

One of Lewis' most memorable moments came after Tawney's show when she answered questions from the audience. One of the students asked her if giving up her life for her art was worth it. Lewis distinctly remembers Tawney looking straight at the student and replying, "Yes." It was this kind of attachment to the arts that inspired Lewis.

The attitude and dedication that she modeled after her heroes is what she brings to the classroom. "Her love for teaching is very motivational," Gebhardtsbauer says. Junior fine-arts major Kathleen Paulicki says, "I've never heard Barb say that she doesn't know how to solve a problem. She can solve any problem you have when it comes to fabric."

When Lewis gets an idea it "festers" in her mind for a long time. For a recent project that Lewis completed in October, her inspiration came from an outdoor market in Paris. She got the idea to make a quilt out of silk ties that she acquired from different markets around town. "As soon as I started picking up ties, then a lot of people started picking up ties, it was really hysterical," Lewis says.

Hundreds of ties that Lewis has collected from around the world fill the studio in her home. Silk ties, like the ones seen below, were the inspiration for the Tie Quilt Lewis made for her niece as a wedding gift and exhibited in the faculty show.



After returning home from Paris with all of her ties, she realized what the purpose of the quilt was going to be. Her niece and her niece's fiance had both been to France and now, "They like everything French," Lewis says. "So I got out all my French ties to make them a quilt. So things just kind of go together to make a project that you need to do."

Lewis likes to weave tapestries and quilts during the cold winter months and prefers to garden in the summer. She ties the

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two hobbies together by making many of her tapestries represent things that are growing in nature. She pulls the colors straight out of her garden and weaves them into her work. Over the years Lewis has done a lot of experimenting with colors that normally would not go together. "You can plant anything by anything and it all goes together beautifully," Lewis says. "The less attention you spend on planting things, the more wonderful surprises and contrasts of color you have."

According to Lewis, experimenting with different colors is one of the most fascinating aspects of weaving. There are so many colors that you are able to create, she explains, each with a variety of different shades and hues. However, all of the color doesn't always end up in her artwork. The dark clothes she wears are good camouflages for all the dyes that have been spilled in the past.

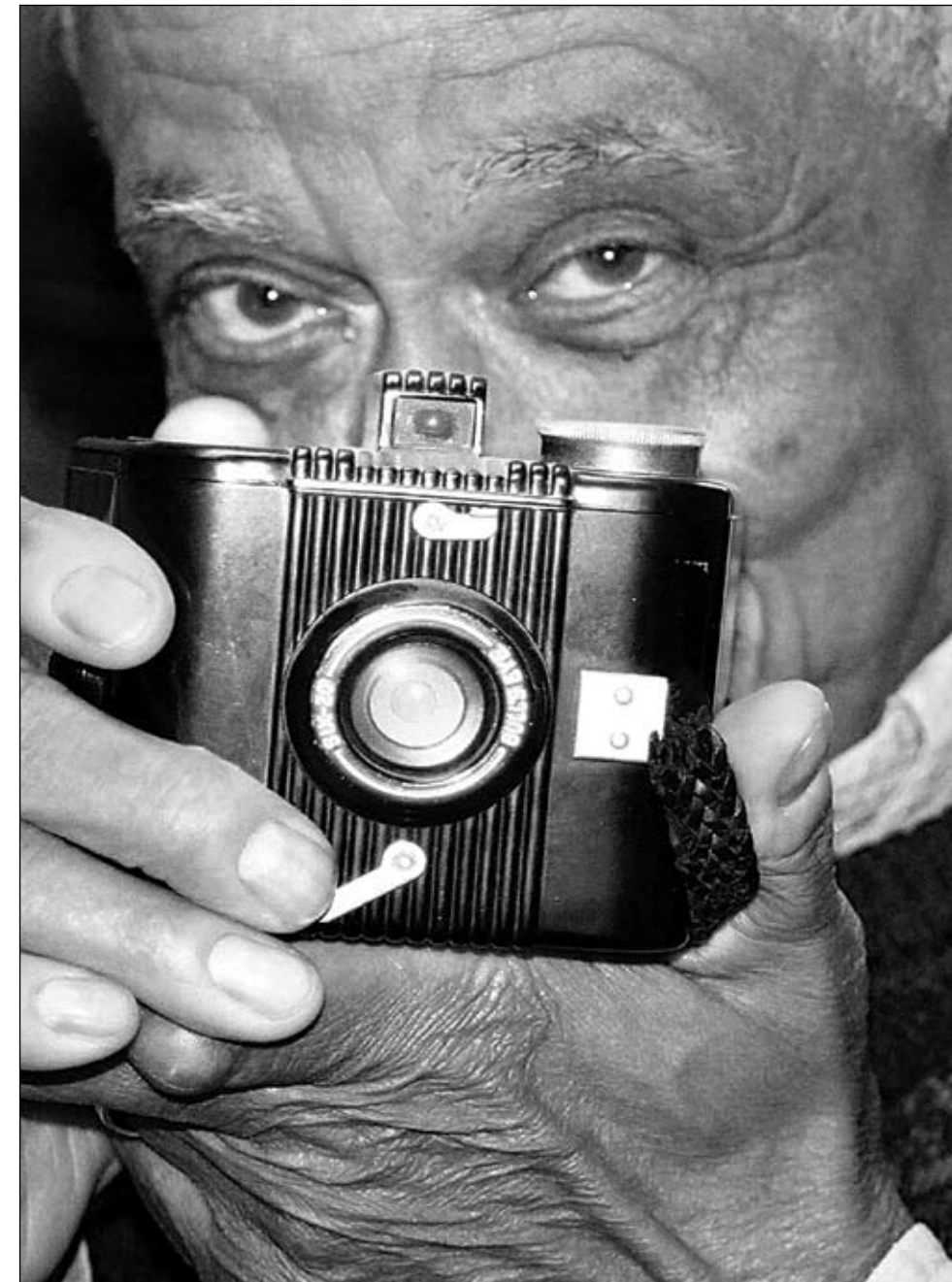
Many students have walked in and out of her life over the years. While many things have changed, one thing remains the same: Barbara Lewis loves her students. "I am proud of the fact that a number of students have gone on to earn their living as weavers," Lewis says. From school and jobs to socializing with friends, there is always a strong demand on time, especially for women, Lewis says. "To have your art be able to be a part of your life, that's really good."

