



Tom and Jean Harling traded snow-shoveling for year-round lawn cutting in Hawaii. Like son, Chris, they think it's ideal.

# We moved to HAWAII—

**A** YEAR AND A HALF AGO my wife and I sold our two-story home in Buffalo, N. Y., and with our two-year-old son Chris moved to Hawaii.

To do it, I gave up a \$6,200-a-year job as assistant sales department head for a paint firm where I'd worked for 11 years. My wife Jean left a full-time position as flutist with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra. Neither of us knew a soul in Hawaii and I had no job prospects.

What we found in the Islands—now our 50th state—wasn't entirely what we expected. At first we wondered whether we hadn't made the biggest mistake of our lives. But not any more; in fact, we'd choose Hawaii again if we had it to do over. Why? For the

same reasons that brought another 1,500 new residents to the Islands last year.

In my case, the first reason was the climate. It gets mighty cold in Buffalo during the Winter. And after 11 years of it I was tired of shoveling snow. I began dreaming of the South Seas beaches I'd detested as a Coast Guard warrant officer during World War II.

But the idea of moving to Hawaii didn't occur overnight. After all, I was approaching my middle 30s and was well along in my company's retirement program. I'd just had a raise. There was my family to consider.

Gradually the pieces fell into place. I began to see that, if I didn't make a move soon, I'd probably live in Buffalo the rest of my life. For several years,

*and we love it!*

by Thomas E. Harling

as told to Bob Krauss

Jean had wanted to sell the house and move to the suburbs. But if we were going to move, I wanted a big move.

The first time I mentioned Hawaii, my wife said, "Don't be ridiculous!"

Even after I'd subscribed to *The Honolulu Advertiser* and prowled the second-hand bookstores for information on Hawaii, she didn't take me seriously.

"It's a perfect place to raise Chris," I argued. "He could be outside all Winter. That should lick his colds. And can't you picture us sunbathing on Waikiki Beach? Besides, business is booming over there."

That went on for a year with no appreciable increase in Jean's interest.

Then one night in July I announced casually, "I stopped by the American

Express office on my way home. They booked my passage for October. I think you'd better stay behind while I get set and find a place for us to live."

The next few months were a hectic race to sell the house (we got \$13,000 for it), our furniture (which we later regretted), and one of our little foreign cars. In the other car I packed 500 pounds of luggage for the trip across the country to San Francisco. I installed Jean and Chris in a small apartment before I left.

We were more solemn than excited on the big day. "Be careful, darling," Jean whispered. "And write!"

I arrived in San Francisco on schedule and boarded the *S. S. Leilani*. The voyage was perfect, but my heart

wasn't in the shipboard fun. I was thinking of the day I would land and start looking for a job.

My only lead was the name of a man in the paint business in Honolulu. His son-in-law was from Buffalo. We'd met at a party one night when he'd showed slides of his trip to Hawaii. It wasn't much to base a future on.

**T**HOSE FIRST two weeks in Honolulu were the most difficult of my life. I made the rounds of the big corporations most likely to hire industrial salesmen. The only openings they had were for beginners at salaries starting around \$3,300. I couldn't support my family on that. My lead didn't help since the man in the paint business wasn't hiring.

In order to save money, I allowed myself \$2 a day for meals. That meant eating in cafes which serve inexpensive Hawaiian foods. I had rice morning, noon, and night.

The second week, in desperation, I took a job selling kitchen appliances on commission. Then my acquaintance in the paint business called with the kind of tip I'd been praying for.

"A friend of mine at California Ink Co. needs an industrial salesman. Why don't you put in for the job?"

I did, and after biting my nails for a week was hired at \$4,200 to start. Our offices are on Cooke St., in an industrial area near the harbor where tuna fishermen moor their boats. You couldn't ask for more pleasant surroundings or nicer people to work with.

The office secretary is Japanese. The plant manager is Hawaiian-Chinese and his assistant is Filipino. My boss, Harry Rowe, and I are the only Caucasians in the plant. But I've never been conscious of being in the minority. It just doesn't matter in Hawaii.

