

## A CONVERSATION WITH THE POST'S NEW PRESIDENT

TOM FERGUSON's navy blue coat is flung on the arm of the couch in a way that suggests he's either going off somewhere or he's just hurried back. No pictures hang on the walls of his seventh-floor office yet.

There's only an ocean scene placed next to the digital clock. Books and mementos have yet to fill the shelves. But his coffee table is covered with manila files, his bookshelves packed with binders and his desk almost hidden by scads of notes and memos.

"I feel like a hostage," laughed Ferguson, who in early December became the president and general manager of the newspaper. "I've hardly been anywhere outside The Post since I came here. I've been staying at the University Club, and you can't get much closer to the office than that."

Ferguson described his time here so far as "doing and getting oriented at the same time." The only major departments he has not spent time in are Data Processing, some Production areas and the Newsroom. He tries to come back to the building at least one night a week when the presses start up.

If there is such a thing as a typical day for a president of a large daily newspaper, it consists of numerous meetings. On Wednesday, January 9, Ferguson's day went like this: Arrived at the office at eight in the morning. Read mail, reports, returned phone calls, etc. First meeting at 11 to review management objectives. Lunch with Don Graham and the Board of Directors. Long meeting at 2:30 with Bob McCormick, the vice president of Advertising, to discuss sales, planning and budgets, which was interspersed with a lot of phone calls. Wrapped up the day with a party thrown for three employees leaving Classified Advertising. Dinner at 8

p.m. with a business consultant.

"I think this is a fabulous company," said Ferguson, who as president and general manager is concerned with the business side of the newspaper. He will be responsible for all noneditorial matters. His primary interest, he said, is in the long-term growth of the company.

Ferguson came to The Post from New York-based Parade Magazine, where he began eight years ago as marketing director. He then became general manager and president.

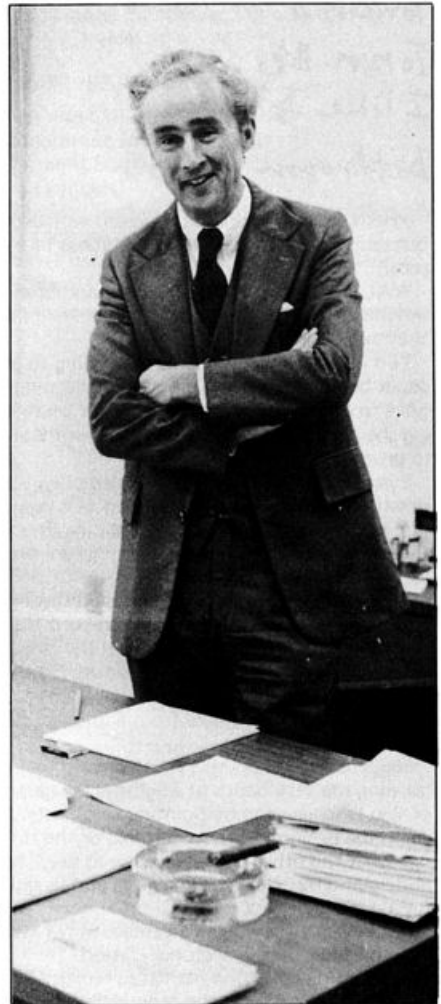
At Parade he felt that his greatest accomplishment was improving the quality of management. "I tried to build a management team that was capable of taking the broadest possible long-term view of the business and I hope to do the same here at The Post.

"I was in love with my previous company," he said, "but after six weeks at The Post, I could never go back."

Leaving New York for Washington, though, was a little more difficult for Ferguson. "I was born in Brooklyn, I've always lived in Brooklyn, and I would have died in Brooklyn if I hadn't met Don Graham."

His college years were spent in New York, also. He attended St. John's University as well as New York University. His wife and six children are still in New York, since one child is graduating from grammar school this year and another from high school.

"I haven't quite gotten adjusted to Washington yet," he said, "perhaps because I haven't had much of a chance to see the city and I haven't been able to look for a house here yet because my office has been my home."



As president and general manager of the newspaper, **TOM FERGUSON** will be responsible for noneditorial matters.