As she reflects back on her years at JMU, her pale cheeks become flushed. Her students are a constant reminder of why she chose teaching. One of the greatest gifts a teacher could ask for is, "Seeing them get excited about something that they had no idea how to do before. The growth of the student's ability is tremendous," according to Lewis.

Junior fine-arts major Lauren Childs says, "She emphasizes quality over quantity. If your work takes you a month or a few years, it doesn't matter — Barb doesn't want you to rush."

While the Shenandoah Valley and the home Lewis has made at JMU are far away from the dreams she once had of living in Hawaii and working with dolphins, she would not change a thing. Her eyes grow misty as she says, "I've always had the job that I've

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Story and photography by ALICE ASHE

Bernie Boston:

View Finder

From his Valley home, an award-winning photographer sheds light on the man behind the camera

As he sits back in his leather recliner, Bernie Boston's soft face hardens as he recalls the events of Oct. 22, 1967. "It was early afternoon," he says, "they marched over from the Lincoln Memorial." His voice is serious as he remembers the throngs of anti-war demonstrators marching to the Pentagon in protest of the Vietnam War. It was the largest anti-war protest the country had seen, as more than 250,000 people of all ages and races gathered in Washington, D.C. As always, Boston was on the scene with his camera ready. He remembers calling his editor at the *Washington Star* newspaper to let him know he was going to drive over to the Pentagon. Instead, he ended up marching along with the protestors at his editor's request, only to return later to a car with three slashed tires and a bouquet of flowers tucked under his windshield wipers. New Pirelli tires were not the only things Boston would get out of the day's events. He was about to take a prize-winning photograph.

"When I saw the sea of demonstrators, I knew something had to happen," he recalls. Boston had positioned himself on a wall at the Mall Entrance to the Pentagon. The Military District of Washington had been called in as a means of crowd control, and the troops were doing their best to keep the protestors from clambering up the steps of the entrance. "I saw the troops march down into the sea of people," Boston says, "and I was ready for it." One soldier lost his rifle. Another lost his helmet. The rest had their guns pointed out into the crowd, when all of a sudden a young hippie stepped out in front of the action with a bunch of flowers in his left hand. With his right hand he began placing the flowers into the barrels of the soldiers' guns. "He came out of nowhere," says Boston, "and it took me years to find out who he was ... his name was Harris." That picture, titled "Flower Power," won Boston second place for the Pulitzer Prize that year.

