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APPARATCHIK

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The fifty-first issue of a bi-weekly fanzine, edited and published by Andy Hooper and Victor Gonzalez, member & founding member fwa, supporters afal, at The Starliter Building, 4228 Francis Ave. N. # 103, Seattle, WA 98103, also available at fanmailAPH@aol.com. See the back page for availability and trade information. This is Drag Bunt Press Production # 245. Apparatchiki: Steve Green, Carl Juarez, Lesley Reece, Martin Tudor & Pam Wells (British Address: 24 Ravensbourne Grove, off Clarkes Lane, Willenhall, West Midlands, WV13 1HX, UK). I'm askin' you, fellow workers, and you ain't got long to decide!

Issue # 51, January 18th, 1996

VMG here: I'm sure I'll be corrected if I'm wrong, but I think that I too could once have been a Wild Heirs editor. No doubt if I had proffered the correct ingratiation to the right person a few months ago, I would have been invited.

That time has passed for me. But not for Rob Hansen (known also in his native land as Rob "Fucking" Hansen), now one of the fanzine's (he pauses to make sure) 23 editors, of whom only 12 appear to have participated in the current issue.

Really, WH simply reduces the meaning, and therefore the status, of editorship to near zero. Nevertheless, with Rob Hansen's help, #12 is a fine issue.

Rob contributes a nice and funny piece about misunderstood language, as well as many editorial comments. Arnie keeps up his philosophical bent with a list of types of fan feud. Ross Chamberlain talks about ACTING. And Mark Kernes has a superb article on sleep apnea.

And the supplement, titled Trufan Detective Magazine, also has nice -- perhaps better -- stuff, with a reprint from Shangri-L'Affaires and Arnie's own pastiche on fan investigations. Trufan Detective is rounded out by the conclusion of Tom Springer's plonker/civil war mini-series.

But Wild Heirs is still a fanzine with problems.

One is timeliness. While all of fanzine fandom should gasp at the frequency of WH and APAK, the former lacks currency. While #12 is dated January 3, the editorial was actually written December 2 (unless you believe Arnie, who says it was written in November) which means no one on the vast editorial staff can possibly comment on anything published past November 30 or so.

While one month means little to most faneds, by the time I get WH, it's three issues old. Despite being monthly. Perhaps if the editorial were the last thing written instead of the first. . . .

But currency is but one element of what I would call the heat death of Las Vegas Fandom.

First of all, you must understand that Tom Springer has been the most active of the Vegrants, aside from Arnie. He has, after all, done three issues of his own fanzine; he takes on the role of an actual editor -- not a hanger-on -- in WH, and -- just to listen to the man -- he has the most powerful will of all.

You must also understand that metaphoric fan fiction has proven the key to figuring the puzzle. Only sometimes, the pieces didn't fit.

When Andy and I wrote The X-Fans, one element was what we perceived as a conflict between Ken Forman and Tom Springer. But we got it wrong. We thought Forman was

turning his back on fanzine fandom, and that he was being ostracized by the Vegrants because of that.

Wrong. As Springer's Plonker Wars series made clear, Forman was not moving against fanzine fandom -- he was moving toward club fandom. And Springer, whose genius is most appreciated by fanzine fans, has redirected his limited energy toward Forman's goals, moving farther toward the core of the Las Vegas apple.

Christ, did we get it wrong. Springer, with the spirit of a brinksman and the heart of a mechanized excavator, has decided to overpower the local SF club and allow the Vegrants to wield it to their own ends.

I think we have the right to ask Mr. Springer what we did to offend him.

"There's going to be a little bump for Las Vegas's science fiction club," he writes. "I'm going to contribute my energy and time to Snaffu. . . I'm going to become an active club meeting participant."

Now, no one has ever accused the Vegrants of being gainfully employed, but where will the time come from? While I wouldn't expect WH to fold, any thought of a Brodie #4 (and certainly #5) just went out the window. And many Vegrants have no choice but to follow Springer's forceful action, for he is charismatic and large (this I know something about).

Now, correct me if I'm wrong, but don't the Vegrants meet monthly? Isn't a fanzine with 23 editors a fucking big enough club?

Mind you, it's very impressive sounding: "Ken Forman is going to be president (because the fanzine vote is in the majority of the club, when you get right down to it)."

Springer makes it clear that the Vegrants have already agreed to participate: "So this is an important aspect of Vegas Fandom History that should be made known."

John Hardin, already suckered, chimes in: "And SNAFFU has atrophied, for the most part. We're small, insular and ineffective in our stated goal of promoting the popularity of science fiction and fact."

Look, I hope they're able to pull the club renaissance thing off and still do fanac. But I'm not putting money on it. I wonder if, at base, they've simply realized they couldn't make it in the straight (fannish) world.

This focusing in, the localization, seems a furtherance of the problem that I and others have noted: the already insular nature, the endless backpatting, the apparent lack of knowledge of any other fanzine, aside from APAK.

It is an experiment we simply have to endure.



These planetary nebulae are a warning that we have 5 Billion years to get out of town.

MINES, MUD AND MONEY

By Andy Hooper

BECAUSE OF THE goofy "party" motif that Victor and I have been using in our editorials, not to mention the

name of the fanzine, we seem to be developing a reputation as frustrated Kremlinologists. I can't really speak for Victor in this regard, but as far as I am concerned, this is not especially accurate.

Through the first 27 years of my life, the Soviet Union was an ominous unknown, one which did not seem to provide intellectual reward to investigation in the way other, more speculative mysteries did. Where UFOs and Bigfoot and remote imaging inspired a kind of giddy confusion, the overwhelming emotion created by reading about events in Russia was depression. While it has always been hard to find evidence for the kind of rapacious conspiracy which American red-baiters saw, a kind of grim malice and paranoia seeped into everything associated with the Soviet Union. Part of that was the fault of the west, and its hostility toward the eastern bloc, but a larger part was simply due to the demands of the totalitarian state, and the dark ballet which its upper echelons performed to stay in power.

In a way, the Soviet military was one of the sunnier elements of their society. In contrast with the sad remnants of the Red Army struggling in Chechnya today, the Soviet military at least had enough to eat, and pursued an ever-climbing curve of technical innovation and development. It was one part of the picture that seemed remarkably similar to institutions in the west, which ought to have told us something about ourselves.

When I was young, I used to spend hours poring over a well-worn copy of Jane's Fighting Ships, a book of my father's which dated back to 1953-54. A substantial number of combatants from the second world war were still in commission when the book was written, and I found it fascinating to look at the silhouettes of old battleships and monitors still afloat in the British Navy, cruisers and destroyers that had been dispersed to "third world" buyers, and relics from the turn of the century that were retained for the status they confirmed -- such as the Turkish *Yavuz Selim*, once the German battle-cruiser Goeben, and the Soviet battleship *Novorossiysk*, which began its life as the Italian dreadnought *Giulio Cesare*. The latter ship was one of the few in the Soviet navy with a familiar silhouette; in general, Soviet naval architecture was very different from that of western navies, largely concentrated on coastal defense and the support of Army operations in littoral regions. The *Novorossiysk* was the largest ship in the Soviet fleet, and it has stuck in my mind all these years.

