

Hi-Desert Star

Sunday Magazine

The Principal

Ted Hayes was
Twentynine Palms' first





April 30, 1989



1946

El Oasis



Hit Desert Star

Sunday Magazine

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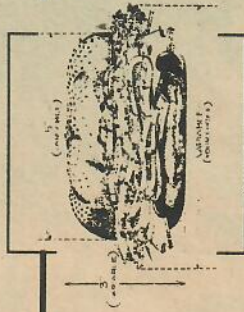
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By **GARY PEDERSON**

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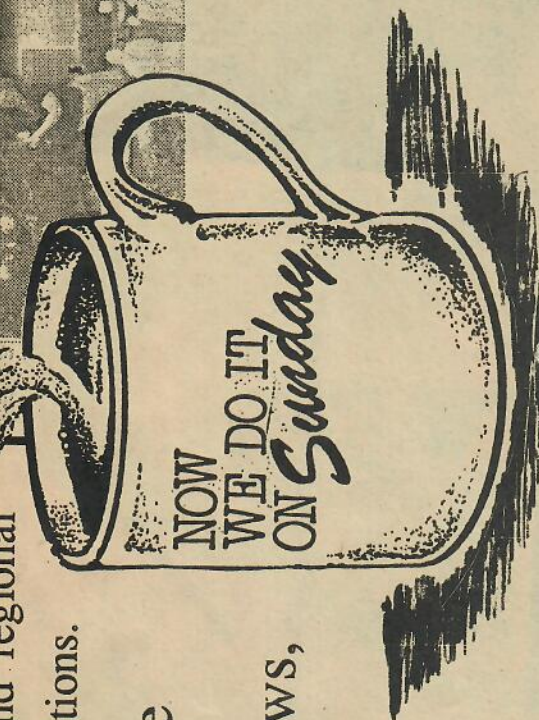
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Home Viewing

Rita Hayworth is still a draw to Hollywood

By JERRY ROBERTS

Copley News Service

The scenario of the combative bombshell vs. the big bad studio bosses is a favorite of Hollywood lore, and Rita Hayworth vs. Harry Cohn at Columbia Pictures was a drama that supplied the gossip columns for a decade.

It was just part of the public Hayworth image of pinup photos, rich husbands and, later, tragically forgotten star and victim of a fatal disease that became more rooted in memory than all but a handful of her films.

Hayworth, "The Love Goddess" of the 1940s who died in 1987 of Alzheimer's disease at the age of 68, was a beauty in the grand tradition of Hollywood's heyday. Her career moved into the limelight when she became a worthy hoofing partner for Fred Astaire in some of the liveliest musicals of the early '40s.

Hayworth became the postwar standard of smoldering sexiness in "Cover Girl" (1944), "Gilda" (1946), "The Loves of Carmen" (1948) and others. Then, after her failed marriage to Prince Aly Kahn, she became a jaded star under her self-described enslavement to Cohn and an exponent of overripe maturity in films she hated.

Except for "Gilda," Hayworth's best

"The Lady from Shanghai" (1948) and the all-star treatment of Terrence Rattigan's "Separate Tables" (1958).

Her Gilda, a saloon chanteuse, was one of the cinema's most ungodly incarnations of erotic glamour — an eventually tragic character who was more of a heartstopper than a heartbreaker, but one that, within the bounds of sheer sex appeal, still is tough to match.

There are many famous glamorous images perpetrated by Hollywood over the years, but hardly any have been as timelessly sexy as her "Put the Blame on Mame" number on the big screen in "Gilda" and her famous pinup photo in still life.

The mistress of the slow burn had her first mass exposure as a sex symbol through the distribution of that famous photo, the reception of which at remote locations around the globe ranked just below V-J Day for many World War II GIs.

It's a strangely lit masterpiece, with Hayworth posed at an odd tilt, her shoulders barely hunched, a slight amused glance that has passed by but would certainly return to drink you. The fully complementary lingerie illustrated that the hunch might be natural



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films only tangentially had to do with her involvement. The best film she was in was Howard Hawks' "Only Angels Have Wings" (1939), the classic portrait of cynical airmail pilots at a South American outpost. As the second female lead to Jean Arthur, she had a big part that helped lever her out of B pictures, but the show was stolen by Arthur, Cary Grant, Richard Barthelmess and Thomas Mitchell.

Hayworth's other top films are "The Strawberry Blonde" (1941) with James Cagney and Olivia DeHavilland, "Blood and Sand" (1941) with Tyrone Power, "Gilda," with Glenn Ford, Orson Welles,

posture against the strain of those straps.

"Separate Tables" starring Burt Lancaster, Deborah Kerr, David Niven, Rita Hayworth, Wendy Hiller, Rod Taylor, Cathleen Nesbitt, Felix Ayimer, Gladys Cooper, Audrey Dalton, May Hallatt. Directed by Delbert Mann. 1958 (CBS/Fox Home Video, 98 minutes).

Terrence Rattigan's play about eccentric and lonely people at an out-of-the-way seaside hotel is given a superb all-star treatment. Niven and Hiller won their Oscars for these portrayals.

THE LOCKHORNS

by *BILL HOEST*



"COULD LEROY HAVE ONE OF YOUR PRESS-ON NAILS TO REMEMBER YOU BY?"