A cowboy at heart, but a long-time Washingtonian, the photographer moved in 1994 with his wife, Peggy, into a modern wooden house tucked into the mountainside in Basye. He has two dogs, a classic 1966 Corvette and, with his wife, is the co-owner of the *Bryce Mountain Courier* monthly newspaper. He is also the publisher and photographer for the publication, which continues to keep him quite busy.

Bernie greets me with a smile and delightful handshake as I walk into the Bostons' unique home on a Wednesday morning. He has big hazel eyes, tufts of curly

white hair, round cheeks and he wears dark brown leather cowboy boots, which accurately complement his free-spirited personality. As we take a seat in his cozy living room, I notice immediately his relaxed yet professional demeanor. Along with his cowboy boots he dons creased blue jeans and a gray collared shirt layered beneath a navy blue sweater with southwestern flair. We chat briefly about the amazing views and the gorgeous woodwork that decorates his house before moving on to more pertinent topics.

Although he is content with his life in the Valley, he enjoys reminiscing about his time as a photographer in D.C. Like many other D.C. journalists, Boston bears witness to some of the nation's most historic events. Most interesting, however, are his captivating tales of life as a professional photographer and the stories behind the news.

Boston started shooting pictures when he was 7 years old. His parents gave him a Kodak Brownie, a camera he has gratefully held onto over the years. He grew up in McLean, where he became a photographer for his high-school newspaper and yearbook, as well as his school's Scholastic Sports Association representative to the *Washington Daily*. It was then that his photography really began to flourish.

After high school, Boston worked for a short time in the Photography Division of the Library of Congress before attending the Rochester Institute of Technology

in New York, where he continued to study photographic science in addition to illustration. He graduated in 1955 with a degree in photographic science. After that he studied at the School of Aviation Medicine in the Air Force and then served time in the Army, spending two years of his term in Germany practicing radiology in the neurosurgical unit. He was discharged in 1958 and moved back to D.C. to work as an assistant manager at Custom Craft Color Service, which specialized in custom photography and processing.

With all of those experiences behind him, Boston began to concentrate on photography. He started working as a freelancer and eventually found his niche as a news photographer. In 1963, he left Washington to take a job at the *Dayton Daily News* in Dayton, Ohio, only to return three years later to work at the *Washington*

Star. After a mere two years with the *Star* he became the Director of Photography, a position he held until the paper folded in 1981. He was then hired by the Washington Bureau of the *Los Angeles Times* to establish a photo operation in D.C. "Ninety-nine percent of the time it was up to me to determine what I figured to be the top news of the day," Boston says of his position with the *L.A. Times*. "I found it fascinating and challenging; it was like I was my own editor."

Boston's fellow D.C. photographer and RIT alumni Mike Geisinger tells me, "Bernie was one of the least uptight photographers on the street. He is focused when he's working, but does not carry it over to the rest of his life." I notice this myself, in the ease and excitement with which he discusses his work.

Placing his boots on a leather stool, Boston sits farther back in his chair. It was tough at times, he notes, lugging camera bags around while chasing after news in D.C., but he did not mind it. He spent most of his time running around Capitol Hill and the White House. "I loved covering Watergate and

the Iran-Contra hearings," he says. "It was sitting on the floor all crammed together [with the other photographers], that was just the fun of it." He continues, "Washington is the city of IDs; you don't get convenient access and your photography is controlled. But the events and people are not anywhere else. All news is made in D.C."

Boston's 1987 picture of the unveiling of the bust of Martin Luther King, Jr. in the Capitol Rotunda also won him second place for the Pulitzer Prize. "He enjoyed the craft and was good at it," says fellow *Star* photographer Ray Lustig. "He had a good nose for news."

Pausing for a second and clasping his hands, Boston tells me that what he enjoys most about being a photographer is "the access it gives you to everything that is going on, to modern-day history." Boston has been one of few fortunate enough to climb inside the Capitol Dome to see the statue at the top; something he describes as "unique to D.C."

