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# APPARATCHIK

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The twenty-seventh issue of a bi-weekly fanzine, published by Andy Hooper, member fwa, supporter afal, at The Starliter Building, 4228 Francis Ave. N. # 103, Seattle, WA 98103, available electronically at A.Hooper@GEnie.Geis.com. This is Drag Bunt Press Production # 210. He has responsibility for more flamingos than any other person on Earth....

**Issue # 27, February 9th, 1995**

About one hour outbound from Ondonga Field, we dipped beneath the generally heavy cloud cover and spotted bandits dead ahead of us. I sent a message to the rest of the flight ordering them to engage, and as the big Corsair's engine roared a little louder I was horrified to see the four bright green dots resolve themselves into eight late-model Mitsubishi Zeroes in tight two-plane elements. But we were committed now; even with our speed, we would never make the cloud cover again before they caught us. Besides, outnumbered two-to one or not, the mission was to attack this Japanese patrol and make way for an upcoming bombing mission.

I picked out one of the green dots, and pointed the nose at it. The dot quickly grew into a green cross, then sleek low-wing monoplane with red circles on the wings. In a head-on pass, it's often critical to fire first, so I tapped the trigger while the aiming circle was well-ahead of the target, hoping he would fly into the tracers. I was off to the left, and inflicted only minor damage as the Zero banked hard to my right and dropped away. But as I instinctively jerked on the stick to follow, another enemy plane broke right in front of me, trying to avoid the fire of another plane in my flight. I tapped the trigger again, and put 120 .50 caliber rounds into the forward fuselage of the luckless plane. Yellow fire burst from his shattered fuel tanks and the aircraft spun away and downward. "SCRATCH ONE JAPANESE PLANE!" said the little information bar at the top of the screen, and then "YOU ARE BEING SHOT AT!"

There was a sound like a hundred logs being split at once and the engine note of my Corsair dropped abruptly. No smoke from under the cowling yet, but there was clearly some real damage. I rolled over hard and dropped the nose down in a 300 mph split-S, and the aircraft firing on me, wherever he was, did not follow.

As I pulled back up out of the dive, two other pilots in my flight claimed kills in quick succession. That put the odds at 5 to 4, and one of those aircraft was at least slightly damaged. All I could see were two Zeroes and two Corsairs turning tightly around one another about 3/4 mile ahead of me; I checked around in all directions, but there was no sign of my Wingman or the other three Zeroes. I bore in on the dogfight ahead of me, pushing the throttle as far as it would go. My engine temperature immediately began to rise to dangerous levels, but my approach had

the desired effect. The Zeroes were caught between me and the other section, and there was nowhere they could go. One tried a head-on pass against the other section leader, but was shot to pieces before he could bring his guns to bear. The other tried to loop away from me and dropped into the other Corsair's sights. Parachutes bloomed and drifted toward the sea below us.

Then a message from my missing Wingman: CLEAR MY TAIL! I searched for him, but all I could see were the other Corsairs and the descending parachutes. Only one possibility seemed to remain, so I pulled the plane into a climb that brought loud protest from the engine. Breaking back up through the clouds, I dropped in right behind two enemies chasing my Wingman, who was rolling and turning violently to get away. Both aircraft were at optimum range, the zone where the fire of the six guns in my wings converged. I sent a long burst in at the one closest to my Wingman, corrected the fire with a twitch of the stick, and his engine smoked, then quit. For some reason, the other Zero didn't alter his course in the least. He was probably a novice pilot; one half-second burst and the battle was over. No sign of the eighth Zero; he must be damaged and run while he could.

So the mission was a stunning success. I damaged my plane on landing, but emerged unharmed. Of course, it was the seventh time I had played the mission out; the previous six times had ended in a screaming, burning spiral, not even a chance to get out of the plane. Dynamix' ACES OF THE PACIFIC and its companion, ACES OVER EUROPE are by far the most challenging flight simulators I've ever seen. At the more difficult levels, aircraft disappear into your blind-spot, excessive Gs make you black out, and riding the throttle too hard will burn up your engine. And sitting at your computer, you don't really have to deal with altitude sickness or take the risk of being chopped to pieces by 20mm cannon shells. Nothing has ever made me respect what my late uncle did while navigating B-17 as thoroughly as simulating escort and interception missions over Germany. It's a little disquieting to think that I might be shooting one of my own relatives as I bring my FW-190 in on the attack, but I cling to the hope that these pastimes will deepen my reverence, rather than desensitize me. In any event, I seem to be thoroughly addicted to the game, which is why I don't have much to write this time. That and writing another book....