What I did not know was that the ship had been broken up in 1956, following a mysterious explosion which tore a huge hole in her bow, and sent her to the bottom of Sebastopol harbor with 608 of her crew. I was not alone in my ignorance of this event; aside from the families of the sailors who were lost, no one in the Soviet Union or outside of it had ever received any official notification of the event. The Soviet navy has always restricted knowledge of accidents and disasters involving their ships, but security in this affair was especially tight, and was not lifted until its primary architect, Admiral of the Fleet Sergei Gorshkov, died in 1988.

The January/February issue of Naval History magazine

has a fascinating article on this sinking and the secrecy surrounding it, by Captain Peter Huchthausen, US Navy (ret.), a man who served as the American naval attaché to both Moscow and Belgrade. I was struck first by the reference to the old *Novorossiysk*, and amazed to learn of her fate after all these years, but like virtually everything else I seem to read about these days, the piece drew me in further by its reference to the puzzling circumstances surrounding the event.

At 1:30 am on the 29th of October, 1955, an immense underwater blast tore up the starboard side of the *Novorossiysk*, which lay at anchor in Sebastopol harbor. She had only returned from operations at sea at 6:30 the previous evening, and had moored just 130 yards from shore. Damage control parties struggled to save her, and engineers came aboard from other ships to assist in the effort. Many of these men were trapped below decks when the 29,000-ton ship rolled over and sank into the deep mud of the bottom just under three hours later.

An board of inquiry was hurriedly convened to investigate the sinking, and their eventual conclusion was that the ship's anchors had disturbed a mine or mines laid on the bottom of the harbor by retreating German forces in 1944. Because the fuses on these were so old, it had taken seven hours for them to detonate. The overall responsibility for the accident lay therefore with inadequate mine-removal procedures, and the blame eventually came to settle on the commander of the Soviet Navy, Admiral Nikolai Kuznetsov. Kuznetsov's distinguished career came to an end, and he was replaced by the man who had ironically been acting as commander of the Black Sea fleet until just four months before the accident -- Sergei Gorshkov.

Gorshkov may have had ample reason to conceal the facts surrounding the case. Kuznetsov had been away on holiday, recovering from a mild heart attack, at the time of the disaster. Rumors persisted for years that the mining of the ship had been engineered in order to make that vacation permanent.

Both the KGB and the Italian navy, which had once operated the *Novorossiysk*, attracted suspicion, especially since many of the counter-measures designed to keep attackers away from the ship at anchor were not in place at the time of the blast. Had the Italians placed explosives in the hull when the ship was turned over to the Russians following the Tehran conference? Or had their famous underwater commandos, riding human-torpedo "chariots", attached mines to the ship as they had the British battleships *Valiant* and *Queen Elizabeth* during World War II? Or had the KGB sabotaged the ship in order to facilitate the change of command in the Soviet navy? Perhaps they had also removed the anti-torpedo netting and harbor defense boom, as well as ensuring that a hydroacoustic listening station was down for repairs for 11 hours prior to the *Novorossiysk's* return to port, in order to point to an attack by a foreign power. Mysteriously, the harbor security patrol ship was moored at the time of the blast, instead of patrolling the harbor as it was assigned.

The "Italian hypothesis" was supported by the testimony of a former Italian sailor debriefed by the KGB in Algiers in 1960, who claimed he had participated in the attack on the battleship. Another Italian mariner, Junio Valerio Borghese,

I don't need a goddamn cat to teach me how to play the piano

known as "The Black Prince", and commander of numerous successful covert assaults on Allied shipping during World War II, had vowed repeatedly that he would sink the ship, enraged at her transfer into communist hands. He died in 1974, four years after leading an unsuccessful fascist coup against the Italian government, and left no indication that he had ever attempted to fulfill his promise.

But the evidence left by the explosion supports the mine theory better than any other. At least one large crater -- some divers reported a second, but they have been confused as to their location in the murky water-- was left in the bottom of the harbor, and a huge volume of mud was blown up into the hull of the ship. The plates around the hole were not blown outward, as they would have been if the charge had been placed inside the ship. And the pattern of the damage was not consistent with that caused by a torpedo.

This does not mean that the Germans were necessarily the ones who planted the mines on the bottom, a fact which was not lost on the board of inquiry. Given the lapses in the harbor defenses, it was impossible to confirm that submarine forces had not gotten into the harbor prior to the *Novorossiysk's* return to her mooring. This suspicion was deepened further when the commander of a motor patrol boat, assigned to search the harbor the day after the disaster, claimed to have found a mine attached to a mooring buoy used by the cruiser *Kerch*, set to detonate ten days later, on November 7th -- the Soviet holiday celebrating the October revolution. And the *Kerch* had begun her life as the Italian cruiser *Emmanuel Filiberto Duke D'Aosta*.

While these theories remain tantalizing, 13 other German mines were cleared from the floor of Sebastopol harbor over the next three years, and the quick and catastrophic sinking of the *Novorossiysk* can be explained without recourse to conspiracy. The ship had been modernized by the Italians in 1937, added substantial weight to the superstructure and severely compromised the ship's stability. Flooding knocked out sound communication and electric lights aboard the ship within minutes of the blast, which made repairs extremely difficult. And Soviet damage control procedures were poorly organized, changes in which were one legitimate legacy of the change of command.

This event, which admittedly would be of interest on its own to only naval history buffs, had extremely far-reaching consequences. It led to the end of the Soviet navy's reliance on big-gun combatants, and a program of modernization which had an immense impact on both the Soviet and Western economies. Gorshkov led the construction of the Soviet Navy's vast "blue-water" fleet, which abandoned the Navy's traditionally defensive posture, and which in turn inspired numerous naval re-armament programs in the west. And the vulnerability of large surface units, as demonstrated by the loss of the *Novorossiysk*, led Gorshkov to make the Nuclear Ballistic Missile submarine the principle strategic element of his fleet, with consequences which have touched everyone in the world.

Navies are the most expensive part of any nation's military. The cost of building, maintaining and sailing large, modern naval forces is only approached by the expense of building and maintaining a strategic nuclear missile/bomber force. The weight which this policy placed on the Soviet economy was immense, and probably made a substantial

contribution to the eventual collapse of the government. And the expense of building more and more aircraft carriers, submarines, even taking our own battleships out of mothballs -- useful though they proved to be -- can account for a very healthy chunk of the American national debt.

The vast amount of money and lives -- the Soviet navy certainly didn't stop having accidents after the sinking of the *Novorossiysk*, and some latter-day disasters involved some extremely dirty nuclear reactors -- expended on these programs, meant that Gorshkov would never have risked having damaging particles of evidence made public. The Soviet press and people might not have been able to put them altogether, but his colleagues certainly would have, and they would have been provided with an irresistible political lever to use against him. But then, who's to say the KGB didn't have their fingers on that switch all along?

And all this from one old German mine, and an even older Italian battleship. To my mind, this is at least as shocking as any alien autopsy film could possibly be, with no special effects or fuzzy focus required.



