

Arts, crafts refining done at 'kingdom'

By JOE SCAMARDO

Once upon a time, there were many peaceable kingdoms, at least in fairy tales, but there is a modern Peaceable Kingdom (PK) in Washington County three miles north of Washington-on-the-Brazos. It is not inhabited by knights, damsels nor even a friendly dragon, but by nine persons who live and work cooperatively.

PK is a nonprofit, educational institution dedicated to "...the preservation and innovation of arts, crafts and related disciplines."

The 152-acre farm is located two and one half miles north of Washington, Texas, down an unpaved county road. As you cross the yellow cattle guard at the entrance to PK, there is an old, leaning building on the left. The building was the meeting hall of the Israelites of the Benevolence before the group disbanded.

A little further down the rutted, dirt road there is a remodeled house on the left where two of the PK residents, Charles and Jande McElroy, live.

The road continues over a low, earthen dam that entraps a large pond on the right. Past the dam, the road curves left up a low hill before curving right up a larger hill. As the road continues up the hill, it runs parallel to the prizewinning PK barn on the left.

At the top of the hill is the rambling farmhouse where the remaining

Saul Bellow wins Pulitzer

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Author Saul Bellow has won the 1976 Pulitzer prize for fiction with "Humboldt's Gift," a novel whose characters speak of the revered award with utter disdain.

Gene Miller of the Miami Herald won a Pulitzer for news reporting, and author Paul Horgan was honored in the history category — the second time each won prizes.

The Anchorage Daily News won the gold medal for public service for its investigation into the Teamsters union's growing impact on Alaska's economy and politics.

The prize for special local reporting went to the staff of the Chicago Tribune.

Sydney H. Schanberg of The New York Times won the international reporting prize for his coverage "at great risk" of the Communist takeover of Cambodia and the uprooting of its people.

The prize for national reporting went to Des Moines Register reporter James Risser.

At age 72, Horgan won the history prize for "Lamy of Santa Fe," the story of the first Roman Catholic archbishop in the Southwest.

A graduate of the underground weekly field, Tony Auth, 33, won the 1976 prize for editorial cartooning as a staff member of the Philadelphia Inquirer.

Stanley Forman, 30, of the Boston Herald American, won the spot news photography award.

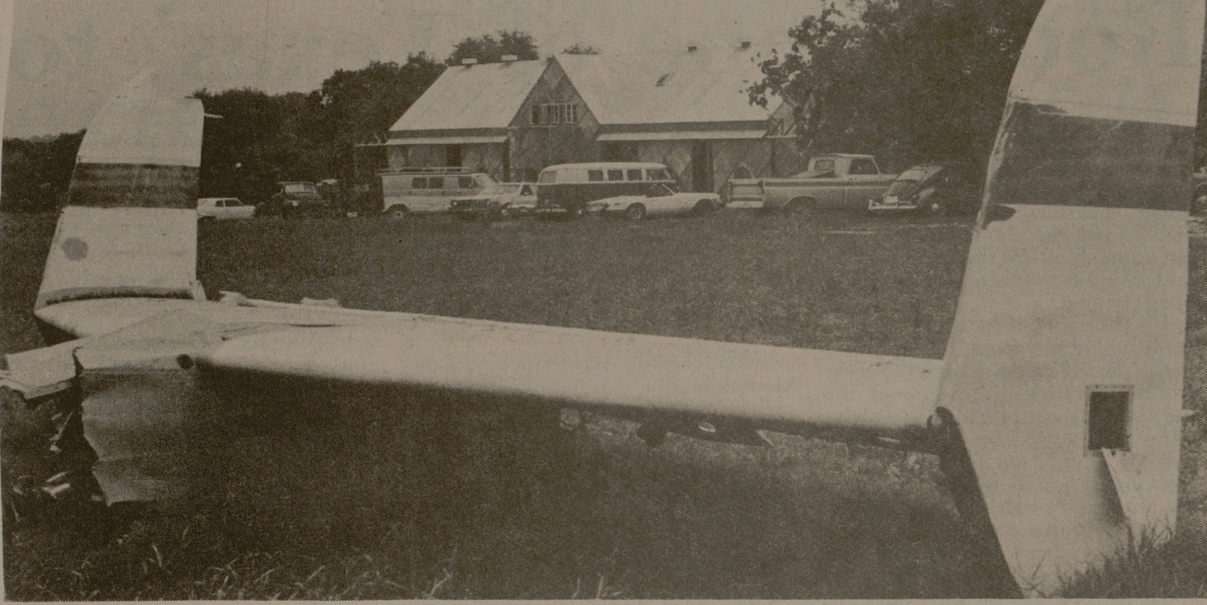
The feature photography award went to the 17-member photo staff of the Louisville Courier-Journal and Times for coverage of court-ordered busing with its attendant violence.

