

HOW I SPENT MY SUMMER VACATION #3 (formerly ALL-STORY CAVALIER ANNUAL) is published for the third distribution of the WorldCon Organization Of Faneditors (WOOF), the 85th mailing of the Southern Fandom Press Alliance (SFPA) and elsewhere by Don Markstein, who currently picks up mail and occasionally answers the phone at 8208 E. Vista Drive, Scottsdale, Az. 85253, (602) XYlophone 4-1724. (I probably won't have much of a fixed address for at least a year or so, but Scottsdale will be a good mail drop for awhile yet.) Demented Turkish Dwarf Press publication #369. First stencil: 8/26/78. I'm sure this won't be the only description of the events herein described that you'll see floating around, but it's the only one from my unique point of view.

It's always best to start at the beginning, says the Good Witch of the North, but like most of the conventional wisdom you'll find in that story, that aphorism is a little too simple to apply to real life. I've yet to run across a true story that even has a beginning. Suppose we just start it in medias res, and I'll try to fill you in on the background as we go along.

...so I arrived in Phoenix July 18 with approximately the clothes on my back, a ten-dollar bill in my pocket, and 150 pounds of comic books to huckster at the WorldCon. Two items of business commanded my attention immediately --finding a paying job so as to relieve my financial distress (and, not incidentally, get a couple of debts I'd left behind me off my conscience), and introducing myself at The Garret, Nerve Center for IguanaCon, so as to volunteer my services.

It took a couple of weeks to accomplish the first goal--I found good, honest, somewhat satisfying, adequately paying work in a print shop. The same two-week period was also the approximate tenure of my association with The Garret.

My motive for volunteering to work on the con had to do with experience, not egoboo. In sixteen years of at least hanging around the periphery of fandom, I'd never once been behind the scenes of a con of over 250 or so members. And as for the more usual considerations, well, I like having my ego fed as much as the next guy (maybe more), but when I originally wrote saying I was planning to be here early, I volunteered to work without public recognition of any kind--not even an agate line in the Program Book. For reasons that will be gone into later, I thought it might embarrass the concom if my name were associated with it.

Mind you, now, I had no taste for the politics of the matter, having tried political activity as a form of fanac and found it wanting. It's not always possible to avoid politics, of course, but I figured if I just volunteered for shitwork, I'd probably manage to miss most of it. Anyway, I'd never done this before, remember, and figured on learning the WorldCon business from the ground up. And besides, all the responsible work would be well under way by this point, right? Of course!

Anywho, so I volunteered to work anonymously, figuring there was no reason to take a chance on ruffling anybody's feathers needlessly. But the friendly folks at The Garret assured me that just because I don't get along with the Professional Guest of Honor is no reason I can't have whatever credit is due me. After all, my disputes are my disputes. I've never tried to draw anyone else into them on my side, and have never even objected to my friends taking the other side, as long as they agree to respect my position. The Garret was perfectly capable of remaining above such pettiness, they assured me, and so I went to work setting type on the Program Book, publishing IgAPA (the weekly con-com newsletter), and various other things.

Now, when I say work, I mean work. Among my talents is an uncanny ability to take on a staggering workload without feeling seriously inconvenienced. Why, I'm so macho I could just shit. All the time I was doing my best to remain as neutral as possible in the imbroglios of Phoenix fandom and the IguanaCon committee.

This was not always easy. It quickly became apparent to me that relations among fen in the area were largely characterized by tension, mistrust and, in many cases, rampant paranoia. For example, when sitting quietly with a small group of non-Garret fans (B.D. Arthurs, M.R. Hildebrand and Paul Schauble, if you must know --I've decided to name names wherever appropriate in this narrative), I happened to

near the phrase "Garret Gang". A mild witticism, to be sure, but it does have a ring to it. A cleverer sobriquet might have been "The Magnificent Seven", since that's approximately how many people comprised The Garret Gang at the time. (In addition to functioning as the WorldCon's office, The Garret was also living quarters for Tim Kyger, Kathi Schaefer, Patrick Hayden, Gary Farber, Anna Vargo, Bill Patterson and Teresa Nielsen. Since that time, Alan Bostick has moved in and I've heard so many different stories of the shuffling of bodies that I've given up trying to sort them out (in fact, last I heard, Harlan Ellison was planning to stay there during Iggy, at least according to a plausible rumor.) Indiscreetly (I immediately realized) I dropped the phrase in conversation with Teresa, who, instead of smiling politely at a feeble attempt at wit (certainly, too feeble a one to provoke anger), instantly demanded to know who was saying such terrible things about her and her friends.

