

TIGHTBEAM #5



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BOB VARDEMAN

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Well, the perpetual argument over the efficiency of the club ran rampant throughout TB #43. It seems to me that while it is nice to point out how wonderfully some of the activities are going, it is more important to look at the ones that aren't going too well and try to figure out how to give them a shot in the arm. Sitting back and gloating over how well this and that went in the past allows other equally important departments to be pushed aside and forgotten.

The principal problem N'APA faces is in its recruiting procedures. I've been trying to get information on joining N'APA for almost two months and haven't as yet received any reply to my three letters. If I wasn't so determined to join the ranks of N'APA I'd have given up a month ago.. But primarily I was lucky enough to find out that the old OE had been kicked out from John Berry and others concerned with N'APA so I decided to be patient and wait out the confusion. But an interesting point comes to my mind. What would have happened to a neo trying to get in? I imagine he'd have thought that N'APA didn't want him because he'd have had no way of finding out about the internal problems.

Janie mentions that Bureau chairmen get listings of new members and their interests. I think it would be a good idea for each Bureau to writeup a one page description of its activities and send it to appropriate newcomers. Don't wait for the neo to get up the courage to inquire - send him the outline of activities and show him that that particular Bureau wants him to take part. If new members are caught up in club activities from the very start, it increases the chances of their staying in the club.

The Welcommittee does as good a job as can be expected in trying to involve new members in the club. But trying to write twenty or more letters at a time necessarily limits comments to "Welcome to the club. Hope you like it. Sincerely..." The Welcommittee cannot be expected to pour forth all sorts of information in each letter to each new comer. And it should be remembered that each new member is exactly that - new.. He doesn't know what the club has to offer and he doesn't get enough information to even ask intelligent questions about the club. I've never seen one of the old "new member packets" but this seems to be what is needed. Descriptions of all activities should be placed in new members' hands as quickly as possible. I don't know why this was discontinued - maybe for financial reasons. If so, I think the members would be willing to pay a little extra if it meant keeping the new members that are constantly entering N3F ranks. More likely, it would be possible to renew the program without any extra cost at all but this would depend on why the program was stopped in the first place. Whether it is possible to revive the new member packet

or to depend on the Bureau chairmen to bear the sole burden of informing the new member. I don't know. But I do know that (as it stands) the Welcommittee is spread too thinly to adequately introduce a new member to the N3F.

I realize that it is easy to just list the troubles and do nothing. Likewise, it is too easy to promise miracles and overnight panaceas. I am running for the Directorate to try and do something about the lacks in the club. I do not intend to try to change the departments that are running smoothly and benefit the club if I am elected to the Directorate. I do intend to do my best to do something about keeping new members. I hope (even if I am not elected) that the new Directorate will closely examine the problem of involving newcomers in club activities and turning them into the cadre, the "faculty" Don Franson mentioned in his letter.

JAN MICHELLE

SLAVIN 6308 Lenox Road
Bethesda, Md. NOZIP

Just received 44, being some days en route to me (I'm temporarily at the beach). My compliments to Jack Haldeman. The cover by Joe nearly made up for the fact that it wasn't TAPE-WORM. TB is good, but it seems to be a discussion between about half a dozen N3Fers plus a few irregulars (like me).

I had an idea recently and I thought this would be a good place to sound it out. When I was a neofan not too long ago, I was greatly confused (and sometimes still am) by various fannish words, such as apa, egoboo, con, etc. Also, I come across words in reading SF that I don't know the meaning of, (for instance Tesseract). Usually looking them up involves a large dictionary, or often a scientific reference book. Therefore, I suggest someone compile a fannish dictionary. Or has someone already done this? If it is a new idea, I would be quite willing to do some of the work, if I could be sure others could help and print it (I have no duplicating



equipment or access to any). I have already started compiling words, and have a fairly long list. If I take up this in earnest, I probably will transfer it to 3x5 cards. Also, I think it might be better to have words indexed, then the definitions by subject. That is, the fan looks up a word, gets a page number; on that page is a definition of that word AND RELATED SUBJECTS. So if you look up hyperspace, you can get data about ftl drive etc. without having to cross index. If this is a good idea, please tell me, and I will start work.

