

## HIGHLIGHTS

**CRIPPLING SOCIETY:** The American With Disabilities Act is now law, but struggles for the disabled are not over. Many say discrimination continues. **E1**

**BABY LOVE:** The harsh 25-year regime of Nicolae Ceausescu left multitudes of children in need of parents. Many Americans would like to adopt, but Romanian red tape is barring the way. **E1**

**WRITERS IN EXILE:** Chinese poets, novelists and journalists who escaped persecution in their native country now wield enough clout in U.S. literary and political circles to help compatriots back home. **E1**

**DOG DAYS:** August brings the year's hottest, most humid days. Those who can escape do; those who can't just get grumpy. **E1**

**MAGAZINES:** Atlantic Monthly looks at the Cold War . . . Emerge focuses on gun control. **E8**

**WEEKEND**

Southern California Indian Center's intertribal powwow is set for Costa Mesa. **E13**

■ 54 Hours. **E12**

## NEWSMAKERS



**Bradbury**

■ The Plot Thickens: As far as **John Frew**, 25, is concerned, science-fiction writer **Ray Bradbury** has had his day in the sun. Frew has started a petition drive in Waukegan, Ill., to restore his great-great-grandfather's name to a park renamed for native son Bradbury. The site for years was called Powell's Park in honor of 19th-Century Mayor **John F. Powell**. Frew said he doesn't object to honoring Bradbury, but thinks a library or other landmark would be more appropriate.

■ Weighing In: The National Assn. for the Defense of Fat Acceptance is coming to the aid of **Regina Elizabeth Guy**, 25, in her battle to stop Maryland from suspending her driver's license. The state claims Guy's 367 pounds force her to drive from the center of the front seat, operating the accelerator and brake with her left foot. Guy says it's discrimination. NADFA plans to demonstrate at a Friday hearing in Baltimore.



**Quayle**

■ Who's Laughing Now?: Vice President **Dan Quayle** may still be No. 1 on the Democratic Party joke list, but it's the Republicans who are laughing all the way to the bank. So far, Quayle has raised more than \$12 million for the party since he became vice president. One GOP insider said Quayle's fund-raising skills stem partly from the attacks on him. "Some come just to see if he's as bad as the press says."

■ Squashed: If the Guinness Book of World Records had a category for "Offending People With a Zucchini," **Jodi Wubben**, 19, would win. Her sculpture, "The Incident," was

By **GARY LIBMAN**  
TIMES STAFF WRITER

**W**hat with Marc Antony and Cleopatra around, Emperor Augustus Caesar ruled in a pretty awesome era.

By comparison, the month named after him is downright boring (events in the Mideast notwithstanding).

The 31 days between July and September are the hottest, most humid of the year. There's not a single holiday. And with the good ol' season ending, many people find themselves stuck with a case of the summertime blues.

Finding that the livin' ain't so easy after all, many give up and run away.

Jack Kyser, chief economist for the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce, said vacations and business slowdowns, once divided between July and August, now are concentrated in

# Too Hot to Handle

For Most, These Lazy, Hazy—Scorching—Days of August Rank as Dullest, Most Miserable of Year

August.

"You can tell by the traffic in your morning commute, by the volume of calls you get, by the calls you make," he said.

Some of those who can't escape grow grumpy or lethargic.

The anticipated joys of the California summer—the blasts at the beach, the trips with the back seat loaded to the roof with luggage—haven't panned out. And now, with no real respite, they face another grueling autumn.

"People have transitional times when they don't want to do anything," said Los Angeles psychologist Gary Emery. "I think August is a transition between the end of summer and the beginning of fall. There's not a lot to look forward to."

Mark and Brian, morning disc jockeys on KLOS-FM, say they've received an unusual number of "negative" calls this month.

"In the spring, we have lots of love interest," Mark Thompson said. "Guys



Bob and Carol Mardock with two of their five children—Marcie, 5, left, and Timmy, 7—at their home in Chino Hills.

