

# THE EMPTY NEST NEWSLETTER

VOLUME XVI, NO 4, MAR 13 1998

Hark! hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings,  
And Phoebus 'gins arise...  
-- Shakespeare



## SOS: 2, 3 SPACES LEFT

WE WERE FULL--BUT THEN,--ALAS-- HAD THREE DROP

**ENGLAND TRIP, OF COURSE.** This is the only bad part for me, filling for sure all our spaces for such fabulous trips as ours have been. We were full, but now we've had 3 drop. Hence a quickie Empty Nest. I've wanted to write you, anyway. Major details: Time constraint: We have to have your name by April 18. We can expedite passports if necessary. No need to be an enrolled student (we have enough) or any age: just come for the fun. Dates: May 18-June 6, O'Hare to Heathrow. \$2500 covers all travel, all lodging and breakfasts, all meals exc 5 dinners in London and 2/3 of your lunches (1/3 will be elegant picnics). Covers Globe Theater (just opened) in London, "Merchant of Venice," and "The Tempest" at Stratford; most entrances. Some places we'll be: London, Winchester, Salisbury, Stonehenge, Avebury, Glastonbury, Oxford, Stratford, Canterbury, elsewhere. Some of what we'll do: Westminster, Br. Museum and Library, Houses of Parliament, tours of various cathedrals, Warwick Castle, a medieval banquet at a castle in Wales, lunch with C. S. Lewis's literary executor at The Kilns, a dance at the Ridgeway Hostel with the Wyverns (our own Morris Dancers), an evening with David Flood, Canterbury's choir director and organist, visit author Catherine Storr at her Hampstead home, sneak into Agatha Christie's garden, explore Tintagel in Cornwall with Prof. Charles Thomas (he's excavated it), other walks and talks. Gonna

be a great trip! Also, I have a splendid young co-teacher, Karen, a medievalist! **So, how about it? Advertise for me!** Call Julie, my secretary, at 217-786-6779, if you're interested or know anyone. I may be in Beloit spring break, through March 22, but if you call 217-544-2916 Andy, the student living here, will get your message and relay it to me wherever I am.

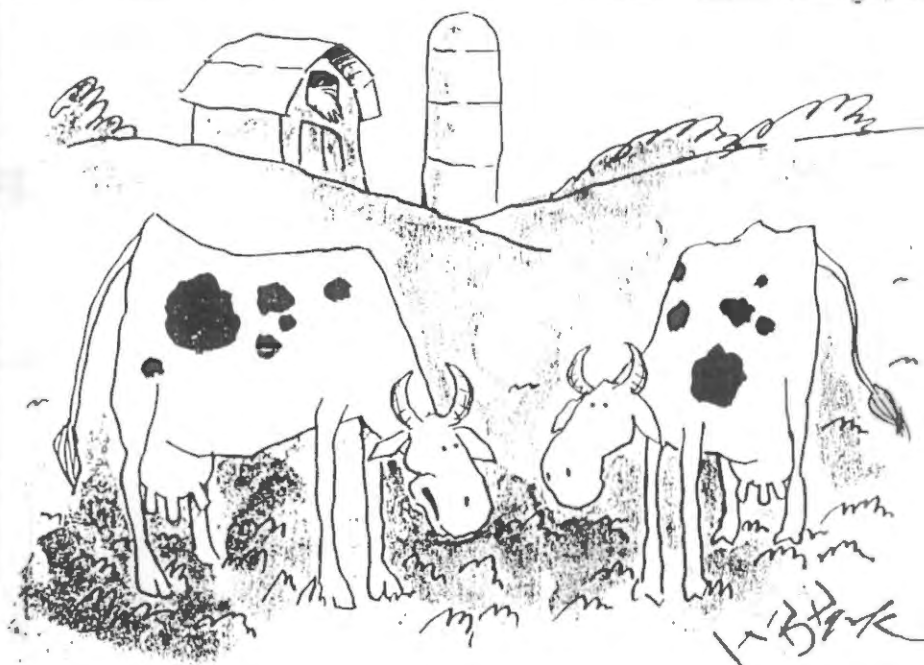
**JUST GOT WORD! SONJA VALEDICTORIAN!** West Bend WI. Doesn't really surprise you, does it? She gets a very nice 4-yr scholarship to a Wis. university; she's already planning to go to Madison. Her chances for music scholarships had to be put on hold when she developed tendonitis this winter, and was unable to make the tapes or take the auditions. Her hands are improving, but not fast enough. She's handled this all very maturely--I and everybody are deeply impressed. We're proud of you, Sonja Yde!

