

Spring Landscaping, Garden Operations, Will Start This Week

Oflag 64 will get a spring face-lifting job this month.

Lt. John Creech, custodian of the camp greenhouse, plans to landscape the area, aided by his horticultural assistant, Capt. Clarence Ferguson, and slave labor from several messes.

Beginning this week, flowers will be planted around the main building, the theater and-er, the greenhouse. Marigolds, zinnias and geraniums will predominate, says Creech.

At the same time, work will start on the camp garden.

For bashomaniacs and other practical-minded Kriegies,

Creech lists the following garden tidbits: onions, leeks, turnips, tomatoes, cabbage, carrots and okra. Okra, according to Lt. Col. Oakes, makes elegant soup.

All will be planted by "volunteer" (See GARDEN, Page Two)

Trading Heavy in Milk; Fags Bullish on Mart

The new Tauschstelle (Mart to you unilinguists) settled down to a quiet future of serving the public after the first week of heavy trading, during which 125 PoW's made deposits of staples ranging from cigarettes to powdered milk.

Items which changed hands in these deals, according to Co-Manager Jim MacArevey, included 315 packages of American cigarettes, 39 cans of margarine, 36 of powdered milk, 13 of coffee, as well as numerous tidbits like banana flakes, French tapioca, soup, minced beef and fish omelette.

In answer to the problem of certain articles tending to flood the market, Co-Manager Ken Goddard stated that it will be necessary from time to time to declare such articles temporarily non-acceptable, until an increased demand starts them circulating again.

The Mart was set up January 31 as a non-profit organization created in the interest of community trading. The officers responsible for its operation are Lts. James MacArevey, Ken Goddard, John Glendinning, Sydney Thal and Ed Ward.

C'est la Guerre

Heard in the Parcel Hatch of a Monday morning:

First officer: "Look—I gotta number nine parcel with three packs of those lousy Marvels in it."

Second officer: "What are you griping about? I got five packs in mine."



Sprig Is Cub!

Sprig! Sprig id Schubid! How dice to see the the tulibs sproudig, the barbed wire seddig forth its buds.

How dice to hear the robids chirbig wudce agaid, seddig their clear sogg idto the adbsphere aroud the oddor latride.

How dice to see the rabbids gabbolig od the greed add the squirrels scratchig id the groud by the harcel path for duts.

How dice to be pladdig spiddage agaid. How dice!

How dice to take off the logg widder udderwear. Thad's how I god this dabbed cold id the doze! How dice!

How dice to dow thad subwhere subwud is waidig—udless sub 4F'er is bakig a hig sprig offedsive! How dice!

Sprig! Beaudiful Sprig! Sprig in Schubid! How dice!

Liberty Reports on Oflag 64

Liberty magazine in a recent issue ran a story on Oflag 64, describing its location as "far from bombing targets."

Said Liberty: "The camp has an orchestra of 15 pieces. A library is being enlarged monthly with more than 2000 volumes at the latest count."

Allen To Lecture on Spain

War Correspondent Larry Allen, who covered the Spanish Civil War in 1939, will speak on that subject Monday night, March 6.

Allen covered campaigns against Barcelona and Madrid with Generalissimo Francisco Franco, after reporting the Czechoslovakian crisis.

His talk will describe Spain's present position and her leaders.

Lee Receives 1000th Private Parcel To Arrive Here, Maybe

Lt. Royal I. Lee, zimmerführer of Room 28 and a large parcel operator, last month received the one thousandth private parcel to be sent to Oflag 64 — he thinks.

The parcel, a neatly wrapped tobacco job, contained three cartons of Chesterfield cigarettes from his family in South Dakota.

It was five weeks in transit.

Presented by Packetmeister Amon Carter, the parcel was one of the shipment that topped the 1000-mark in private parcels received since June, when the Oflag was set up.

Lee is now looking for a good deal in D-bars.

Broadway Hit Will Open Spring Season At Oflag 64 Theater

A sophisticated comedy in three acts, "The Man Who Came to Dinner" opens the Spring season at The Little Theater on March 16, 17 and 18. James Koch is producer-director.

A Broadway hit, the play was written by George Kaufmann and Moss Hart and was first produced in 1939 with Monty Woolley as Sheridan Whiteside, the man who came to dinner. It was later made into a film.

Leading characters in the play will be John Hannan as Sheridan Whiteside; John Cramer as Maggie Cutter, Sheridan Whiteside's secretary; Russell Ford as Lorraine Sheldon, a movie star; Clyde Herring as Beverly Carlton, an English actor; Sydney Waldman as "Banjo" a Hollywood comedian; and Bill Gray as Dr. Bradley.

John T. Jones is production stage manager.

Five Shows Scheduled For March Production

A full round of entertainment with two one-act plays, two variety shows, The Bloody Gut Saloon, and "The Man Who Came to Dinner" are scheduled this month at The Little Theater.