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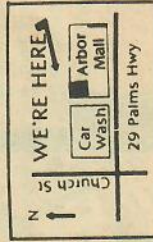
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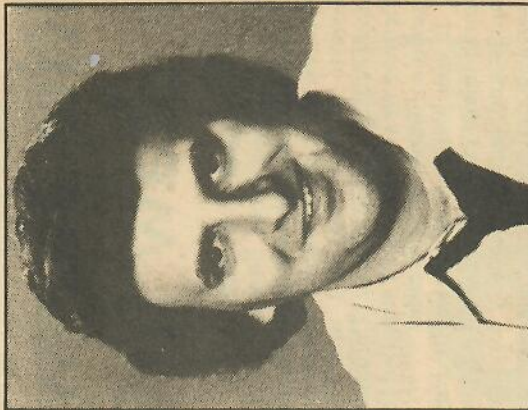
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In Step With....

It's De Dee on the phone

It has happened to you, the traveling businessperson, a thousand times: You're out of town, you pick up the phone to make a credit-card call, and a recorded voice thanks you for selecting a long-distance service. Now, you have not really selected anything; you have merely punched "O" and then the number you want to reach. Somehow, though, some long-distance company — and they always seem to be composed of three initials — is grateful that you have "selected" their service. They ought to be grateful. You usually have to pay a premium fee for the service.

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Bob Greene

Dee Hollenbeck; she is 23 now, although she was 22 when she was selected and made the recording.

"About 55 people here tried out," she said. "Ten or 15 people voted on the voices. And they picked me." She has no idea why.

"I got a letter of congratulations (from the company)," she said. "And I was supposed to get a gift certificate for dinner. The gift certificate never happened. But

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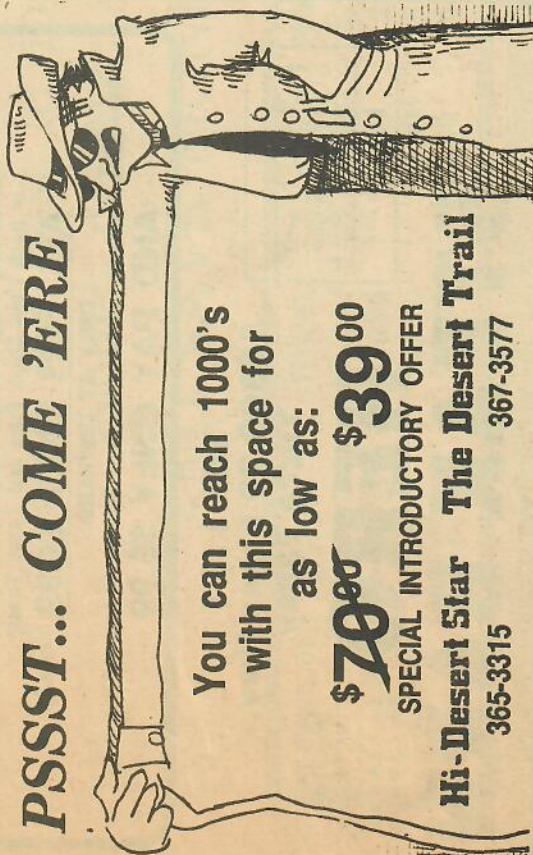
\$70⁰⁰ **\$39⁰⁰**

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they said, "Here's a hundred dollars. I was happy."

When De Dee goes out with friends, no one ever recognizes her as the voice on the phone. "Not at all," she said. "No one really knows unless they knew me before."

One time, though, her father was on a trip to Puerto Rico, and made a long-distance call. The recorded voice he heard on the phone was De Dee's. He was so surprised that he hung up and dialed again. Then he called De Dee's mother and told her about it. This was especially interesting because De Dee and her father are not on speaking terms, because of some arguments.

"I thought that was neat," De Dee said, referring to her father's call to her mother. I told De Dee that the reason I was calling was that she sounded just like the girl at the Eskimo Queen. "Oh," she said.

to select a service called ITI. The voice will say: "At the tone, please enter your card number or press 'zero' for an ITI operator." Then the voice will say, "Please hold for card verification."

It's not what the voice says, though. It's the voice itself. The voice is not that of a computer chip. The voice is not that of a Broadway actor or actress. The voice is not that of a British citizen. The ITI voice ...

How do I say this? When I was a kid I used to stop at a place called the Eskimo Queen for chocolate sodas. The girl behind the frayed screen window would smile and say, "You want chocolate ice cream or vanilla in that?" She spoke with a giddy, open, guileless twang — just the kind of voice that you'd expect from a girl working at the Eskimo Queen.

That's the voice of the ITI operator. The person on the tape sounds just like the girl at the Eskimo Queen. It didn't make sense — why would a communications corporation decide to make their official voice sound like a clerk at the Eskimo Queen? I loved the voice — but why would a corporation do it?

"It was intentional," said Dennis Geraghty, chief operating officer of ITI. "Oh, absolutely. We wanted the voice to be as natural as possible — instead of like you're talking to a robot."

So instead of hiring a trained professional, or using a digital voice, ITI had a little contest among its employees. "I believe we just picked a person in the computer department with a pleasant voice," Geraghty said. "She's a computer operator here, I believe. We didn't hire her for her voice. She's just a real person." Indeed she is. Her name is De

There's nothing quite like a sandwich

There's nothing quite like a sandwich to whet a hearty summer appetite. These are sure to perk up your tummy.

