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People

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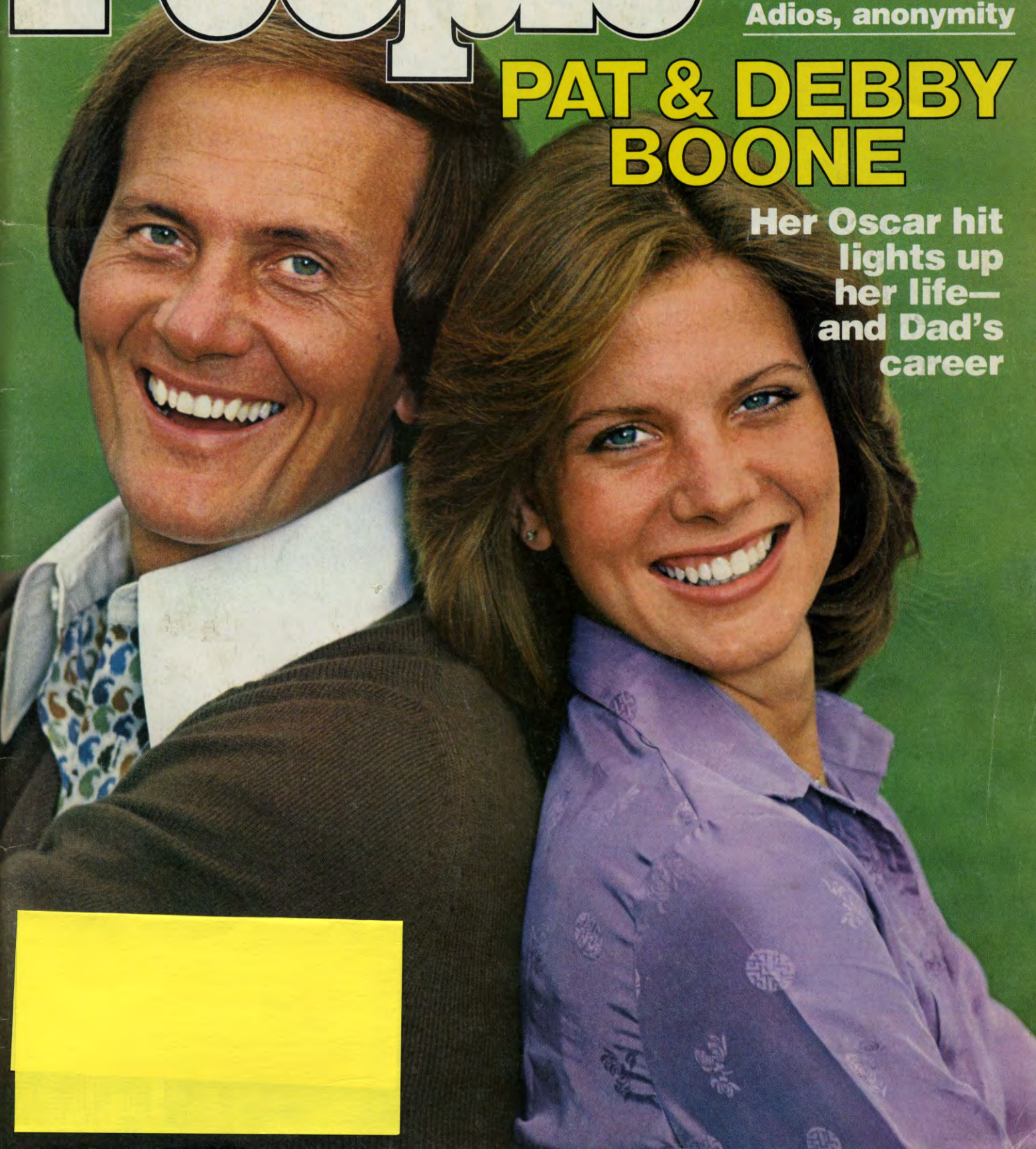
**Flash! A Paycheck
bites the IRS**

**Cloning people?
Nonsense, says a
Nobel Prize winner**

**Ricardo Montalban:
Adios, anonymity**

PAT & DEBBY BOONE

**Her Oscar hit
lights up
her life—
and Dad's
career**



TEACHER



Lederman changed the no-children policy at Esalen Institute. Mandy Campbell is the latest beneficiary of her affection.

**JANET LEDERMAN LET
THE LITTLE CHILDREN
COME UNTO ESALEN—
AND NOBODY SUFFERED**

CONTINUED

'Kids tense up when they hear no-nos,' Lederman believes

The tense, tired and numb who flock to California's famed Esalen Institute are urged to shed inhibitions and adopt a childlike openness. But for years Esalen did not welcome those who were already open and childlike—namely, kids. Parents in search of expanded consciousness were asked to leave their expanded families at home.

The reason, according to Esalen director Janet Lederman, was that the institute had "too much yang [masculine] and not enough yin [feminine]. Men have these perfect theories that they don't want messed up by emotional women and noisy children."

Three years ago Lederman, 48, a former elementary school teacher, became the first woman to head the

institute. When the issue of children came up at staff meetings, she suggested that they simply be tossed over the cliffs. "The staff finally got the message," Lederman chuckles.

For the past year Esalen has had what is probably the world's only nursery school created from 20-foot-high redwood wine-barrel staves. It is staffed by a Shetland pony, two dogs named Artie and Jigsaw and four 2-year-olds. The children of staffers, they are called the "tenured faculty."

Two young adult "custodians," picked for their ability to "talk straight to kids," make sure the dozen or so youngsters stay out of danger. Otherwise they are free to pad about barefoot through the pine needles and eucalyptus leaves and build nests among the trees for naps. They rinse off the Big Sur mud in child-size showers and learn toilet manners in an outhouse built for two. "Kids love to

do everything together," Lederman explains.

Susie the Shetland is Lederman's kind of teacher. "The kids can't manipulate her the way they can Mommy and Daddy. Kids accept natural limitations easily, and nature teaches them about their own limitations."

A New York-born city child herself, Janet moved with her family to California at age 5 and has never regretted it. "I was raised with trees instead of concrete," she says. "I think people aren't as crazy outdoors as they are indoors, don't you?"

Though she has never married, Lederman formulated her ideas about children and education as a teacher in Los Angeles. She described her experiences working with supposedly "hopeless cases" in a book, *Anger and the Rocking Chair*. Her philosophy, she says, was "to let the kids know that I respected and accepted them just as they were."

Lederman, who has been at Esalen since 1966, lives in a cottage on the grounds. An accomplished artist (painting and tapestry), she confides with a twinkle that she currently is working on a "dirty novel." Of the adult hang-ups she sees every day at Esalen, she insists that many can be blamed on overly rigid education. "School is this terrible box that you're supposed to go through with blinders on," she says. "We do a big business here at Esalen based on the premise that people have been schooled out of their senses."

K. C. COLE

A gazebo assembled from a redwood wine barrel is the epitome of an indoor-outdoor learning environment.



Big Sur scenery provides inspiration while Janet confers on staff problems with institute co-director Julian Silverman.

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