# EAST MEETS WEST

Wash 洗澡 *vó sài*  
*hànkā xī*  
 brush your teeth 刷牙  
*vó xī*  
 Wash your face 洗脸  
*vó xiǎo*  
 Sit down 坐 *zì*  
 Stand up 站 *zhàn*  
 STANDING *tián qǐ*  
 To read 读 *dú*  
 To walk 走 *zǒu*  
 To run 跑 *pǎo*  
 I like 喜欢 *xǐ huān*  
 bathroom 洗手间



"In the beginning we spent most of the time just trying to figure out what the other one was trying to say," said WALLACE McDONALD, left, who has been helping PHAN BUU, right, with her English homework. TRAN NAHM, center, interpreted Buu's conversation.

PHAN BUU, the smiling, pleasant woman who cleans tables in the cafeteria, may well be the only Chinese to speak with a Southern accent.

WALLACE McDONALD, a born-and-bred Virginian who works in the Stereotype Department, has been helping Buu, a refugee from Vietnam, learn English.

"I'd go to the cafeteria every morning to get coffee and read the paper before work. She'd be there, cleaning the tables, and we'd wave to each other. This went on for a while and then one morning she came up to me with a list of words she wanted to know how to pronounce."

Every weekday for about a month now, McDonald, who speaks slowly and patiently and with a bit of a drawl, has been helping Buu with her homework. She is taking English lessons two nights a week at the Career Center in Arlington, and on Sundays she is tutored privately.

The most important thing, Buu said through PHAN NAHM, a cafeteria employe who is also a Chinese-born Vietnam refugee, is to learn English. "If she doesn't learn the language," Nahm said, "she'll work the rest of her life in restaurants, which of course she doesn't want to do." Buu has been in the United States only a year and a half. She came here from a refugee camp in Malaysia, where she spent a year.

McDonald, who doesn't speak a word of Chinese, and Buu, who is learning the very basics of English, manage to communicate by a sort of sign language and by pointing to objects.

"In the beginning we spent most of the time just trying to figure out what the other one was trying to say," he laughed. "If she didn't understand me she'd start giggling and laughing and this could go on for a minute or two."

"But even though I can't explain to her what words mean, at least I can give her the right pronunciation."

When Buu shows him her list of words McDonald pronounces them for her, and she writes the pronunciations in Chinese.

"I can't really teach her anything — it's up to her teachers to explain what the words mean and how to use them correctly. But she's

doing real well by her method of writing the English words the way they sound in Chinese."

Buu began her English studies by learning the difference between "a" and "and." Now she's concentrating on when to use "this" and when to use "that." She's learned the 50 states, she knows the names of fruits, and she can compose simple sentences.

Nahm, who has been in this country for about six years, said, "She finds the pronunciation much more difficult than the grammar. But we all feel that way because English words all sound alike and everybody talks so fast!"

One of Buu's more difficult assignments so far also challenged McDonald. Her homework said "This is a drill in using 'this' and 'that.'" "Another guy from Stereotype was sitting with us," McDonald related, "and he said, 'Just compare it to having your teeth drilled.' But that didn't work because of course she doesn't know the word 'teeth.' I finally gave up on explaining 'drill' and just helped her with the assignment itself."

Somehow, McDonald said, she learned the expression, "She sells sea shells by the seashore." "What a time I had trying to explain the difference between sells and shells — they sound so much alike but they mean totally different things."

Buu obtained employment in the cafeteria through the Department of Human Resources, which also set her up in her Arlington apartment and arranged the English lessons when she arrived from Malaysia.

McDonald, who has been in Stereotype here for 22 years, has never undertaken anything like this; he's never taught before. "But for years I'd come in to read the paper, and I find this a lot more interesting and more gratifying than sitting down and reading the paper."

"She's doing real well, though. She tries very hard and it's obvious that she's very determined to learn English."

"Right now we're at the point where she knows she's off Saturdays and Sundays, and that my days off are Sundays and Mondays. So every Friday she says, 'I'll see you on Tuesday!'"