HEALTHY JOES

- ¾ pound lean ground beef
- ½ cup shredded carrot
- ½ cup chopped onion
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- One 8-ounce can sodium-reduced tomato sauce
- ¼ cup water
- 2 tablespoons toasted wheat germ
- 1 tablespoon prepared mustard
- 1 tablespoon vinegar
- ½ teaspoon sugar
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 5 whole-wheat buns, split and toasted

Alfalfa sprouts (optional)

In a skillet cook beef, carrot, onion and garlic until meat is brown and onion is tender. Drain off fat. Stir in tomato sauce, water, wheat germ, mustard, vinegar, sugar and pepper. Bring to boiling; reduce heat. Simmer, covered, 20 minutes. Serve spooned on top of toasted whole-wheat buns. Top with alfalfa sprouts, if desired. Makes 5 servings.

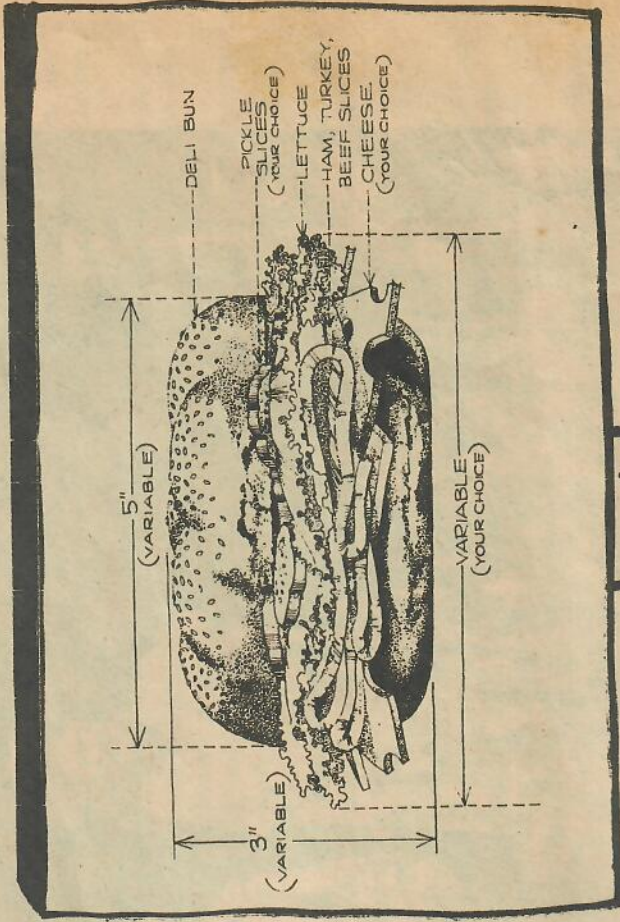
THE TEXAS SANDWICH

- 4 ounces barbecue beef
- 1 ounce Cheddar cheese
- 3 slices jalapeno peppers
- 2 lettuce leaves
- 1 tomato slice
- 1 whole wheat bun

Layer all ingredients on a bun in the order listed.

CRISPY ZUCCHINI FONTINA SANDWICHES

4 small zucchini, cut lengthwise into ¼-inch slices



4 ounces Fontina

1 egg, beaten

$\frac{1}{4}$ to 1 cup fine, dry bread crumbs

Vegetable oil for frying

In large saucepan, heat water to boiling. Add zucchini. Cook for 3 minutes. Drain. Cool on wire rack.

Cut Fontina in thin strips, the same size and shape as zucchini. Place cheese strips between slices of zucchini to make a sandwich. Press lightly together. Sandwiches can be cut in half for easier handling. Dip sandwiches in egg, then roll carefully in bread crumbs.

In large skillet, heat $\frac{1}{2}$ inch oil over medium heat. Fry zucchini until golden brown, turning once. Drain on paper towels. Serve immediately. Serves 4.

GRILLED BEL PAESE AND TUNA SANDWICHES

One $\frac{6\frac{1}{2}}$ -ounce can tuna, drained and flaked

2 tablespoons mayonnaise or plain yogurt

Butter

6 slices white or whole-wheat bread

2 to 3 ounces Bel Paese cheese (remove wax coating and moist white crust), cut into 6 slices

Tomato slices (optional)

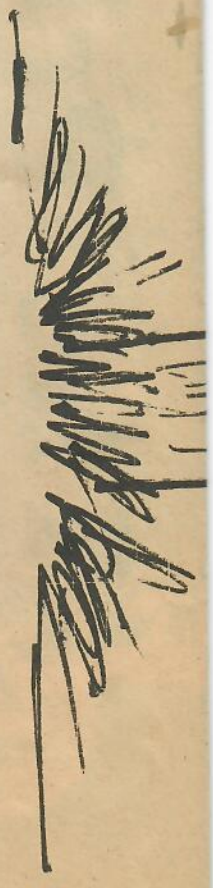
In small bowl, mix tuna and mayonnaise. Set aside. Lightly butter one side of each slice of bread. In large skillet or on griddle, place 3 slices of bread, buttered side down. Place 1 slice of cheese on each slice of bread. Spread with tuna mixture. Top with remaining cheese slices, then bread, buttered side up.

Fry sandwiches over medium heat until golden brown and cheese melts, turning once. Serve hot with tomato slices. Serves 3.

