

The Soul-Searching Sergeant

By BOB O'KEEF

The Sergeant was a man. He was a story-book-sergeant, always right, always daring, and always daring, and always victorious. He was battle seasoned, tough, and ideal soldier, and a military genius. He was the kind of leader who could gain the respect of his men just by looking at them. He was a self-made man, and he didn't need or want help from anyone.

We sat poised in the fox-hole for the battle which was sure to come. I was glad I was with the Sergeant. There was no doubt that I was scared. I made no secret of it, either. I bowed my head and prayed for the courage and the ability to do my best. When I looked up, I saw that the Sergeant was intensely watching my actions. It made me feel uneasy. I began to wish I had not prayed; for his expression was one of utter rejection, a rejection of my very existence.

"I've been through this hell over and over," the Sergeant said. "Don't take any stock in some idiotic god. If there was a god, I wouldn't be here. Neither would you. I hate the utter thought of religion. All people who believe in that stuff are nothing but a bunch of hypocrites. 'Love one another,' says the preacher, 'Peace on Earth,' says the Bible. Peace on Earth . . . Hell on Earth!"

I sat gazing into the night. I knew the Sergeant was there, but he seemed off at a distance. The words 'Peace on Earth . . . Hell on Earth' embedded themselves on my mind. "Peace on Earth . . . Hell on Earth . . . Peace on Earth . . . Hell on Earth . . ." I broke down. Tears began streaming down my face. I yelled out "Hell on Earth!" I looked up into the stars, composed now, and said, "Dear God, give me peace."

I noticed the stunned expression on the Sergeant's face. It was no longer one of rejection of me, but instead, one of inward searching. He muttered to himself, "Hah 'give me peace' . . . stupid fool." He started to sing, his voice was without enthusiasm. Finally, it cracked. He hummed. He whistled. He became frigid. He chuckled. He began to sulk. Suddenly he cried out, "God is dead; He must be!"

I shivered. I wondered what I should say, what I should do, what I should think. I began to cry again. I cried because of despair, of hatred for the Sergeant, and of hatred for war.

It was nearly dawn. For the Sergeant and me, the time had slowed to a mind-shattering stop, as if a clog had stopped the sand from flowing. We sat. We stared into the jungle maze earnestly searching for our unseen and un-

capable enemy.

After more than two hours of silence, I said, "Do you really—really think He exists?"

At that moment a shot rang out. The Sergeant began a savage burst of fire trying to kill his unseen enemy. He released all his built-up emotions with what seemed to be his only friend, the rifle. Suddenly, he realized his blunder. He stopped firing, yet maintained his strong grasp on the rifle. He was visibly disturbed. Perspiration ran freely down his forehead. His breathing was jagged. He seemed to have lost all control of himself. He had made an unforgivable mistake, giving away our position with the cross firing of his gun. The enemy had been able to break us down, and now would move in for the final blow. The Sergeant sat, knowing he was helpless, except for his gun. He released his firm grip on it and held it like a mother would her child. He noticed my look of pitiable amusement. He dropped his gun and ever so slowly said, "Oh . . . Dear . . ." almost at a whisper ". . . God."



STUDENTS OF THE MONTH are Rotary Couple, Shelley Wilgus and Kenneth Burnette, and Kiwanis Boy, Jim Bailey. (Photo by Killebrew)

Elections Bring New Leadership For Next Year

Elect "the man" for the job; vote Kenny Dickerson, Bob Brantley, Earl Abernethy, and Stewart Edwards for the 1969-70 President of the Student Organization! Absurd? Well, maybe a little, but all of these fine young men seemed so well suited to fill the highest office attainable at RMSH. Students were given a chance to narrow down their choices during a special assembly on May 6. As you guessed it, Earl Abernethy struck again with another victory.

The rising juniors held their elections for first semester class officers on May 13. One of the highlights of the campaign assembly involved Louise Weeks and her Mission Impossible skit for Gay Wilgus. It proved quite successful, since Gay won the vice-presidential election. Bill Daughtridge emerged as president, while Susan Pittman was elected secretary and Ann Pitt as treasurer. The present sophomores really did their class a favor when they put their trust in these competent people.