The two one-act plays, "The Seventh Man" and "The Fourth Man" go on tonight and Friday night.

On March 9 and 10, John Hannan brings a series of skits in shadow.

Sid Thal's popular "Bloody Gut Saloon" returns March 24th.

A second variety show on March 30 and 31 closes the month.

Letter League Standings

Averaging one letter a day during January, Lt. Stanley Stetson stays in first place in the letter league. His total, 271.

Some distance behind, but still in the running were: Lts. Amon Carter, 248, John Scully, 222, Francis Roy, 217, Earl Buckley, 211, William Rudel, 210, Capt. George Juskalian, 209, Lts. Henry Perry, 207, Robert Lobb, 205 and Charles Cheatham, 202.



The Oflag 64 Item

Published monthly by and for American officers temporarily detained in Offizierlager 64, Altburgund (Schubin), Germany.

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1st Lt. Willard Duckworth
1st Lt. Jim Bickers
1st Lt. Larry Phelan
2nd Lt. Bob Bonomi
2nd Lt. Frank Maxwell
2nd Lt. Frank Hancock
Larry Allen, A.P. Correspondent

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MARCH 2, 1944

Welcome

To the recent arrivals at Oflag 64 we old-timers extend a welcoming hand. We know you don't care much about being prisoners of war. Naturally. Neither do we. But here we are and no amount of wishing will change it.

That's the point — wishing, fretting, worrying. That sort of stuff never was worthwhile. It never got a kriegy anything but kriegieitis. And that's bad!

We think we've a well rounded set-up here: sports, studies, library, canteen, glee club, dramatics, saloon, gambling, orchestra, swing band, lectures, movies, newspaper, yes, and even needlepoint. They're all available. So step right into the swing. You'll be amazed the way the days slip by.

Paging Poets and Authors

There's literary talent in this camp as Richard Rossbach's "Oh Hell, the Bell" attests, and THE ITEM aims to coax it along.

All things being favorable, a literary supplement will appear in THE ITEM soon.

So you embryo O. Henrys start writing. Submit your manuscripts to any ITEM staff member.

Deadline: March 5.

Space is precious; be brief.

Supply and Demand

The Mart fills a large need in camp life. It sets up a uniform point system for trading what one has but doesn't want for what one hasn't and does want.

Prices appear well-pegged. Turnovers are brisk. Service is good.

The Anvil Chorus...



By: Fabian

"Für Sie Ist Der Krieg Aus"

It's no fun being lost on a dark night when the place is Africa and there's a war on.

John Slack, Captain, TD, Res., etc. was lost. He was in a peep going from somewhere to Feriana. He wanted to consult a map. But he didn't strike a light.

He rode for a long time. Instead of becoming familiar, the country grew stranger and weirder.

Disquiet crept over Captain John. His outfit must be somewhere — but where? Ah ha!

His driver saw it at the same time and stepped on the gas. Sure 'nuff. A tank about a hundred yards ahead.

The captain breathed easier now. Undoubtedly the tanker, whoever he was, could give him some information.

The peep hove to aside the tank. Out sprang the captain.

The silhouette of a man rose above the tank turret.

"Hey!" bawled the captain. "I'm lost. Can you tell me the score?"

Funny — the joker was holding a tommy gun now.

"Humph," thought the captain, "suspicious lot."

Then the figure told him in brisk Deutsch what the score was:

"For you the war is over."

GARDEN...

(Continued from Page One)

messes in numerical order. Cabbage, lettuce, onions and tomatoes are to be grown in the greenhouse and hotbeds and later transplanted.

Meanwhile, Horticulturist Creech is planning to set out flowers he has tended in the greenhouse all winter. Also in the greenhouse are four goldfish which have been there ever since the Oflag was set up, which John feeds with discarded plants.

Creech, who once lived in a greenhouse for 4 years while attending Rhode Island State College, is a botanist with beaucoup experience. In civilian life, he was a field worker with the Agriculture Department's Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine for four summers.

ITEM Pertry Contest
Prize-winner —

Oh Hell, the Bell!

By:
Richard Rossbach

The Bell

Oh hark how near, how loud and clear.

You hear the clanging of the bell;
It chills your bones with mournful tones:

'Tis time now for Appell.

The Chorus

Hurry, Hurry, get your things,
Quick the moment that it rings.
Grab your cap; put on your coat;
Follow that compelling note.

Solo

Oh stay in check for just a sec,
Withhold your voice impending.
Please, please, desist! You won't
be missed:

I've got some toast I'm tending.
It's just begun ('twill soon be done)
A tasty tan to turn;
The marge is near with which
to smear;

Come on, you coals, and burn.

The Bell

The echos die, the Kriegies fly,
No wonder to behold —

The tardy man must later plan
To shiver in the cold.

