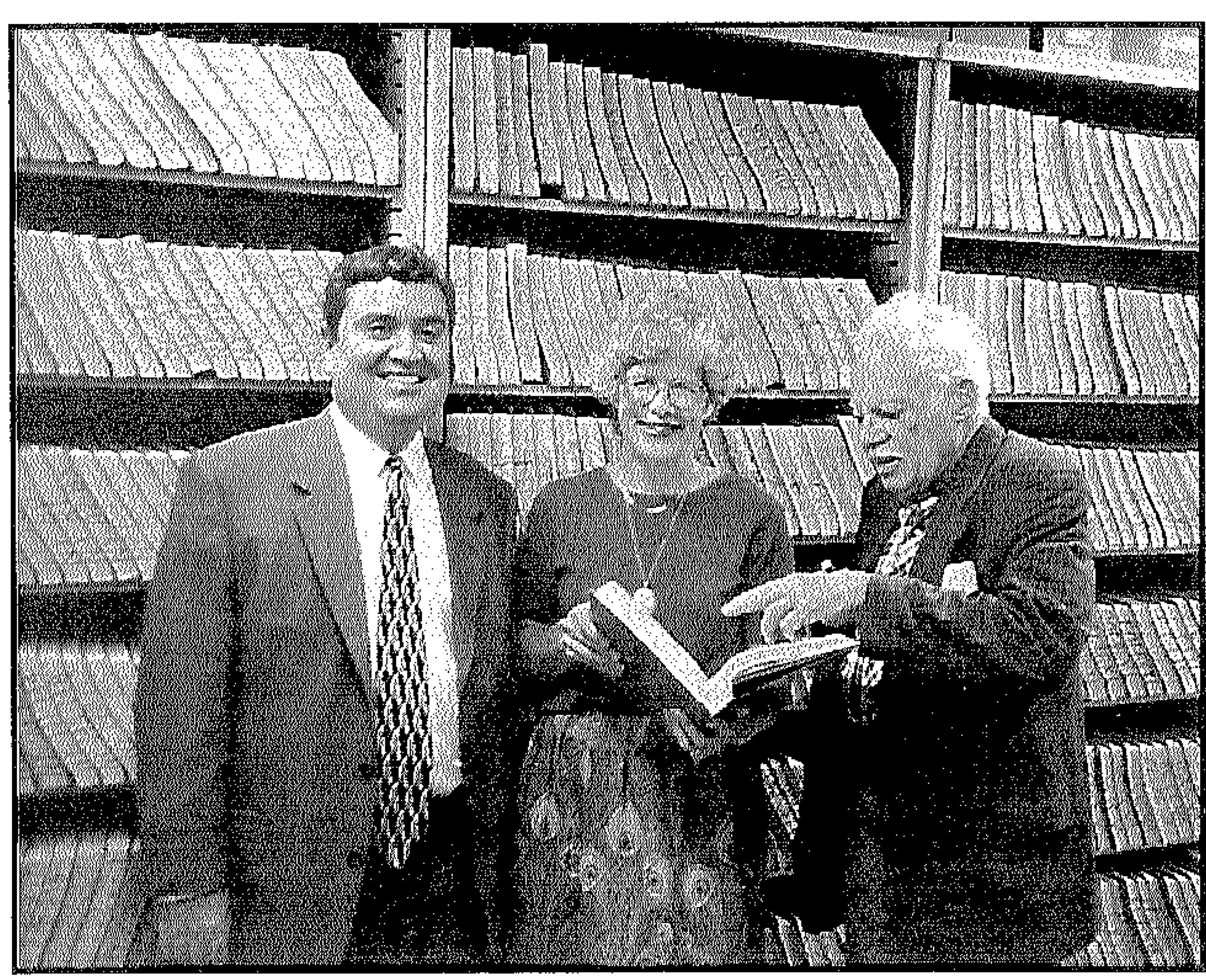
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Dictionary of American Regional English



David Simon, Development Specialist; Joan Hall, Associate Editor; Frederic G. Cassidy, Chief Editor

# What's Going On? Joan H. Hall Associate Editor

Sometime during the last two decades, DARE's tradition of the occasional newsletter to friends was lost in the midst of editing, producing, and publishing three volumes of the Dictionary. This seems like a good time to reinvigorate the custom and connect with old friends and new. One of the features of this newsletter will be a space ("Where Are They Now?") in which we can let you all know what former staff members are doing now. So please be in touch with us so that we can pass your news on to your old friends and colleagues.

For those who are new to DARE and others who have lost touch with us, this is a

I am very excited to be working as the new Development Specialist for the Dictionary of American Regional English. So many people across the country (and beyond) care deeply about DARE. The project is very special, as are the funding challenges facing us.

