

## SU'S WHO People and their exploits

# Who's News

### The New Wimpy's

Although it has a new look to celebrate its 25th birthday, the **Wimpy Wagon** still features the cheese-jaws that have delighted thousands of SU students.

Wimpy's, an SU tradition in late-night curbside snacking, has been stationed in front of DellPlain Hall since the 1960s. Now new owners **David Mulherin '79** and **John Desko '80** have made some interior renovations and also spruced up the exterior of their 1973 wagon with aluminum siding decorated by two art students. The original vehicle went to a dignified retirement some time ago.

"It was important to continue the tradition the original 'Mr. and Mrs. Wimpy' started," says Mulherin. "We just wanted the wagon to look better." He and Desko were both scholarship athletes at Syracuse and recall munching happily on Wimpy snacks as students.

"In my day, the Wimpy owners were informal advisors to students," Mulherin says,

"and I'm happy to report we still are. We're people students can talk to besides their parents or peers. It's nice to be asked for advice."

Mulherin, who is in Syracuse real estate, and Desko, an assistant coach of the SU lacrosse team, each manage to put in three nights a week on the wagon, continuing Wimpy's traditional hours and menus.

"I've turned down lots of opportunities to take the Wimpy Wagon somewhere else for an evening," Mulherin says, "because I can't disappoint our regular customers. We have an obligation to people at the University to keep up our reputation and our service."

### Woman of Distinction

**Virginia Guilfoil Allen '40** thought there'd been a mistake. The letter from the Lettermen of Distinction, addressed to her, must be meant for her husband, Philip Allen '40, who had been made a member in honor of his football career.

But there was no error. Golfer Ginny Allen was being



*Golfer Ginny Allen is SU's first Letterwoman of Distinction.*

invited to join an exclusive group of outstanding SU athletes—the first woman so honored.

"It was a complete surprise," she remembers. "I was honored to be among so many outstanding men. And it's nice that Phil and I are the first husband-and-wife team in the group."

After her graduation, Allen settled in Syracuse and over the years won 24 club championships at Bellevue Country Club, 19 Syracuse Women's District championships, and the 1941 New York State amateur championship. Twenty-nine years later, she won the first of two state amateur seniors' titles.

"I've always liked competition," says Allen, also a member of the Orange Plus Hall of Fame honoring SU women athletes, "but I think I enjoy traveling and meeting new people almost as much. I try never to get upset when I play because it throws my game off. My father always advised me to just try and beat the golf course, and that's been my

goal." Apparently the advice worked.

### Painted Ponies

Some collectors have baseball cards in the attic, model trains in the basement, or old bottles on the window sill. But **Marianne Shirley Stevens '50** has collected enough carousels to fill an airplane hangar.

Stevens is a leading national authority on carousel art and history who has cowritten a handsome new book, *Painted Ponies: American Carousel Art*, offering the largest collection of full-color carousel art photography ever to appear in print. Stevens is herself a restorer of antique carousels and figures. Her 1906 Loeff carousel, which she restored singlehandedly, operates at Shoreline Village in Long Beach, California.

Stevens' love affair with carousels began in 1957 when she bought and restored one carousel figure to amuse her children. People kept trying to buy the piece, so she began ac-

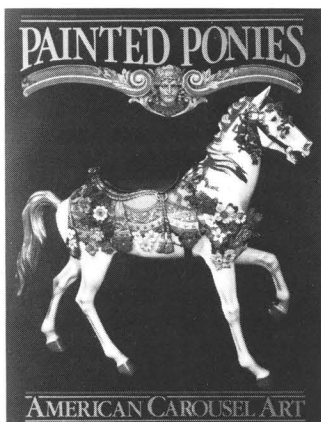


*Celebrating its 25th year, the Wimpy Wagon has a new look but not a new menu; Wimpy's still serves cheese jaws and Wimpy burgers at DellPlain Hall. John Desko (above) and David Mulherin are co-owners.*

cumulating other figures to sell. "My skills were self-taught," she laughs, "and entirely hit-or-miss."

Her expertise grew, however, and in the 1970s she began acquiring whole carousels, at one time storing seven of them in an airport hangar near her home in Roswell, New Mexico. "It takes about two years to restore an entire carousel, and that's using two helpers," she says. "The hardest part is getting the old paint off without harming the wood."

Stevens' love for carousels springs from her childhood on Long Island. "I remember that we celebrated every festive occasion by going to an amusement park. So carousels always meant happiness to me."



## To Soothe the Savage Beast

When Shamu the killer whale dances, it's **Kurt Wagner's** music he twirls to.