((Indeed, fan slang dictionaries are always a good idea, I believe. The language (or argot, actually) is constantly changing and I feel it serves some purpose to explain old terms as well as new ones. There have been many such dictionaries, even one published by N3F (Fanspeak). The most famous is the Fancyclopedia (Fancy) and its successor Fancy II. (IEPF) This could make an interesting Handbook project (coming out in various volumes, for instance, and discussing subjects fannish with a cross reference. Play your cards right and you could become chairman of this effort, learn a lot, and contribute in a lasting way to Fandom in general. ghl))

NED BROOKS 713 Paul Street
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Jay Haldeman's issue of TBem was good, even if a bit late. Especially John Boardman's letter, revealing the Eric Blake hoax. Of course, I knew all along. Sure I did.....

You are still remembered, George Horace Wells,.. I have a copy of SICK ELEPHANT. And you talk about indecent literature.

KUSSKE, this has been said before but I might as well say it again: the NFFF Directorate does not try to direct the operation of N'APA. We only insist that the apa remain what it was set up to be, an apa for NFFF members. All those I have talked to that wanted to separate N'APA from the NFFF, or admit non-neffers to the apa, are people who are known to agitate for the pure love of agitation. When they get tired of this, they'll find something else.

I just missed seeing Leonard Nimoy sing THE BALLAD OF BILBO BAGGINS on TV, but I have the record. The lyrics are passable, but not from the book. The tune is mediocre, to say the least, and the lverly loud instrumental nearly drowns Nimoy's none-too-strong voice. Oh well.

((From your description it sounds more like you almost didn't miss hearing LN sing TBOBB (shudder). I'm glad I didn't hear it. ghl))

Doodle
Space...

FRED LERNER

98-B, The Boulevard
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In recent years, World Conventions have been invaded by increasing hordes of non-fans; of persons who have a commendable interest in science-fiction, but no knowledge of (and often, no interest in) the traditions, customs, and prevailing conditions of Fandom. This ignorance does no harm, save to one phase of World-Con activity: the business meetings. The sites of future Conventions are chosen carefully by active fans, who base their choices on knowledge of fan history, convention committee personalities, equitable distribution among cities, and the like; while non-fan attendees seem to consider little more than the relative distance of potential consites from their homes, or other extra-fannish matters. If a nearby American city were to bid against an overseas entry, no matter how popular the outlanders were with actifans, their chances would be almost nil. So I offer this proposal:

Voting for consites (and perhaps all voting at business meetings) should be limited to members of the convention-in-being who have attended at least two conventions (one of which may be the convention-in-being). For example:

Sam Snerd is a NYCon member and attendee, and also attended the DisCon: he can vote.

Fred Furd is at the NYCon; it's his first WorldCon. No vote for him.

Barry Byrd is a NYCon member, but couldn't get there in person. He attended the NolaCon, PittCon, and TriCon. He can vote, by postcard or proxy.

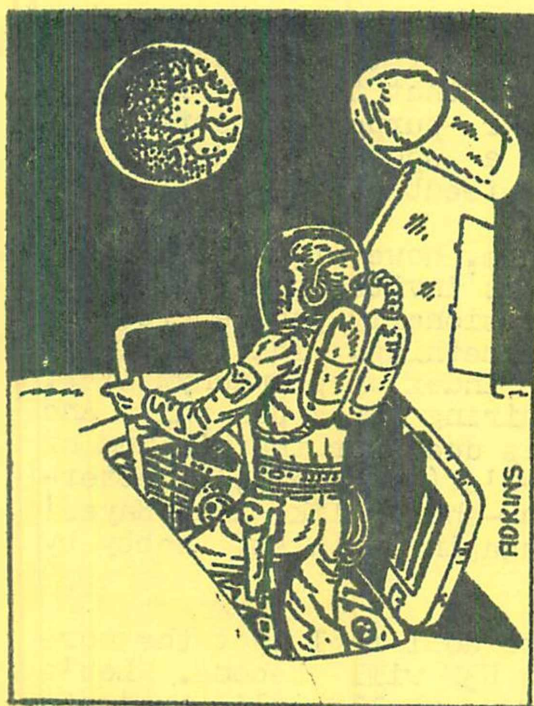
No doubt a better system for alleviating the problem could be offered. But at least my proposal should serve to open discussion of this issue.

