



A Bad Case of Student Envy

While preparing this issue of *Bloom*, I contracted a bad case of IU student envy. I kept daydreaming about what a privilege it would be to take classes with people like Scott Russell Sanders, Steve Raymer, and David Baker — three educators prominent in this issue.

Scott, the author of our story on the courthouse, has written 20 novels and nonfiction books. Not long ago my wife Jenny and I had dinner with Scott and his wife Ruth. The conversation (mostly about writing and the creative process) was even better than Zagreb's steaks.

Photojournalist Steve Raymer is another IU treasure. The man covered every sort of human drama in every corner of the globe during his 25 years at *National Geographic*. I accompany Steve on his *Bloom* assignments whenever I can to hold the lights. That's how much I enjoy watching him work. For this issue, I tagged along to Capriole Farm for our cheese story and to the music school where he photographed David Baker for the cover.

The three hours Steve and I spent with David were inspirational. A contemporary of Dizzy Gillespie, Wes Montgomery, Duke Ellington, and Miles Davis, he is a giant in his own right, still vital, still teaching, still a creative force.

I like Scott, Steve, and David as teachers because they have been up the mountain. All made their mark in highly competitive, creative fields. Much of what they know—and they know a lot—they learned by doing, over and over again, under real-world conditions: endless contemplative hours alone at a typewriter, huddled in rubble clutching a camera as bullets whizzed by, playing trombone 'til three in the morning in some dive in Cleveland. They practiced their craft for decades, yet all three still possess boyish curiosity and enthusiasm, as well as a desire to share their knowledge.

Having teachers who have excelled outside the classroom, I believe, is essential if the kids they're instructing are serious about making a living in writing, photojournalism, or music. Lucky students. I envy them.

Please note:

- Just so you know, those big new offices out on Liberty Drive do not belong to *Bloom Magazine*. The confusion (and there has been quite a lot) comes from the name on the sign out front, "Bloom Marketing Group." This is a telemarketing company owned by Finelight. If they interrupt your dinner, call them not us.
- One of the aforementioned Scott Russell Sanders' books, *Wilderness Plots*, was transformed into a musical presentation starring Scott as the narrator, and featuring the singing and songwriting talents of Carrie Newcomer, Krista Detor, Tom Roznowski, Tim Grimm, and Michael White. The story and songs chronicle the settling of the Ohio Valley in the years between the American Revolution and the Civil War. If you weren't among the fortunate 700+ at the Buskirk-Chumley on May 18, you missed something very special. The CD has been in my car player and the songs resonating in my brain ever since. I would love to see *Wilderness Plots* become a part of Bloomington tradition, performed annually, perhaps around July 4.
- If you are having trouble finding a copy of *Bloom*, that's because they are grabbed up quickly. If you go to our beautiful new website (designed by Mediaworks), you'll find a list of all the places where the magazine is available. Or you can subscribe, which is also a nice way of supporting the magazine. There's a subscription card between pages 32 and 33 or you can register at the website. So far, nearly 500 Bloomingtonians and others in 31 states have signed on. Thank you all.
- Finally, all of us at *Bloom* are honored that a copy of the magazine was included in the time capsule implanted at the courthouse.

Malcolm Abrams
editor and publisher