Also week before last the candidates for the rising Senior class officers were announced by the nominating committee. Petition candidates had not been announced when the Blackbird went to press. For the first semester the vice-president and secretary will come from the present RMSH student body, while the president and treasurer will be chosen from Booker T. Washington. This procedure will be reversed for the second semester.

School Leaders Selected Rotary Couple For May

The Rotary Couple for May is Shelley Wilgus and Kenneth Burnette, two ideal examples of school spirit at its best.

Rotary Girl

Rotary Girl, Shelley Wilgus, is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James M. Wilgus of 224 S. Grace Street. Shelly is constantly on the go, and her active participation in many

school activities indicates her school spirit. As a member of the RMSH band, she is Commander of the Color Guard. During each school election this year, Shelley had an important responsibility as Chairman of the Elections Committee.

Shelley is an active member of the Hi-Noc-Ar staff, the National Honor Society, and the Black Masquers. Next year Shelley will be attending Mary Baldwin College in Staunton, Virginia, where she plans to major in either English or sociology.

Rotary Boy

Rotary Boy, Kenneth Burnette, the son of Mr. and Mrs. L. H. Burnette of 753 Cedar Brook Drive, is also quite an active and proud member of the Class of '69. As vice-president of the Senior class, Ken is respected as a leader. In this aspect he has served in the Student Organization and as vice-president of the Rocky Mount Optimist Octagon Club. Ken really enjoys radio work, for he is a DJ at WEED radio station and is president of the Radio Broadcasters Club at Senior High. Ken's favorite sport is surfing.

At East Carolina University, Ken plans to major in Marine Biology.

Kiwanians Honor Artist As Boy Of The Month

A graduating Senior from the Class of '69 should feel a deep sense of pride and satisfaction for his accomplishments during his high school years. Jim Bailey, Kiwanis Boy for May, is such a senior. Jim is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Reese Bailey of 3601 Woodlawn Drive.

A devoted member of the Senior class, Jim has an outstanding record of achievement. His talent as an outstanding musician has been recognized by the school, for he has participated in many assemblies as one of the Letterboys, for example. Jim is an active member of the RMSH band and has also participated in various professional bands, among those the Essex. For his outstanding achievement in the field of music, Jim was selected Outstanding Junior Musician.

Since Jim is concerned about school affairs, he has

actively served as a Student Organization representative as well as a member of the AFS Committee. In addition, Jim is an active member of both the Phalanx Club and the National Honor Society.

Interested in sports as well, Jim has been a member of the tennis team for the past two years.

Even though he will not be here next year, the Kiwanis Boy for May is quite concerned about the school merger next year, and he has given it much thought. "The greatest problems in the school merger will not arise next year, but rather the following year. With both school bodies supposedly unified, there will be no student involvement committee to arbitrate between the races. Any serious problems that arise then could result in a dangerous division of the student body."

After graduation Jim will enter Davidson College.

Tire & Appliance Center Inc.

Corner of W. Thomas and Franklin Sts.
PHONE 442-5151 ROCKY MOUNT, N. C. 27801

DAVID HILL'S GROCERY

THE BEST IN FOODS—FEEDS and NOVELTIES
Phone Gibson 6-6618 Cokey Road Rocky Mount

JOSH BULLUCKS

For The Best Barbeque In Town

Gazebo

134 HOWARD STREET ROCKY MOUNT, N. C.

JOYNER'S ATHLETIC HOUSE

446-6159

124 Tarboro St.

MAUS

PIANO COMPANY

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS
AUTHORIZED DEALER
SALES and SERVICE



Save 20% To 40%

On All Your

- ★ PHOTOS
- ★ COSMETICS
- ★ Health & Beauty Aids
- ★ SCHOOL SUPPLIES
- ★ PRESCRIPTIONS

... at **ALMANDS**
Downtown Rocky Mount

FINE Portraits

Call 446-5738 for an Appointment

Only You Can Give Your Portrait

Barringer's

129 WESTERN AVE.