I can sort of understand how that frame of mind came about. If you can't figure it out for yourself, then go back a few lines. Read over where I mentioned how many people are living in The Garret. Be informed that The Garret is a one (count it) bedroom apartment with a decrepit swamp cooler for an air conditioner. Understand that Phoenix lies smack in the middle of the Sonoran Desert, with July-August temperatures frequently reaching 115. Lift your jaw off the floor; you're drawing flies.

And this doesn't even take into account the intense pressure of the approaching WorldCon, nor the way that opinions in such small, closed groups tend to become amplified and homogenized while the clique takes on an "us against the world" attitude (I'm sure everyone reading this can draw on his own experience for parallels). Tho my general opinion of The Garret is pretty low, there are one or two Garret folks that I would like to meet under normal circumstances, just to see what they're really like.

But I was still blithely going about the business of helping out, not paying much attention to the workload and fascinated by the spectacle of a WorldCon being put together around me, when Bill Patterson called me to the phone. "Harlan wants to talk to you," he said. But, I replied, I don't want to talk with him. But I let myself be dragged to the phone in spite of myself, on Bill's assurance that we were "making nice".

Despite said assurance, the conversation was typical of those I've had with Ellison over the past few weeks. He made a bunch of accusations, called me a bunch of names, and threatened me. I acted unimpressed, and refused to lose my temper or call him unpleasant things. Seeing that I wouldn't be intimidated by him, he went absolutely livid, shrieking obscenities at me. Finally, he asked me to put Bill back on (in previous conversations, he'd slammed the phone down in my ear). The exchange was notable mostly for the creation of a couple of labelabels that seem to have gotten some circulation--Ellison said I shouldn't antagonize him because he's irrational and crazy (his words) and there's no telling what might happen to me; and later on, he said that he'd gotten the impression from people who know me that I'm more-or-less a "silly goof". Fine, sez I, we've got an irrational crazy man slugging it out with a silly goof. So where do we go from here? (I don't so much mind being called a silly goof, by the way, since it fits my self-image at least as well as any other two-word epithet and is kinder than a few things that have gotten back to me recently from people who profess to like me. It's just that nothing is being accomplished while that sort of stuff is being slung about.

You may be wondering what was going on. To tell the truth, ~~so/for/I~~ I'm so sick and tired of the whole affair that I'd really rather not go into it--I've heard little else since I arrived in Phoenix. But I've been through it so many times already that once more isn't going to hurt. Pay attention, tho. This is the very last time I'm going to tell this story.

I've got this newszine, see, called RALLY! (4/\$1, address above), subtitled "Southern Fried Newszine". It's rather regionally oriented, frequently tongue-in-cheek, not always entirely reliable if you're looking for precise facts about the faanish world, and some people (like Kathi Schaefer) even think it's occasionally obnoxious. But as long as you don't take it too seriously, it's not a bad little scandal sheet. Even Linda Bushyager used to plug it until I carried the story about KARASS folding and headlined it "RALLY! Drives Out Competition".

Well, I got hold of this story that was right up RALLY!'s alley. It took place (and already had some currency) in the South, concerned somebody who is of passing interest to Southern fans, and--most important--it made me smile. I phoned a couple of people who were in a position to confirm it, made sure the facts were straight (never mind the implications--the facts are straight), and published it.

Briefly, Harlan Ellison spoke at Tulane University in New Orleans last March. Louisiana has not ratified the Equal Rights Amendment. I slapped the headline "Ellison Walks Walk" on it, gave it seven lines on the front page, ran it in #38 (May), and sent Ellison a copy.