((I feel this is absurd. First, if somebody comes to a Con and pays up why should he be treated differently? Second, he can say he has attended other cons and how do you prove he didn't? Third, if a city is nominated and wins it is obvious that the part time reader didn't do it. No, active fans made the nomination and will run the con. So if they are so hot for following fan tradition they shouldn't be nominating another city when it's Oversea's turn to have it. You just want to keep the trappings of an election and fix it anyway, don't you Fred? What about me? I think I've been around Fandom a while and understand what is going on, but have never attended a con. No vote for me, right? ghl))

Outer Space

GARY H. LABOWITZ

362 Prince Frederick Street
King of Prussia, Pa. 19406



At the urging of a couple of fans (and it never takes many) I have decided to run for the office of Director. I am taking this opportunity to communicate to the members and also hope this issue will serve as an example of good and bad in publishing for my Fanzine Advisor role. I might add that there have been no questions to date on any aspect of publishing. A pretty good average for me. Never stumped!

First, some introduction of myself. I am Gary Howard Labowitz, born 1939 in Kansas City, Mo. At some early date (hard to pinpoint but I think Puppet Masters was still new) I began reading stf. I be-

came somewhat active and published Kaymar Trader for a year or so before going GAFMOI. At about that time I served as a so-so director of the N3F, was active in ISFCC, belonged to a couple of apas (FAPA and Cult), and did some collecting.

After acquiring some college, getting married, moving to New York, spawning, moving back to Kansas City, and finishing college I rejoined the N3F (all I could remember was the Lamb's address). Obviously, I still feel the N3F can serve some real purpose in Fandom and I am willing to help accomplish something the N3F undertakes.

And I believe there are things for the N3F to undertake. Whatever else may be said of fans one overriding truth is: "Fans are independent as Hell." As such, there can never really be a governing body of Fandom. However, some form of rally point is needed to give focus to the fan's activities. Some main focal points have always been the apas, letter columns in understandingly edited prozines, and conventions. A few enterprising and resourceful fans have managed to make themselves focal points by dint of very good or very bad fanzines and by fueding.

Other focal points of Fandom (usually potential) are clubs. Some (like the locals) are sustained by in-the-flesh meetings but exist mainly in large centers (East and West coast). A

few have managed to last a short time via mail contact. But only one that I know of has lasted. That one is the N3F.

Critics of the N3F have often said that individual effort is really behind every accomplishment of the N3F. Even if this statement were true, the fact is that the N3F is still necessary. If the N3F serves no other purpose it acts as a focal point. It is an outlet and a sponge. And if you squeeze it a little you get plenty of feedback!

Above and beyond its mere existence, however, this is not all the N3F does. As with any club it invites participation (not "demands" as with an apa). Occasionally people respond to the invitation and do a little something. This activity may consist of proofreading a cross index or pseudonym list, or typing same. It may be the acquiring of a pen pal. And should a person desire to send in his dues for the minimum of return -- his name listed, regular O-O's (we hope!), a letter-zine, occasional Handbooks, and one-shots like Art Hayes' efforts -- who can say he is not engaging in a stf hobby by joining?

Naturally, if there is something to do I feel that the more members participating the better the N3F will become. Let's face the fact: there are relatively few really solid projects for the N3F, as a club, to do. We are not, after all, the OEO which must make work to occupy everyone. We are a club devoted to a hobby of Fandom. The N3F should undertake such projects that mean something to its members and/or Fandom at large and finish them.

On the other hand there are individualistic projects that require many people or lots of money that should be available as N3F sponsored. Let us suppose a member is interested in a Space War Strategy bureau. Via contact with the Directorate the matter is discussed and voted upon. The Directorate votes it in and asks (or is it tells?) the president to appoint a chairman. The chairman (presumably the sponsoring fan) has the duty (it is really his hobby fanac) of getting up a group via the mails, reporting on how it is going six times a year, and possibly summarizing what the group is talking about into an article for TNFF. When the day comes that he wants to quit as chairman the N3F does itself a disservice (I believe) by proclaiming that a bureau has no head and someone must be found. Clearly, if no one is willing to be chairman there is probably not enough interest to have a bureau anyway. The N3F should drop that bureau or at most put it on an "inactive" list. When someone is willing to become chairman there should be the opportunity of having the job available. In a sense, the N3F acts as a clearing house for such projects.

The tactics of committees and projects vary but my philosophy of club management should have been amply demonstrated by the above discussion.