The Chorus

Hurry, Hurry, faster yet!
Throw away that cigarette.
Seconds tick, the clock won't wait —
Quicker, quicker., you'll be late.

Solo

My toast is spoiled, my coffee's
boiled

Away, a sticky mess.
I curse the day, I cannot stay;
Oh weep for my distress.
My legs dig in, my lungs begin
To pound away within.

A final chase! I'm in my place,
And just in time: "Fall In!"

Flash! Bash Cash!

To cover celebration expenses and other necessary bashing for returning kriegies after the war, Congress recently provided for a discharge bonus, according to late mail.

The amounts: 300 dollars for soldiers serving overseas, and 500 dollars for soldiers serving overseas for 18 months or more.

Kriegy Sketches

LT. BOB RANKIN

By: Larry Allen

It's another RANKIN HIT!

That'll be the top-billing in your favorite music store some day if young Bob Rankin has anything to do with it — and he intends to!

Right now this twenty-two-year-old second lieutenant from Brooklyn is doing a lot of advance work in writing songs and putting together a first-rate orchestra.

He's the "Maestro" for Oflag 64 with one big objective in this interlude — to give his fellow captives as much musical entertainment as possible.

This keen, brown-eyed, brownhaired music enthusiast pushed his way through New York Military Academy on a scholarship, emerging in the class of 1939.



As a reserve officer, he went into active service in June, 1942. A few months later, he was shoved overseas, winding up as a prisoner of the Germans with other fighting men of the famous "168th" on February 17, 1943.

In the early days of Oflag 64, Rankin started an orchestra of four pieces. Today his co-workers in melody number fifteen.

"Maestro" Rankin and his "Goons" are constantly on the lookout for new hits but, naturally, they don't come often to far-off Altburgund.

He solves that partially by writing some bang-up compositions of his own, as easy on the ears as a Cole Porter product.

"Dreaming" and "I Just Got a Letter" ring the bell.

Incidentally, Rankin says a big reason why there hasn't been a catchy war song in the United States yet is that most of the "cream of the crop" songwriters are toting guns now.

One Picture Is Worth Ten Thousand Words, Almost

Before Lt. What's-His-Name of Oflag 64 went to war he taught Wifie how to drive the family car.

Not long ago he had a letter from her. It included an infinitely detailed sketch of the instrument panel of that car. The letter queried:

"This is the exact way the dashboard looks. Do you think we need a quart of oil?"

OFLAG 64 DIRECTORY

IOWA

(continued)

Merle Meacham
1008 W. Sharp St., Glenwood
John Miller
2911 W. Broadway, Council Bluffs
Robert Milligan
Jefferson
Edgar Moschel
c/o N. W. Bell Tel. Co., Des Moines
Francis Noonan
911 3rd St. Pl., Des Moines
Robert Oshlo
2400 Ave. "A", Council Bluffs
Vernon Paulson
Crystal Lake
Rocco Pravidica
513 N. 2nd St., Centerville
Donald Rockwell
821 S. Main St., Council Bluffs
Joseph Schneider
269 Campus Ave., Ames
Richard Secor
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Jefferson
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Louisville
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William Pieratt
Frenchburg

LOUISIANA

James Copes
Delhi
Alphonse Elmer
2738 Gen. Pershing, New Orleans
William Yates
951 Ontario, Shreveport

MAINE

Maynard Files
Bucksport
Milton Jellison
Bangor
Rober Keith
R. 57 Washington Ave., Portland
Thomas Morse
Islesford
Lawrence Thibodeau
241 Main St., Fairfield
Edward Yenco
Lisbon Falls

MARYLAND

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4710 College Ave., Collège Park
Frank Diggs
Linthicum Heights

Harold Tallman
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Robert Walters
1105 W. 42nd St., Baltimore

MASSACHUSETTS

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Kenneth Goddard
120 Newton Ave., Worcester
Fredrick Hughes
134 Dartmouth St., Holyoke
George Juskalian
269 Elm St., Fitchburg
Curtis Livingston
17 E. Britannia, Taunton
George Lucey
49 Devens Rd., Swampscott
John Monks
6 Forest St., Willimansett
William Murphy
48 Cushman Road, Brighton
John Scully, Jr.
Winchester
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Irving Yarock
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John Kamps
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Donald Lussenden
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Amelio Palluconi
408 E. Main St., Iron Mountain
Robert Payne
1826 Delevan St., Lansing
Donald Steward
15103 Cruse Ave., Detroit

MINNESOTA

Donald Frederick
2535 Park Ave. S., Minneapolis
Max Gooler
1908 E. 3rd St., Duluth
Fred Mitchell
North 8th St., Montevideo
Edward Sager
1508 W. Lake St., Minneapolis
Horace Spaulding
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(Continued Next Issue)

Gefangener Gus . . .