That's where the shit hit the fan, and I'm the fan. Since then, I've had three telephone conversations with Ellison (one of them at 1:30 a.m., followed by a series of one-ring-and-dial-tone calls that persisted until I unplugged the phone and went back to sleep), two calls from his lawyer's office, and just an incredible shitload of flack.

Oh yeah, there was also a letter. It contained several points of information, shedding less harsh a light on his involvement in the Tulane affair, but since it started out "Dear Time-Wasting, Yellow-Journalist Asshole" and continued in like vein for two pages, I felt no obligation to slant my reporting of those points of information in a way calculated to soothe his ire. Everyone knows how easy it is to print a retraction even more infuriating than the original story, and that's exactly what I did. For example, when he stated that he had a ruptured eardrum and was running a high fever and therefore could hardly have been having a grand time in old New Orleans, as I had implied in the story, I reported in #39 (on sale in the huckster room), "He was sick the whole time and didn't enjoy himself, so it's okay." Some might say this is unfair, but the facts are there, and if he wants them stated in a way that makes him look good, then he can damn well address me in a civil manner.

And there was another letter, but all I know of that one is that one day I came home and found a notice in my mailbox that an attempt had been made to deliver a registered letter. I've heard varying stories--some people say it was from Ellison's lawyers; others say it was from Ellison himself. For all I know, it might have been from an insurance salesman, because I've got better things to do than go obediently trotting down to the post office every time some clown decides to get clever and register his letters to me.

Because all the time this was going on, my life was proceeding, as lives will do, and I simply didn't have the time to spend on this bullshit that Ellison apparently does. In addition to the exigencies of day-to-day living, I was in the midst of winding up my affairs in Austin, Texas, where I was living at the time, and preparing for my move to Arizona. The exact causes of the move are neither here nor there. Suffice it to say that I had nothing in particular to hold me in Austin, my parents had invited me to spend a few weeks with them at their home in Scottsdale (a suburb of Phoenix), and arriving in the WorldCon city six weeks early appealed to me.

(I don't know why I should have to be defensive about this, but apparently there are several versions of this part of the story floating around, very few of which I would recognize in a dark alley. Basically, what happened is that I decided to take a vacation from some personal and financial problems I was having. I was--and, more-or-less, am--at one of those junctures in life where I can pretty well take off in any direction I choose. A nice position to be in, but hell to get to. I decided to keep my options open until I could look at the situation calmly and rationally, which I couldn't in the middle of all that was happening back then. And what better place to hole up while licking my wounds than with good ol' Mom and Dad, whom I hadn't visited in over five years anyway. Anybody see anything wrong with that? Come on--somebody must, or I wouldn't be hearing all these strange stories about myself.)

(So what was the nature of those personal and financial problems? To quote Hamilton Burger, that question is incompetent, irrelevant and immaterial. Let's get on with the story.)

Where were we? Oh yeah, The Garret was assuring me that it was perfectly all right with them if I walked my own

walk with regard to their Pro Guest of Honor; it wasn't like I was trying to involve them in the quarrel or anything like that. It was all right, that is, until Thursday, August 3, which was a turning point of one sort or another in their relations with a whole bunch of people.

That was the day Bill Patterson informed me that he had something important to discuss with me. There was a department heads meeting going on at The Garret that night, so I didn't get over there to work on IgAPA #3 as I had planned, and didn't actually get the word until Friday. Briefly, the message was that until and unless I could come to terms with Harlan Ellison, I would be relieved of all duties connected with IguanaCon.

I said I'd be glad to discuss the situation with him if he was planning to be at the Inevitables Party (the regular Friday night gathering of Phoenix fandom) that evening. I have never been unwilling to come to terms with Ellison, but I respond very poorly to threats and insults, and I don't kiss anybody's ass. Sure, he said, The Garret was "on strike" and wasn't going to be busy, so there was a strong likelihood of his being there. I thought that sounded reasonable--as much stuff as was going on there, and as much tension as was present, a strike every week or so seemed like a good idea.

