



Barker tries to produce tears from one of his actresses

Staff Photo by Owen Taylor

DSC vets rap war

By OWEN TAYLOR
DD-T Staff Writer

Jerry King says he wants "to show people what's going on and get the war stopped." King, a Delta State College student who spent a tour of duty in Vietnam as an infantry man and helicopter machine gunner, calls the war illegal in terms of Geneva Convention rules.

The bearded Memphian says he's seen free-fire zones, defoliation of large areas and inhumane weaponry used by the U.S. in Southeast Asia. All these things are outlawed by the Geneva war rules, along with the unlawful training he was given as a soldier, King says.

"We were told to win at all costs. It doesn't matter how you go about it, just so you win. American soldiers should be taught the Geneva Convention rules before they are sent into combat, but they're not."

King also wants to see a U.S. pullout. To bring it about, people on a local level, he believes, should make themselves heard. "People" in King's case means Vietnam veterans.

The veterans are the people he hopes are organized by the time school is out in a few weeks, he says.

The Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW) is his vehicle for this organization. The VVAW is recognized as a legitimate veterans group by the Veteran's Administration, King says, which means "anyone who joins won't be placed on a subversive list."

VVAW has nine objectives which include helping to bring about immediate withdrawal of all troops, ending U.S. aid in supporting "illegal operations" in foreign countries and giving returning veterans better educational opportunities.

About 25 people come to the meetings, King says. The group has met twice in the last two weeks, and will meet again at 7 p.m. Tuesday at the Wesley Foundation building on 5th Avenue here.

The Cleveland group the second to organize in the state, has not obtained national affiliation yet, King says, but is waiting for instructions on gaining affiliation.

Membership, he says, is not restricted to just veterans. "Honorary" membership can be given to non-veterans wanting to help stop the war, King explains.

Jerry Snipes, a non-Vietnam vet who served in the Navy and now goes to Delta

State, is helping in the organization of the Cleveland chapter.

The two men, along with a small group of other students, have been circulating petitions on campus calling for support of a pending Congressional bill which would place a 30-day withdrawal deadline on U.S. troops in Vietnam.

Snipes says King is the group's main spokesman "because he's been there and people will listen to him."

When asked if he thought people in this part of the country will respond to his group's efforts, King replies: "I think the majority of the people are tired of the war. And I believe people want the U.S. to get out of the war."

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Social Security

By NORMAN L. THAMES

Disability applicants are not required to wait six months before filing. Those persons who become disabled should file immediately.

An applicant has to be disabled six full months before monthly benefits can be paid. However, by filing immediately, the applicant can have his file fully documented and reviewed by the disability determination team while the six-month period is elapsing. The first monthly check, due for the seventh month of disability, can then be paid on time.

If the disabled person waits until six months have passed before filing, his first check will be late. In addition, waiting too long to file can cause a loss of benefits.

Anyone interested in the disability provisions of Social Security should telephone the Greenville office. Correct information about the proper time to file can be given by expert technicians. Disability claims can be filed by phone and a trip to the social security office is no longer necessary.

For disability information, call 332-0957 in Greenville, and 843-2305 in Cleveland.

Willy's waiting

PENZANCE, England (UPI)—Willy the greyhound got lost Friday because he ate his address.

The dog had been put on the London-Penzance train with his owner's name and destination on a tag around his neck.

By the time he got to the end of the line, he had only his name tag. Now police are waiting for his owner to claim him.

Cleveland's movie

Quiet on the set!

By OWEN TAYLOR
DD-T Staff Writer

CLEVELAND—Mel Barker lumbered from behind the movie camera and pushed up his cap's brim. He put his hands on his hips and looked over the fifteen young, scrubbed faces.

He started to say something to them when he suddenly realized the noise behind him had built to an intolerable level.

"I've got to have quiet," Barker yelled as he spun around to look at 85 or so other scrubbed faces sprinkled with a smattering of parents and onlookers.

First rule of movie making: Quiet on the set.

Second rule: Listen to the director, who in this epic also happens to be the producer, director of sound, script boy, director of photography, and all the other people listed in the credits after a movie.

Barker, in Cleveland's Firemen's Park one recent Saturday to shoot what was billed as "Cleveland's Own Comedy" in an advertisement he ran in the local paper, says he doesn't need the usual myriad of technical assistants.

"I took Hal Roach about 10 days to shoot what I do in a day," Barker says. "You see, he had a lot of help and everyone was getting in the way."

Hal Roach. Ring a bell? Roach produced the "Our Gang" series about the time of the Depression. There were two "Our Gang" series, actually. The second series is the one, Barker says, which is shown on TV stations throughout the country. But it has been retitled "The Little Rascals."