The Fannish Lame List

(What's Wheak This Wheek)

Brought to you by the smokers in the basement

Paul Feller

Blat!'s publishing schedule

Little rusty staples

People who don't put their name in the colophon

Being a filter-feeding fanzine suck monster

Fans absorbed by the on-line brain sponge

Topic A

The Yankees paid Tino \$5 million a year

Neofans who whine

Filksongs lifted from Kipling poems

Orson Scott Card

Hawkwind broke up (again)

People who send brilliant comments marked DNQ

Philip Jose Farmer's GOH speech at the '68 Baycon

Half-assed alien autopsy films

Talking about TAFF behind the administrator's back

The price of RAM

Howard Waldrop having to sharecrop
for Piers Anthony

The man is obsessed by the slit, but he cannot portray it.

FANNISH MEMORY SYNDROME

by Steve Green

CONSIDERING HOW RIPE a target sf fandom - even a cultural group as small as British fandom - must appear to commercial

interests, it's fairly amazing that we're only now beginning to see the acolytes of Mammon camping on our doorstep.

Unlike the United States, where the genre's profit potential was spotted as early as the mid-1970s (indeed, Joel Engel's excellent biography of Gene Roddenberry reveals that until the first movie went into production, STAR TREK's creator was almost entirely reliant upon appearance fees and the illicit income his company Lincoln Enterprises derived from marketing Xeroxes of other writers' teleplays), the UK has remained largely free of exploitation. Until last year, the only serious incursion had been Project Starcast, announced in 1980 for 1982 with an initial £17.00 membership fee (as compared, say, to the £4.00 charged the previous year by Novacon, admittedly a more low-key event); preposterously mounted for 4000 attendees (even with foreign visitors, the 1979 Worldcon in Brighton had only attracted 3100 fans), Starcast was officially ignored by the British SF Association and lambasted by fanzine writers (one of my own columns for the late SUPERNOVA managed to attract an absurd threat of legal action from the organizers), eventually collapsing like a black hole and reportedly metamorphosing into a one-day mart in Westminster.

Matters changed, however, with the UK release of STAR TREK: GENERATIONS. British TREK conventions had previously maintained an honourable tradition of donating their not inconsiderable profits to charity, but the two-day tie-in event hosted at the Royal Albert Hall last February by Star-gazer Productions was strictly commercial, with the fans present expected to do little more than gaze at their favourite actors and applaud the Q&A sessions (though, to be fair, my friend Ray Holloway tells me he approached it purely on that basis and actually had a great time). Two months later, the same crew ran Babcom, a BABYLON 5 "convention", but their hubris finally reached fruition: only 1500 of the 15000 target membership turned out, whilst dealers tore their hair

out at the paucity of merchandise then available for a series here consigned to teatime viewing on the minority-oriented Channel Four - one CD, one novelization - and instead filled their tables with TREK spin-offs. At neither event, needless to say, were the guests available to mingle with fans (which, given my experience at the Fantastic Film Festivals in Manchester, is a disservice to both parties); we are ever more in the kingdom of the couch potato.

Ironically, the regular FFF venue - Sacha's Hotel - was also chosen by Wolf 359, a fan-run composite intended to cater not only for Trekkies but any B5 fans wandering through the centre of Manchester. Judging by Mike Scott's account in ZORN #3, the fact that fans rather than businessmen were pulling the strings counted for naught: "I rate it the worst convention I've ever been to, and I've been to some real stinkers in my time . . . the culture of the convention was utterly inimical to everything that I find worthwhile and enjoyable about sf conventions. And these people say similar things about the commercially run media conventions that are starting to spread across the face of fandom like some disfiguring disease - I can barely imagine how bad they must be."

Whilst it's difficult to see how we can prevent such events taking place, even by boycotting the more ramshackle or exploitative, their potential proliferation has prompted several British fans to consider formalizing a "convention charter" (hopefully more successful than the numerous other charters which Major's government keeps rolling out in place of actual policy). The field is presently led by Caroline Mullan, whose initial three-point proposal both calls upon organizers to ensure a suitable framework exists for "intimate spaces where members can make and maintain personal connections" and places a responsibility upon individual members to interact rather than merely spectate; as she herself is swift to point out, these suggestions (available in full on the Internet discussion group Intersmof) are less concrete guidelines than a broad identification of the fannish ethos. The pity is that many new fans, particularly those entering through media fandom, may not even be aware that such a state of affairs already exists.

But very slowly, SF began to gag on power.

AND NOW, YOUR LETTERS

[APH: We lead off with a very densely-printed postcard from TEDDY HARVIA (701 Regency Dr. Hurst, TX 76054-2307), with advice on how to get nominated for a Hugo award:]

"If certain fanzine fans value the fan Hugos but are disgruntled about recent winners, they should put more effort into nominating their favorites and less on whining after the fact. Fandom has many talented writers, editors and artists who go virtually unrecognized outside their own circles. A mere 15 - 25 nominating votes are enough to put a name on the ballot. Even the smallest clique can muster that many votes, if its members can agree on the same individual(s). But realize that most winners are those who've sought a broad audience outside their own inner circle of friends and favorite fan publications.

"Most non-artist critics judge cartoons by the wrong criteria. They are supposed to be minimalist, flat and lifeless. Cartoonists in the classic tradition practice that less is more. They will not draw two lines when one will suffice. A cartoon is as much what the reader brings to it as what the cartoonist

puts into it. Most cartoons are intended to amuse, not change one's life. If one appears not to have depth, the reader may lack the depth of experience or knowledge to appreciate it. Too many do not want to have to think to fill in the elliptical elements. They are a sad by-product of a culture that has spoon-fed its children complete packages in which detail masquerades as substance. David Levine is the audience every artist loves, who enriches a work by reading more into it than the artist imagined he'd put there.

"Being compared to Joseph Nicholas, even facetiously, I am flattered. Although he may have trouble believing it from my postcards to him, I admire the sincerity of his writing. His arguments may be convoluted, but I see no hidden agenda in them except a search for the truth."

[VMG: Frankly, I'd like to hear D. West's response to your comments on cartoons. Lacking that, though, I disagree. Why should I have to bring anything but a standard level of fannish background to an illo? When I write - whether for APAK or the newspaper, my goal is to make it understandable to a reasonably educated reader. Your attitude seems to be that if a person

doesn't get the joke it's their fault. Oh, well. I guess all your critics must be "sad by-products."

[APH – Your comments in regard to the Hugo awards are certainly correct, but the juxtaposition of winning the Hugo awards with the act of attempting to appeal to a mass audience suggests a course of action which I want to avoid. Obviously, if you want to appeal to a wider audience, that's one thing, but if people attempt to do so primarily to gain votes in award balloting, the product that results is seldom very satisfying. Of course, I'm not really suggesting you counsel or practice such a thing yourself; your subsequent statements blaming the viewer for not fully grasping the subtle delights of your work indicate that you are working primarily to please yourself, which is the aesthetic that I've always been most comfortable with.