You know, distances in the Phoenix area are staggering, at least to a small-town boy from Southern Louisiana, like me. It's thirty miles from Scottsdale to Bruce and Gigi Dane's house in Glendale, where the party was. And the landscape along the way borders on the surreal--in the middle of the desert, there are enormous fountains...green lawns...seafood restaurants...I even heard ducks quacking at one point. Which just goes to show what you can do when you set your mind to it.

As I drove those thirty miles, I thought over the situation. And I arrived at what seemed to me an eminently reasonable proposal for ending the disagreement. All I would ask Ellison to do would be to rewrite the letter he'd already sent me, leaving out the loaded words, and simply address me politely, as if we were two rational adults, both acting in good faith tho perhaps in error, who wished to reach an accord. I would read the letter in a carefully-induced frame of mind, as if I had never had any communication from him before, and would respond in kind.

No, said Bill, to do that would be giving in, and Harlan Ellison does not give in. But all I want him to do is be polite, said I, to which Bill replied that to Ellison, that's giving in. "Coming to terms" with him meant strictly his terms, and that meant that I had to grovel and beg forgiveness for offending the High and Mighty Mr. Ellison.

During this conversation, I happened to glance over to a couch, where Tim Kyger had his nose firmly buried in a copy of TIME ENOUGH FOR LOVE. Without ever looking up and meeting my eye, he was nodding vigorously whenever Bill spoke. And it occurred to me, as the conversation progressed, that I had never once heard a member of The Garret express an opinion--particularly a disparaging one--of someone else that wasn't shared by all the rest. If you've been wondering why I continually use a collective noun to refer to them, now you know.

Another thing that occurred to me was that Bill Patterson sounded a lot like Harlan Ellison. He didn't reach the point of shrieking obscenities at me, but many of his phrases were ones that I'd heard Ellison use, and the pressure to capitulate that I felt during conversations with Ellison was certainly present in this one. More than once, I even felt myself taking a physical step backward. And my usual response to such techniques appeared: I stood my ground. I can be cajoled, but I can't be pushed. I'd made a reasonable offer, and until it was accepted--or at least until a reasonable counter-offer was presented to me--that was the end of it. The Garret left shortly thereafter.

It was that similarity of phraseology, along with the suddenness of The Garret's reversal, that made me wonder exactly what was going on that I didn't know about. The only guess I could make at the time was that Ellison had somehow forced the issue--not that I seriously thought he'd said something as ridiculous as "Either get rid of Markstein or you won't have Harlan Ellison to kick around" (although I didn't entirely rull that possibility out), but it's perfectly plausible that he

might have hinted that he'd consider it a personal favor if Something Were Done about me. But it later became apparent that my removal was only a tiny episode in a general purge that, within another 24 hours, would sweep the committee nearly clean of anyone whose attitudes weren't kosher by Garret standards.

Later on in the evening, Curt Stubbs cheerfully called out to me, "Hey, I heard you got fired by The Garret." Thus did I become embroiled in IguanaCon politics.

Now, I never did manage to sort out all the issues involved. But as I understand the situation, the meeting of the previous night had been an extremely stormy one, during the course of which the entire Garret had threatened to resign en masse if certain conditions were not met. ("Make me an offer I can't refuse" is an expression I heard more than once during the course of the evening.) Until they were met, that is, until the issue was brought up and settled at the regular Saturday committee meeting, The Garret was on strike--that is, the strike wasn't just a colorful way of describing a much-needed rest, but a genuine protest against conditions they found intolerable.

And what conditions could be so intolerable that the bulk of the management of the World Science Fiction Convention would not merely cease work a scant three weeks before opening, but would actually threaten to walk out and leave the con in the lurch? Why, it was nothing less than Rusty Hevelin refusing to resign from Curt Stubbs' staff on their sayso, and Curt refusing to fire him.

A lot of opinions about Rusty have been bandied about in the past few weeks. Not only in Phoenix, but as a result of machinations here, throughout fandom. I have my own opinion, of course, and it was largely formed long before anybody ever heard of IguanaCon. I tend not to express my opinions in catch-all terms like "grand person" or "incompetent", so you'll have to deduce what I think of Rusty from the specific things I say about him herein. As I understand it, opinions of people comprised the original bone of contention between him and The Garret. Bill Patterson foolishly asked Rusty's frank and honest opinion of the various members of the steering committee, and Rusty foolishly answered frankly and honestly.