Alan M. Kriegsman, 45-year-old dance critic of the Washington Post, won the prize for criticism.

Prof. R. W. B. Lewis won the biography prize for "Edith Wharton: A Biography."

The poetry prize went to Brooklyn College teacher John Lawrence Ashbery, 48, for his "Self Portrait in a Convex Mirror."

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Framed by the tail section of an abandoned plane, this barn is used as a workshop and classroom by the residents of Peaceable Kingdom.

seven residents live. A large white star is painted on the farmhouse's roof.

In the front yard rest the time-ravaged head and tail of an airplane. The plane's remains were deposited one dark night by friends of the PK residents as a gift.

Further color is added to Peaceable Kingdom by the trapdoors, balconies and stained glass windows which decorate the buildings.

The PK barn was built because the expanding operations on the farm required a larger storage and work space. Danny Samuels, of Architects Inc. and Associates and Artie Kahn, a resident of PK, designed the barn and built it with the help of 100 students in a class entitled, "how to build a barn."

The barn was built using materials salvaged from the stage of the 1972 Watkins Glen rock concert.

The barn contains a woodworking studio, an auto repair shop, and living quarters for Kahn.

Not just any country barn, it caught the attention of the Texas Society of Architects. They judged the barn one of the nine best designed buildings of 1975 in Texas.

After the barn was completed a year and a half ago, a contest was begun which solicited designs for painting the structure.

The judges announced Monday that the design of Pat Johnson Lister had been chosen to decorate the barn.

The barn painting was held Saturday as the main event of a May Day celebration.

Although PK is a working farm, its main function is that of a crafts school. It is a place where the residents can improve their own craftsmanship and teach those arts to students.

Classes are taught by the residents in subjects ranging from bee-keeping to yoga. Besides teaching at PK, the residents have taught and demonstrated their crafts at such places as the Texas A&M University Crafts Center, the University of Houston Sundry School and the Alabama-Coushatta Indian Reservation.

Besides the classes taught by PK members, visiting craftsmen and instructors also teach classes in sub-

jects ranging from blacksmithing to identification and use of the plants of Texas.

Because the people of Peaceable Kingdom live and work so closely, all major decisions are made collectively. Every resident has an equal vote in all decisions and does an equal share of the work. Chris McCarthy, one of the members, said that PK operates on the principle that responsible persons will take care of what has to be done on their own initiative.

The residents are careful, however, not to let the "all work and no play" habits creep in. During long periods of drought, they put semi-broken toasters in the front yard as a sacrifice to the "Rain God."

After the day's work is completed and the residents are gathered in the farmhouse, such subjects are discussed as the PK theory of armadillo

reproduction. The theory says that the armadillos incorporate automobiles into their reproductive cycle. It states that armadillos reproduce by spores, like a mushroom, and that they have to be struck by an automobile to release the spores.

PK will grow into a larger crafts center and become more stabilized, said McCarthy, but it will not become "big business" oriented. The Peaceable Kingdom philosophy is that "if the school were to cease to change, it would cease to contribute both to the individuals and to the communities we serve."

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(Answer: Yes, Green Teak Logs)