September to film the aerodynamics and voice box testing conducted at NTID by Dr. Robert Whitehead, chairperson of the Communication Research Department, and Dr. Dale Metz, Communication Research associate. By studying the airflow on the normal biomechanical processes that take place during the production of speech, the researchers hope to gain a better understanding of the oral characteristics of deaf people. The segment, which was captioned by NTID, aired several times in November.

Mowl Represents NTID

Last September, Gary Mowl, Support Service Education chairperson, represented NTID at the 28th Annual Conference of the National Council for the Deaf in Johannesburg, South Africa. His invited papers were a series on NTID Interpreting Services and the Educational Interpreting program.

Will Receives 'Grand Tour'

Madeleine Will, assistant secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services for the U.S. Department of Education, toured NTID facilities December 11. She was accompanied by Dr. William Castle, director of NTID and vice president for Government Relations for RIT; Dr. James DeCaro, dean; Dr. Jack Clarcq, vice president for Technical Assistance Programs; and Wendell Thompson, assistant to the director. Will visited NTID's state-of-the-art Computer Aided Design Lab, the NTID Theatre, and the English Language Learning Lab.

Dear Friends of NTID,

It is gratifying to see NTID faculty members taking advantage of the RIT International Faculty Exchange Scholar Program and spreading the message of deaf education to other areas of the world. The faculty members you read about in this issue of ***NTID Focus*** *are but two of approximately 30 who have participated in this program since it was established five years ago. We are particularly proud of this faculty exchange program, for it promotes professional development among our most important resource—our teachers.*

M. Richard Rose
President

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

NTID student Stephanie Cloutier has high flying dreams, p. 28

Photography by A. Sue Weisler