Be that as it may, as I was slowly becoming aware of the events of the past 24 hours, and slowly coming to realize that the next 24 would be equally interesting, Curt was asking me if I were still willing to work on the con. Sure--just as long as I didn't have to deal with The Garret. (I'd already told Bill that even if I did work things out with Ellison, I wouldn't work with him again.

I'd been thinking of volunteering for Curt's staff anyway--a conversation of his that I'd overheard had left me impressed not only with his grasp of the nuts-and-bolts of running a con, but also with his attitude of leaving it as free as possible to run itself. And the fact that he went an hour on nuts-and-bolts without once mentioning politics didn't damage my opinion of him in the slightest. I was further impressed by his willingness to enter the political arena when necessary--that is, when a member of his staff was under attack and needed support. All of which led me to believe that Curt is not only a good man to learn con running from, but also a good man to have on your side.

And so I attended the Saturday committee meeting, despite the fact that I had no official standing, just to see if I would have official standing by the time it was over. Also, not incidentally, from an overpowering curiosity to see just what the hell was going on.

If you want to accuse me of being there to watch the fireworks, be my guest--I won't deny it. But there weren't any fireworks to watch; leastwise, not out where anybody could see them. People more-or-less just milled around for awhile, during which time the only particularly notable event was when I sat down near The Garret and they got up, one by one, to stand elsewhere by themselves. Not that they all snubbed me (tho I was somewhat peeved at the way people I'd thought I was on good terms with looked right through me)--Gary Farber took the trouble to ask if the grayness of my hair was merely a trick of the light or an actual physical fact, and Anna Vargo, bless her soul, actually went out of her way at one point to sit down and talk with both me and Rusty.

Pretty soon, it was announced that a meeting of the Board of Directors would precede the regular business meeting. Actually, it wasn't strictly a Board meeting--the lowliest gopher who had anything to say against Rusty was allowed in, but those who might speak in his favor were emphatically denied entrance. In point of fact, aside from Rusty (whose presence, I understand, was permitted only after an effort on Curt's part and that of Jim Corrick), the only non-Board people present were from The Garret.

It was a very interesting situation. Inside, what looked for all the world like a well managed kangaroo court was in session. (Jim later told me he'd been the one who insisted on hearing from all threatening quitters, but that he didn't need any character witnesses for Rusty.) Outside, all anybody talked about was what a great guy Curt was, and what a great guy Rusty was, and what a rotten deal they were both getting, and how the con would be the worse for it. And there was considerable talk of every Phoenix fan quitting cold.

After about an hour, the door opened. Curt stalked out without saying a word to anybody. A moment later, Jim Corrick did the same. One local fan who had unabashedly listened at the door was unabashedly weeping, saying "These people used to be my friends." A Garreteer or two came out grinning. Rusty appeared, and was instantly surrounded by a crowd of well-wishers. Seeing me in the crowd, he flashed a grin of his own and thrust out his hand: "Well, Don, it looks like we're in the same boat."

Piecing it together from conversation at the Losers' Party that night, I gather what happened is that the two Directors from Tucson--Jim Corrick and Carol Hoag--walked into the meeting without entirely knowing what was going on. All they could see was seven threatened resignations versus one removal from office--they had no idea what was going on outside. And although the "take my ball and go home" ploy is repugnant to right-thinking individuals everywhere, they had to be practical and opt for the alternative that looked least likely to cripple the convention. And so Rusty was fired.

At this point, you may be asking exactly what is the difference between The Garret talking about quitting, and everybody else talking about quitting. The difference is that The Garret was doing so as a political maneuver. Any honorable person may resign whatever he sees fit as a protest against whatever he pleases under whatever circumstances suit his fancy. Getting up on a grandstand and threatening to do so is vulgar, to say the least. Indeed, before the Board meeting was over, Curt had resigned on grounds that he couldn't do his job effectly if not allowed to choose his own staff--but he hadn't threatened to do so even when asked pointblank what he would do if the vote didn't go his way.

