Listening to America
Joan Houston Hall
Chief Editor

One of the unique features of DARE has always been the inclusion of oral as well as written evidence of language use. Our Fieldworkers talked with 2,777 Americans in 1,002 communities across the United States and recorded not only their responses to the questions in the DARE Questionnaire, but also many of the words they used in casual conversation. Fred Cassidy trained the Fieldworkers to keep their note pads handy at all times so that they could jot down unusual words, phrases, or pronunciations whenever they heard them, whether at the gas station, in the café, or on the local radio station. The same is true for DARE staff members today, who make a point of listening carefully and writing down whatever sounds new, unusual, or otherwise noteworthy.

These bits of linguistic evidence are scattered throughout DARE entries under the rubrics “DARE FW Addit” (for Fieldworker additional information) and “DARE File” (for examples collected by staff members from oral sources or ephemeral written sources). In the Dictionary you can learn, for instance, that in southeastern Pennsylvania raisin pie is called funeral pie because it is served only after a funeral there; in Maryland mudlarking means catching crabs by walking over the mud flats exposed by low tide; in Nevada a pogonip is a fog that freezes onto trees and bushes, and when you see a fog in the mountains in winter, there will be a pogonip in the morning; and in east Tennessee many people say “Scat cat! Get your tail out of my gravy!” when someone sneezes. These remarks were all collected by DARE staff members.

Continued on page 2

Funding Update
David Simon
Director of Development

The Dictionary of American Regional English development effort has been greatly affected by improvements in technology over the years. A wonderful example can be found at the DARE Web site.

At <http://polyglot.lss.wisc.edu/dare/dare.html>, you will find a link titled “Funding.” Click on that link, and you will arrive at a page titled “DARE’s Funding—You Can Help.” Click on the “University of Wisconsin Foundation Making A Gift” link and follow the directions. Under “Gift Designation,” use the pull-down menu to enter “College of Letters and Science” and then, in the larger box below, type the words “Dictionary of American Regional English Fund.” Then submit a bit more information—that’s it. Your gift has been made.

In less than two minutes, you will have used the abilities of modern technology to support DARE. When work on DARE began over forty years ago, this method of support was not even imagined. I am pleased to say that many of you have taken advantage of this convenience, and we are grateful to all of our “cyberspace supporters.”

On page 5 of this Newsletter, you will find our 2004 donor list. I would like to thank each and every person or organization that made a gift to DARE last year. Your support is needed and appreciated by everyone connected to the Dictionary. It is thanks to you that our work is able to continue on Volume V of DARE, which will complete the alphabet. It is thrilling to be working on the last few letters of the alphabet and to know that we are

Continued on page 4
Soon after, this message came from California:

We had periwinkles in the creeks in Bishop, California, east of the Sierra. They are little bug-like things that make their own tubes out of sand or other small bits from the stream (there were 2 kinds). Although we went fishing a lot, we didn’t use these as bait.

An Idaho correspondent wrote, “My Dad remembers that fishermen called caddisfly worms ‘periwinkles’ on the Salmon River when he was a kid in the 1920s and 30s.” And from Oregon we heard that “Periwinkle is used for any cased caddis larva. I’m sure I heard the term in the 1950s in eastern Oregon.”

Not only did these writers verify the fact that the word is alive and well in the sense we were interested in, they also made it clear that the regional pattern suggested by our other evidence could be confirmed. We labeled it “chiefly Northwest, California.”

More recently, Editors were working on the verb phrase take up. Not surprisingly, the phrase has multiple meanings, including ‘to begin,’ as in “School takes up at 8:15”; ‘to lodge, put up, take residence,’ as in “A stray cat took up at our house”; and ‘to consort together,’ as in “Those two just took up; they never got married.” But there was also a small amount of evidence for the sense ‘to remove (food) from the stove or from the cooking pot in preparation for serving it; to bring food to the table.’ This had the feel of something genuine, but how could we find the evidence? The sense is not in the standard dictionaries that we regularly consult, and to search the myriad Web sites that might be useful would be impossibly time-consuming: we would have to sift through hundreds of thousands of hits that were irrelevant to our specific sense.