However, far be it for me to break tradition and not give specific recommendations. Here are some points I consider worth discussing if elected to the Directorate:

- 1) An index to pocketbooks with regular updates. This is ready now, from me, based on my collection (about 500 volumes) and could be a money maker for the club as well as a service for Fandom.
- 2) Art folios -- will pro artists do one drawing each for the N3F to have reproduced and sold at conventions (or by mail)? We could split, for example, with TAFF.
- 3) Say Alma, why isn't the N3F giving its budding writers an outlet to publish fiction? Can the N3F support a fiction zine -- even twice a year?
- 4) I am still eager to try and establish an "at cost" service for fans who do not own reproduction equipment. Will the N3F support such a service? Should it?
- 5) I support more Handbooks and right here volunteer to publish if asked to do so.
- 6) Can we begin publishing fan photos and finally see what other people look like? As an experiment I'm attempting to run my picture in this. Sorry.



DONALD FRANSON 6543 Babcock Avenue
North Hollywood, Calif. 91606

It appears that I am the only one running for President this year, so I will not campaign, nor will I participate in the Directorate campaigns. However, I would like to ask for volunteers for non-elective offices for next year. If elected President, I will be glad to retain in office anyone who wants to continue, but often there are many vacancies that must be filled. A little advance knowledge would be helpful, since there isn't much time between confirmation of election

and the first of the year, when all offices must be functioning.

This particularly applies to an editor/publisher for TNFF. Apparently no one has yet offered his services to Stan Woolston as editor or publisher, so that he has had to go on editing and publishing himself, under mild protest. I will not do this, so the result of my election and no editor of TNFF may be no TNFF. It is more likely, though, that I will have to appoint someone as editor who does not quite meet with universal approval. If this happens, don't say you weren't warned. I can only use volunteers, in this voluntary organization, so if you don't volunteer (or suggest someone) you will have no complaint coming about anyone else.

I would really like to have several volunteers for every office, to choose from, and I assure you that no one will be turned away empty-handed. There is always some other, similar job available, or a stand-by can be created, since turnover is rapid.

I hope that more members will be encouraged to write to TIGHTBEAM. This is your forum, and a lot of effort is expended on making it available to you. Take advantage of it.

ERIC BLAKE P.O.Box 26
Jamaica, N.Y. 11431

So now the NFFF has dropped to a low of letting fans who are not members of NFFF have letters in TB. I thought there was a rule forbidding this. Not only that, but they allow such members to deny a real member exists.

John Boardman comes out with the news he created me, me, Eric Blake. There is only one Creator and He is the Divine Creator. To this Divine Creator I owe my being, not to a human who was also created by the Divine Creator, but to the One who gives life to all living matter. A fan may create a fictional character, or a fanzine, these are inanimate things, fans do not have the power to create living beings.

I hereby declare that I am a living being, and am asking Janie Lamb to leave my name on the NFFF membership list. I paid my dues for the year 1967, as the secretary can show by her books. I have attended LASFS meetings when I was in Los Angeles, before I joined NFFF. You can ask some of the old members of LASFS and they can tell you they met me.

TB is again being late and thin. I wonder if all letters are being used, or do they only use letters from certain members? I notice some members have 3 or 4 pages in each issue of TB. This leaves no space for the other members to voice their

sentiments. Of course NFFF is lucky to have volunteers to pub TB and we should give them a vote of thanks. I know nothing about the technical side of preparing and distributing TB, but know it must be a hard job.

This letter is to let you know I'm still around in spite of John Boardman. Some people just cannot stand to read my plain straight language. They would like to censor all Christian-like letters, but you'll be reading them from time to time.

((The reason only a few members' letters appear in TB is because they were the only ones who wrote. I publish what I get, with some editing, even letters like yours which show up a little late.))