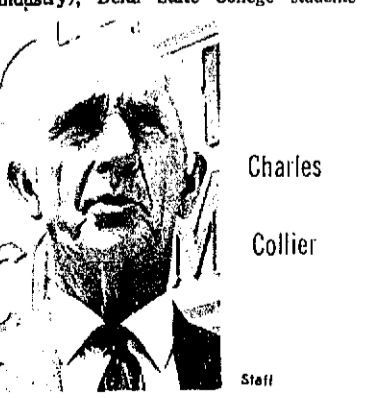
Barker claims more than a passing acquaintance with the second series. He discovered its star, Spanky McFarland, the little fat kid who kept Buckwheat, Alfalfa and the rest of the gang in enough hot water

Movies are Collier's life

CLEVELAND—Charles Collier's way of life is showing movies. But Collier, part-owner of two theaters and one drive-in here, along with three Starkville theaters, also has taken an active part in making movies.

When he receives the final print of a movie made in Cleveland recently by Mel Barker (see story, this page), Collier will show it and one of his own he made of Cleveland in 1950.

"The movie includes scenes of Baxter Laboratories when it was first built (Baxter Laboratories is now Cleveland's largest industry), Delta State College students



Charles Collier

Staff

dancing the Charleston and staging a sword fight and the Cleveland High School band," Collier says.

The full-color movie was one of several Collier made of Mid-Delta towns, including Shaw, Drew, Ruleville and Benoit.

His movies don't have plots, but show unusual aspects of the communities or acts of derring-do by local folks.

"I remember one time," Collier chuckled, "I tried to stage an auto wreck. One man in a car was to drive toward the camera, turn his wheel sharply and go around a curve on two wheels. He cut too sharp the car started to turn over. By George, I grabbed my camera and ran without taking a single frame."

to cook three-minute oatmeal. "The first gang grew up," Barker says, "and Roach dropped the series. I was in Houston in 1933 shooting commercials for local movie houses. Spanky McFarland—I never knew his real name, but his mother called him Sonny—was a little kid I used for bread and ice cream commercials."

Although Spanky was "hard headed," Barker says he was impressed with the 3-year-old's ability. He sent Roach clips of the Spanky commercials, Roach liked them "and he started the series up again on the strength of Spanky."

Spanky, Barker says, now has a successful "hillbilly" band in New York.

But there was no Spanky McFarland here. Between 90 and 100 Cleveland kids from 3 to 15 years old, though, did sit before the Barker camera and recite lines he shot at them.

"We're supposed to meet the rest of the gang here," Barker said to the first child perched atop a picnic table. He pointed his finger at the boy and flipped on his camera in time to film the boy repeating the line.

Next boy. "Wish they'd hurry and get here." Signal. Camera on. Boy repeats.

Next boy. "Me too. I'm getting tired of waiting." Signal. Camera on. Boy repeats.

And so it went for the better part of the bright Saturday.

The movie isn't all kids posing on the bench, repeating line after line. There's a kidnapping in the plot (which Barker has memorized since he "wrote it and shot it about a thousand times") and of course, the Gang (always the Gang captures the culprits. Everyone but the two heavies live happily ever after in Cleveland.

Landing a part in the movie is no great feat. Barker charges an \$8 "training" fee. Call it a gimmick if you like, but that's not how several of the parents feel about it.

"A lot of people may think it's a fake or something," says Mrs. Roy Peacock, whose 6-year-old Brain is in the cast, "but we think it will be good experience for Brain. He really wants to do it, too."

Mrs. Lyndol Ellison says she told Barker she thought it all sounded like "a money-making" scheme when she registered daughter Penny, 10, and son Scott, 8. "He said he made money from this, alright, but he said he also had to pay for his expenses. But if he does what he promises, it will be worth it," she says.

What Barker does promise is to send Charles Collier, part-owner of Cleveland's two theaters and one drive-in theater, the finished print. It will probably run about 25 minutes. Barker will give him the film, Collier says—he won't sell or rent it to Collier.

It will then be shown with a film Collier made of Cleveland in 1950. The two films will probably run with a G-rated family film and be shown for a full week.

Barker, who has been in the movie business for over half a century, has been making movies like the Cleveland feature for 38 years, and on two separate occasions "many years ago" made similar movies in Greenville, he says.

His corner of the film industry is one without much competition.

"There have been other people who have tried making this type of movie, but they usually messed things up. There was one guy I caught," Barker remembers with a serious grin, "who had been making this kind of movie for two years using my name."

"I told him if I caught him doing it again, I'd have him thrown in jail. He got out of the business."

"I get that sort of thing (people saying his movies are a money-making gimmick)," says Barker. "It usually comes from ignorant people who don't know what's involved. Actually, I could probably make some money at this sort of thing if I didn't have to buy film and have it processed." He estimates the final print costs \$400 to \$500.

Barker also incurred motel and meal expense for a week in Cleveland setting up the day-long shooting, paid three high school girls to help several days registering the children, and paid two high school boys to

handle a microphone boom and sound equipment.

"If people follow through on this, I think they'll see it's legitimate. The kids got a big kick out of being in a movie, and besides, I work too hard for this to be a fake."

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