The 1981 graduate of SU's music industry program is the studio recording/mix engineer at Sea World in Orlando, Florida, responsible for producing all the audio used in stadium shows, with exhibits, and as background music. He also handles live mixing for special events and concerts.

Wagner develops musical concepts for a new show from scratch. Then he oversees the music's writing and recording and finally puts the music into a show format. He is responsible not only for the Florida park, but also for Sea World in Aurora, Ohio, as well as Florida's Cypress Gardens and



*Kurt Wagner, recording engineer at Sea World, produces the music that makes Shamu boogie.*

a new Florida theme park, Baseball and Boardwalk.

"There are 12 different shows in one Sea World alone," he explains, "and because we change every show at least every three years, music is constantly being written or recorded or mixed. Since the entire audio staff consists of me, there's an amazing amount of work."

Wagner is amused that when he describes his work, most people are surprised such a job even exists—and admits he was, too, until he was hired shortly after graduation. But he finds his work a continual challenge. "I must always stay at the forefront of music. It's important to be fresh and topical and to have our shows reflect what's new in music."

## Alone in a Boat

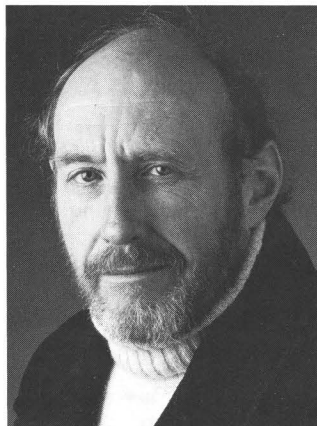
Probably millions of weekend sailors dream of making a solo voyage across the Atlantic.

**Jake T.W. Hubbard**, chairman of the Newhouse School's magazine department, did it and lived to tell about it.

In 1984, Hubbard entered his 32-foot homemade cutter in the Observer Singlehanded

Transatlantic Race and sailed across 3,000 miles of ocean from Plymouth, England, to Newport, Rhode Island, completely alone. His new book, *The Race*, offers an inside look at the challenges, ironies, and quirky personalities he encountered.

Hubbard brings to life every aspect of the odyssey. It begins at the Start—a comical jumble, with near collisions on all sides as Hubbard frantically yanked at a fouled anchor. His description of the crossing itself is



*Jake Hubbard, professor of magazine journalism, is one of those few sailors who have crossed the Atlantic alone.*

both lighthearted and philosophical. Hubbard chronicles a number of menacing adversaries—freighters and tankers, storms, windless doldrums, and his own psychological state as he fought against boredom, terror, sleeplessness, and hallucinations.

Of the 92 boats that left Plymouth, only 64 made it to Newport. Happily, Hubbard was among them, finishing 61st after 41 days.

"I had proven that a home-completed boat could survive an ocean crossing without a mishap," he writes, "and I had also proven—at least to my own satisfaction—that the old-style seamanship I'd learned as a boy had not been superseded by the new plastic ethos of waxed hulls and speed without joy."

*Newsweek* magazine called Hubbard's book "an engaging, witty account . . . well told, often funny and honest." It is the main selection of the Dolphin Book of the Month Club.

## Chief Negotiator

It took **Sereta McKnight '80** only eight months to negotiate her own job change from secretary to administrator of the Winfield Foundation. Maybe that's why they invited her to lead a workshop on successful negotiating at the Coming Back Together II reunion for minority alumni last fall.

According to McKnight, the foundation, set up by baseball superstar Dave Winfield, serves the nation's youth. "We're developing leaders for the future," she explains, "primarily through health and education programs. We give young people scholarships to all types of schools. We have a computer literacy center. We give free medical screening. We sponsor a major drug awareness program, bringing athletes and entertainers into the school systems." The foundation carries on its work in both New York and Minnesota, Winfield's home state.

Today McKnight's respon-



Sereta McKnight is the former administrator of the Dave Winfield Foundation.

sibilities have shifted from managing the entire nonprofit organization to Winfield's business affairs. Although she still retains budgetary responsibility for the foundation, she also concentrates on enlarging Winfield's business opportunities.

In addition, McKnight has set up her own consulting firm. "It's called PULSE International, where the beat goes on," she laughs. "We're basically a public relations and production firm. We can package any special event for you."

Characteristically, McKnight's plans for the future are ambitious. "Maybe in 12 years my little company will go public. Then I might be able to work only half the year and donate the rest of my time to worthwhile projects."

## El Yanqui

When Douglas Unger was an exchange student in Argentina in the late 1960s, he painted walls with antigovernment slogans, joined in demonstrations against the government, and was jailed twice. It wasn't much fun, but it was the start of a great book.