The only sensible course was to ask people like you! We posted the query both on our Web site and in the Newsletter of the American Dialect Society. And we were well and quickly rewarded. The phrase is current throughout the country, but it seems to be somewhat more frequent in the South and the South Midland. Snippets from a few of the many messages we received show just how it’s used:

My mother used . . . [to say] “Look, I am ready to take up dinner and where is everyone?” . . . She was born in 1904 in Provo, Utah . . . What sent me to the DARE site was that I said to my wife, “I am going to tidy up the kitchen.” “That’s an odd ex-

and are included in the entries along with the more traditional written evidence.

But what if you never meet a DARE staff member or are never overheard by a lexicographer when you use a regional word? Does that mean that your contributions to the history of American dialects will necessarily go unrecorded? No! We may not be doing systematic fieldwork anymore, but we certainly never turn down any information that comes our way. And sometimes we need to ask for assistance from those who care about language. Fortunately, there is now an easy way for people like you, the readers of the DARE Newsletter, to provide that help.

If you go to the DARE Web site at <http://polyglot.lss.wisc.edu/dare/dare.html> (or Google “DARE” and follow the link titled “DARE WEBPAGE,” which should appear near the top of the list), you can click on the link for “Queries” in the left-hand column. That will take you to a page where we have listed some of the Volume V words for which we would like additional information. Have you ever heard the word slumpy, for instance, used to mean ‘muddy, slushy’? How about stirry, meaning ‘to stir’? Or such a much, used to refer to someone or something of great importance? If so, please let us know! Your name will be included in the list of acknowledgments in the final volume of DARE.

Two entries, periwinkle and take up, will illustrate the value of the contributions made by visitors to our Web page. As we edited the term periwinkle for Volume IV, it became clear that as well as referring to the marine gastropod mollusk, the word also referred to a freshwater snail and to another creature: the larva of the caddis fly, which typically constructs a sand- or pebble-covered cocoon that is frequently found attached to a rock in a rushing stream. We knew that this creature was also called a rock worm and stick bait, but we didn’t have much evidence for periwinkle. So we posted a query both on our Web site and in the Newsletter of the American Dialect Society asking for additional information. It wasn’t long before we had the following response from western Washington:

My dad called a local fresh-water larva ‘periwinkle.’ This creature was about an inch long, cream-colored body, black head, and built itself a full body-length cylindrical case out of cemented sand or small gravel particles. We found them in shallow water at the edges of fast-flowing streams. Used for bait.
pression,” she said. . . . “We always said ‘clean’ up the kitchen.” She’s a rock-bound New Englander.

I grew up using the term [=take up] for taking things off the stove. I don’t know if it was in general use . . . or just in my family, but I don’t recall friends or guests mentioning that it sounded odd. . . . My mother grew up in Caldwell County, Missouri. This is a fascinating project. Words are magic. Thanks for letting me be a part of this.

I use the term take up the potatoes . . . to mean ‘remove from the cooking pot or pan and place in a serving dish.’ My daughter (18 years of age), who was born in California and raised in Mexico City and New York City, finds the expression exceedingly quaint and humorous and has never heard it used by anyone but me and my family members in Indiana.

[I live in Florida and] I still say “Dinner’ll be ready quick as I take up the rice,” or “Let me take up these beans before they burn.”

These anecdotes and others like them make up the bulk of the DARE entry for this sense of take up, emphasizing how important it is for lexicographers not just to read published works but also to listen to the speakers of our language.

Fred Cassidy could not have predicted that the Internet would be an extension of the work he asked DARE Fieldworkers to do forty years ago as they traveled about the country asking questions, listening to the answers, and making careful notes. But he would heartily endorse this method of collecting data. It provides us with evidence from all corners of the country, from people who may not be lexicographers, but who are experts on their own language and that of the people around them. Take a look at the current queries on the DARE Web page. You may be just the person who can solve a puzzle for us!