# The Waiting Game

Hundreds of Americans Anxious About Adopting Romanian Orphans

By **SUSAN CHRISTIAN**  
TIMES STAFF WRITER

**C**arol Mardock's list of contacts grows, almost by the day. A new name at the U.S. Department of State. A name at the U.S. Embassy in Romania. A name at a Romanian church in Orange County. A name of another international adoption agency. A name of another adoption attorney.

But somehow the list is never long enough, and the contacts—thus far—never powerful enough.

On a hot August day, the Chino Hills housewife lounged by the pool at a friend's home, watching three of her five children splash about. She was half a world away from the still faceless, still elusive child she fervently wants to make her sixth.

"You worry: What if you spend \$1,200 on a home study [for an adoption]? What if you get all of the paper work done, everything seems to be in order, you buy two round-trip tickets to Romania—then you get over there, and for some reason they won't let you bring back a child?" fretted Mardock. "It's so frustrating. Nothing is certain."

Carol and Bob Mardock, a pastor at

**'The babies are put in long rows of cribs; the caretaker walks down one aisle and sticks bottles in the babies' mouths, and then walks up another aisle and removes bottles. There's almost no one-on-one contact.'**

**TOBY SCOTT**  
Father of 4-year-old Jessica Scott

Brea-Olinda Friends Church, are among hundreds of American couples who long to adopt a Romanian orphan.

They have read the tragic stories, they have seen the heartbreaking news footage. Many have been trying to adopt for years—no easy feat, regardless of the child's nationality. And now their passion has been fired by additional incentive: They want to rescue one of Romania's forsaken children.

About 100,000 children and adolescents live in Romanian institutions that provide minimal care—physically, nutritionally and emotionally.

Their plight is largely due to the harsh 25-year regime of Nicolae Ceausescu. In an effort to increase the Romanian population, he heavily fined couples who produced fewer than five children. The dictator, executed after last December's revolution, also made birth control virtually unavailable.

As a result, many people in the impoverished country—where even such basic necessities as food staples and soap are scarce—have relinquished unaffordable children to the state's care.

Although French citizens have been adopting Romanian children for years, it wasn't until Ceausescu's fall that Americans en masse learned of the myriad orphans.

"Since January, we have received as many as 400 calls a week regarding Romanian orphans," said State Department spokesman Charles S. Smith.

But, despite the multitude of children who need parents—and the multitude of Americans clamoring to fill that role for

**Please see ADOPT, E15**

# ADOPT: Families Play a Waiting (

**Continued from E1**

them—adoption is not so simple as jetting to Romania and plucking a child from his bleak surroundings.

On June 11, the new Romanian government temporarily froze all international adoptions to reorganize the procedure. The freeze recently was lifted, but success stories remain few and far between. Only about 35 American families have managed to adopt Romanian children since the revolution, Smith said.

"In a country run by a Communist government for so many years, of course there is a lot of red tape," said Downey lawyer Alexandru Cristea, a native of Romania who has been providing adoption information from the International Institute of Los Angeles over the last few months.

While the revised law—which transfers approval of adoptions from the presidential office to district courts—eventually could prove more expedient, Smith warned that its benefits may be slow in coming.

"It will do nothing to sweep out the backlog of adoption requests," he said. "We are waiting for the law to become a reality before we encourage people to run over to Romania and pursue an adoption."

But Carol Mardock will not be deterred.

"You'd think that the Romanian government would welcome all these people who want to give their orphans homes," she said.

She and her husband already have adopted one child, 5-year-old Marcie, born in Korea. They were inspired to adopt again by a "20/20" news program last April that featured a Bucharest orphanage.