But the impending walkout of the Phoenix fen never took place. There was a brief cooling-off period, and then the full committee meeting convened. To everyone's surprise, Rusty attended it. He was among the first to speak--and I, for one, am convinced that it was his speech that was responsible for defusing the bomb. One word from him, and at least 2/3 of the people in that room would have left and never come back. And instead of giving that word, he spoke calmly and evenly--and convincingly--of the fact that trashing the convention would accomplish nothing and would reflect glory on nobody--that their loyalty should be to the con and to the 4000+ people attending it, and whether they liked the management of it or not should have no bearing on their ability to work together. Upon finishing, he turned and walked out of a very quiet, thoughtful meeting.

This...minutes after he was fired amid rancor and fury.

He wasn't the only person to express similar thoughts at the meeting--but it was his words that I heard on the lips of several Phoenix fen who continued to work on IguanaCon, though protesting the highhanded tactics of The Garret. And if IguanaCon somehow fails to be remembered in history as an organizational disaster, I would give a large measure of the credit to Rusty Hevelin.

That's about where things stand now. I'm In with the Out Crowd, but that's okay because I find the Out Crowd in this case to be a much better class of people. As a rule, I prefer the company of people who deal honestly and openly with one another. I may not come out

on top of many political struggles that way, but I consider the price of victory too high to pay...which is why I try to avoid politics.

Oh yeah, the whole affair impinged itself upon my consciousness once more. A week after Black Saturday (properly pronounced by cupping the hand over the mouth), I was staying for the weekend with my brother in Tucson. While there, I decided to drop in on my old friend from DeepSouthCons long past, Jim Corrick, and his covivant, Gay Miller. Unfortunately, I timed the visit slightly wrong and arrived just as the committee meeting, which was being held in Jim and Gay's home, was breaking up. After they (finally!) cleared out, a sudden suspicion having siezed me, I glanced through Gay's copy of the program.

And sure enough, they'd dropped my name from the Regional Fandom Panel, without even the courtesy of telling me. I guess it doesn't pay to underestimate the pettiness of some people. I shouldn't complain, tho--at least they didn't replace me with Lester Boutillier or Guy Lillian (a suggestion I offer free of charge).

In a way, I'm glad they did drop me from that panel. I would like to have been on it, of course, but it doesn't mean so much to me that I'm going to get all upset about the matter. And being dropped helps me keep my perspective in all of this--you may not believe it, but until that happened, I was in mortal danger of taking this whole business seriously.

This story may not have had a beginning, but it does have an end, and you're looking at it. Now that I've ensured that I won't spend the whole con answering the same questions over and over by getting my entire point of view into print, the names of Harlan Ellison, Bill Patterson, et al. will not cross my lips in public again, no matter what the provocation. I asked for experience, and I got it; and having had it I am satisfied. I intend to enjoy IguanaCon, and pursuant to that end, I hereby declare that my involvement with all of the above described events ends when this fanzine comes off the mimeo.

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Tho I haven't done anything else quite so outrageous as walking into a 4000-member con where the Pro GoH has threatened to punch me out on sight, the rest of my summer hasn't been entirely uneventful. It started with my being Fan GoH at NutriaCon in New Orleans a fabulous, frenetic gathering of about 175 or so. (In case anybody is wondering, the nutria is the Louisiana equivalent of the Texas armadillo or the Arizona jackrabbit--a pestiferous little beast whose carcass litters highways.) That would be the high point of most summers, but the finest moment of this one, for me, happened at a con I didn't even attend.

If you're not from the South, you've probably never heard of the Rebel Award. Many of the institutions of Southern Fandom are virtually unknown in the outside world--a situation not relieved by the fact that the Regional Fandom Panel at this year's WorldCon has no Southern representative on it. Be it known, then, that since 1966, most DeepSouthCons have given the Rebel to an outstanding Southern fan. Big deal, you may say, but to some people it is a big deal. Rebels have been won in the past by Al Andrews, Hank Reinhardt, Ned Brooks, Ken Moore and other stellar personages. (If some of those names are unfamiliar to you, that's because a lot of Yamdankee fen have never heard of some of our BNFs, either.)