Now, another episode of "How High Was My Dudgeon," featuring everyone's favorite truth-seeker, JOSEPH NICHOLAS (15 Jansons Rd., South Tottenham, London N15 4JU):]

"Thank you reprinting (one of) my previous letter(s) in Apparatchik 49; no thanks for Victor's rejoinder. I am perfectly well aware that neither of you are ideological kin to the Fosfax tribe, and that those who may disagree with me do not automatically agree with them; the comment was made tongue-in-cheek, but Victor's dudgeon was obviously rearing up so high that he didn't realise as much. Perhaps humour doesn't travel very well; certainly not my humour. I'm reminded of a time, ten to fifteen years ago, when I proposed to one U.S. fanzine editor who seemed determined to misread everything I said that I should in future set out my letters in double-column format -- one column containing text, and the other stage directions instructing him how to react. The proposal was of course made ironically, in the full knowledge that he would be stupid to understand it; but to see someone of Victor's intelligence reacting in a similarly literal-minded way is astonishing. Perhaps I should resurrect the proposal. Or cease writing letters which are other than purely literal. Or cease writing letters of comment to US fanzines altogether.

"I was disappointed that my autobiographical piece in Cybrerbunny was so casually attributed to Terry Jeeves, despite clear and obviously un-Jeeves statements in the first couple of paragraphs about its author growing up in the sixties watching space shots and making plastic model aircraft and having a father who'd just missed the war but test flew V-bombers afterwards. (I'm told that my name was carefully omitted from the article when it was sent to Jeeves to illustrate; I would be very interested to know how he reacted once the identity of the author was disclosed to him.) I'd been looking forward to seeing what Andy would make of it, since it's so completely different from everything else I've written over the past few years; but the moment has gone, and to avoid future confusion of this kind I should perhaps swear off ever again writing anything about aviation."

[APH: Is the thinly-veiled complaint in the first line of your letter an admonition that you expect us to print every word that you send to us? I hope not, for you are doomed to perpetual disappointment if that is the case. And before you withdraw from the conversation altogether, let me ask one question: Who is misinterpreting whose sense of humor here?

For what it's worth, I thought it distinctly strange that Terry Jeeves would have made reference to growing up in the sixties, and I wanted to clear up that and other discrepancies,

but the deadline came down and I never managed to get it corrected. I'm sorry, I didn't remember that your father had been a test-pilot, which should indeed have been an immediate giveaway. I do hope that your suggestion that you will never write about aviation again is humorous hyperbole, since, as I said at the time, I thought it was a very good article no matter who wrote it.]

[VMG: Joseph, I don't want to fight about who does and doesn't have a sense of humor. There are better topics. I didn't think you were really serious in demonstrating such a black-and-white view of politics; but what you wrote about that wasn't very funny, and it was followed by a body-slam about The X-Fans. I'm willing to take my lumps. But you can make your points understood more effectively.

Speaking of being understood, JOHN DALLMAN (jgd@cix.compulink.co.uk) has a complaint:]

"For a significantly less comprehensible APAK 49, take an ordinary one, remove the staples, and re-collate it as pages 1,2,5,6,3,4,7,8... Once I'd got that straight, a good issue, although just I don't believe your claim that the revered R wasn't meant to look Russian. The very title is redolent of the old USSR and the image its communist party had; the R just seems like reinforcement.

"And no, Joseph isn't exaggerating when he says that the UK government is attempting to make the whole 19-25 age group into 'criminals'. When I heard the first speech announcing the policy, my reaction was 'war on the young', and it proves to have been somewhat worse than that. The alienation is becoming frightening.

[VMG: Wrong, wrong, wrong. You're seeing hammers and sickles where you should be seeing a gigantic stuffed Fan Barney, all purple except for the propeller beanie, with a tube of AB Dick ink in one hand and singing, when the salesman pulls the string, "I praise you, you praise me, we are one big happy family. . . ."]

[APH: Sorry about the problem with the page order; I shall Speak Sharply to our mailing agent, the next time I am discussing his free duplication of the fanzine.

We move now to a letter from ROBERT LICHTMAN (P.O. Box 30, Glen Ellen, CA 95442):]

"I read Apak No. 49 under unusual circumstances. I was visiting Charles and Cora Burbee on December 27th and after keeping Charlie up well past his usual bedtime I borrowed his copy of that issue to read since I was to stay up at least another couple of hours. Saying goodnight to Burb as he unwound in his bed across the hall from me with a John D. MacDonald mystery, I settled down to read your ish. I was fascinated by the description of the Star Trek Phaser Flying Disc Weapon of your childhood and how it compared to the modern version. At least you can still run across a modern version. My equivalent childhood toy was the Space Control Cosmic Smoke Gun. I guess the difference is that Space Patrol the program is no longer around, its primary characters Capt. Buzz Corey and his sidekick Happy long lost from the national consciousness. Even early baby boomers would have difficulty remembering the show as it was first on radio, where I listened to it from a very early age -- it might have been one of my first exposures to science fiction because I was hearing it before I could read -- and then appeared on TV for several seasons in (I think) 1947 and 1948. By the mere expedient of staying up several nights in a row until

Never fall in love with a barista — it always ends in bad coffee

3:00 a.m., I saw reruns of several episodes about ten years ago on an all-night 'sci-fi marathon' on one of the schlockier San Francisco TV stations. It was incredibly clunky.

"The Space Patrol Cosmic Smoke Gun was a futuristic-looking red plastic affair which I'm quite certain later inspired the designers of General Motors Camaros and Firebirds of the '60s. One loaded it with special Space Dust that came with it -- you had to send some number of boxtops and a sticky quarter or two for it -- and be squeezing the futuristic-looking trigger it would spew for several feet a cloud of white powder. When I ran out of the powder, I substituted some flour from the household pantry, which worked just as well (and was perhaps the same thing). I imagine if the same gun had appeared in the '60s, resourceful druggies would have used it as a coke-snorting device, although it would have taken several hundred dollars to load it up.

"Good to see a letter from Ted White, though I take issue with his impression that his 'present lactivity is being enjoyed by much of fandom.' Actually, aside from those of us in and around the fringes of the group mind, much of fandom has hardly noticed Ted's absence. I haven't seen any correspondents in the lettercols of The Reluctant Famulous or Fosfax either applauding or lamenting Ted's absence. Like Ted, I also rather enjoyed the Beatles' 'Free as a bird.' The video that accompanied it on the TV show was a delight with all its visual references to the Beatles pantheon. However, I heard one portion of the Anthology I CD -- one of my sons got it for Christmas -- and I found that my tolerance for early '60s demo tapes with covers of old Carl Perkins songs is severely limited. Or at least it was that day.

"Moving on to No. 50, congratulations on reaching yet another milestone, tying with Voice of the Imagi-Nation for longevity (if you don't count the two issues b/w The Denventioneer, the Chicon issue and the "Vombozine" that was part of the Pacificon Combozine). What would Paul Feller make of it all if he were still around fandom? (But perhaps he is.)