Carol evac

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coming in Volume V</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>slick and a promise Variant of lick and a promise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Chiefly NJ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>slip-go-down Any soft, pudding-like food.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Esp NEast)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sollaker A whopper, an impressive example of its kind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(VT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stifle A stew. (Chiefly MA, ME)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stump-mover A heavy rain. (Sth, S Midl)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>summercater A summer vacationer. (ME)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sun-ball The orb of the sun. (Chiefly sAppalachians)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sunfish Of a horse: to buck with a twisting motion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(West)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suption The “goodness” (nutrition or flavor) of food.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Sth, S Midl)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>surface coal Dried cow dung used for fuel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(West)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>surly A bull. (Sth, S Midl, esp TX)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>surround To bypass, go around. (Chiefly sAppalachians)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>swag A low, frequently damp or marshy, area. (Chiefly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S Midl)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>swagin A kind of soup or porridge. (ME)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>swale A low-lying, often damp, area; a meadow, bottom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Esp NEast)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tanglewood Densely tangled underbrush.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Esp NEast)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>toadstabber A large folding knife. (Chiefly Nth, N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midl)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>toby A cheap cigar. (Chiefly wPA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>toby-struck Congenitally peculiar in appearance or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>behavior. (Chiefly VA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>toddick A small amount. (Chiefly NC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>toggle up (together) To fix in a makeshift way, cobble</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>up or together. (Chiefly Nth, now esp NY)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tolo A dance to which women invite men. (Chiefly WA)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
beginning to close in on the goal embodied in Fred Cassidy’s mantra for our work—“On to Z.” Every donor helps us get closer to that monumental achievement.

I also want to thank all of you who have supported DARE in other ways. Your development suggestions and other comments and actions contribute to the positive momentum of the DARE development effort.

Gifts to DARE are especially important now. Any gift that you decide to make is tax-deductible and will be matched on a one-to-one basis by the National Endowment for the Humanities. This will double the value of your gift. If you believe the Dictionary of American Regional English is an important project, I hope you will make a gift to DARE in 2005. You can do that online or by filling out the form below.

If you are interested in discussing a gift of stock or a deferred gift, please give me a call at (608) 263-5607 so we can discuss the easiest way to make that type of contribution. Or you can contact me by e-mail at <david.simon@uwfoundation.wisc.edu>. Thank you very much for your interest in the Dictionary of American Regional English.

On to Z! ✦

Name: _____________________________________
Address: ___________________________________
City: _______________________________________
State: ______ Zip: ___________________________

Please use this gift to support the Dictionary of American Regional English Fund.

☐ My/Our contribution of $________ is enclosed.
☐ Please charge my/our gift of $________ to my:
  ☐ MasterCard ☐ Visa ☐ AmEx

Card no. _ _ _ _ - _ _ _ _ - _ _ _ _ - _ _ _ _
Expiration date: ________

Cardholder name (please print):
___________________________________________

Signature: ___________________ Date: ________

Please return this form to Dictionary of American Regional English Fund, c/o University of Wisconsin Foundation, 1848 University Avenue, P.O. Box 8860, Madison, WI 53708, Attn: David Simon.

[DARE Ed: We have been able to reciprocate by sending copies of letters from Pound to Cassidy to the Nebraska State Historical Society archives.]
CONTRIBUTORS TO DARE IN 2004

The Dictionary of American Regional English is grateful for the support of these donors in 2004. Gifts were received by the Dictionary of American Regional English Fund, the Frederic G. Cassidy DARE Fund, and the Dictionary of American Regional English Technology Fund. Because this is a national project, it is particularly meaningful that gifts were received from twenty-five states and the District of Columbia (and our neighbor to the north as well).

