



## OHIO ASSOCIATION OF THE DEAF, INC.

ESTABLISHED FEBRUARY 23, 1961

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### President's Fall Message

#### Memories of My Two-Year Stay in California



As summer is winding down, unseasonably warm weather is here to stay for a while... I would like to share with our readers my fondest memories in the late summer of 1983.

During my 11th year of teaching, I had difficult challenges in the teaching profession and I felt a need to grow in a different environment. I started applying to graduate schools in February of 1983. I chose California because my mother's close family relatives lived in northern and southern California. I was accepted into the graduate school at California State University, Northridge (CSUN) and California State University at Sacramento (CSUS). I chose CSUS because its Counseling Program offered a high quality training program for future counselors.

The Youngstown Ohio Board of Education approved my two-year sabbatical leave. One early morning in August of 1983 Mother and I packed for our four-day drive to Sacramento on Route 80. We enjoyed the sights in the West, such as our visit to the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado where one of my cousins graduated in 1974. As we traveled along the Rocky Mountains, an

intense dust storm in Utah lowered my driving visibility and I slowed down and raised the windshield wipers to get a clear vision. The dust storm was not heavy, but dust covered most of my car's body, making it look like it came from a junkyard!

As Mother and I arrived in Sacramento in the late morning of the fourth day, the first thing we did was find an apartment. The first place we visited was a nice one-story brick apartment on Howe Avenue, close to the university by one mile. The manager was cordial and said that all apartments were filled but one was to have been saved for a new tenant who cancelled at the very last minute due to undisclosed illness. Wow! Some luck on the first day! Mother and I unpacked our suitcases, and we were on our way to the university.

Nancy Wallinder, Sacramento State University Graduate School Coordinator, welcomed me and Mother to her office and took us to the Special Students Services Center. I was introduced to Jackie Mann, Coordinator of Interpreter Services. Jackie, a graduate of Gallaudet University, Class of 1967, remembered me as a Freshman at Gallaudet during the first semester in 1966. I was shy and had no background in ASL at that time. After my short visit with Jackie, I was introduced to two staff members who were to be my interpreters in several classes.

Mother stayed at my new apartment for the night and in the morning, I took her to the airport to board a plane back to Ohio. For the first time in my life, I was alone and afraid. Within a week, I overcame anxiety by driving around and getting to know the places. I also made frequent visits to the Students' Special Services Center at the university to meet other interpreters who were assigned to interpret for me in several classes.

During graduate school days at Kent State in 1971, I was not allowed to have interpreters in all classes. Kent State's Special Education Department adopted Alexander Graham Bell's Oralism Philosophy until 1980. Mother volunteered to take notes for me in several classes until her arthritic fingers became strained from all the writings. Some graduate students volunteered to take notes for me and I managed well and received my first graduate degree in Deaf Education in 1972.

Anyway, during my 2-year stay in Sacramento, I joined California Association of the Deaf (CAD) and met Willis Berke, president of CAD, Sacramento Chapter. I enjoyed attending its deaf-sponsored events. I learned more about CAD's governing system which was very much like OAD's during my 7-year term as OAD Recording Secretary. During one CAD meeting, I was not allowed to make a motion because CAD President Willis Berke said motions could not be made by new members who are not residents of California!

I joined Sacramento Valley Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (SAVRID). Greg and Eileen McCaffrey, CSUS interpreters, were most helpful with the introductions. They served as my interpreters in some Counseling classes at the university.

SAVRID was an active interpreter organization and I participated in one of its fund-raising events at the NorCal Center of Deafness on Arden Way where I did my Counseling Internship for one semester. My Counseling internship was in several places: in the Deaf Program at Del Campo High School Fair Oaks, California; Sacramento High School and Crestwood Center for the Mentally Ill.

In June of 1985, I received my second Master's in Counseling from Sacramento State University. Dad and Mother hosted a graduation party for me by the pool of my apartment. A day

later, we dropped Dad off at the airport and within a few days, Mother and I drove back to Ohio. When another new school year began, I was re-assigned to teach English and Social Studies in the Deaf Program at Woodrow Wilson High School in Youngstown.

Upon my return to Ohio, I realized my feelings had changed and making adjustments in my old environment gave me more time to settle down because I was used to the fast pace of life in California. Deaf friends asked why I did not stay in Sacramento after graduation. Reasons are...its high cost of living and California's Department of Education had a strict policy for out-of-state educators that wished to land a full-time teaching position at any public school. As I was close to completing the requirements for graduation, I met with California State Department's Director of Teacher Education to see if there was an opening for a full-time teaching position at California School for the Deaf (CSD) in Fremont. He did not accept my first Masters. I was required to take five more classes to qualify for a teaching position at CSD! I did not feel it was worth the risk. Decision was made to return to my family home in Ohio.

I was blessed to have had great professors from Sacramento State University's Counseling Program. Their support and guidance helped me become a better person mentally and spiritually. Also, my thanks went to Jackie Mann, former Interpreting Coordinator at CSUS, and her deceased husband Willis, former director of NorCal Center of Deafness, for introducing me to many fine people in Sacramento's Deaf Community. My two-year stay in Sacramento brought growth to my well-being. I am ending with a quote from Aristotle on Self-Discovery.