Fast, warming and satisfying, hot sandwiches make a pleasing family supper. Here are six suggestions you can put together in no more time than you would spend in the takeout line.

MEAT AND CHEESE ON RYE

For each sandwich spread 2 slices of rye bread lightly with soft-style cream cheese and horseradish mustard. Top 1 slice with very thinly sliced smoked turkey, very thinly sliced pastrami, and sliced Swiss cheese. Top with other slice of bread. Bake 1 or 2 sandwiches in a toaster oven at 375 degrees F about 15 minutes or until heated through. Bake 3 or more sandwiches on a baking sheet in a 375-degree F oven about 15 minutes.



HAM AND VEGGIE ROLL

Cut a thin slice off the top of a round club roll. Hollow out the bottom, leaving a $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch shell. Pile very thinly sliced cooked ham inside the roll bottom. Fill the roll with drained marinated vegetable salad from the deli. Top with Havarti cheese slices. Broil 1 or 2 minutes to melt the cheese. Recap with roll top.

EASY STROGANOFF BURGERS

Cook 1 pound ground beef in a $1\frac{1}{2}$ -quart microwave-safe casserole, covered, for 4 to 6 minutes or until no pink remains, stirring once. Drain off fat. Stir in $\frac{1}{2}$ of an 8-ounce container soft-style cream cheese with chives and onion, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon dried dillweed. Cook mixture, uncovered, on high for 1 to 2 minutes or until heated through, stirring once. Serve on toasted buns with lettuce and sliced cucumber or tomato. Makes 4 servings.

BEEF AND SLAW BARBECUE BUN

Toss bite-size strips of cooked beef with barbecue sauce mixed with a little prepared horseradish. Heat on range top or in microwave. Pile meat mixture onto the bottom of a split hoagie roll. Top with coleslaw and roll top.

SWISS AND BRAT ROLL

Cut a fully cooked bratwurst or smoked Polish sausage in half lengthwise, cutting to, but not through, the other side. Place cut sides down in a skillet. Cook 2 minutes; turn and cook 2 minutes more. Top with 1 slice process Swiss cheese; cover and cook 2 minutes or until cheese is melted. Serve in split frankfurter or hoagie bun with drained sauerkraut or coleslaw.

MEAT-LOAF BURRITO

Brush a tortilla with water to soften. Top with a lettuce leaf and dairy sour cream. Stack on cooked meat loaf and Cheddar cheese slices, avocado wedges and onion slices. Add salsa. Roll up. Fasten with a wooden toothpick. Heat in a microwave on 100 percent power (high) $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 minute.

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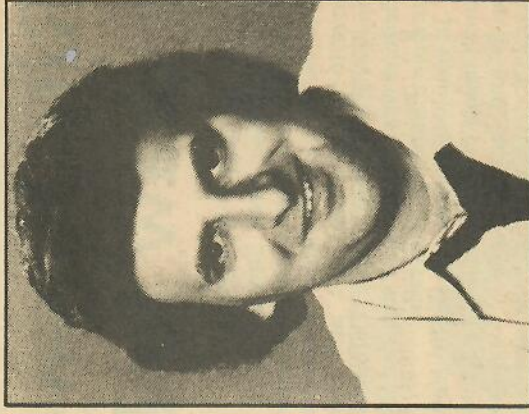
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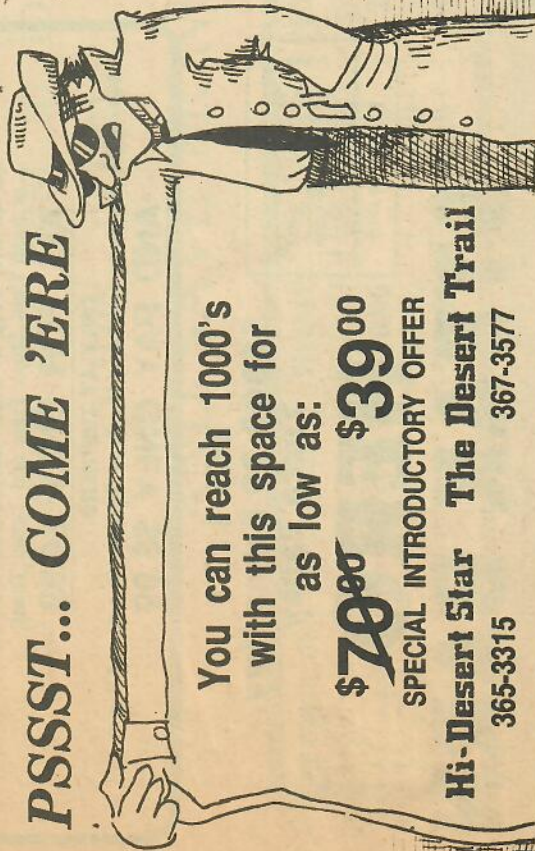
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TED AND MARY HAYES IN THE "TALK OF THE TOWN" GARDEN.

The Principal

Ted Hayes was Twentynine Palms' first

By GARY PEDERSON • Photos by HART PONDER

TO FULLY UNDERSTAND THE STORY YOU ARE ABOUT TO READ you must be able to do one elementary thing — be able to read. Read and understand just what it is you are reading. A popular high school teacher's slogan once read: "If you can read this, thank a teacher."