**I've taken the low road, and you've done the same.**



## Horrific Crash Kills 3

Eastside woman's birthday ends in high-speed tragedy

by Victor M. Gonzalez  
Staff Writer

Bring your rain gear, said my editor, you're covering the floods.

A photographer and I scoured the boonies east of Lake Washington to Snoqualmie Pass, the main route over the Cascades to Eastern Washington. Brown and white water blasted over Snoqualmie Falls at 20,000 cubic feet a second, and mist drifted to the lookout.

The rain died and we went into the valley looking for power lines and exploded transformers downed by the wind. Then the cellphone rang.

A triple-fatal on the Duvall-Carnation Road.

Specialists were still taking pictures with floodlights as dusk turned to darkness, documenting the inside-out Camaro and the birthday girl in the tree and the man and woman resting in the swampy underbrush. I took the blue "Media" sign off the dashboard before we pulled out from behind the coroner's car and a Channel 5 News van.

In the newsroom I interviewed the father and the girlfriend of Mike Bright, the male victim. I had a taxi pick up yearbook mugshots from a source in Duvall.

It was my first fatal, and I got lucky.

The piece ran above the Bellevue Journal American's masthead the next morning. I wrote, in part: "All three were ejected from the car and killed on impact; the force of the crash sent one victim into the limbs of a tree. Police said excessive speed caused the accident."

The photograph depicted the twisted muscle car, steering column mounted on the outside. I didn't describe LisaLinn Brown, the woman celebrating her 24th birthday, her still body wrapped backward around the tree limb, leather-clad feet splayed toward the treetop, a small bough piercing her abdomen.

The dead car was surrounded by stuff. Clothes and compact discs and a compact disk holder. I didn't see any alcohol containers.

At the newsroom I described the facts to reporters. Over 100 miles per hour. Age range from 20 to 26. High-school drop-outs and once-wed mothers.

A black Camaro with wide racing tires and a nice stereo. Huey Lewis and the News and Mark Chesnutt CDs.

"Hey, I own a Mark Chesnutt tape," said the same Cop reporter who later suggested a title for the feature on the causes of accidental and intentional suicide among the young blue-collar adults in these former boom towns: "Natural Selection in the Snoqualmie Valley."

The poverty-driven lives spoke loudly. They seemed stupid people.

It was not a two-car accident, nor a strike from above. Blood alcohol levels didn't seem important. It was the high-percentage result of habitually careless behavior.

The women were pretty and had children. The men were underemployed and owned fast cars and pretty women. And tempestuous relationships, if I am to take a couple of anonymous callers seriously, were common.

Somehow, they had managed to accept such limited ambitions into their twenties.

I joked to reporters but adopted a serious, sympathetic attitude when talking to family and community sources. I couldn't help laughing at the stereotypical hicks. I had little emotional reaction to the accident scene. It was as detached as a photograph, and I still think about it.

I slugged the first story "FATAL." A slug is a working title given to a story by a reporter or editor, intended to keep track of the story through the editorial chain.

For example, a story on a poor woman with two kids scratching through the holidays in a charity shelter: "WRETCH." Eight characters maximum. Sometimes editors will substitute less honest descriptions.

A week later I got an exclusive because I had called many Duvall people for the original story and a follow that encapsulated later police findings. The afternoon of Mike Bright's funeral, I interviewed someone who had been there, a person I had talked to before.

Rapport, mutual trust the underlying constituent, is the community reporter's greatest tool.

Charles "Chuck" Bright, Mike's brother, injured his spine inner-tubing in the snow at 4 a.m., towed behind a pickup truck driven by his older brother. Once again, alcohol may have been involved.

Chuck rolled and slipped down a hill, said the family, and fractured two cervical vertebrae, said the doctors. His chances of walking remain low.

He was being operated on at Overlake hospital, a few minutes from the office, and I waited with the family for Chuck to come off the table. Above the fold again.

I slugged the story "NOTBRITE." The lead read: "Vicki Bright missed her oldest son's memorial service today."

About \$20,000 was raised for Chuck's rehabilitation, because we printed an item on where to send money, picked up by every paper around the Puget Sound.

The last I heard, the Journal American is still following the story. Chuck took a day off from rehab.

His first stop: the Monster Truck show at the Kingdome.

-- Victor Gonzalez

## AND NOW, YOUR LETTERS:

ROB HANSEN (144 Plashet Grove, EastHam, London, E6 1AB, U.K. E-mail at Avedon@cix.compulink.co.uk) weighs in on subjects divers:]

"Thanks for the copies you recently mailed us of your elusive perzine.