# RECREATION ASSOCIATION WANTS YOU!

**THE 1980 ELECTIONS** — The Recreation Association invites interested members to run for any of the following offices in the upcoming election on January 30. Although the chairpersons are selected by the president, any member with the time, particular talent and special interest should contact **BECKY HOLT** in Personnel, x6425. Also, all members are invited to attend the annual meeting on Wednesday, January 23, from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m., at which nominations of officers and area reps will be taken. Following is a list of positions to be filled, and any member who wishes to run for an office should either contact Holt or fill out the coupon and send it to Personnel, seventh floor.

### OFFICERS:

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer

1) I am interested in running for the following office(s).

2) I would like to recommend that the nominating committee contact the following person(s) who might be interested in serving on the board.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Department \_\_\_\_\_

Ext. \_\_\_\_\_

### RECREATION REPRESENTATIVES:

- Area I Pressroom, General Workers, Paperhandlers
- II Production Office, Electricians/Machinists
- III Mailroom
- IV Composing, Stereotype, Engraving
- V News and Editorial
- VI Retail and General Advertising
- VII Real Estate, Ad Art, Automotive, Promotion, Public Relations
- VIII Classified
- IX Circulation
- X Ad Services, Make-up
- XI Accounting

- XII Data Processing, Advanced Systems
- XIII Personnel, Executive, Corporate, Engineering, Security, Building Services, Purchasing, Administrative Services

### CHAIRPERSONS:

- Arts and Skills (run art shows)
- Fundraising (organize sales)
- Discount Buying (handle discounts offered to members)
- Publicity (gather information on activities and route to necessary people)
- Travel (work with travel agencies in planning trips)

## THE INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER ASKS "PARDON ME, BUT..."

"Who would you like to see win the Superbowl?"



**LLOYD FEAR — Stereotype**  
"Pittsburgh, I guess, because they're closest to home. Actually, I didn't even know the Superbowl hadn't been played yet — you can tell I'm a real hockey fan."



**PETE LEE — Mailroom**  
"My team (Redskins) is not there so I don't really care. I'm a die-hard Redskins fan, win or lose. But I would say Pittsburgh because they are the best team."



**MARY ANNE KENNEDY — Classified**  
"I'd vote for L.A. just because they're the underdogs."



**CLIFFORD HAMILTON — Building Services**  
"I don't think L.A. can whip the Steelers, but I know a lot of people would like them to. I'd like to see the Rams come through once, but they've got to play the game."



**ALPHONSO TATE — Mailroom**  
"The Rams beating Pittsburgh is something I'd like to see. I don't think Pittsburgh's steel curtain can be broken, but I'd at least like to see it cracked."



**CAROLYN NUGENT — Circulation**  
"Definitely Pittsburgh. I'm from that area and I'm a big fan of the Steelers and Pirates both."

Do you have a question you'd like the inquiring photographer to ask? Jot it down and send it to Camille Recchia, sixth floor.

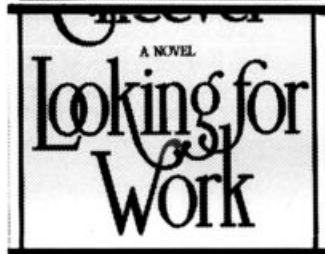
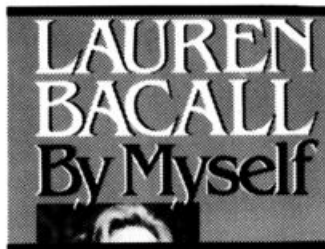
## POST SCRIPTS



Publisher **DON GRAHAM**, assistant managing editor/Financial **PETER SILBERMAN** and Office of Management and Budget director James T. McIntyre.

**LOOKING AHEAD** — Addressing an audience of about 175 business and community leaders at the annual Washington Post Business Outlook Luncheon, Office of Management and Budget director James T. McIntyre predicted that the nation will have a "major tax cut" sometime in the next year or so. "The effect of this, he said, would be to offset inflation which is pushing taxpayers into higher brackets.