Funding Update

David Simon

Development Specialist

One thing is very clear. Substantial private support is necessary to complete Volume IV of DARE. We have received grant money in the past and are aggressively seeking it now. However, the publication of Volume IV will depend largely upon the ability of individuals to support DARE.

One of DARE's biggest strengths is the many ways the Dictionary can be used and is being used. Teachers, students, writers, actors, lawyers, physicians, law enforcement officials, and many other people consult DARE regularly. I have spoken to many DARE users in recent weeks. The message has been clear: DARE is an amazing resource with one drawback—it currently stops at the letter O! We are interested in enlisting everyone's support to make certain that DARE reaches the only logical conclusion for a dictionary: the letter Z.

So, what can you do? A number of things. We would welcome a gift to DARE, which would be tax-deductible for you. Gifts

Continued on page 2

good chance to bring you up to date. First, let me answer the most frequently asked question, "How is Fred Cassidy doing?" I'm delighted to say that DARE's Chief Editor shows few signs of slowing down as he approaches his ninetyfirst birthday. His recent trips to Jamaica (to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the University of the West Indies) and to St. Lucia (for a conference of the Society for Caribbean Linguistics) should convince you of his good health. Working with him on Volume IV of DARE are fourteen full- and part-time staff members—people we want you to meet. A different staff member will be profiled in each issue of the newsletter until you have met all of those whose hard work and dedication make this project a reality.

# More Than Halfway There

As I said, three volumes have been published so far. Volume I, including extensive introductory matter plus the letters A–C, came out in 1985 (published by Harvard University's Belknap Press). Although we had originally intended to bring out the whole alphabet at once, it became apparent early in the 1980s that we needed to get something in print in order to prove the value of the project. Our efforts were rewarded: John Gross wrote in his New York Times review that "when it is completed the dictionary will rank as one of the glories of contemporary American scholarship" (October 8, 1985). Widespread praise in both the scholarly and the popular press made it clear that DARE is that rare thing, a book that meets the highest standards of scholarship and is at the same time accessible and of interest to a much wider audience. Volume I had gone into a fifth printing within a year of publication.

Volume II (D–H) came out in 1991, with Volume III (I–O) following in 1996. In between those volumes, our production staff assembled a unique and valuable companion

piece, An Index by Region, Usage, and Etymology to the <u>Dictionary of American Regional</u> English, Volumes I and II. (This was published in 1993 as Number 77 of the journal Publication of the American Dialect Society.) Why would anyone need an index to a dictionary, you ask? Because DARE is filled with labels describing headwords as representing the speech of various regions and social groups, or as illustrating an etymological process. Would you like to know which words are labeled as being used in Texas? In North Dakota? California? Or which words represent the process of folk-etymology? Which words come from French? Chinook Jargon? Swedish? The Index can answer all your questions. (The *Index* to Volume III is now in press.)

#### Who Uses DARE?

One query we often hear is, "Who are the main users of the Dictionary?" We assumed from the start that librarians and teachers would be significant users. That has certainly been true. But we've also discovered that DARE is a valuable resource for physicians (whose patients may use folk terms to describe their ailments), lawyers (who need to know when a word means one thing in one place and quite another thing in another place), and historians (who can figure out what those seventeenth-century documents were referring to), not to mention novelists, poets, folklorists, actors, and directors. And of course, it is treasured by those who simply delight in the variety, wit, and wisdom found in the quotations that illustrate each entry. See the "Notes and Quotes" column in this issue for a sampling of comments from satisfied customers.