He has flown on presidential press planes numerous times and once, during Reagan's inaugural party at

the Capitol Center, was even aboard a helicopter when it lost a rotor during take-off and slammed back down to the ground. With the exception of George W. Bush, Boston has photographed every U.S. President since Truman, whom he snapped as a young high school cadet. And he knows many of them personally.

"[As a photographer] you get to shake hands with royalty and the scum of the earth," he says. "There are a select few that have had the opportunity to do and see what we saw." Boston tries to visit or speak with President Ford at least once a year, and he has pitched horseshoes with President Bush Senior, whom he knows on a more personal level.

"[Bush Senior] used to whisper things in my ear," recalls Boston. "I would know where he was going before anyone else." Boston says he had more access to the President than anyone in

This photograph was taken July 4, 1982 at Edwards Air Force Base California. The shuttle is the Columbia. STS-4. With the Reagans are Captain Thomas Mattingly II and Commander Henry "Hank" Hartsfield Jr., the pilot.

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- Bernie Boston



Photo courtesy of Bernie Boston

town when Bush Senior was in the White House. Laughing, Boston recalls one occasion when he walked unescorted across the South Lawn of the White House and past the center ellipse to the street. He remembers being confused by the ease in which he made his trek across the prohibited grounds, but got his answer later from a Secret Service agent who simply told him it was his hat. "Always wear that hat," he says the agent told him. "Wear it and we know who is under it." Boston grins from ear to ear, proud of his trademark cowboy hat.

It should be pointed out that Boston was recognized around D.C. not only for his cowboy hat, but also for his good humor. Within the first half hour of my meeting with him, he lightened up the mood with a joke. "If I had to be a stand-up comedian I could not do it," he insists. "I do not have a repertoire [of jokes] at hand. Words, situations and life trigger me." According to Amanda Zimmerman, former photo editor of *Newsweek*, that is the thing about his personality that most made working with Boston fun. "He always had a joke, whether it was good or not," she recalls. "He makes light of a lot of situations, but he is very serious when he is on assignment with a camera around his neck."

As Boston continues to describe the hectic scene that made up his daily routine as a journalist in D.C., he also describes, with warm sentiment, the bonds that formed amongst the photographers, or "boys on the bus." While there was always competition between them, there were also friendships. "You would not give away secrets, and you would let your talent do the talking, but there was always fun," he says. He laughs about one occasion when he and others in Ohio filled the bottom of a fellow photographer's camera bag with heavy lead basing, which he unknowingly lugged around for the rest of the day.

Boston chuckles again as he recalls the games that entertained the

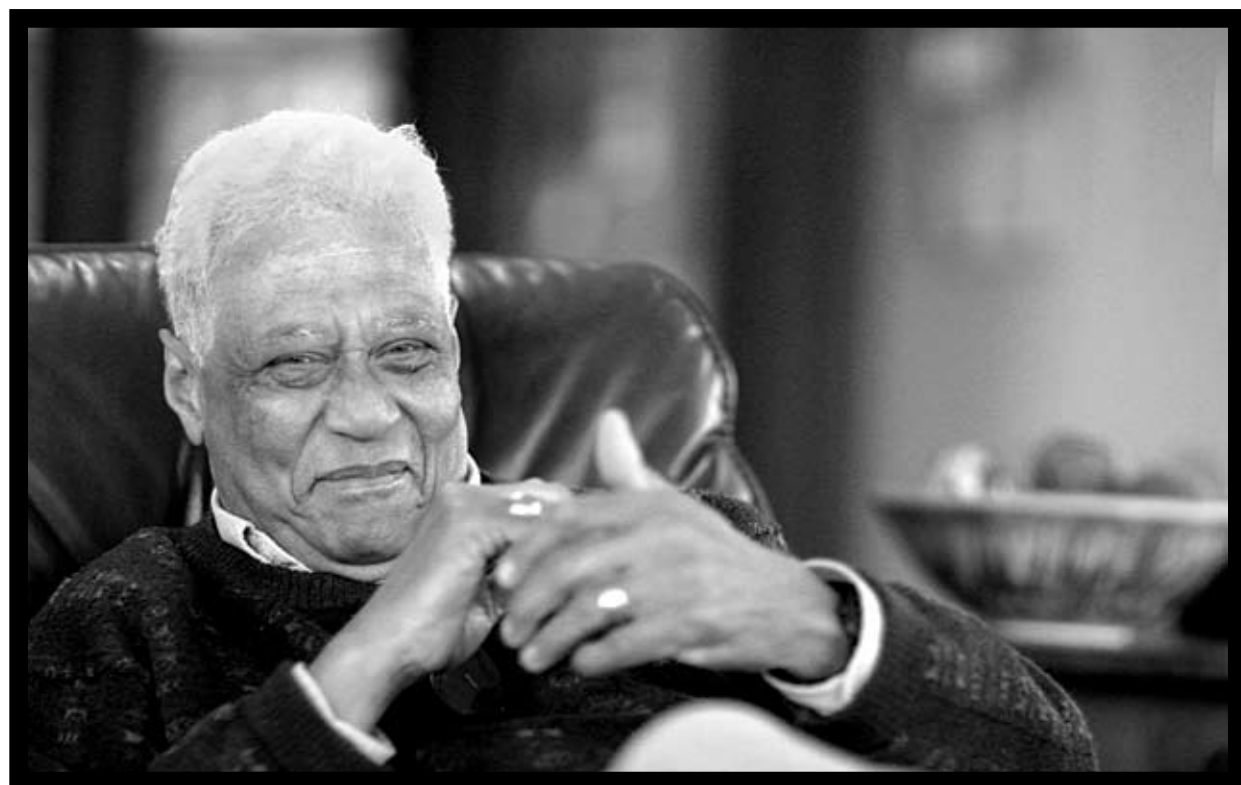
journalists on the press planes. Orange-rolling contests involved trying to roll an orange from the nose of the plane to its tail without hitting anything during lift-off. In another lift-off competition, the journalists fashioned sheets of cardboard into "skis" and used them to slide down the aisle. "The press plane was always fun," he exclaims.