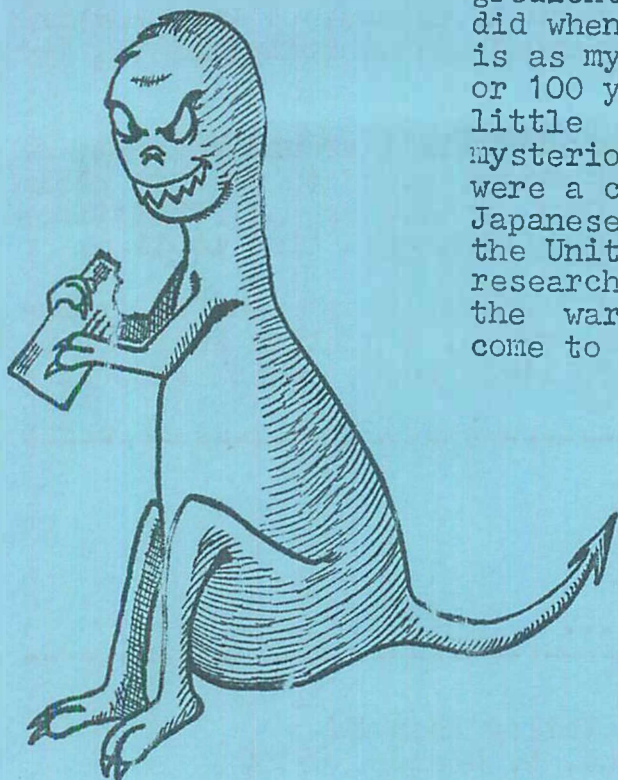
WIT H nary
a sheet of canary
a page or two
of blue
should do.....

ROY TACKETT 915 Green Valley Road NW
Albuquerque, N. Mexico 87107

Now and again my eyebrows twitch (which is about all I allow myself in the way of expressing surprise) when I come across a fan, as I did recently, who is unfamiliar with the works of A. Merritt. Actually I shouldn't be surprised at this for it is only recently that Avon began reissuing some of the titles. They haven't appeared in the magazines since the demise of the A. MERRITT FANTASY MAGAZINE or whatever it was called which disappeared along with a host of other zines during the great collapse of the late 1950s. And that is long ago enough for fans to appear on the scene who haven't heard of the Master.

And Merritt was that: a master of pure fantasy. There were/are few who can equal his ability to describe and bring to life strange, far-away places and even stranger events. Merritt painted with words better than an artist can paint on a canvas and is without peer in putting color and beauty into the sober black and white of the printed page. One of the tests of literature is how it stands up over the years. Merritt's tales stand up well.

I have, for instance, just re-read The Moon Pool which was first published in 1919--just short of a half-century ago. It reads well even in this day of thoroughly modern stf. There are a few flaws in the light of modern scientific theory but not enough to date the story or to detract from the enjoyment of it. One reason the story holds up is because, despite all our scientific advancement, we know little more about the



things that make up the basic ingredients of the yarn that Merritt did when he wrote it. The Nan-Matal is as mysterious today as it was 50 or 100 years ago. There has been little opportunity to study these mysterious ruins for the Carolines were a closed territory first by the Japanese and then, after the war, by the United States. True, some small research has been done there since the war but not enough to really come to any conclusions about who really built the Nan-Matal.

Avon seems to hold the publishing rights to Merritt's works and is currently dribbling them back onto the market. If you haven't read them don't pass them up this time. Reading Merritt is an experience no fantasy fan should pass up.

((My ghod, a real live fan letter of the old school. What on earth is it doing in TB?? Thank you Roy.))

ART HAYES Box 757 - Timmins
Ontario, Canada

Haven't been writing for some time to TIGHTBEAM but the present time is one that calls for such a letter, if only as a matter of politics. I decided to run for the 1968 Directorate and therefore, I should advise the general membership of at least a few of my reasons for desiring to place my name before them for judgment.

As is normal with TIGHTBEAM, some of the letters included are not of real value, #44 was the same, even though I think that particular issue is above average in quality, but the letters that to me, are of special interest at this time, are the two specials on N3F.

George Wells states my position quite well, well...one aspect of my position. Rephrased it amounts to not taking the politics of N3F or Fandom too seriously, not trying to make N3F the Boss of Fandom, but just a functioning part of Fandom. When I was in the Directorate before, that was my main

thought. When I was Welcomittee Chief, I did not worry about the fact that an occassional WC letter was not quite right and tended to offend someone who was easily offended. The overall picture was the main thing and the newcomers to N3F had the chance to try to explain why they joined N3F in welcoming the other new members. On the whole, I think it worked well with only the occassional faux-pas.

Don Franson comes next for a view. I find I agree with most of what he says, but I won't cover the subjects individually as he has done. The Editorship of TNFF is best done by the President, but it is an added burden to a job that is difficult at the best of times. Whether the President publishes TNFF or has someone else do it, it is my belief that TNFF is not the proper media for more than a brief report by the Directorate Chief.

Now, since it is the Directorate I'm attempting to re-enter the Directorate is what I want to discuss on at least a few points. The Directorate has a DNQ ((do-not-quote)) rule that was passed when I was Directorate Chairman. Many of the by-laws were first passed when I was Chairman but were made into an orderly set of by-laws and rephrased to be clearer by Al Lewis who took over from me.