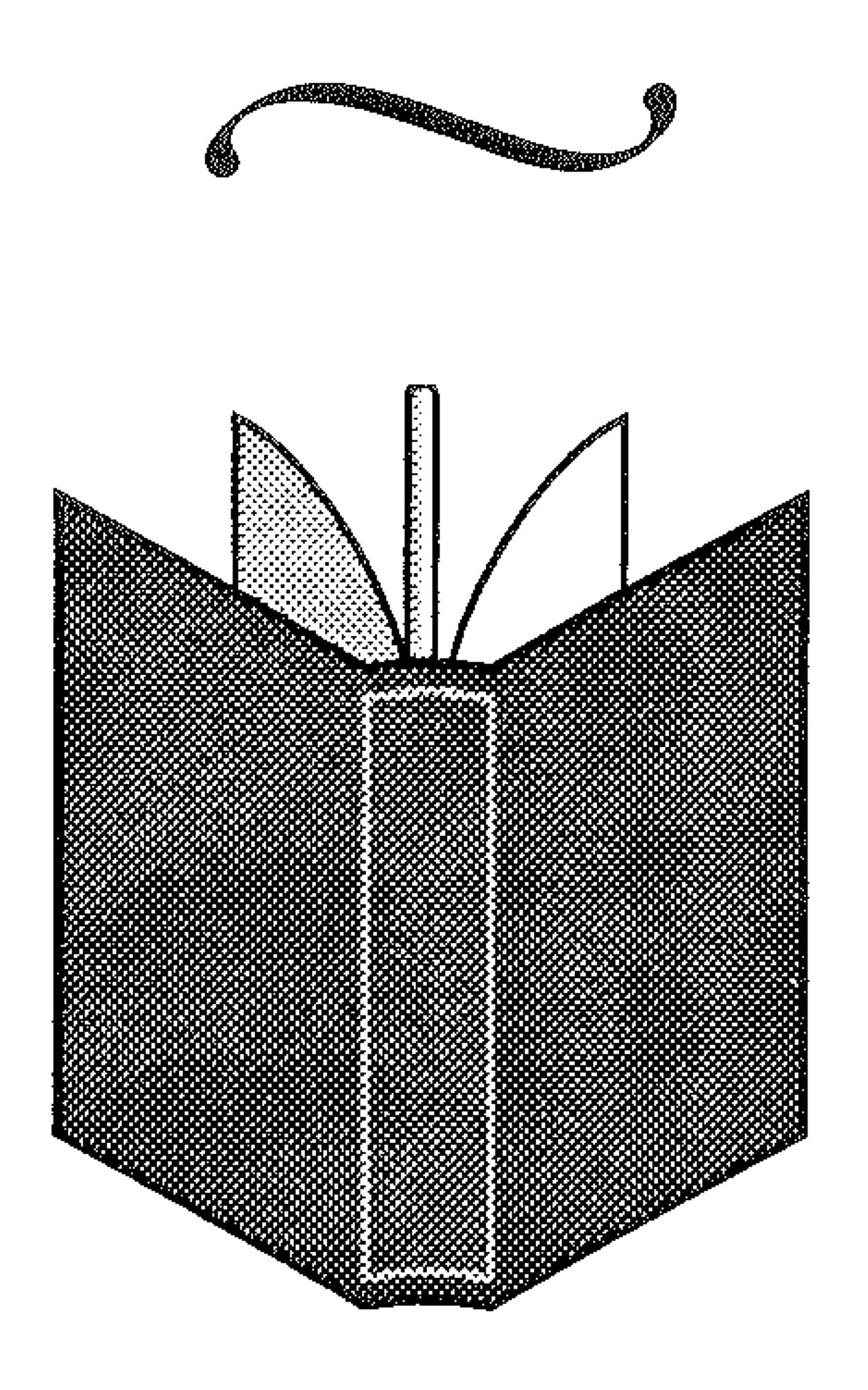
#### Where Are We Now?

We're working hard on Volume IV now, which will include P, Q, R, and the first half of S. "When will it be available?" That's the second most frequently asked question around here. Unfortunately, the answer is dependent on our obtaining continuous and adequate funding.

Our financial situation necessitated a staff reduction last summer, but if we can find sufficient resources to maintain our current staff, we *might* be able to get this volume out by the end of 2002. (The single bright spot in our funding picture is that the Dean of the College of Letters and Science here at the UW-Madison has provided *DARE* with a Development Specialist for three years. David Simon has just joined our staff, and will be devoting his considerable energies to finding new sources of funding for *DARE*. His column in this issue will talk a little more about our financial position.)

To reassure you that we are indeed moving steadily through this part of the alphabet, I'll share a few of the more unusual entries from Volume IV. (Don't recognize them? Check the key on page 5.) The P's yield paddybass, pastafazool, pokelogan, puckersnatch, and punkie. In Q, you'll find quandy, quill, and quituate. In the R's, look for racket store, rinktum tiddy, rippet, and rusticator. And the first half of S will offer sac-a-lait, saluggi, scallyhoot, and scythe-whetter.

In future issues of the *DARE Newsletter* we will fill in more of the gap between the last newsletter and this one, describe some of the other uses of *DARE*, share some of the goings-on in "the big room" (where the Questionnaires, most of our reference books, and numerous staff members spend their time), profile other staff members, and answer your questions. We look forward to hearing from you!



# Funding Update Continued from page 1

can be made in a variety of ways: cash, stocks, deferred giving arrangements, and many other options are available. We are interested in all types of support; both large and small contributions are needed and appreciated. Because of a matching grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, your contributions will be matched on a one-to-one basis. Checks may be made out to DARE/UW Foundation and sent to DARE, 6131 Helen C. White Hall, 600 North Park Street, Madison, WI 53706. To those of you who have contributed to DARE recently, THANK YOU!