It was nearly 20 years ago this month when a "capacity crowd" of more than 400 friends, associates and former students packed the multi-purpose room at Twentynine Palms High School on a Saturday evening in 1969 to honor a man who had devoted his heart and soul — and 35 years of his life — to the education of children in a small desert community called Twentynine Palms.

The program, as reported in the April 30, 1969 edition of The Desert Trail, was planned as a "surprise" to commemorate this man's "outstanding contribution to his profession and to his community." Twenty years later, this mild-mannered gentleman, who retired after 35 years of service to the school system, is enjoying retirement and is still living in Twentynine Palms with his wife. His name is Theodore "Ted" M. Hayes.

Ted is most well-known for being the first teacher and principal of Twentynine Palms High School, but he is also known in the community for his green thumb.

At times, his gardens have been the talk of town. Today Ted feels he doesn't quite seem to have the energy he used to, but he still manages to plant healthy gardens full of vegetables and flowers of all different varieties.

While he was serving as a principal of TPHS, Ted was recognized as "one of the key educators" working toward the construction of a gymnasium. When the gymnasium was completed, it was formally named Theodore M. Hayes Gymnasium, a moniker it bears today.

Ted remembers that when they named the auditorium for him, fellow resident Ada Hatch called his house and said, "I didn't know that Ted died."

"And I said, 'well, he hasn't. He's very much alive,' he recalls. Ada replied, 'But they never name anything after anybody living.'"

Among several special presentations made to Ted that Saturday evening 20 years ago were a certificate of endurance from then-superintendent of Morongo Unified School District, Glenn M. Hardy, and a plaque from the Twentynine Palms Alumni Association. On the silver anniversary of his service to Twentynine Palms High School in 1960, Ted received a life membership from school's PTA.

A native of Pasadena, Ted holds bachelor of arts and master of arts degrees from Occidental College in Eagle Rock. He married the former Mary MacPhie in 1931. They have two daughters, Sandy Shelver of Lemon Grove and Sally Sweet of La Mesa.

Now 84, Ted moved from El Monte to Twentynine Palms 55 ago with Mary. In the 1969 Trail article, it was estimated that the community's population when Ted moved here was about 400. Ted later said he thought that figure probably included the population of the entire Morongo Basin and, in his opinion, did not solely represent the population of the community of Twentynine Palms.

Back in 1934, when Ted first moved to what is now known to be the city of Twentynine Palms, the price for a set of tires was around \$5. Hill's Bros. coffee went for 29 cents per pound. The Desert Trail had only four pages per issue and Ted took home approximately \$120 a month for teaching at the school. Nevertheless, Ted says, after being unemployed for a few years, he was happy with whatever pay he could get.

Ted remembers when he and his wife paid \$20 per month to move into a place that was actually part of the American Legion

from Frank Bagley. In 1936 they began building the adobe home they still live in today. The adobe used to make the home came from the dry lake area located on what is now known as the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center.



The highest enrollment of students during Ted's first year of teaching was 17. During the second year, TPHS annexed to Victorville and the school board hired another teacher. "That's when we rented one of those little cottages out back of the Legion as a second classroom," Ted remembers.

The late Helen Bagley played a major role in Ted's life as a teacher and administrator. It was her decision to hire Ted, as she was chairman of the school board then.

Things were fairly liberal in those days, Ted remembers. Before he got word, he wasn't too sure that he would get the job because of the fact that he smoked. In a May 1974 interview, Ted said that he admitted to Helen that he smoked, and that in order to get the job, he would be willing to quit. He noted that Helen thought smoking was "OK," but she preferred that he not drink heavily.

Ted says that attitude "was really something," because in the school district he came from teachers who smoked were fired.

The town was full of people who were shell shocked or had problems resulting from their military service, Ted says. "I remember when this man's wife wanted to go to Yucca Valley to a dance, but he didn't want to go. Later he thought he saw his wife with another man and shot her. When Jack Cones (known as the flying constable) arrived to arrest him, he thought that it was funny that he shot an innocent woman."

Ted remembers translating readings of the "Canterbury Tales" by Chaucer, whom he calls the "first great English author," to his students.

please turn to page 8



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grounds located near what is now Luckie Park. The Legion had several little houses that it rented out.

There wasn't any indoor plumbing, except for a cold-water sink in the kitchen. But they did have electricity. Sometimes.

"Like an early day motel," Ted says, noting that one year, the school board even rented one for an extra classroom.