TNFF should contain a Directorate Chairman report, but it has to be relatively brief (maybe a hundred pages may have been written by all the Directors on ONE subject) about all it can report is what motions were voted on and the results. Now, the DNQ rule was intended to prevent any one Director from publicizing the private words of another Directorate member. That rule was never intended to prevent a Director from discussing his own views on a matter under discussion publicly. This is the type of information the membership needs. The dry reporting of the votes tells the members relatively nothing. It is my view that the Directors be encouraged to publish their own views on matters being discussed so that the membership may comment on them and so influence the resulting vote. I am in favor of letting the membership know more of the internal discussions of the Directorate. Certainly there may come up some matters where discussions might not be publicized since publication makes it public and as long as it remains 'priveleged' communications, it does not become libellious, legally..

I also believe that some investigation should be initiated as regards our club's policy when dealing with the Convention Hospitality room. Some conventions were very glad to have us operate this room, others not so much. Are our services, or attempted services, at Conventions actually wanted? Are we trying to force our services upon Convention attendees? Are they worth it?

So, my policy in presenting myself to the membership is, summed up:

Be willing to entertain some humor in the club, not try to 'take over' Fandom but have the worthwhile goal of merely being a successfully functioning Part of Fandom. This includes investigation of our public relations effort and decision on a policy for this, in all fields including the Convention Hospitality room.

Next, make sure that the Directors understand that the DNQ rule has never meant that they could not say things in print, publicly, about matters under discussion within the confines of the Directorate. To encourage the individual Directors to publicize their own views on matters under discussion (for which they must assume responsibility if made public) and to arrange to have them understand that they must not quote what another member of the Directorate has said; leave it to that member to publicize his own views. This also includes the possibility (which must be investigated) of a Directorate Newsletter, separate from both TNFF and TIGHTBEAM. The membership would reply, if they feel up to it via TIGHTBEAM.

And to summarize even more briefly: communications within the club must be improved, and communications between the club and other parts of Fandom also improved.

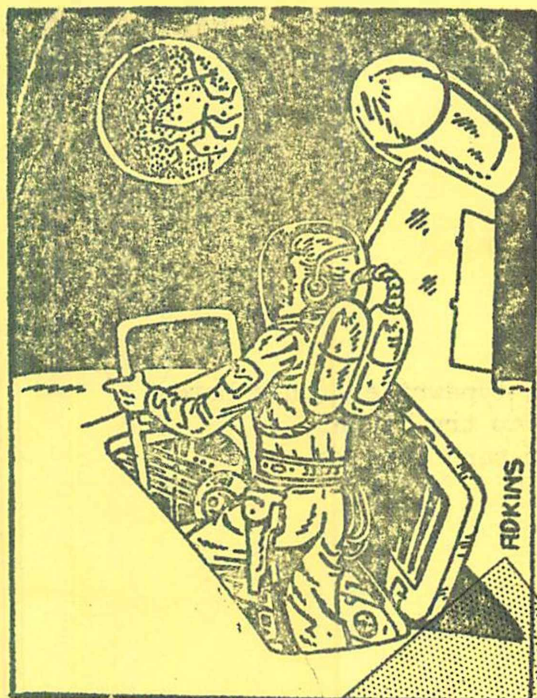
I promise to TRY to achieve this.

((Herewith, the end. I have enjoyed publishing this issue and only wish that I had it out a little earlier. This is Aug. 25, and chances are I won't get it mailed the 1st as I planned. I still don't have the mailing list!! There is also a letter that came which says "Here I am writing ... one day after the deadline for #45. Maybe I'll learn someday." You'll have to wait two months for that one. Also, a reminder: letters sent to me (watch for the next editor's name) will be forwarded to whoever gets the ball next time. I should probably know, but don't.))

Gary

GARY H. LABOWITZ

362 Prince Frederick Street
King of Prussia, Pa. 19406



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HOTTER FLASH!!! Next
editor is Donald Miller
12315 Judson Rd.
Wheaton, Md. 20906

HOT FLASH!! I just purchased a used elite typewriter (this here)
and so will volunteer to publish TB again to try it out.
CHECK last TB and TNFF for next editor or send letters
to me for relay. ghl

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PRINTED
MATTER

37754

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