You can also help by talking with me about others who might be interested in helping *DARE* or who may have ideas regarding funding opportunities for the project. You can reach me at 608-265-9836, 6131 Helen C. White Hall, 600 North Park Street, Madison, WI 53706, or at davidsimon@facstaff.wisc.edu.

I look forward to hearing from you. Together we will ensure that *DARE* is completed and enjoyed by thousands of people for generations to come.

# Notes and Quotes

We've been pleased to hear from readers about the various ways they have used *DARE*. Many simply say that they enjoy browsing in it, or that they check it whenever they hear strange or unfamiliar words. Others, however, have made specific uses that we might not have predicted. Here are excerpts from letters to us:

"I have made use of *DARE* in my forensic work and would make a lot more use of it when more volumes emerge. . . . I have been

## Notes and Quotes Continued from page 3

working with the FBI, various large businesses, and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in threat letter cases, often bomb threats.... I keep my three volumes of *DARE* very handy to my desk along with . . . other important reference works. I find it invaluable. Needless to say, it would be even more valuable if it went beyond the letter O."

Roger Shuy Roger W. Shuy, Inc., Linguistic Services

"A few months ago I spent quite a bit of time with the two published volumes of *DARE*, checking etymologies for a dictionary of prison slang that I've been working on with a former student of mine. . .: *DARE* turned out to be more useful than any of the specifically slang dictionaries I consulted. Fun, too."

Sarah G. Thomason
Former Editor, Language

"I look at entries in DARE and I say to myself: here is language really in action, as people face the problems they have to talk about and invent ways of talking about them. That comes closer to direct observation than any of our fancy descriptions of American Indian languages, which necessarily peck away at the surface because that is as deep as the investigator has a chance to dig."

. . . . .

Charles Hockett
Cornell University

"Thanks for your comments to Stumpers [=an electronic bulletin board for librarians]. We just wish all volumes of *DARE* were available now. It is fun as well as helpful."

Mary Bostick, Documents Librarian South Carolina State Library

"I have used the information I have received from DARE... [while] serving as dialect coach for professional actors at the Denver Center Theatre Company, the Cincinnati Playhouse-in-the-Park, and (most notably) the Royal National Theatre of Great Britain and the Royal Shakespeare Company.... Your work and contributions have, indeed, benefited and enriched hundreds of students, actors, and thousands of theatre patrons. DARE is a national treasure."

Kathryn G. Maes
University of Colorado at Denver

"Here in the Institute for Oral History, we use the Dictionary of [American] Regional English frequently to assist us in transcribing oral history memoirs. . . . When an undergraduate student transcriber gets stumped, . . . we exhaust the standard unabridged dictionary, then we turn to the DARE. . . . We use it on a regular basis, and we need it."