### YOU WOULDN'T WANT TO LIVE HERE

My grad student, Andy, a mycologist (that's fungi, folks), has the job of cleaning the upstairs bathroom. He refused to scrub the toilet until he had time to cultivate a fungus which was thriving in the basin. It turns out to be two species of *Aspergillus*, one of which looks just like it did in the john (black); the other is quite a handsome green. Life at 816 is always interesting, even without Elvis (who has had a name change, Elvira, and is now queen of a reptile ranch in in Missouri.) I am currently catsitting not only Cheswick but Clyde, Eile and Royce's sick feine. The two animals are not compatible.

See next page: You can look up book and barn (and pix of them and me!) on the splendid website Mitch Hopper made for me: <http://www.uis.edu/~jjackson> --and you can write me e-mail but I'll only get it at school: [jjackson@eagle.uis.edu](mailto:jjackson@eagle.uis.edu)

**Coming soon:** The chance to join "Friends of the Round Barn." Giving levels start at "Barn Cat" (\$10), go up to Farm Boss: (\$250 or more): "You've bought the farm!"



"In the final analysis, it's all cud."

## SO WHAT ABOUT THE BOOK?

It's doing very well! Sold out the first printing before Christmas; it was unfortunate that the Press didn't heed my editor (and me) and print 5000 instead of 3, but as my salesperson Sarah said, "All authors tell us to print more--how were we to know you'd break the mold?" So we lost some Xmas sales, and also Jan. ones when the book was read on Chapter-A-Day, Wisconsin Public Radio, and the 2nd printing wasn't ready till the reading was almost two weeks over. It is still doing well, but not as spectacularly. I haven't got my own publicity out to everybody yet, though most of you got it--the actual publication in October caught up with me, and then there's school and everything else. (The NYTimes won't review it, says it's "regional"! Huh. So's Faulkner.) How you can help: continue to buy it, natch, for all your gift needs, but also tell your friends, libraries, schools, etc. I appreciate all of you who've been doing this, and your letters. People DO think it's a fine book! I've had a number of letters from strangers, and it was "Editor's Choice," Dec. 7, in the Chicago Trib.

## SO WHAT ABOUT THE BARN?

There's progress, lots of progress, but it's going to be a big job, doing everything that has to be done to save it. There have been so many delays that the initial surge of support has waned, and will only start up again when actual work can begin. That day is close for we finally have legal possession of the building, and we have the land to put it on, alongside I-90, but repairs, moving, and 3 of the 4 acres must be paid for. We need volunteers to work on many aspects. All the profit I make from the book is going to the barn, and more out of pocket, which I pray is deep enough. We're starting to raise money, and you'll get asked to become a "Friend of the Dougan Round Barn" ere long!

Verso "Untitled" fiber by Damaris Jackson

### Fiber Art by CAROL ADLEMAN DAMARIS JACKSON

**MARCH 3-13, 1998**

Reception and Workshop  
Tuesday, March 3 • 5:30-7 p.m.