You've guessed what I'm leading up to, of course. As I sat home alone, bemoaning the fate that left me in Austin while so many of my friends were living it up at the DSC in Atlanta, Cliff Biggers (last year's Rebel winner) called to ask what I wanted him to say when he accepted my Rebel for me. And I just about dropped the phone. I really, truly, honestly never expected to win one.

(RALLY!, by the way, reported that this year's Rebel "went to a surmudgeon who didn't have the decency to show up at the convention to pick it up, and we aren't even going to mention his name.")

The physical embodiment of my Rebel arrived a couple of weeks ago. It's a magnificent hunk of lucite designed by Virginia Aalko--by far the most beautiful Rebel I've seen yet. But I'd have stars in my eyes every time I look at it even if it were an amorphous lump of brown clay, because it represents the esteem of my friends. I wouldn't trade it for a Hugo.

Been a helluva summer for me. Hoping you are the same...

First Pavlac was fired and that's okay--
A kumquat's better any day.
Then Brown got the axe but that's all right.
The hotel contract's sewed up tight.

Who's next?

The Webberts got out while they still could
Because their doctors said they should.
The Williams pair was maneuvered out
When Tim and Tom began to shout.

Who's next?

Rusty was to get it too
Cause he wouldn't give them egoboo,
Then Markstein's out, you see
For fanactivity.
Ellison said that Don was wrong
So Patterbunny said--"You better move along."

Who's next?

Then Rusty was fired and sent his way
On what is called "Black Saturday".
And Curt Stubbs resigned when his "ops" staff
Was suddenly cut right in half.

Who's next? Who's next? Who's next?
Who cares?

Any Tom Lehrer fan knows the tune to that song. It started a week or so ago, when Mike Glicksohn was in town on a layover, flying from Toronto to L.A. The Iggy political situation was one topic of discussion that somehow came up; Lehrer was another. I blurted out the first two lines at one point, and that's where it stood until the Inevitables a week later, when it was picked up and finished (the ability of some people to compose filksongs while plastered at 3 a.m. is truly astonishing). I offer it here for your perusal. Not offered are the several other songs that came out of that session, which you may be fortunate enough to hear sung at the con. (Look particularly for "Talkin' IguanaCon Blues," which I wouldn't insult by reducing it to print.)

The illo to the right of the song is a minor mystery. I found it in the RALLY! file when looking for a space filler for that corner, but there's no note on the back to tell me who drew it. I seem to recall getting a couple of cartoons from Rod Snyder right before I left Austin, and with all that was going on right then, it's conceivable that I could have tossed them into the file without proper documentation. So unless somebody recognizes it and says "Hey, you fink, that's my drawing", I'm going to state positively and forthrightly that it's by Rod. In any case, my apologies not only for screwing up the credit (I didn't want to throw out a cute cartoon like that just because I couldn't be absolutely certain where I got it) but also for the fact that I haven't had a chance to have it electrostencilled. Like I say, a lot has been going on and this zine has reached its eleventh hour--like, the stencilling has got to be completed tonight, it's got to be run off tomorrow, and copies have got to be delivered in person to The Garret the next day.

Oh yeah, there's one more thing about my summer vacation that I should mention. Curt Stubbs and I are going to put on the next HalfaCon here in Arizona this December. Write me or Curt (5239 N. Central, Phoenix, Az. 85012) for details. HalfaCon has a unique bidding procedure--whoever bids first gets it unopposed. It's now going on nine months since the 1977 one, and nobody had bid for 1978 until we did. So even tho it's a Southern convention (the farthest West it's ever been is New Orleans), what the hell, Arizona has been under the Confederate flag. Jim Corrick will be fan GoH. We have a pro GoH picked out, but won't mention his name until we've talked with him. See you there?

This zine run on B.D. Arthurs' mimeo (which isn't always this messy).