Unger's new novel, *El Yanqui*, is based directly on those experiences. "Much of what happens to the character happened to me," he says. The novel tells the story of a young American who lives with a ruling class family in Argentina in

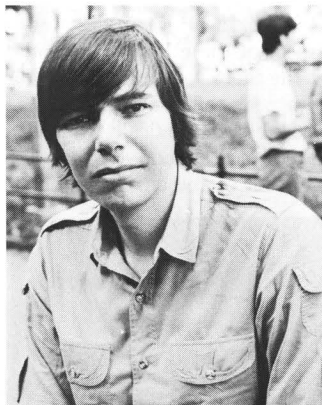
the late 1960s.

Unger, who teaches creative writing at SU, explains that his book is an attempt to explain the roots of the fascist crackdown after the exile of ruler Juan Peron and to illustrate how a culture "slowly goes mad and makes war on itself."

"I want to write about social issues and explain big social structures," Unger says. "The scale of the crimes committed in Argentina defies imagination. The degree of cruelty, though on a smaller scale, is as bad as if not worse than what the Nazis did."

Both of Unger's Argentinian "brothers"—the young men in the family with whom he stayed as a student—were among the *desaparecidos*, those people whom the military caused to "disappear." At the time of the first disappearance it was believed dissenters were being dumped from helicopters; the second brother was shot in his bed.

Unger's highly acclaimed first novel, *Leaving the Land*, detailed the plight of the small farmer and won six awards, including nomination for the Pulitzer Prize.

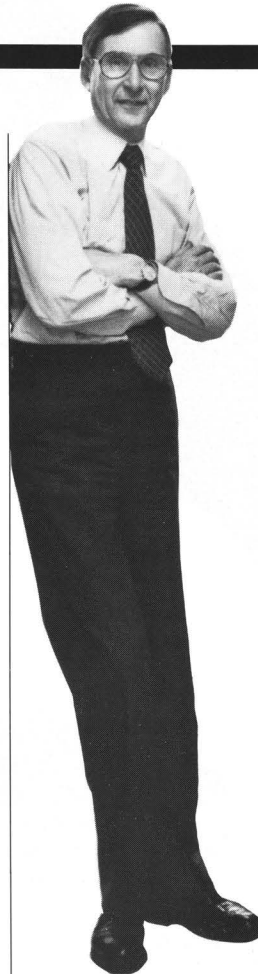


Douglas Unger's new novel is a story of political terror in Argentina, based on his own experiences as a student.

## High Tech Pioneer

You've probably never heard of him, but without Arthur Rock '48, the millions of people who now use computers every day probably would not.

Rock is singled out in a re-



Arthur Rock provided the means by which Silicon Valley was born.

cent book of who's who in Silicon Valley, *Portraits of Success: Impressions of Silicon Valley Pioneers*. The book chronicles the entrepreneurs and innovators responsible for today's computer-oriented society.

Rock is as important to the computer revolution as Steven Jobs and Steve Wozniak, but far less well-known. Since the late 1950s, when he and a partner formed one of the first venture capital firms to invest in Silicon Valley, Rock has been a leader in this particularly American branch of finance. In fact, he was a cover-story man for a *Time* magazine issue on the venture capital business.

Rock is acknowledged by his peers as "the top player in the game." At the same time, he shuns publicity. According to the book, Rock is an analytical businessman, averaging only three to four investments a year and becoming totally in-

involved with a company once he's made a commitment. Some of his most notable successes have been with Apple Computer, Fairchild Semiconductor, and Intel.



Denise Washington, alias Misha McK, is the Me of Me and Mrs. C, a television series expected to return to NBC sometime this spring.

## Me and Mrs. C

If Denise Washington '81 had been allowed to take a course on embryology at SU, there would be some other actress up there on the television screen starring in *Me and Mrs. C*.

Instead it's Washington, who performs under the stage name Misha McK, who landed the role of a black college student who moves into a house belonging to an older white woman, portrayed by veteran stage actress Peg Murray. The comedy, which revolves around their very different life-styles, debuted as a limited summer series last summer and during its six-week run was never out of the top 20. It was picked up by NBC for 13 episodes in January as a replacement show.

About that embryology course: When Washington started at SU, she planned a career in medicine. However, as a sophomore she tried to take a course in embryology that wasn't open to her yet, and in frustration, she changed her major to English, with a minor in drama. It was a decision that changed her life.

Syracuse Stage artistic director Arthur Storch, who also



The Hejases are (top, left to right) Hussin, Chafia, Mohammed, Ali, Zein, and Hassan. All except Mohammed are SU students.

heads the drama department, quickly recognized her talent and cast her in several plays. He helped again after her graduation, introducing her to an agent in New York City. Over the next few years she made television commercials and acted in regional theater.