**BOOK AND AUTHOR LUNCHEON** — Lauren Bacall, Bob Woodward and Scott Armstrong, and Susan Cheever will speak at The Washington Post Book and Author Luncheon on Tuesday, February 5. The luncheon will be held in the Sheraton Park Hotel at 12:30 p.m. Lauren Bacall will speak about her autobiography, "Lauren Bacall By Myself," which explores her career, her marriages, her successes and her tragedies. Bob Woodward and Scott Armstrong will discuss their book about the Supreme Court, "The Brethren." "Looking for Work," first novelist Susan Cheever's book about the frustrations of a young woman trying to cope with both marriage and career, will be the topic of her talk. Managing editor **HOWARD SIMONS** will preside at the luncheon. Tickets, \$10 each, will be available from January 17 to January 31 at The Post's front counter and at area bookstores.



**RICHARD EYCHNER, RALPH SCHOOLEY and MIKE ELLERIN.**

**SO LONG, FAREWELL, SEE YOU AROUND** — Classified held a big bash last Wednesday night on the ninth floor for **MIKE ELLERIN**, who's off to San Jose; for retiring **RALPH SCHOOLEY**; and for **RICHARD EYCHNER**, who's transferring from one phone room to another. Ellerin, leaving to become the Classified manager at The San Jose Mercury-News, joined The Post in 1971 as a telephone sales representative. Schooley, a familiar face at The Post's front counter, has retired after 17 years here. And Eychner, who most recently was a supervisor in Classified, has transferred to Circulation to supervise the Service Desk.



**IF LOST RETURN TO . . .** — If **LOIS MUNDAY** ever wandered away and got lost, no one would have any trouble knowing where to return her to. Munday has a "Property of Financial" tag tied to her ankle, but she won't be rushing off anywhere too quickly. On January 3 Munday chipped a bone in her ankle after falling down a flight of stairs. Her co-workers in Financial are trying to make her life a little easier, though. When reporter **ART PINE** needed to use the VDT on which Munday's leg was propped, he told her not to move, and propped his leg up on the other side and proceeded to use the machine.

## RECREATION ASSOCIATION NEWS

**BULLETS BASKETBALL** — On Thursday, January 31, the division-leading Boston Celtics come to the Capital Centre to take on the Washington Bullets. A \$7.50 ticket is discounted to \$5.00, and are available to association members and their families. Contact **GERRI PANCOAST** in Classified at x7022.



**CAPS HOCKEY** — Get your tickets now for the January 27 match between the Washington Capitals and the New York Islanders. Save \$4.50 from the price of a regular \$7.50 ticket and enjoy a night of NHL action. Contact **GERRI PANCOAST** in Classified at x7022 for tickets and more information. Tickets available to members and their families.

## MARKETPLACE

**TILE WORK** — Ceramic and tile work by Giovanni. Baths, showers, kitchens. All kinds of repairs. Free estimates. Call 588-1691 for more information.

**OLD ENGLISH SHEEPDOG** — AKC, 19½ months old, female, spayed, very well trained. Best offer. Call Jay or Percy, 232-7998.

**RENTAL** — One-year lease on a townhouse on Eastern Ave. N.W. Three bedrooms, 1½ baths, wall-to-wall carpeting, finished basement. Available February 1. Proximity to Silver Spring Metro, 16th and Gerogia Avenue buslines. \$500. Call Marielle at x7155 or 723-5365.

**PRINTING** — Business cards, letterheads, envelopes, business forms, flyers and brochures. The finest selection of thermographed or engraved invitations and announcements to choose from. All at a discount to Post employees and their families. Call Erwin Sessler daily at 262-9430, Monday-Friday, 6-7 p.m. at x7788.

**FOR RENT** — Dupont Circle. Stunning newly renovated two-bedroom, with loft, in Victorian townhouse. Separate dining room; living room with fireplace. Quality restoration. Separate entrance. Security system in building. \$625 per month plus utilities. Call 265-1800.

**GERMAN SHEPHERD** — Free to good home. Female, seven months old, all shots, excellent health, good with children. Beige with black muzzle. Also, doghouse for sale, \$50. Contact Dave Brooke in Composing, 2:30 p.m. — 10 p.m., x7830.

**RIDE NEEDED** — From University of Maryland, Wednesday and Thursday nights, 9:30 p.m., into Northwest Washington (near Post). Starting Wednesday, January 16. Call Diane at x7987.

**What would you like to read about in Shop Talk? Your suggestions and ideas are always welcome. Editor Camille Recchia x6803.**