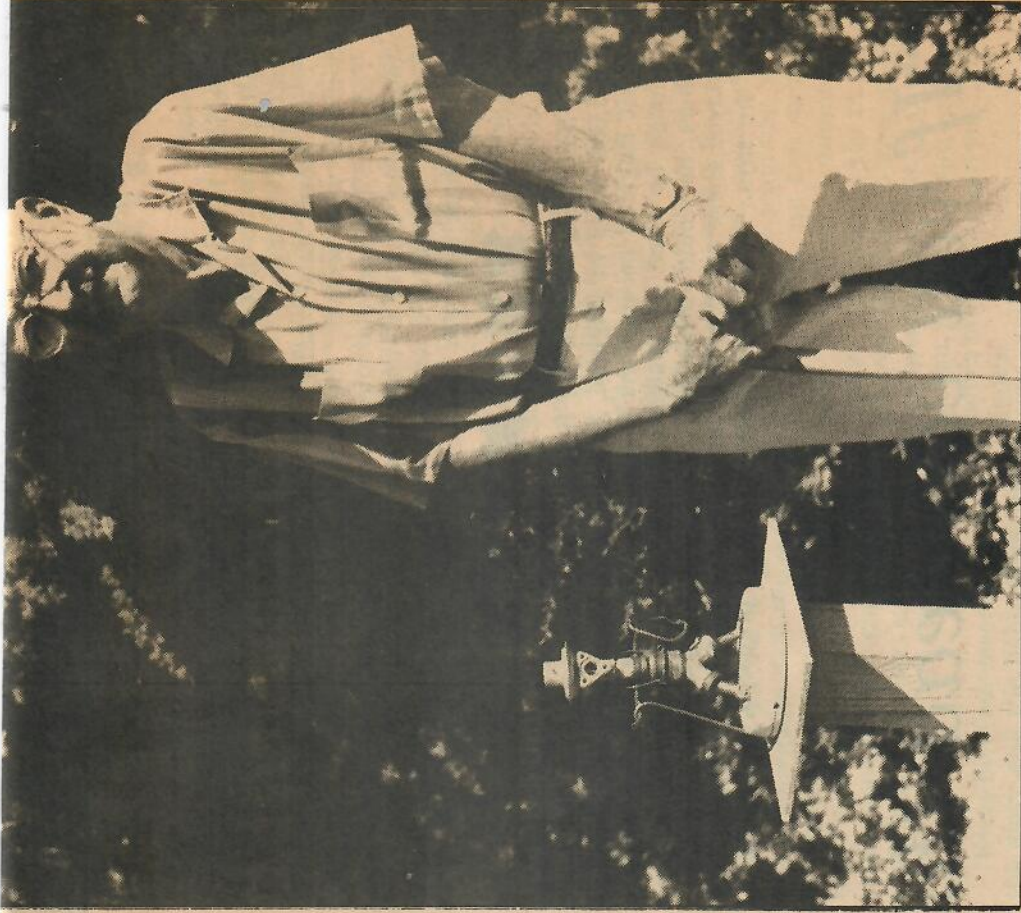
You see, a man named Tom Marlow, who operated the Legion grounds and property back then, would soon come to be known by Ted as the man who would give three short blinks from a light switch within the main Legion building every week night.

The blinking of the lights was to become an everynight occurrence. It was a sign to let Ted and Mary know that Tom was about to turn out the lights. The couple knew that when the lights blinked on and off they had about three minutes before the lights would be turned off and their modest home would, obviously, become dark.

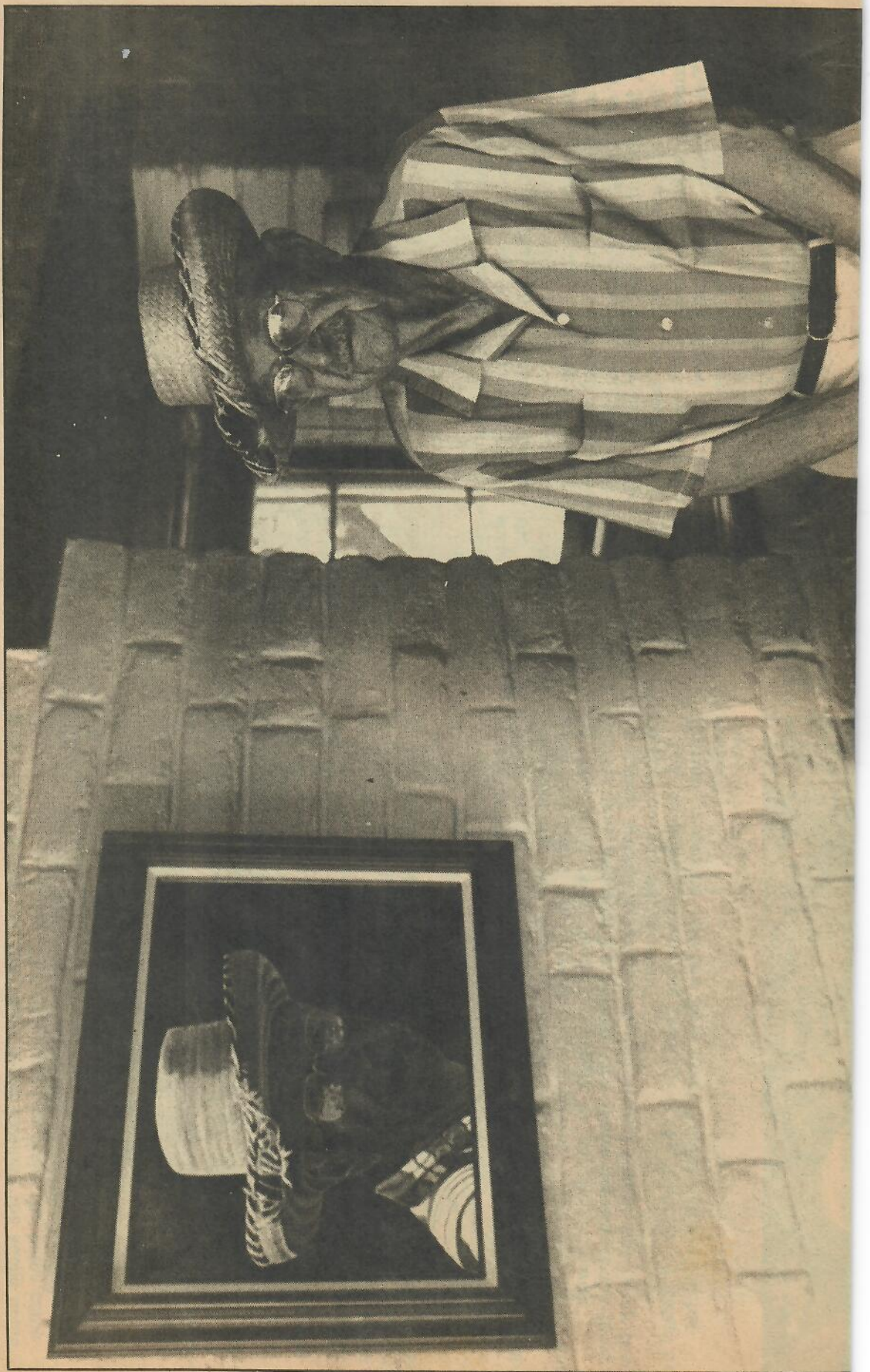
Having no separate electrical switch of his own, Ted says, "it was either time to light your lamps or else get into bed." Ted, it seems, got used to this rather quickly because his home on the Legion grounds was all he could afford at that time.