M. Rebecca Sharpless, Director Institute for Oral History, Baylor University

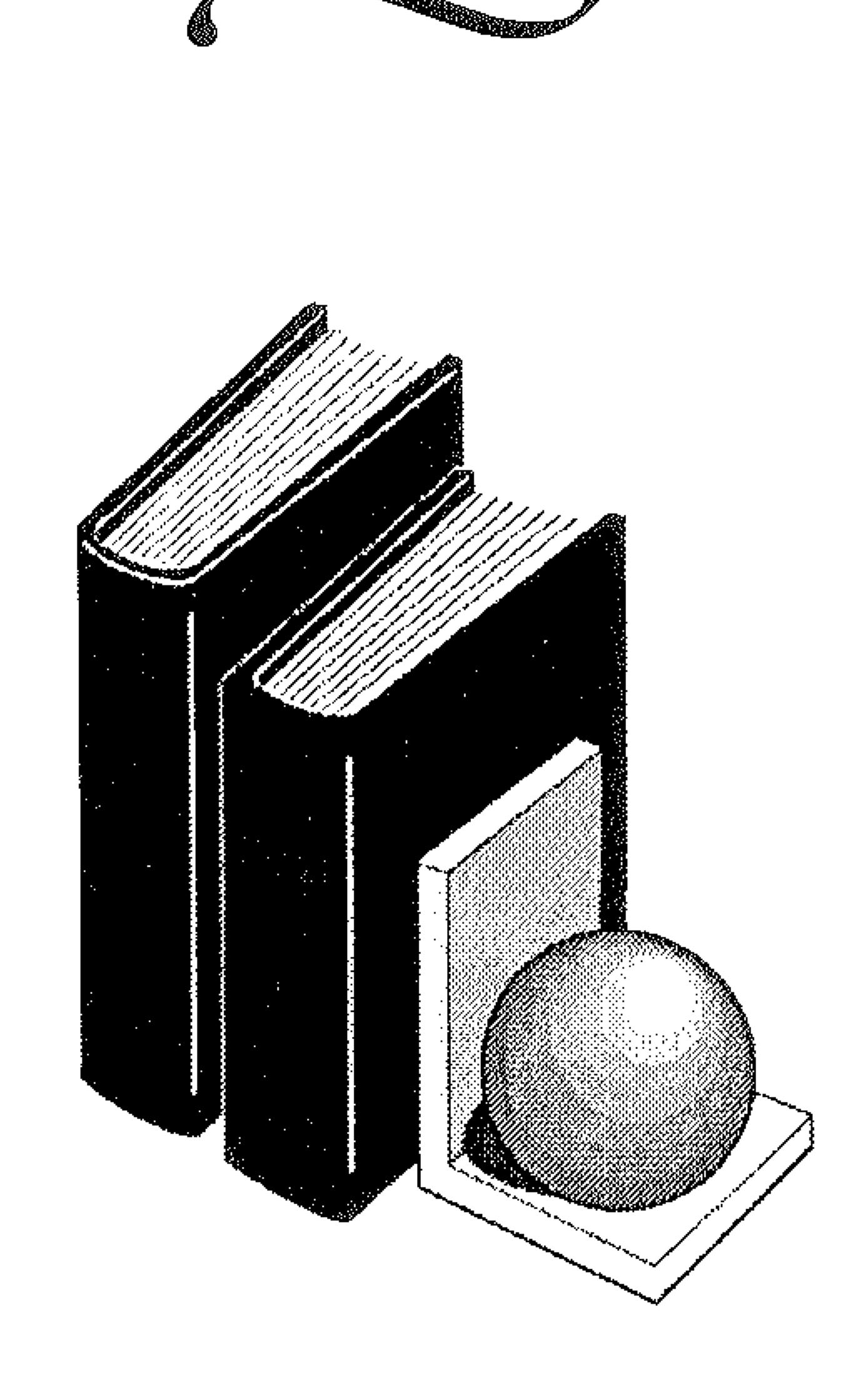
# Notes and Quotes Continued from page 4

"Although I'm not a linguist, I've found the volumes of the DARE immensely helpful in a variety of public history projects I've worked on over the past several years. . . . I realize it [=DARE] must be a monumental task, but I think it's an immensely important project whose value, for both scholars and the general public, will appreciate over the years. I look forward to seeing future volumes."

Curt Miner, Historian
State Museum of Pennsylvania

"I am a novelist working on my second book for Bantam,
Doubleday, Dell. The novel is set in middle Georgia in the year 1961, and I have found the Dictionary of American Regional English to be an invaluable reference in providing accuracy about language customs for my work."

Trudy Krisher
University of Dayton



Key to V	olume IV Headwords
paddybass	To walk back and forth. (Outer Banks, NC)
pastafazool	A dish consisting of pasta and beans or peas. (In Italian neighborhoods)
pokelogan	An area of stagnant water connected to a lake. (NEng, Gt Lakes, NW)
puckersnatch	A difficult or muddled situation. (Northeast, esp NEng)
punkie	A biting insect. (Chiefly New York State)
quandy	A sea duck better known as <i>old-squaw</i> . (NEng)
quill	A drinking straw. (old-fash)
quituate	To drop out of school. (Scattered, but chiefly S Midl)
racket store	A variety store. (Chiefly W Midl, Cent, esp TX)
rinktum tiddy	A dish consisting of cheese, tomatoes, onion, egg, and pepper, on toast. (Esp NEng)
rippet	A noisy disturbance; a dispute, fight. (Chiefly S Midl)
rusticator	A vacationer, esp a summer boarder. (ME)
sac-a-lait	A white crappie (a fish of the sunfish family). (LA)
saluggi	(Spelled in other ways as well) A "game" intended to torment a victim. (New York City)
scallyhoot	To move quickly; to gallivant.