During a trip to California she talked her way into an audition for *Me and Mrs. C.*, even though the title role supposedly had already been cast. Just like in a TV story, she got the part.

### Family Tradition

This semester there are almost as many Hejases on campus as Smiths.

Five members of the family are currently pursuing graduate studies at SU, carrying out the dream of their parents, Jose and Charife Hejase. As Lebanese immigrants, the Hejases worked as merchants in Torreón, Mexico, pooling their resources to provide each child with a solid education. Their success is very much in evidence at SU.

The five Hejase children at SU, ranging in age from 23 to 32, are **Chafia Hejase-Trad**, a biophysics doctoral student; materials science and solid state technology doctoral candidate **Hussin**; electrical engineering doctoral students **Ali** and **Hassan**; and **Zein**, a master's candidate in chemical engineering.

Chafia, the only daughter, was the first to choose Syracuse in 1982 and influenced her brothers to do likewise. "I served as a connecting branch for my brothers to come here," she says. "Our mother and father encouraged us to do well in school, and this always gave us the ambition to achieve academically."

Hassan adds, "Our father, now deceased, and mother told us that a good education will stick with you for the rest of your life. From them, we learned that we had to stick together because we are one family united."

### Valued Assets

Want to succeed in New York City real estate? Then get into it during a recession.

In the late 1970s, **Jim Kuhn** '70, G'72 instinctively felt it was the right move. Now he knows it was his biggest break.

"I learned about distressed properties instead of successful ones," the School of Management graduate says. "You don't learn very much from a deal that's a winner."

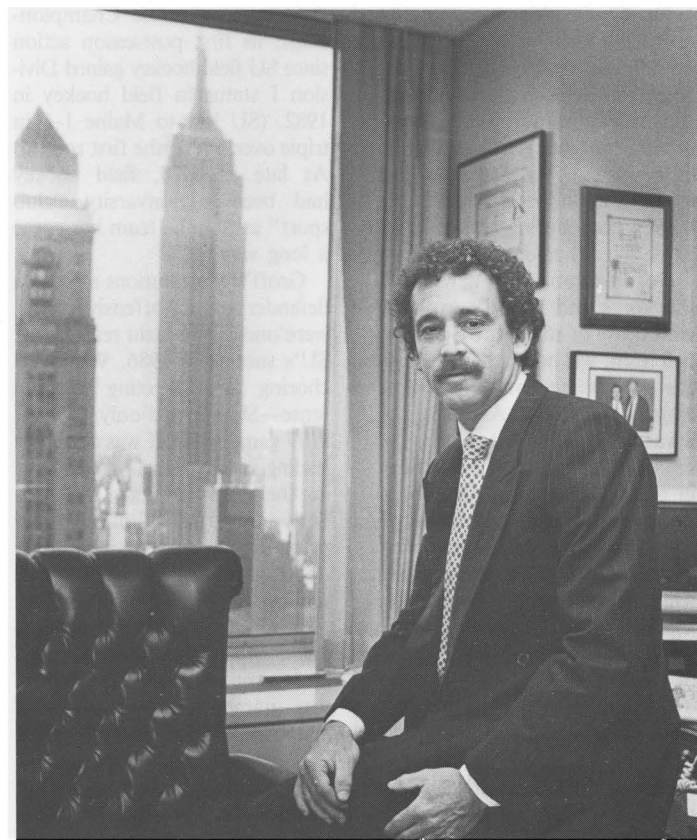
Today Kuhn is executive vice president of Mendik Realty Company, the third-largest owner of commercial property in New York City. The company manages about 11 million square feet of office space and owns 6,000 apartments as well as property outside New York. In 1985, he received the Young Real Estate Man of the Year award from the Young Men's/Women's Real Estate Association of New York, becoming the first person in New York to win both that

award and the Service Award of the Year before age 40.

He is candid about the entrepreneurial qualities that have brought him success. "I admit I'm a compulsive Type A personality, but that's what's needed to operate in the high pressure, 24-hour-a-day New York real estate market. Also, people used to think I was too quick to reach a conclusion, but often the key to success is moving quickly. There are probably a million people smarter than I am, but in our business you must be able to move quickly and keep that momentum going when someone decides to sell."

However, Kuhn feels his greatest asset is being what he calls a "contrarian," someone who swims against the stream. "You can't become successful jumping on the bandwagon when everyone else does. The key is recognizing an undervalued asset and acting on your belief."

—Carol North Schmuckler



Jim Kuhn became a success in New York City real estate by recognizing the winners among the losers.