Fortunately, Ted says, when the Legion had a meeting, he and Mary would have lights until midnight. They made sure that if they had extra chores, such as ironing, they were saved until meeting night.

Times got better, and Ted and Mary purchased five acres of land



TED IN THE GARDEN WITH A FRIEND.



WITH A PORTRAIT OF HIMSELF.

from page 7

The idea behind reading the tales of Chaucer was to teach the students how words can change with time and or have different meanings, Ted says.

"Some words have totally different meanings today than they did when they were written," he adds.

Ted describes one example of what can happen to a story through time. One of Chaucer's tales tells a story that's "mild as milk." The woman who wrote it, Ted says, was actually "a raunchy old gal if there ever was one."



Ted has spent most of his time lately vacationing with Mary, logging 5,000 miles in England, Scotland and Wales. He says he likes to visit England because the country is the basis of our language.

Though he loved his profession, Ted says that if he had his druthers, he would rather not teach under today's conditions.

"Maybe there are too many administrators and not enough teachers," he says. "Some of the teachers are ill prepared, and many

parents of unruly children expect the school system to try and raise them up to be upstanding citizens.

"If the children these days are unruly, it may be the fault of the parents," Ted continues. "The school can't teach unruly children and they shouldn't have to."

But he remembers that not every student at school in his day was well-behaved. Ted relates a day when four "classy" girls decided to take off from school. They went to one girl's house to watch cars go by on Adobe Road.

"By the time I caught up with them I made them write an essay of not less than 2,500 words in good English," he says. The four never pulled that stunt again.

"If the children were caught smoking they were sent home," he says. "If they were caught drinking, the parents took care of it, of course," he laughs. "I may have had to run across a field and jump a fence to catch them."

Ted doesn't do much running these days. He has various physical problems and does not get out of the valley very often, but he still manages to raise a fair garden.

He says, "I'm not ready to cash in my chips."

"If you can read this, thank a teacher..."

Points of Interest



ONE CAN SEE WHY THIS SEDONA RESORT IS CALLED "ENCHANTMENT."

Visit Sedona, land of enchantment

By JOHNNY J.

Sedona. The name conjures up visions of craggy canyons, red and pink in color, where tourists enjoy such unusual activities as taking part in Warren Cremer's "Vortex Tour," exploring Sedona's internationally famous ancient Indian ruins along with its "vortex," or energy, areas.

Psychics the world over acknowledge Sedona to be one of the places where unusual occurrences happen, although they can't say why. Psychic phenomena specialists come here from around the globe. Traveling by jeep, Warren Cremer's expeditions take you to timeless areas where red rocked buttes and ancient ocean floors are explored, allowing you to trace footsteps of the ancient Sinaguas, who knew the answers to questions we no longer ask. Cremer wildlife tours and photographic expeditions also lead you to the Sedona "outback."

The ancient environment of Sedona's outback blends beautifully with several new tourist facilities. John Gardiner's Enchantment, Los Abragados and L'Auberge de Se-

dona each provide something of the past uniquely combined with the present. The newest of Sedona's wonders, John Gardiner's Enchantment, is one of the world's finest tennis resorts where players enjoy 12 championship courts with the assistance of an internationally recognized tennis staff.

Nestled close to the Secret Mountains on some 75 acres surrounded by national forest land, sheer red rock cliffs and Indian ruins that date back to 300 A.D., Enchantment is true to its name.

Technically a private club with a complete health spa and three therapists, on call any time of the day, this resort, says Manager Richard Jones, features a trio of heated outdoor swimming pools and jacuzzi spas, an internationally rated croquet court and wilderness hiking trails.

Enchantment, on many occasions, serves as the site of Fortune 500 "think tank" seminars where relaxation is combined with work, in the form of workshops and seminars. The resort specializes in providing meeting facilities for

small groups of from 10 to 60 people. Meetings are also sometimes held in Enchantment's delightful restaurant. Providing a breathtaking vista of Boynton Canyon with its red hued cliffs, the indoor-outdoor ambience of this dining establishment provides beautiful vistas to be savored along with Enchantment's great cuisine.