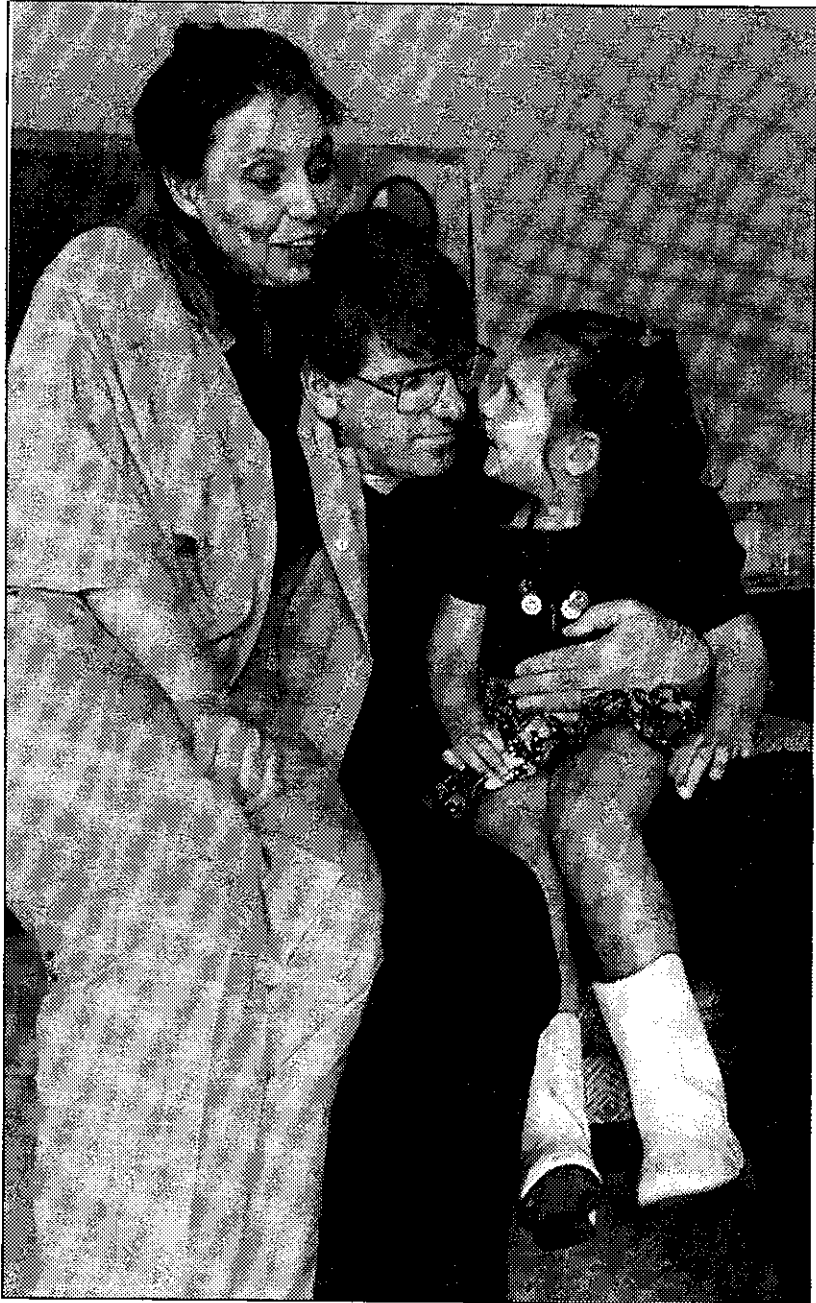
ABC received more than 15,000 letters and telephone calls in response to the broadcast. "I was overwhelmed by the number of people desperate to adopt," said Janice Tomlin, who produced the segment.

The show focused on 4-year-old Jessica Scott—one of the lucky few to make it out of a cold orphanage and into a warm family.

□

Jessica does not seem like a child who has spent the bulk of her short life deprived of love and care. The gregarious brunette skips cheerfully about her elegant Camarillo home as if this is all she has ever known: frilly clothes, "Little Mermaid" on video, a sunny back yard, pancakes for breakfast and adoring

But only seven months ago, she was trapped in the cruel maze of



MARISSA ROTH / Los Angeles Times

It took three years and thousands of letters for Ilona and Toby Scott of Camarillo to pry 4-year-old Jessica from Romanian bureaucracy.