DARE Bascom Hill Contributor
$25,000 and above
Anonymous
Carnegie Corporation of New York, NY
Franklin Philanthropic Foundation, IL
Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation, NY
National Endowment for the Humanities, DC (outright grant)
National Endowment for the Humanities, DC (matching grant)
National Science Foundation, DC
Salus Mundi Foundation, AZ
John C. Sime Trust, AZ
“We the People” Program of the National Endowment for the Humanities, DC (matching grant)

DARE Lake Mendota Associate
$10,000–$24,999
John A. Shea, IL

DARE Family Member
$1,000–$9,999
John Bordie, TX
Robert and June Easton, CA
Joan Houston Hall, WI
Hiram Hester, NC
Houghton Mifflin Company, MA
Louise H. and David S. Ingalls Foundation, OH
Robert D. King, TX
Samuel M. Levy Foundation, DC
Gerald and Mary Manville, MN
Mary McAndrews, WI
Mary Lu and Wade Mitchell, GA
New York Times Company Foundation, NY
Grace Jones Richardson Trust, NC
David H. Simon, WI

DARE Circle of Friends
$500–$999
Greg and Carol Alfus, IL
John and Adele Algeo, GA
Joyce Cohrs, GA
Cynthia L. Moore, VA
Lee A. Pederson, GA
Frank Pickel, IL
Pitney Bowes Corporation, CT
David Quady Jr., CA
Douglas Quine, CT

DARE Supporter
Up to $499
Robert J. Alexander, PA
Anonymous
Louie and Barbara Attebery, ID
Frederick Axley, IL
C. Richard Beam, PA
Karl Benghauser, MI
Elizabeth Brinkman, OH
Telise E. Broughton, TX
Lawrence D. Bryan, IL
Susan Bryant-Kimbull, NH
Charlotte Cassidy, CT
Claire Cassidy and John Rosine, MD
Michael and Jacquelyn Cassidy, WI
ChevronTexaco, NJ
Mary Alice Coan, WI
David and Annabelle Collins, WI
Marshall Cook, WI
Karen Cornwell and Kenneth Hammel, WI
Vincent Dimarco, MA
Rosemary Dorney, WI
Douglas Downey, IL
Connie Eble, NC
Richard Ekman, NJ
Catherine Ellsworth, NY
Elizabeth Evanson, WI
Harold Farwell, NC
Beverly Flanigan, WI
Matthew Flannery, NJ
Donald and Nancy Gains, WI
Kenneth Gambone, NY
J. Edward and Marion Gates, MA
Godfrey and Irene Gattiker, PA
Eugenia Gengler, WI
Betty Ruth George, AK
E. Ward and Jean Gilman, MA
Kathleen Glaser, TN
Gerald and Miriam Green, CA
L. Kenneth and Elizabeth Hammond, GA
Anette Hansen, WI
Kelsie Harder, NY
Alan H. Hartley, MN
Carolyn Hayes, WI
Cleo Higgins, FL
Douglas and Karen Hill, WI
Lorrie Huff, CA
Stephanie Hysmith, OH
Julia Ihlenfeldt, WI
Ellin Kelly, IL
Christopher & Margaret Kleinhenz, WI
Constance Knop, WI
James M. Knox, CA
Cosima Lyttle, GA
Jane and Louis J. Maher Jr., WI
Beverly McGraw, VA
Robert and Elizabeth Menefee, KY
Edgar and Grace Louise Moore, OH
M.L. Moore, OH
Robert M. Moore and Kathryn Muehlhauser, OH
Shirley Mueller, WI
Sherrill Munson, WI
Betty P. Nelson, TN
Harold Q. Noack Jr., ID
Joan Paulson, WI
Terry Pratt, Canada
Carol and Dennis Preston, MI
Peter and Beth Anne Rahko, WI
Mary J. Resnik, MD
Andrew A. Rossbach, MD
Eric and Nancy Rude, WI
Wilbert and Genevieve Schauer Foundation, FL
Leslie Scott, OH
Connie Shehan, AR
Roger W. Shyu, MT
Margaret and Alexander Skinner, WI
Anne J. Stone, DC
Edwin Swilling, CA
John Tinkler, TN
James and Karen Trenepohl, MD
Patricia VanDyke, MO
Barbara and Jozsef Vass, WI
John Vickery, CA
Luanne von Schneidemesser, WI
Nancy and John Webster, WI
Joseph Wiesenfarth, WI
Anna Maria Williams, WI
Bettie Zillman, WI
Staff Member Profile