"Loved Victor's article about the Nielsen Hayden zines of yore, to the point where I got them out last night when I first read his article, and had a good time remembering having read a lot of them in the first place. Telos came out around the time I was leaving The Farm and reentering real life and fandom simultaneously, and my first reading of them was hampered by the fact that I didn't understand all the contemporary references to people and events, though the general nature of them, being fannish, was certainly familiar and comfortable. After I get a little more caught up from the holidays, I'm going to get them out again and reread them more completely. And Izzard No. 9 -- certainly one of the ten best single issues of the '80s. I gotta read that one again sometime, too. Too bad P & T are largely invisible to those of us who aren't on the Net. One wishes they were still around in fanzine fandom, pubbing the occasional ish or at least providing those of us who do with the occasional cogent, good-humored article and pithy letter of comment.

"I love the observation in your reply to David Levine that 'no one ever went broke underestimating the intelligence of the American public.'

"While I made some passing reference in my last letter about Paul Feller's article that Burbee wasn't the ex-editor in 1945 (when Feller's article allegedly appeared), Don Fitch's wondering 'was Burbee already the ex-editor of Shaggy in '45?'

prompts me to set the record straight. According to the Pavlat/Evans/Swisher fanzine index, Burbee took over Shangri L'Affaires with the 13th issue dated May 1944 and edited it continuously through the 25th issue, April 1945, when he interrupted his editorial stint for a spell in the armed forces. Gerald Hewitt edited Nos. 26 and 27, Joquel No. 28, and Burbee came back on board with the 29th issue in April 1946, continuing through his firing by the club after the 38th issue, November, 1947. Copies of that issue were sent out with a single-sheet addendum from Burbee reporting on his firing. The club revived its previous title, Shangri-La, in January 1948. Shaggy was once again brought back in 1959; Burbee wasn't editor, but he had editorial pages in the first few revival issues. Fan history quiz: who was the editor of those first revived issues? (LASFS members of the time, such as Don Fitch, should be disqualified from answering.)

" 'Good Editor, Bad Editor' was a lot of fun to read, plus it contained the bottom line about fanzine fandom, that 'it's completely open to anyone who is willing to write to and for fanzines.' Big secret, huh?"

[VMG: Hear, hear for P&T back in printed fandom. But I'm not holding my breath. While writing the piece, I joked that I might insert a couple of major errors to see if P&T actually read this rag. Even if they do, I wouldn't expect a reply, even in a piece focusing on them as fannish gods. But errors. I wouldn't have thought Patrick could put up with that. And, although I didn't intentionally insert any errors, at least two crept into the chart. But I'm not going to point them out until P&T reply. Hmmmph.

[APH: Ah, but Victor, we have heard from P&T; a brief e-mail note of thanks just made its way to me! Guess we'll have to run that errata in the next issue, so hold your breath, everyone!

BTW, here's the note from PATRICK NIELSEN HAYDEN (e-mail via pnh@tor.com), who responds to Victor's piece thusly:]

"I got this pink thing in the mail today, and I'm still sitting around slightly stunned. You know, we set out to publish a really good Old Fanzine. It's a remarkable sensation to know that, at last, we succeeded.

"More later, I think. But thanks to you and Victor."

[APH: Our pleasure, Patrick. But where was I? I was talking to Robert and -- oh, yes, Robert, I remember Buzz Corey and Cadet Happy (and by the way, SPACE PATROL appeared on local stations on the west coast in a kind of precursor of syndication from 1950 to 1955, and appeared on ABC in evening hours from 1951 to 1952, and on Saturday and Sundays during the day for about a year and a half later) from a recent syndicated incarnation, something like ten years ago. They were clunky, but the scripts were no worse than a lot of stuff appearing in AMAZING at the time. I understand there is some effort underway to make a feature film out of the series, although I may be confusing that with "The Adventures of Captain Zoom in Outer Space," a recent TV movie that features the star of a Space Patrol-type show getting involved in a real galactic conflict, which is in turn a rip-off of an old Quantum Leap episode.

I think Arnie has further blown the gaffe on the Feller hoax in the lettercol of the most recent Wild Heirs -- see the fanzine countdown for details.

Now, on the subject of P&T's fanac, here's a letter from LINDSAY CRAWFORD (4056 Southway Loop, Springfield OR 97478-5928 :)

"I'm confused. One address to two people. At least. I suppose the custom is to simply address the message to the

The exciting new novel by the author of "The Leather Boys"

intended, and write on, but I know you're both seeing this, or at least I assume you are. Make that mildly puzzled. Nevermind. Number 50 read and enjoyed. Thanks!

Victor, Did you remember to mention that good writing isn't easy? It seems to require some effort and concentration when I try it, but maybe I'm doing it wrong. But you make it look easy. Damn you!

"Could you tell that was mixed admiration and mirth? I am referring to your 'When Seattle Fandom was Fab.' I am listening to George Harrison sing 'The Sheik of Araby' on the Anthology CD. Just before he sang 'Three Cool Cats.' If I had the Cloud Nine CD I'd listen to 'When We Was Fab' to see if the lyric has any resonance with your piece about The Patrick & Teresa Nielsen Hayden zines. The title reference scans and later when I listen to the Cloud Nine cassette I'll listen for anything that might suggest Seattle fandom.

"I'm sure there were other fanzines by PNH & TNH you didn't mention, which I don't have and would have to hunt for references to, but I have a couple. One is from when Patrick was in Phoenix and doesn't seem relevant to what you wrote. The other is Zed Number One, May 1981. It's 10 pages of light tan fibertone plus a cover on same (the IFC is blank). It says ec#190, and 'published monthly. (really) (no shit).' It's all by Patrick and Teresa, and mostly seems to concern Seattle fandom. The first Vanguard party is referred to, as being at the Farber-Schaefer-Vargo residence, includes a quote from Gary Farber and Chuck Spear. It's not all about local fandom but enough to be of interest if you're looking for same.

"I just wondered if you didn't mention it because you didn't have a copy or because it wasn't Telos or Izzard. The return address is The National Fantasy Fan, but short of reading every word (rsnl) I see no obvious indication of it having any NFFF content. From my veil of ignorance it's hard to be certain that TNFF and NFFF are separate entities."

[VMG: Yes, we both see all correspondence addressed to the fanzine. Thanks for the appreciation of my writing; I inevitably end up rising from the terminal in disgust at my own failure to make whatever article I'm writing the way I really wanted it. So I like comments that express a contrary emotion.

Um, I did mention Zed, but not in the main body of the article; it was a "front-page-stinger," and we might say in the news biz when we're feeling quite self-important.

Zed seems to have been a failed trial run or something; P&T were fully involved in Telos and not always in love with that fanzine's format; they clearly wanted to break out into something smaller and faster.

Izzard is another way of saying Zed; they both stand for the letter "Z," says a note in Izzard I.

More mail inspired by Andy's cereal-premium memoirs, this from HOWARD WALDROP (Box 5103 Oso General Store, 30230 Oso Loop Road, Arlington, WA 98223):

"Only three words need to said about cereal/candy/sugar-food giveaways and premiums:

"Zero. Centralia, ILLINOIS."

"Yrs. M. Nat. Treasure.

"P.S.: I'm waiting for the situationist issue of APAK. And your bottom of the page line on page 9 of ish 50 is way too close for comfort as I finish I, John Mandeville. . . .