My problems weren't over, however. The biggest shock came when I learned the prices of goods in Honolulu, from groceries to gas. Milk costs 32 cents a quart, gas 43 cents a gallon for ethyl, grade A eggs 69 cents a dozen, a little Fiat 600, \$1,605—about \$200 more than in Buffalo. Shipping costs, apparently, are responsible for these high prices.

Homes come high, too. I finally plunked down a payment on a modest two-bedroom bungalow on a 10,000-square-foot leasehold lot in Kailua, a suburb across the Koolau mountain range from Honolulu. Price for the

(Continued)



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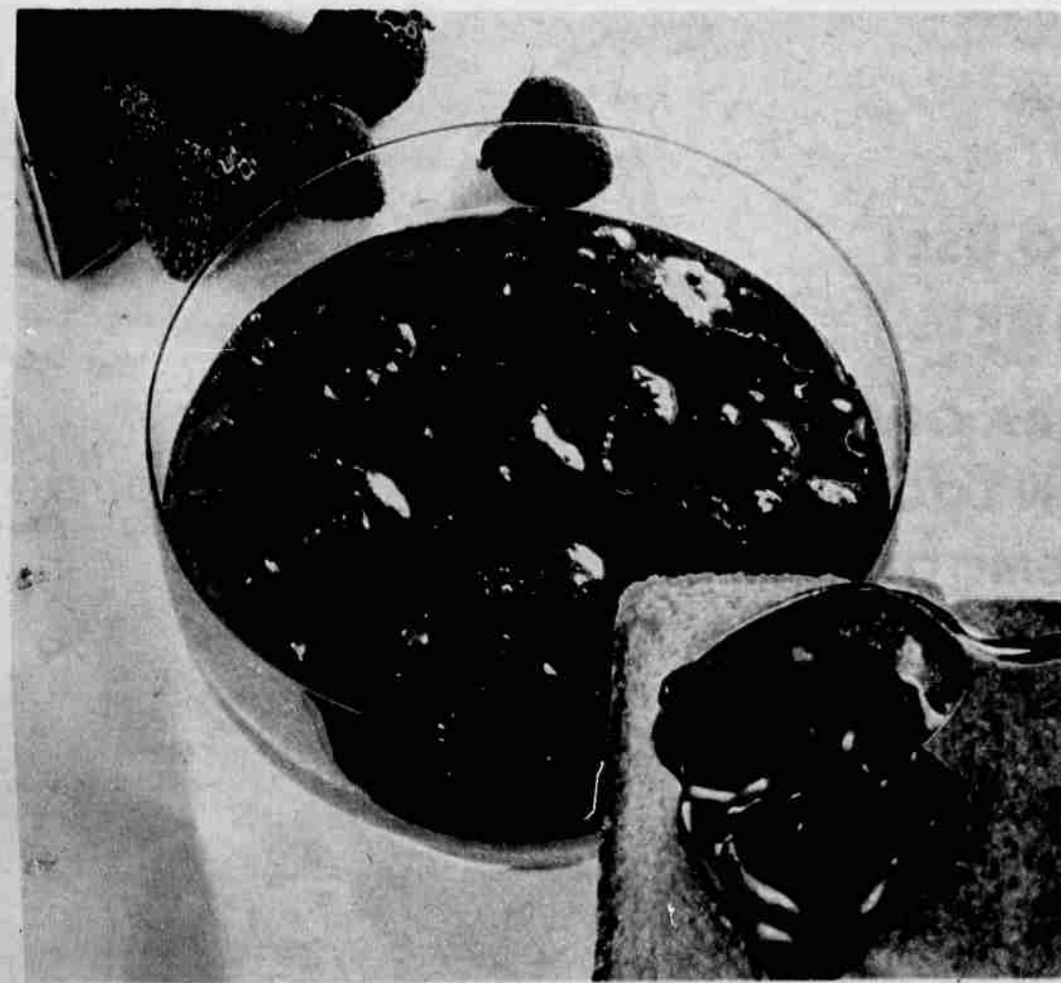
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Chris, who's become an accomplished banyan and hau tree climber, hasn't had a cold in months and loves dressing Tom Sawyer-style.