(Esp West)

scythe-whetter A woodpecker better known as a

flicker. (OK)

# Where Are They Now?

We've kept in touch with quite a few of our former colleagues, and would be delighted to hear from many more. Let us know where you are and what you're doing, and we will share the news with friends of *DARE* in each issue of the *Newsletter*. Let's start with some of the people who were in on ground zero:

Audrey Duckert was involved in the naming of DARE ("It couldn't be the Dictionary of Regional American English, because that would have given us a horrible acronym, DRAE!"). Audrey was largely responsible for the huge task of developing and testing the Questionnaire and then putting it into its final shape. Later she read galleys for Volumes I–III (as well as reading proof for the Oxford English Dictionary Supplement). She lives in Hadley, Massachusetts, where she teaches at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

Shepherding our Fieldworkers between 1967 and 1970 was Jim Hartman, who orchestrated the flow of Questionnaires, tape recorders, and Word Wagons, making sure that the salary checks (they seem so little now!) went out on satisfactory completion of each interview. He used just the right mix of encouragement and prodding to get those interviews done on time. Since 1970 he has been teaching at the University of Kansas, where pronunciation of American English has been his primary research interest (he wrote the Pronunciation Introduction for the first volume of DARE). Last year he collaborated on a completely revised edition of Daniel Jones's English Pronouncing Dictionary, and he's now at work on the pronunciations for a Japanese-English dictionary.

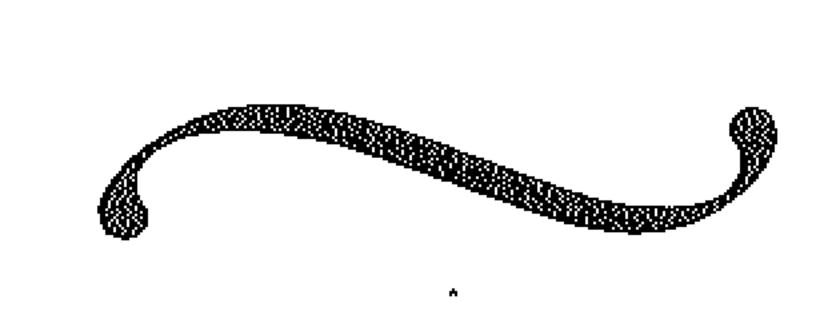
DARE's first Office Manager, Kathie
Beckett, oversaw our budget from 1965–68, and did some pre-editing of Questionnaires as well.
Facing the first of what were to become chronic financial crises, she worked valiantly with the UW to keep the project afloat while additional

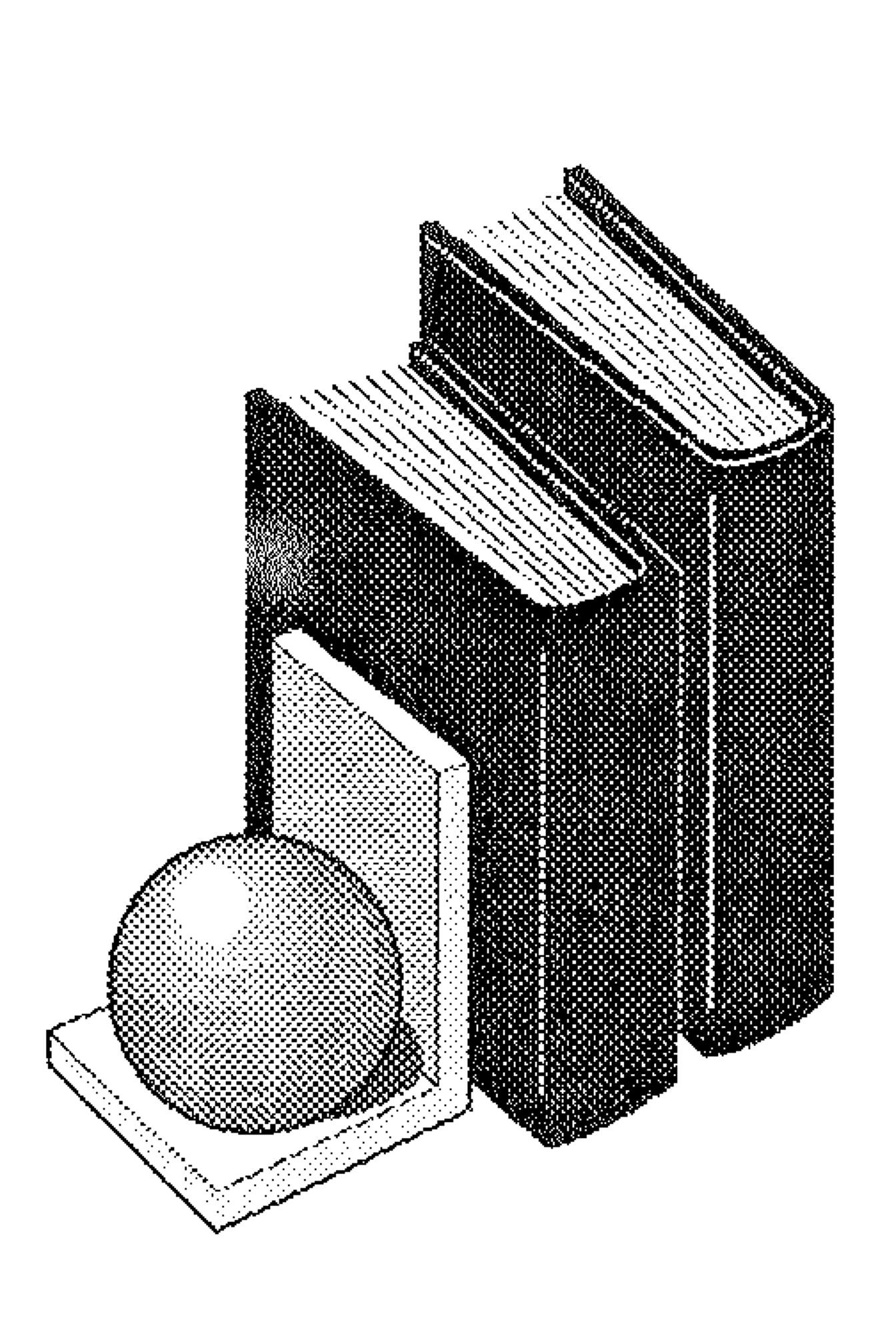
grants were sought. Her list of valuable contact people, "Kathie's Book," was our office bible for many years! Leaving Madison with husband Paul for a brief sojourn at Purdue University and a six-year teaching assignment in Nigeria, followed by a stint in Pullman, Washington, Kathie returned to Madison in 1977. She developed her technical writing skills for Credit Union National Association, became enamored of computer technology, and is now Director of Information Systems and Technology at CUNA.