"The name of the book I recommended to you on New Year's Eve is Watch the Skies! If I were at the Arlington Public Library, I'd give you the publication data and the ISBN, but I'm

not. It's about the UFO phenomenon -- it's not about UFOs. Like -- it's divided into periods 47-49, 50-51 (Sign, Grudge, BlueBook, etc.)- extraterrestrial origin; secret Russian/Nazi weapon, experimental aircraft, misinterpretation of natural phenomenon, etc. -- what ideas were common, within and without government, and in the general public, about them -- when MIB first showed up. (You might look up the famous Maury Island -- now hoax -- case, it happened in your backyard -- to see who thought what when. It's got everything, the sighting, the 'material', the crash of the B-25 taking the stuff back to ATIC at Wright-Patterson, etc.) And as the Firesign Theater used to say: Everything you know is wrong -- it won't be like anybody thinks, when All is Revealed. They'll come: they live 50,000 years. 'How do you do it?' we ask, and they'll say, 'Don't you know about beets?' "

[APH: Thanks for the good word; I'll definitely try to find the book. And maybe I'll try to eat more beets. . . .

I'm sorry my memory is failing me here, but I can't remember what sort of premium or plastic device could be obtained from Centralia, Illinois. Anyone else out there know what this refers to?

Now, a brief note detailing her own memories of the Star Trek Phaser Flying Disc Weapon from the noted mail- and rubber-stamp artist JUDY HOOPER (jhooper@mcn.org) (who also happens to be my mom):]

"What I mostly remember is that the little colored discs could only be shot, not picked up. That leads me to believe that they were easily replaceable, i.e., cheap, within the realm of allowance, etc. It might interest you to know that there were a number of them found in the attic, on the floor, in various boxes and among other flotsam when we were getting ready to move from Spooner Street. It gives me some pleasure to know that there are probably still thousands more in that house, in the heating ducts, between the floor boards, in the false ceiling."

[APH: Naturally, I apologize, well after the fact, for unleashing this plague on our vacuum cleaner. I assure you, the discs have lost none of their tendency to sit up in the corners of one's dwelling; every time Victor comes over here, he had a distressing tendency to unload a full clip at me.

But what puzzles me about your observation is that I don't have any recollection of using the S.T.P.F.D.W. in the Spooner Street house; all my memories of it revolve around the house in West Virginia. This could be a flaw in my memory, or perhaps we brought this discs with us when we moved to Wisconsin, or more amazing still, they might have been in various cracks and corners already when we moved in, and were only dislodged by your tenacious and determined cleaning in anticipation of leaving there. Or, as has been suggested by some observers, the discs may reproduce themselves, through some process of asexual fission, which might also explain why there always seems to be more of them around than were contained in the original package.

Now, back to boring fan-stuff with ARTHUR HLAVATY (206 Valentine St., Yonkers, NY 10704-1814, e-mail at hlavatypanix.com), who has an interesting theory on the popularity of Teddy Harvia's cartoons.]

"The description of David Thayer as someone who writes such brief comments on zines that he is assumed not to really like them and someone who has a weaponed wit that he is not always successful in aiming outside the group reminds me so much of me that I'd probably be tempted to defend him even if I knew nothing else about him.

"But I have actually known him almost as long as I have

Six years of protection — Free!

been in fandom, going back to the days when we thought Miranda Thomson and Teddy Harvia existed outside his imagination, and my interactions with him have always been pleasant. He certainly started out drawing his own stuff, and he switched to computer-generated art in the late 80s or early 90s.

"As to his Hugo popularity: Everyone knows that fanzine fandom is word-oriented. One result of this is that artists who write amusing captions get more Hugo votes, independent of their drawing skill, from fans (me, for instance) who are more competent to judge writing than drawing. In this, David is following on the footsteps of Rotsler and Gilliland, among others. I am too much a part of this phenomenon to judge whether any of these artists 'should' have won."

[APH: And I, honestly, have much better things to worry about. It seems to me that trying to figure out why anyone wins a given Hugo award is a quick way to drive yourself crazy. The only time I really care is right after I lose and I have to watch Dave Langford or Martin Hoare lurch up to the platform and thank everyone, ho-hum, for choosing Dave yet another time. Here's a better question: how does Martin Hoare afford traveling to all those U.S. Worldcons?

Back to reality for a brief moment with JAE LESLIE ADAMS (621 Spruce St. Madison, WI 53715):]

"I started writing to you right after I got Apparatchik # 48, but then Matt was home for most of two weeks with the chickenpox, and then two weeks of holiday, and December got away from me. Before the holiday set in I was writing pretty regularly, and now that Matt's in school expect to be back at it. It's the sort of writing that I immediately feel a desire to qualify as Only This or Only That, with a pained smirk; but let me not denigrate the creator spirit in even its smallest works.

"So most of this letter was in the can a month ago, but now I have A #50 in hand in which David Levine has corrected you on that 'oat hulls and wheat chaff' bit which I refrained from writing originally to mention But he has also cast my mind back to the times before granola was available commercially, when Nevenah Smith was just a sprout and her family (which lived just a block from mine), manufactured its own granola. It's just baked oatmeal, you know, with some oil and honey and other stuff stirred in. Her oldest brother who was quite a baker had a recipe for something called Hudson's Bay Canoe Bread, which took two days to bake, sheet pans and ovens of which we survived on through the wilderness of high school -- now available at a premium price in individually wrapped portions labeled: granola bars.

"Many kinds of food we used to find in co-ops and health food stores and mostly made from scratch have now become convenience foods. I thought part of the idea of organic food originally was to produce those good things more locally, deny our dollars to capitalist distribution and advertising, fill our friends' and families' dietary needs directly from the garden, and thus invent our food with the holiness removed from modern factory production. So I feel an amusing surreality in the local co-ops when I contemplate the aisles of beautiful expensive boxes. It's not just Celestial Seasonings anymore.

"The reason a lot of old hippie food recipes call for dried milk powder is because that was one of the commonly available commodities provided to the needy by the government surplus in the days before food stamps. Bulk quantities of beans and insect-flecked cornmeal; gallons of peanut butter, unhydrogenated and separating oil from solid; five pound blocks of

cheese.

"Victor's piece in #48 about fannish standards recalled some of my own initial reactions to fandom (which I entered just in time for one of the periodic stonings of Steve Swartz, such a popular fannish amusement here since he took up residence in Madison), which I can now at best chuckle over in rueful amusement.

"I'm still thinking about this, as our little Madison clique resists so strenuously and even denies the existence of any 'groupmind'. Victor's fifth fannish standard clarified all this for me very helpfully: 'Fandom is made up of individuals. There is no consensus reality.' Yet he admits groupminds, local in time or space, share a relative consensus, which changes and mutates separately from the individuals involved.

"I was expecting one of the fannish standards to include the stylish postmodern Naming of Names. It is one of the most entertaining things to me about British zines, the plain identification of characters popping up here and there whom one can begin to know. Avedon Carol's remarks always name names, for instance, and describe characters. I am sort of waffling around here with my new project, to explain those crazy Madison fans to the big world, an idea which has been held up here by the social necessity not to name names.