In this ongoing series, Beth Gardner interviews the newest member of the DARE staff, Bibliographer Sally J. Jacobs. A graduate of the UW–Madison School of Library and Information Studies, Sally holds a Master’s degree with a specialization in Archives Management.

Q: How did you first become aware of the Dictionary of American Regional English?
A: I worked for several years as a historical researcher at American Girl, a company you’ve probably never heard of unless you have an eight-to-twelve-year-old girl in your life. They publish a popular line of historical fiction and have an exceptional research department with a first-rate corporate library. The entire research staff at AG relies on DARE to double-check unfamiliar terms in draft manuscripts. Sometimes the word turns out to be regional, and sometimes it has fallen out of common use but is perfectly appropriate for the time period of the story.

Q: What are your primary job responsibilities at DARE?
A: As Bibliographer, I am responsible for updating and maintaining the list of sources cited in the Dictionary. As of March 2005 our bibliography includes just under 10,000 unique sources, including more than 800 newspaper titles. The bibliography exists as a card catalog as well as an electronic database, both of which are updated as new titles are added. When an Editor finds a quote in a source we have not previously used, the first thing I do is create a short-title for that work. The short-title is what you see in a DARE entry, and it includes the minimum amount of information needed for readers to get their hands on an exact copy of that work.

Next comes a little research to gather bibliographic information, such as full author name, publisher, date of publication, number of volumes, etc. I say “a little research,” but there are tricky sources which take quite a bit of time to untangle. Once I have all the information I need, I type a “bib card” on the electric typewriter I inherited from the former Bibliographer. I input the same information into our electronic database (ProCite, for the curious). In the not-too-distant future, I will work with the publisher to compile and design the final form of the bibliography.

Q: What aspect of your work do you enjoy most?
A: Working with historical materials is unquestionably what I enjoy most. All of my favorite job environments, from a used book store to the Library of Congress, have this in common. It’s also very satisfying, both personally and professionally, to know that the work I do today will help scholars with a variety of research projects for many years to come.

Q: What part of your duties do you find most challenging?
A: I started working as Bibliographer less than six months ago, and from the very beginning it’s been a challenge to keep up with the tide of new titles. Digitization of newspapers, books, and government documents is a great boon to scholars (including our Editors), but it creates a lot of work for yours truly. In fact, the upsurge of new titles is one of the reasons DARE created a separate position for the Bibliographer in 2004.

Q: What is the most unusual or surprising thing you’ve come across in doing bibliographic research for DARE?
A: So far my favorite “DARE word” is toe party—a gathering where women would remove their shoes and socks and stand behind a curtain with only their feet showing. Guests placed bids on the women based on what they could see, which was mostly toes. You can read all about it in Volume V!

Q: What are your interests away from the Dictionary?
A: My job as Bibliographer is a part-time position. I devote the other half of my work week to freelance research projects and my archival services business, which helps people organize, preserve, and share their history (again with the historical materials!). Fortunately, these combined endeavors still leave me with enough time to do what I love most, which is spending time with my husband and two young children.
Where Are They Now?

We’re always glad to hear from past Dictionary staff-
er, and are doubly delighted to bring you updates on
two former colleagues in this issue of our Newsletter.

Earlier this year, we received a letter from former
Project Assistant Kate Peterson, who worked on the
electronic version of our bibliography. Kate left DARE
in 2003 after completing a Master’s degree in the UW–
Madison School of Library and Information Studies. She
wrote:

I have just completed my first year at California
State University, Long Beach. CSULB is a mostly
commuter campus of over 34,000 diverse students.
I am a Science and Engineering Librarian and re-
sponsible for the departments of Civil, Computer,
Electrical, Mechanical, and Aerospace Engineering,
Physics/Astronomy, Geology, and Science
Education. My duties are split between the refer-
ence desk, library instruction, and collection devel-
opment. There is only one library on campus, and
it is busy. It has been a fascinating year, and I have
learned so much (and introduced a few patrons to
DARE to answer reference questions).