By: Bickers



Fathers Threatened With Civvy Status

Married men with children, unless they hold key Army positions, will be first to be demobilized after the war, according to new arrivals here, some of whom left the States as late as November, 1943.

Next will come childless married men, then single men with dependents, and finally the fancy-free bachelor.

Now before Congress is a plan to raise all combat officers and and NCO's one grade.

Further reports from the land of steak and ice cream indicate that New York is ablaze with lights again, night clubs are booming, and theatres are filled with a record number of new musicals and plays. "The Man who Came to Dinner" is running into its fifth year with S. R. O.

On the fighting front, American troops are being relieved regularly for short leaves in Naples where bars, restaurants, hotels and Waac's are turning the Neapolitan Love Song into a jam session.

Douglas' "The Robe" Heads Oflag's Best-Seller List

Lloyd C. Douglas is "head and shoulders" above all others as most popular author in camp, according to the library staff.

"The Robe" is the most read book in camp — five copies being in continuous circulation and yet having the longest waiting list.

Other new volumes bring the Oflag library total to nearly 3000 books, according to Leroy C. Ihrie, camp librarian.

Eleven languages are to be found among the present 300 educational books, as well as sciences and histories. Authors from Shakespeare to Sherwood are represented in the drama section, 50 collections of poems from Dante to Carl Sandburg, 200 biographies, 150 travel books, several histories of art, and more than 1900 fiction novels.

No, No, Mr. Culbertson!

Ed Berlinsky, the big 3-B Bridge operator, hit the jack-pot this week.

Holding seven diamonds with all honors and six hearts with 100 honors, he bid a slam.

He made it. The score: 140 for seven tricks, 150 for honors, 1500 for grand slam and 500 for rubber. Total: 2290 points.

Ed's partner was Bucky Walters, his opponents Howard Holder and George Durgin, who dealt the lucky hand.

Lagerites Once Built Rigs, Watches, Planes

Nearly every profession from accountant to zoologist is represented by the 300-odd officers here, according to an IFEM survey last month.

More than 70 civil occupations were listed including baby specialists and morticians.

There are, for instance, 7 doctors, 12 engineers, 7 lawyers, 5 chemists, 5 newspapermen, and 9 professors.

One fourth of the officers in camp are listed as students, clerks, salesmen and farmers.

Some of the more unusual occupations revealed are:

Professional Fund Raiser, Lt. Donald Wafal.

Fingerprint Classifier, Lt. Sid Waldman.

Broker, Capt. James Fraser.

Commandant of Cadets, Capt. Tony Lumpkin.

Jeweler, Lt. Ed Hirt.

Cotton Merchant, Lt. Col. Charles Jones.

Golf Pro, Lt. Gerald Long.

Winter Sports Instructor, Lt. William Burghardt.

YMCA Secretary, Capt. Ellsworth Cundiff.

Oil Rig Builder, Lt. Floyd Leming.

Fire Insurance Inspector, Lt. Bob Aschim.

Other fields include: 7 business managers, 3 machinists, 11 accountants, 2 aircraftmen, an instrument maker, a pay master, 3 steel workers, a statistician, 3 railroadmen, a restaurant operator and two petroleum engineers.

Bonomi Loses Last Illusion in Algeria

Once upon a time there was a lieutenant and his name was Bonomi. Weaned on plenty of Mother Goose, he ripened into manhood a firm believer in the roundness of the world, the Stork, and Africa as a continental den of lions.

So, one night as he set foot on Algerian soil, he was all keyed up to meet the king of beasts on the loose in his own lair.

Pushing inland with his platoon, Bonomi reached a palm grove. It was dark as blackout. Suddenly the air was rent with the roar of lions. They were surrounded!

That didn't faze Bonomi. "We bivouac here for the night," he told his platoon. They bedded down.

Came the dawn and awaking.

"Guess what, sir," said the orderly with unveiled excitement as he shook his platoon leader. "We've bivouacked in the Algiers Zoo!"

Gefangeners Represent 128 American Colleges

One hundred and twenty-eight United States universities, colleges and technical schools plus the University of Hawaii are now represented by alumni who are now at Schubin College.

Office records disclose that 228, or 66%, of the 347 American Ground Force officers have attended one of these institutions.

The United States Military Academy and the University of Iowa have eight alumni each, the largest number from any one school.

Texas A & M is tied with the University of Illinois for the runner up position with seven former students each. The University of Hawaii has the only representative of a school outside the continental limits of the United States.

Divided roughly into geographical sections, the East furnished 73 of the total; the South East 12; South, 38; South West, 37; Midland, 49; West, 11; and the Pacific Coast 7.

Italian Front Ups Oflag T. O.

Arrival of 30 new U. S. officers from the Italian front during February increased the camp T. O. to 347 officers.

The total American personnel now stands at 419.