#### Web Site

The Dictionary of American Regional English has a web site for you to enjoy. It can be found at http://polyglot.lss.wisc.edu/dare/dare.html. This site has lots of interesting information about the Dictionary, so be sure to bookmark it for future reference. One of its unique features is a list of words and expressions that we would like more information on for Volume IV of DARE. If you know any of the terms, please e-mail us at the address on the web site.





# Staff Member Profile

In this first-of-a-series interview with a *DARE* staffer, David Simon poses some questions to Joan Houston Hall, *DARE*'s Associate Editor.

Q: How long have you been with the project, and how did you happen to come to *DARE*?

A: I've been here since 1975, but I first heard about *DARE* when I was a graduate student at Emory University in 1968. At that time I thought it sounded like a dream job, but had no idea that the dream would eventually come true. When I was finishing my dissertation in 1975 and looking around for work, I heard that Fred Cassidy was in need of an Editor. I applied, came, and never left.

Q: What are your major duties at DARE?

A: I'm responsible for the overall management of the project. That includes consulting with Editors about work in progress, reading all the entries, and making changes at various stages in the production process. Administratively, it means writing grant proposals and reports, acting as liaison with the UW-Madison English Department, the College of Letters and Science, the Graduate School, and all granting agencies. Now that the Dean of the College has provided us with *your* services, I'm delighted to be able to pass much of the development work on to you!

Q: What's the most enjoyable aspect of your job?

A: I really appreciate the variety in this job. I love reading and reviewing the entries—there are such unusual words to learn (but no, I'm sorry to say that I don't find myself using them in my own conversation). And I have found it fascinating to learn how institutions such as universities and government agencies work. But one of the most gratifying aspects of the job

is to work with people who also care deeply about the project and want desperately to see it finished and done well.

Q: What's your favorite entry?

A: I have lots of favorites, but the all-time standout was way back in Volume I: bobbasheely. This is a word found in the Gulf States, both as a noun meaning "A very close friend" and a verb meaning "To saunter, sashay, move in a friendly fashion; to associate with socially." The pleasure was in starting with a totally unfamiliar word, searching for any possibly related forms, and ultimately finding the source in a Choctaw dictionary. The fun was in solving the puzzle.

Q: What's the most interesting use of *DARE* that you're aware of?

A: Several years ago we had a call from a psychiatrist in Chicago wanting to know whether there were alternate terms for such words as stilts, mask, and harmonica. George Goebel, our Review Editor, assured him that there were, and read him the lists of variant words. The doctor was delighted to have his suspicions confirmed, for he had discovered that some of his patients were being misdiagnosed as aphasic because they used such terms as Tommy walkers, false face, and mouth organ when shown pictures of the items mentioned above. Apparently the makers of a standardized test were unaware of the phenomenon of regional variation when they made up the test key, so patients who used legitimate regional variants were being marked "wrong." One of my hopes is to find the time to work with the makers of the test to eliminate bias based on language variation.