California feels like home, and I have adjusted
to the mild seasons, palm trees, and hordes of peo-
dle everywhere. I must confess I have not missed
snow for one second! We live in a great neighbor-
hood called Los Feliz (interestingly pronounced
“feelis”), just a few miles east of Hollywood. We
can walk to restaurants, the local library, shopping,
and movie theaters. We are also blocks from the
massive Griffith Park (larger than Central Park),
and have enjoyed going to the beach, the desert,
and the mountains.

The only downside is the Los Angeles traffic!
I have a thirty-five-mile drive to work that takes
anywhere from forty minutes to three hours, with
an average of an hour and thirty minutes. I am
now a devoted fan of books on tape! ✦

In a happy bit of serendipity, we also recently caught
up with former DARE Editor John F. Clark: a Google
Alert caught a reference to DARE in the Cape Codder
and forwarded us an article about John’s innovative
teaching program in Eastham, Massachusetts.

John came to DARE as a Project Assistant in 1977
while he was working on his doctorate in the
UW’s English Department. Before long he began
working as an Editor, writing such L entries as
lagniappe, lalapalooza, and larruping. Unfortunatley
for DARE, he finished his dissertation and re-
turned to the life of teaching that he had interrupt-
ed to come to Madison. A visiting appointment at
UCLA was followed by a long tenure at Central
Washington University, which was capped by “re-
tirement” on Cape Cod.

For John, retirement means teaching courses on
language and literature in the parlor of his home,
a restored sea-cap’t’s house near the water. His
program, “The Inquiring Mind,” offers six-week
sessions to local residents on such topics as “The
Iliad,” “The Odyssey,” “Moby Dick,” “The Great
Gatsby,” and “Our English Language.” Students
wax enthusiastic about their experiences in his
classes, mentioning not only his erudition, but also
his generosity, his accessibility, and his dry wit
(all of which we at DARE can vouch for). On top
of his teaching schedule, John also serves as a life
coach, helping people discover and unlock their
creative gifts. And those of us who remember the
lyrical tones of his oboe are delighted to know that
he continues to use one of his own creative gifts by
playing in the Cape Symphony Orchestra. ✦

DARE Editor Heads Dialect Society

DARE’s Chief Editor, Joan Houston Hall, was
inducted as President of the American Dialect
Society at the organization’s annual meeting in
January. The ADS, founded in 1889, is “dedicated
to the study of the English language in North
America, and of other languages, or dialects of
other languages, influencing it or influenced by
it.” The Society publishes the journal American
Speech and the monograph series Publication of
the American Dialect Society. In recent years it has
become particularly well known for its annual
“Words of the Year” celebration, in which language
scholars engage in serious but lighthearted de-
bate over the best candidates for such categories
as “Most Likely to Succeed,” “Most Unnecessary,”
“Most Outrageous,” and “Word of the Year.” (The
2004 “Word of the Year” winner was actually a
phrase that became prominent during the nail-bit-
ing process of tabulating election returns: red state,
blue state, purple state.) ✦
Do You Speak American?

Many of you probably saw the MacNeil/Lehrer Productions documentary with this title that aired on public television on January 5. It followed Robert MacNeil as he toured the U.S. talking both to linguists and to “ordinary” Americans, exploring the diverse dialects of our country from Maine to Florida to California. It is clear from his research as well as from DARE’s that dialects are not going the way of the horse and buggy. They are always changing, but “homogenization” of our language is not a likely outcome. DARE was asked to provide material for the Web site that accompanies the documentary; you can see it, along with many other linguistic contributions, at <http://www.pbs.org/speak/>.