Retaining the flavor of the American Southwest while providing the latest in modern amenities is Los Abragados, where 178 suites reflect the "stone house" atmosphere reminiscent of the ancient Sinagua Indians. Tamyra Highland, executive sales director, explains that the atmosphere of the old is combined at Los Abragados with the modern in typically Southwestern architecture. Here, some structures retain some of the original building materials. The resort's 175 suites, says Tamyra, "are very Southwestern.

"Every bit of our resort brings out the glory and the light of the red rocks of Sedona with its serenity."

Large, two bedroom suites with common "living" areas provide rest-

ful get-aways from the many varied tourist activities of Sedona, including golf, horseback riding, expeditions into the canyons and mountains and shopping and dining.

Another unique resort is L'Auberge de Sedona, set against spectacular natural red rock backdrops used in such famous western movies as "Broken Arrow" and "The Last Wagon." Here, a feeling of the past is captured and combined with an elegant French "country" decor.

L'Auberge offers modern amenities, including 95 rooms, suites and "log cabin" cottages. L'Auberge also offers 1,885 square feet of meeting facilities along with a wide variety of other amenities, including a first rate restaurant featuring French cuisine. There are two swimming pools here and a unique "hill-evator," which takes you in a glass cab from L'Auberge's creek and garden areas to the resort's Orchard's section, a few steps from uptown Sedona's many art galleries and boutiques.

Sedona, with its many new resorts and very special environment offers a unique blend of the ancient and the modern.^{cb}

Choice Reading

Who is Tobias Wolff?

By GENEVA COLLINS

Associated Press Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Who the heck is Tobias Wolff to be writing his memoirs?

That's the question that Wolff, an award-winning short story writer whose name elicits admiration in literary circles but blank looks outside of them, pondered in a recent interview.

It's a query he's fielded a lot lately, with the publication of "This Boy's Life: A Memoir" (Atlantic Monthly Press: \$18.95), and it makes him a little defensive.

"These are not my memoirs in the sense of Famous People I Have Known or Wonderful Places I Have Been; it's an account of what it's like to come of age in this country," said the author, citing Frank Conroy's "Stop-Time" and Mary McCarthy's "Memoirs of a Catholic Girlhood" as like works.

But doesn't it take a kind of arrogance for a writer to decide his life is as interesting as his fiction?

"It requires, I would say, more courage than arrogance to write a memoir," he said. "I think there's a

spending weeks shucking prickly horse chestnuts that are then allowed to mold.

Wolff, 43, is the author of two short story collections, "Back in the World" and "In the Garden of the North American Martyrs," and a novella, "The Barracks Thief," which won the 1985 Pen-Faulkner award.

He is also the younger brother of the novelist and former Newsweek critic Geoffrey Wolff, although the two grew up in separate households. Geoffrey was raised by his father on the East Coast, while Tobias traveled with his mother out West.

Geoffrey Wolff's well-received "The Duke of Deception" published in 1979 was a chronicle of his father, a charismatic con artist constantly reinventing himself, a man who once fast-talked his way into an aeronautics position with a bogus resume. It is uncanny how the young Jack duplicates his father's deceptive behavior even though the elder Wolff was a virtual stranger to him.

Wolff is a nervously energetic man whose mind races far faster than his answers to an inter-

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certain amount of arrogance inherent in writing anything. Because what you're in essence doing is going up to complete strangers and saying, "I'm so interesting that you're just going to have to spend \$20 to spend three hours in my company."

"You have to be willing to get your neck chopped off when you write a memoir. It's a kind of humbling activity rather than the other way around."

This account of growing up in blue-collar Chinook, Wash., and other rough-and-tumble locales in the 1950s has received high praise for its honest and unsentimental evocation of childhood.

Wolff, who begins the book as a 10-year-old cadging his mother into buying him souvenirs he knows she can't afford and ends it with his getting kicked out of prep school, has resisted all temptation to make either himself or his childhood idyllic.

The youth we see in these pages (the young Tobias preferred the name Jack during this period, after Jack London) breaks school windows, pelts cars with eggs, sneaks the family car out on joy rides, and in an ultimate ruse, forges references and school records to get himself admitted to prep school.

Much of the delinquency is a rebellion against a totalitarian stepfather, Dwight, who berates and occasionally beats the boy and forces him to do demeaning tasks, such as

viewer's questions, with the result that he is constantly restarting sentences or leaving them unfinished.

The author is dressed in jeans, a plaid shirt and Reeboks that belie his professorial status — he has taught creative writing at Syracuse University in New York for the past eight years.

Wolff believes that it is a very powerful myth in our culture for adults to remember growing up as a magical and happy time, and that he had altered his childhood memories to fit that notion until he started working on this book.

"And then I discovered a darkness in those years that I had forgotten about, glossed over. It's like women who remember years later in analysis that their fathers abused them. You think, 'How could they go on all these years without remembering this?' But we do," he said.

"This Boy's Life" ends with Jack being dismissed from the prep school, being academically unprepared for the rigorous curriculum he had duped his way into, and joining the Army.

In the interview, Wolff picked up where the book leaves off, describing his duty tour in Vietnam and wandering through Europe afterward. He fell in love with Oxford, England, and discovered that he could attend the university even without a high school degree if he could pass the grueling entrance exams. *ms*

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