#### DARE Newsletter

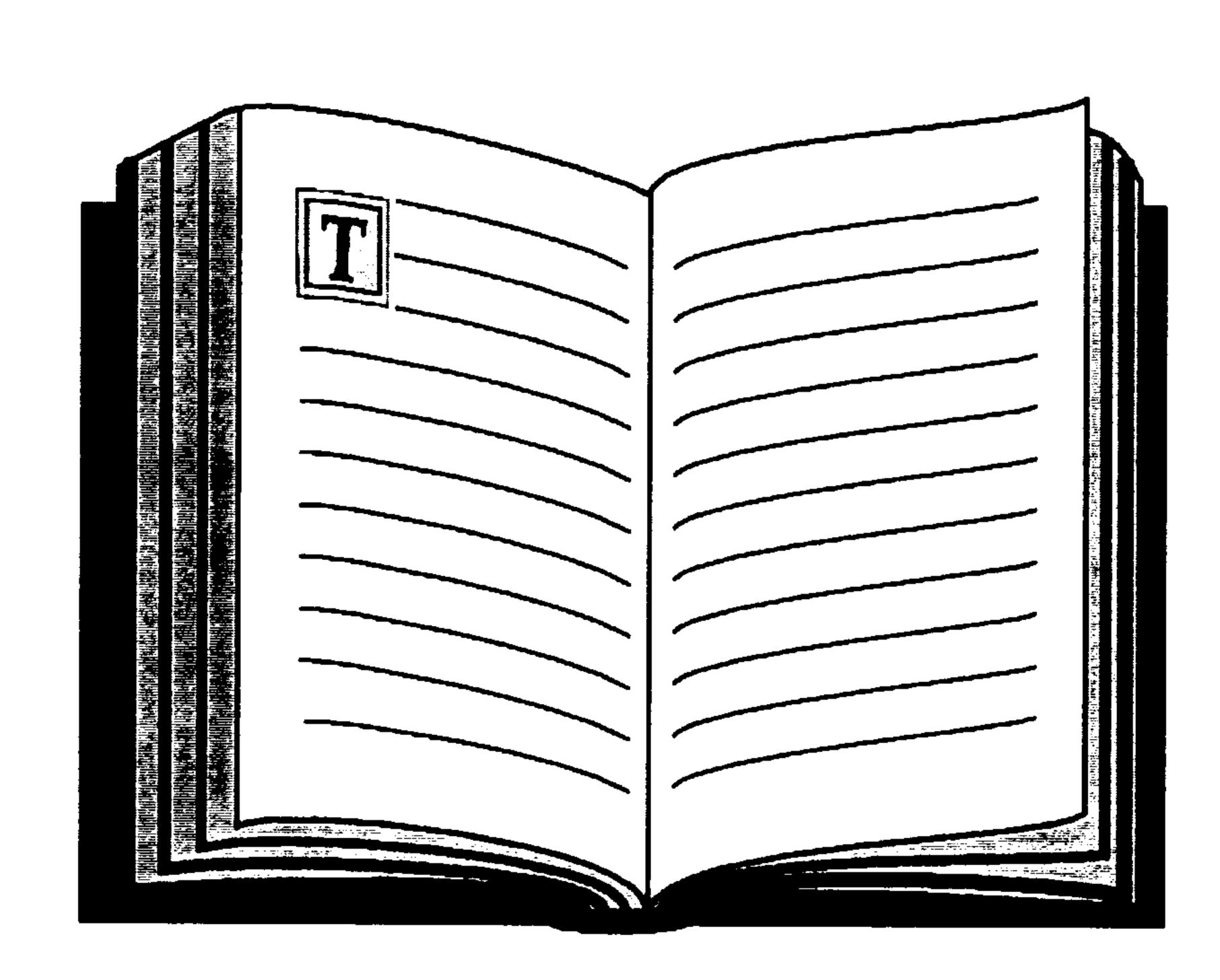
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# Staff Member Profile Continued from page 7

Q: What are your interests outside of DARE?

A: I love contemporary fiction (but can't read anything without marking it for *DARE* quotes). I also enjoy cooking, trying out recipes from around the world. I've been tempted to try some of the recipes in *DARE*, until I remember what the ellipses in the quotes could be leaving out!



### DARE Staff Members

#### EDITORIAL STAFF

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Craig M. Carver, Senior Editor, Editorial Computing
Frederic G. Cassidy, Chief Editor
George H. Goebel, Review Editor
Joan H. Hall, Associate Editor
Sheila Y. Kolstad, Senior Science Editor
Luanne von Schneidemesser, Senior Editor, Production
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Technical Typist
Elizabeth Blake, Proofreader
Elizabeth R. Gardner, Senior Proofreader

#### OFFICE MANAGER

Karen J. Krause

#### DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST

David H. Simon

## RESEARCH ASSISTANTS

Rebecca V. Roeder Conrad Treff