Ceausescu's government. Her parents, Ilona and Toby Scott, have been calling her their own since they fell in love with the unresponsive but otherwise healthy 9-month-old baby at a Romanian orphanage.

It took three years and literally thousands of letters—to every U.S. and Romanian official they could imagine—before the Scotts pried their daughter from the jowls of the bureaucracy.

"[Romanian officials] never told us why things were or were not done—it was constant psychological harassment," said Ilona Scott, 43, who was born in the Soviet Union and grew up in Romania. "They would tell us that we'd have

her by Christmas, and then Christmas would come and go and still no Jessica."

Then came the revolution. "We had hope again, because suddenly we were not dealing with an insane person any more," Ilona Scott said. Within weeks, on Feb. 1, the couple brought Jessica to the United States.

Jessica picked up English quickly. She is an affectionate, bright, vivacious child. If she has scars, they are not readily apparent.

"There are 60 children to every one caretaker at the orphanage she was in," said Toby Scott, 46, a stockbroker. "The babies are put in long rows of cribs; the caretaker walks down one aisle and sticks

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Jessica Scott, foreground, was photographed by adoptive parents in Romanian orphanage when she was about age of 2.

bottles in the babies' mouths, and then walks up another aisle and removes bottles. There's almost no one-on-one contact."

The little girl never talks about her former life. "I think she's blocked it," said Ilona Scott. "Fortunately, she's a happy-natured child."

Couples adopting an orphan from a foreign country should prepare

themselves for a child likely to suffer some degree of maladjustment, said therapist Sharon Kaplan, executive director of Parenting Resources, a Tustin- and Dana Point-based counseling firm that specializes in issues surrounding adoption.

"It isn't just a matter of bringing a child over and loving him and everything will be fine," she said. "Many children adopted from overseas have not been nourished emotionally or physically. Families need to be aware that they may have a great deal of catching up to do with these children."

Discipline can be a problem for a child who has not learned to trust and respect adults. "Children coming out of institutions often have difficulty taking direction," Kaplan said.

When conducting a "home study" of prospective adopters, Hemlata Momaya ascertains that the couple's interest is not rooted in pity. "I tell people, 'Don't adopt because you feel sorry for the child; someday you may not feel sorry for him anymore. Adopt because you want to adopt,'" she said.

Momaya operates Bal Jagat Children's World, an international adoption agency in Chatsworth. In recent months, she has received numerous inquiries about Romanian orphans, and has completed three home studies for clients planning trips to the country. A financial and psychological profile of prospective adopters is required by both the Romanian and the U.S. governments.

One reason Americans have enthusiastically embraced the oppor-

tunity to adopt Romanian orphans is that the children would assimilate into Caucasian families. "Americans want white children," Momaya remarked.

Adopting a child from a foreign country has become increasingly difficult. "Both Korea and India have frozen international adoptions, and Brazil has slowed down," she said.

□

Romania's forgotten children have spawned a movement among the Southern Californians who cannot forget them:

■ The Scotts have fielded about 400 telephone calls since their appearance on "20/20." Toby Scott writes a newsletter that he constantly updates for his mailing list.

■ Attorney Andy Cristea counsels, free of charge, people wishing to adopt from Romania, directing them to the proper agencies and explaining step-by-step the somewhat complex procedure.

■ Santa Monica resident Orson Mozes, whose half-brother lives in Romania, recently formed the Romanian Club ({213} 393-2856) to help people who want to adopt. He plans to escort couples to Romania next fall.

Carol Mardock has spread to others her dream of adopting an orphan; now she and a clique of friends keep one another posted on the latest news about Romanian adoptions.

"When Carol sees pictures of these beautiful children who don't have anyone to love them, it rips her apart," said her husband, Bob. "She says, 'Why can't I have them all?'"



# TUXEDO RENTALS

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