Visual Arts Gallery

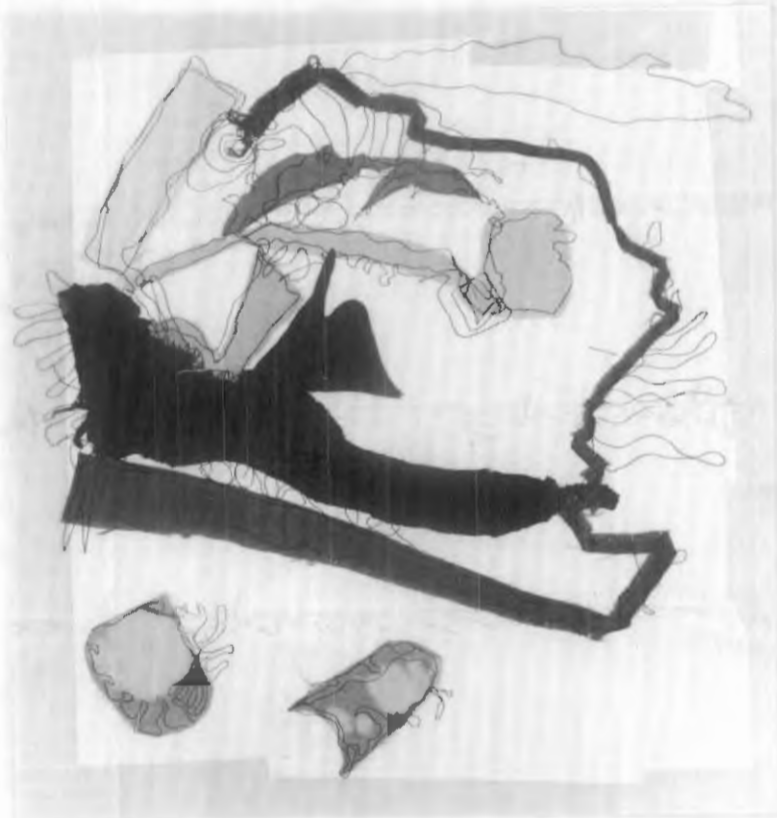
Health and Sciences Building, Second Level  
University of Illinois at Springfield  
P.O. Box 19243  
Springfield, IL 62794-9243  
(217) 786-6506

Gallery Hours:

Monday-Thursday, Noon-6:30 p.m. • Friday, Noon-5 p.m.

## DEMI HAS SUDDEN ART SHOW

Spfld, UIS Gallery: She came from Mpls to visit, me, bringing her current work at my request, and ended up having a gallery showing with friend and quilter Carol Adleman. Mauri Formigoni was admiring Demi's fabric art, when the artist for the next show cancelled, and M. urged D. to fill in. She did, the opening was two weeks later, (M and I had to hang the show!), it was festive, colorful, great eats, WONDERFUL ART! and about 200 people came. (M and I built a huge loom in the Gallery, and guests could weave fabric into the web, we had baskets of fabrics, scissors, etc. It was a fun companion to viewing the show, and turned out splendidly.) Both Demi and Carol also showed slides and talked about their work. A triumph! (Elle, Royce and sick cat also came, then went on the next day--sans cat--to ski and boat with Gillian, Cress and Eddy at Tahoe.)



*From Borders (Madison, Wisconsin) Staff Selections: they chose my book as one of 8 for recommended holiday giving.)*  
Stories from the Round Barn--Jacqueline Dougan Jackson's gathering of tales and memoir from her family farm near Beloit--is every bit the equal of the finest personal memoirs of recent years. Hard to have made the book so memorable, no doubt, since the author's story is not traumatic, as many of these recent memoirs have been. But it sticks in the mind nonetheless. Much of it is the style, which makes the daily life of the farm--with its rare round barn--come vividly to life. Jackson's writing is sharp, with an excellent memory for the telling details, and an unerring sense of the right way to tell a story, or recount a conversation. She re-creates a vanishing way of life, and brings to life a cast of characters that you'll come to care for. This book is long overdue, and a wonderful gift for those who love memoirs, nature or farming, or just good writing.