"You know what I mean, cause you lived here for quite a while and have known the local cast of characters far longer than I. But I am still astonished from the panel at ReinCONation where David Emerson had come up with that wacky 'Golden Age of Madison Fandom' idea. My first reaction was, Oh no has he got it wrong, but then I thought about it, and considered the gross physical manifestations of various massive clubzines and occasional Cazbahs and World domination review and two count 'em two annual conventions all in Madison

"There are of course individuals here in Madison who are particularly wary of being named. (Fortunately you are not here: publish and be damned.) This is one of the reasons Bill Bodden's gossip column in CUBE uses only about a half a dozen names, and drives them into the ground. Someone who didn't know might not suspect Bill has a personal ax to grind with Nevenah, n'est-ce pas. I suggested to him that he might plug Jim Frenkel's latest adventure or mention Joan Vinge's new book coming out in the spring, as they are both people with some name recognition among the fans on the CUBE mailing list, but I haven't any great confidence in my advice being heeded.

"There's a lot to be said for written communication instead of the face-to-face variety, when you're dealing with social and psychological clumsiness on the scale we have here.

"Fandom Is A Shed In Glasgow (FIASIG) did strike me as amusing, but from here I see Fandom Is A Crumbling Castle, that is, the picturesque ruin of a dying century. We are building little huts against the walls from salvaged bricolage, to shelter ourselves and friends in the 'storm of days thick and fast'. Some days it looks almost like a village. Every time we try to name it, the meeting goes on for hours and then someone new walks in who has missed the whole discussion."

[APH: Which is certainly an annoyance on one level, but encouraging on another. It means we get to keep telling our stories over and over and there's always someone new who hasn't heard them yet. I sometimes see Fandom as a ramshackle castle too, but more like one of the Gormenghast variety, with endless corridors and chambers to explore, and a tendency to shift its floor plan so that even if one backtracks over supposedly familiar ground, there

You have to be very mean to get a laugh on the campaign trail.

are subtle changes which keep the surprises coming.

Madison fandom is indeed a puzzling phenomenon at times, its natural crankiness exacerbated by a dose of Midwestern reserve that prevents promiscuous naming of names. Actually, I think a more significant factor in that regard is the fact that so much of what Madison fans like to whisper about is the tawdriest, silliest gossip you can imagine, and who, outside of that group, really wants to know about it anyway? Plus, many people are unlike Avedon Carol in that they are able to remember that what they say about other people reflects on themselves as well.

I think the key to being happy in Madison, or indeed, in any really tightly-knit fan-group, is to cultivate lots of contacts in fandom outside it. Once you have a sense of being part of a larger circle of fans, the peccadilloes and frustrations of the local group don't make you tear your hair out in such big clumps. Plus, it's easier to find people who are interested in your particular flavor of fandom if you have a wider sample to choose from.

Next, a quick note (and as he says, note the COA) from BARNABY RAPOPORT(407 Noxon Rd. LaGrangeville, NY 12540) who truthfully observes]

"Ah, yes, e-mail is perfect for lazy snarks.

"Speaking of mail, note my COA.

"I've been posting messages around AOL and elsewhere for about a month now, though seldom in their piss-awful science fiction fandom board. There's one in Spin On-line that's a top ten list of embarrassing crushes, Susan Dey and nine others. I thought you'd be interested. At least I had enough sense not to put it in a LoC....

"Your article on UFO conspiracies was very interesting. I've been getting into Watergate revisionism myself. It started with some speculative chapters in Carl Ogelsby's The Yankee and Cowboy War, got fully developed in Jim Hougans' Hidden Agenda, and was recently updated with lots of new findings in a book by a couple of reporters (if this wasn't e-mail I'd dig it out and look it up) called Silent Coup. However, the latter omits the CIA traces so central to the first two, so who knows what's up."

{APH: A field of study almost as rife with contradictions and disinformation as Ufology. Keep us posted on your research, Barnaby.

Now, DAVE LANGFORD (ansible@cix.compulink.co.uk) sends along note of an SF library in trouble (and you thought all those strikes in France had nothing to do with you :)

"I hope no one objects to my sending this to the Ansible e-mail list; apologies if it's a last straw after recent extra items, but the included deadline will have passed by the time Ansible 103 appears."

[forwarded stuff begins]

Maison d'Ailleurs in trouble

"Please do what you can, either by signing the petition, or by giving publicity. This message was forwarded to me by Jean-Louis Trudel from an original in French.

"This seems to be the SF Foundation's problems all over again in a different country."

—Bridget Wilkinson

[original message follows]

"The House of Elsewhere (Maison d'Ailleurs / Haus von Anderswo / Casa di Altrove) is the European museum of SF and

Utopia, in Yverdon-les-Bains, Switzerland. Its collections of various documents (books, comics, A/V, toys, works of art) are unique in Europe and probably in the world. The only two other collections of the kind are not really comparable (Toronto's Merril Collection and Berkeley's Riverside Library). Its foundation in 1975 was made possible by the gift to the city of his personal collection by the author and encyclopedist Pierre Versins.

"In 1988, the museum started to flourish in a building better suited to its role. Since then, the House of Elsewhere has organized 30 exhibits, alternating thematic and artistic ones (200 artists in all, such as Giger, Jodorowsky, Moebius, Siudmak, Jacobs, Caza...). It has published or created 7 books, one board game and 8 A/V productions. Finally, it has put on many talks, one international symposium on utopia, and one international francophone SF convention.

"IT IS PRESENTLY UNDER ATTACK BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF YVERDON-LES-BAINS WHICH, LIKE MANY OTHER GOVERNMENT LEVELS, IS TRYING TO BALANCE THE BUDGET AT THE EXPENSE OF CULTURE (among other designated targets).

"Even if you are not a research scholar (for whom such a library is infinitely valuable), you appreciate SF. You know that the genre absolutely needs to preserve and enhance its memory, in addition to reaching new readers, which is what is made possible by a library-museum such as the House of Elsewhere. Thus, you can show your support by filling out and returning the petition hereunder to those concerned, and by passing it on via the Net to other people who appreciate SF."

"ON DECEMBER 7, THE YVERDON CITY COUNCIL DECIDED TO REDUCE BY 70% THE BUDGET OF THE HOUSE OF ELSEWHERE. This harsh decision aims to suffocate the museum in the shortest possible time.

WE ASK THE CITY COUNCIL OF YVERDON-LES-BAINS TO RESCIND ITS DECISION AND TO ALLOW THE HOUSE OF ELSEWHERE A BUDGETARY ENVELOPE SUFFICIENT FOR IT TO CARRY ON WITH ITS ACTIVITIES IN A SUSTAINED AND PROFESSIONAL FASHION."

FAMILY NAME:
FIRST NAME:
ADDRESS:
YEAR OF BIRTH:

"Thanks for sending this petition (and/or messages of support) to either the House of Elsewhere (FAX: 41-24-21-65-75), or directly to the city of Yverdon, (FAX: 41-24-22-11-22), or to: yc_wacke@master.cinev.ch, making sure to include the words "Petition Mda" in the subject line. Please do this on or before 26th January 1996."

{APH: A good cause, it seems, and it would cost one nothing to send an e-mail squib to the address included.