As we begin to conclude our get-together, Boston tells me matter-of-factly that he does not have a favorite photographer. Of course there are those he studied and admired, including Avedon, Penn, Fred Maroon and Eddie Adams, but none of whom he can distinguish as his favorite. He simply says, "You do not copy, but admire them for what they did." As for a camera and film, he says he has always preferred the Leica M camera and Kodak Tri-X film. Nowadays he has converted to digital photography, which he went into "kicking and screaming" but now admittedly loves. He shoots all digital for the newspaper and even considers taking out the darkroom in his house, which has recently succumbed to storage.

He is pleased with the newspaper and with his and his wife's quieter lifestyle at Bryce Resort. "The newspaper has afforded us the opportunity to meet a lot of people," he says. "And it's good people here." Boston undoubtedly fits in. Lustig insists, "Bernie has a big heart and is always in good humor. He is a delight to be around."

And Geisinger agrees, "What probably separates Bernie is his easy-going personality and dedication to photography. Bernie always has been and always will be a great photographer." □

Alice Ashe is a senior SMAD major concentrating in Corporate Communications, with a Spanish minor. Last summer she was the Communications Intern for the Institute for Women's Policy Research in Washington, D.C. and participated in the New Faces, More Voices intern program for women's organizations in the Washington area. Upon graduating in May she plans to move back to Washington where she hopes to work for a magazine.



When not taking photographs, Boston relaxes at his home near Bryce Resort where he lives with his wife and two dogs.



Photo courtesy of Bernie Boston

Bernie Boston's "Flower Power" initially ran in *The Washington Star* and won second place for the Pulitzer Prize in 1967.

Awards

- 1967 Second place for Pulitzer Prize for "Flower Power"
- 1975 Rochester Institute of Technology's Outstanding Alumnus
- 1987 Second place for Pulitzer Prize for a picture of the unveiling of a bust of Martin Luther King, Jr.
- 1991 Kodak/White House News Photographers Association Achievement Award for service to his profession and the industry
- 1993 National Press Photographers Association Joseph A. Sprague Memorial Award — the Association's highest honor in the field of photojournalism — given to an individual who advances, elevates or attains unusual recognition for his profession
- 1996 Hall of Fame of Sigma Delta Chi, the Society of Professional Journalists
- 2000 Sigma Pi's national Founder's Award — the college fraternity's highest honor for an alumnus
- 2003 RIT Distinguished Alumni Award — College of Imaging Arts and Science

In addition, he has received awards from the Washington-Baltimore Newspaper Guild and the Ohio Press Photographers Association.

Graphic by Shelby Giles