That's all for now, folks. We'll be back in two weeks; until then, why not give some thought to your votes in the FAAA balloting? If you've been reading this zine for the past six months, you're eligible!]



Here we are, Pismo Beach and all the clams we can eat!

FANZINE COUNTDOWN, December 21st to January 16th

1.) The Metaphysical Review #22/23 & 24/25, edited by Bruce Gillespie, 59 Keele Street, Collingwood, Victoria, 3066 Australia: These are the sort of fanzines that inspire feelings of awe and deep personal inadequacy, 184 pages of saddle-stapled, card-bound, gloriously offset class, tastefully illustrated with grey-scale photos, fractals and blonde, clean-limbed cartoons by Ian Gunn. The first is all personal memoirs of and by various Australian fans, many with pictures that put faces on people who were previously just names to me. 24/25 is split mostly between a bunch of people's lists of their favorite writers, and some excellent travel writing, by Wal Robinson, Catherine Hoffman and Doug Barbour. Plus, it features "The World's Longest Letter Column": the WAHF list alone goes on for three pages. While these tomes are pointed at a very different standard than most fanzines aspire to, I found them largely free of pretention, full of very accessible and entertaining writing, a real delight to receive. My only problem is, what can I possibly send that would constitute fair trade? Maybe if I bound a complete run of APAK in tooled-leather covers, with endpapers made out of fifty-dollar bills

2.) Trufan Detective Magazine, aka Wild Heirs #12.5, edited by the unholy 23, 330 S. Decatur, Suite 152, Las Vegas, NV 89107, e-mail at WildHeirs@aol.com: First fanzine I've ever seen which uses the phrase "porno GIFs". The highlight of this pulpy fan-fiction is Arnie's take on The Goon, a legendary character from the fifties, shared by various members of Irish fandom, and recently reprinted in the "Bleary Eyes" collections by Ken Cheslin. It's a funny piece. So is "Crime Stalks the Fan-World," a reprint of a piece from 1945 by F. Lee Baldwin. And "Me, My Plonker, and Ken Forman", by Tom Springer, was pretty amusing too, but perhaps a trifle long. As seems to be the fashion lately, the rider is somewhat better than the fanzine it was sent with.

3.) Empties #16, edited by edited by Martin Tudor, 24 Ravensbourne Grove, off Clarke's Lane, Willenhall, West Midlands, WV13 1HX UK: This issue features the theme of "Laws, Rules and Regulations," which has inspired a much greater variety of response than I had anticipated. Highlights include a piece of quantum pulp fiction by Al Johnston, "Physique Noir", Bob Shaw's "Laws and Customs", and Helena Bowle's hair-raising account of the birth of her son, "In Pain and Sorrow." The only thing which really rubbed me the wrong way was an anonymous piece of dim-witted misogyny titled "The Rules", which was apparently found tacked to a bulletin board and handed in to Martin by Dave Cox. Other than that, a strong effort, marred only by some dodgy repro. The fact that Martin scrunches everything down to fit on a folded A-4 format rather works against the zine; outwardly, it does not seem to say "this is an involved genzine, featuring 17 contributors and 6 illustrators". But it's worth risking the eyestrain to check it out.

4.) Critical Wave #43, edited by Steve Green and Martin Tudor, same address as #3: But of course, Empties is not Martin's only love; he and Steve Green go slogging onward, publishing this rather brainy sercon semi-prozine, stuffed to the gills with book and movie and television and animation and convention reviews, all executed with an ineluctable Britishness that makes even the dullest claptrap rather

entertaining. This issue is only marred by some really dreadful fanzine reviews by yours truly, which a real magazine would have rejected out of hand. I especially enjoyed the profiles of Gwyneth Jones and Christopher Priest, and the use of the phrases "tattooed feminists intent on a gelding party" and "chortling over the subject of circumcision" in Graham Joyce's worldcon reportage. Well played, Blue.

5.) Wild Heirs #12, same address as #2: As seems to be the pattern with WH lately, the least overtly fannish material is the best -- Ross Chamberlain' memoir of the dramatics of his youth, largely reprinted, without any attribution thereof, from Ross' FAPA zine Quondam Bleep. Rob F. Hansen offers some observations on the perversity of the English Language, to amusing effect. And here is Arnie Katz again, like clockwork, continuing in his effort to define every conceivable aspect of fandom. This time he covers fan feuds, and manages to find seven different varieties of them (Arnie is the kind of taxonomic splitter that would have made Louis Leakey proud). The real development in this issue is in the lettercol, which really seems to be hitting stride now. This features a very silly defense of the "Paul Feller" hoax article featured in Heirlooms #11, in which Arnie continues to spell the man's name as "Keller", and offers some daft suggestion that Don West was writing in December, 1944. Pull the other one, Arnie. The only thing in here that struck me as stranger is a letter from Buck Coulson that concludes "I'd rather talk to Samanda Jude than I would to anybody in WH." I have removed Mr. Coulson from my mailing list some time ago, and rather recommend anyone reading this follow suit.

Also Received:

De Profundis #284 & 285, Tim Merrigan for the LASFS; File 770 #111, Mike Glycer; The Knarley Knaws #55, Henry & Letha Welch; Lettersub 8, Terry Hornsby, MSFire # 6, Sue Burke for Milwaukee Science Fiction Services; Opuntia # 26.2 & 26.5, Canadian Journal of Detournement #8 & The Papernet, Dale Speirs; PhiloSFy #1, Alex Slate; The Reluctant Famulus #42 & 43, Thomas Sadler; Situation Normal!?? Dec/Jan. 1995/96, Joyce Worley for SNAFFU; Brum Group News, #290 & 291, Martin Tudor for the Birmingham SF Group.

APPARATCHIK is the Pervomayskaya of fandom, a sleepy little village known only for its sugar beet production and the famous Pervomayskaya festival of Interpretive Dance, until the day a wandering circus of terrorists, separatists and fanzine fans came to call. It's still available for the usual, but note that trades must now be sent to both Andy and Victor (Victor can be reached at 403½ Garfield Street S., #11, Tacoma, WA 98444, and electronically at Gonzalez@tribnet.com), and/or you can get Apparatchik for \$3.00 for a three month supply, or a year's worth for \$12.00 or a life-time subscription for \$19.73, or in exchange for a 1995 Donruss Elite Series #51 (Greg Maddux, valued at \$65.00 and rising). For readers in the United Kingdom, Martin Tudor will accept £10.00 for an annual subscription, £19.37 for a lifetime sub, see his address in the colophon on the front cover. Lifetime subscribers include Tom Becker, Judy Bemis, Richard Brandt, Steve Brewster, Scott Custis, Don Fitch, Jill Flores, Ken Forman, Lucy Huntzinger, Nancy Lebovitz, Robert Lichtman, Michelle Lyons, Luke McGuff, Janice Murray, Tony Parker, Greg Pickersgill, Barnaby Rapoport, Alan Rosenthal, Anita Rowland, Karen Schaffer, Leslie Smith, Nevenah Smith, Geri Sullivan, Steve Swartz, Michael Waite, and Art Widner. Look at the teeth, willya?