"I tend to agree with Bill Donaho about the different approach one should take when editing articles and LoCs. Yes, you should definitely consult with the writer about changes in an article, but so long as you don't actually change the meaning of what's being said, you slice and dice LoCs, cutting away the stuff you're not interested in and trimming the rest to fit. Apa-waffle apart, most of what I write these days seems to come out as formally structured articles so you won't be too surprised to learn that, in general, I also share your preference for these over open-ended rambling, however well-written a letter might be.

"And I laugh heartily in the general direction of George Flynn for the amazing lack of sophistication he reveals by admitting to not knowing 'there was a West Seattle'. Of course there is. It's called Puget Sound and Aquaman lives there.

"Glad to hear you intend expanding the APAK mailing list to include a few Brits, and I have a suggestion as to how you might keep costs down. As a collector and someone who often refers back to old zines, I obviously want genuine copies of APAK. However, so long as I get to read the zine in timely fashion I'm perfectly happy for copies to accumulate such time as we're next in the same location or a visiting American can bring them over. So, if you e-mailed your zine, while putting a copy of each issue to one side in an envelope with our name on it for future handover, I for one would be perfectly happy with this arrangement. conceivably other on-line Brits would be as well. Might be worth trying. If you let me know who's on your Brit mailing list I'll dig up as many e-mail addresses as I can find for them.

Oh yeah, before I sign off, do you think you could include an ad in your next issue for my TAFF report? They're moving reasonably well at the moment, but I need to spread the word as widely as possible."

[Of course, dear fellow, I'd be happy to: MR.

**ROBERT HANSEN, Publishing Jiant, Traveling fan, and Chronicler of things historickal, is pleased to announce the publication of his long-awaited report on his 1984 TAFF trip to THE NEW WORLD, entitled *On the Taff Trail*, now available to all and sundry at the address printed above. U.K. fans please send £3 and 50p for postage; U.S. fans send \$5.00 plus \$1.50 for seamail, \$2.50 for air. All proceeds devolve to TAFF its own self.**

As for sending ersatz electronic copies of APAK across the waves, I'd be happy to, but people have to be

aware that the limitations of the Internet are such that the zine would arrive as nothing but a very long column of words 72 characters wide, with none of the fabulous layout mistakes I make in the original. If you can live with that, I'd be happy to pare one down for you.

Now, a few words from one of England's premier experts on personal and public degeneracy, Mr. CHUCH HARRIS (32 Lake Crescent, Daventry, Northants NN11 5EB U.K.):]

"Sometimes you worry me a little, and sometimes I am, frankly, incredulous. and incredulity comes in varying degrees.

"This morning, whilst Sue was out shopping, I as watching old soccer videos on the box and, spur of the moment, join in and hone up my Mexican Wave.

"You know The Wave? the sort of group phenomenon that, when Leeds United does something really special like stamping Sheffield Wednesday into a bloody froth, the supporters, almost spontaneously but in a sort of sequence, raise their right arms and incline their torsos to the left so that a sort of ripple runs around the stadium like wind through a field of wheat. Sometimes we shout 'Yah' with it.

"Anyway, there I was practising my contribution, (but without the 'Yah') when I look up and find the window-cleaner man staring pop-eyed and incredulous through the double-glazing.

"That, I would have you know, is incredulity Stage 1. (It's also Embarrassment Stage 10 when you have to go out and give the man his money and he backs away in terror, but that's beside the point.)

"Incredulity Stage 2 comes two hours later along with the postman and *Apparatchik* arrives.

"Dear boy, you are exactly what Brit Fandom and the US Mails need -- a great big benefactor. With 40% of your mailing list in this sceptred isle I reckon you are spending damn near \$500 a year on us! You could buy an Apple Mac or a hot woman for less -- I certainly would. (The Apple Mac son -- I've already got more woman than I can handle comfortably).

"I don't think anyone has spent that much on us since Mr. Carnegie gave us our free libraries, and if you care to send exact measurements I'll be happy to start a fund to put up a small statue"

[I put it around \$520 myself, not that that is something I really wanted to know, thank you. And others spend more, I am sure. But as for the Mac, I do well enough with my Air Force surplus raincoat. -aph]

"From here on down is the sort of first draft of this letter. I was going to write a lot about TAFF...UNTIL I REALISED IT HAD SLIPPED MY MIND AND WE HAVENT EVEN VOTED IN THIS ELECTION YET!!!!!! I will scurry around now and find voting forms or I will be shunned by trufandom when the list of voters is eventually published

"Here I am, Founder, Taff sage and Militant and I can make a cock-up like that.

"Fortunately TAFF is something we fully agree about....

## I love saffron vodka - it's like free-basing crocuses!

"Joseph [Nicholas] is quite right. The Brit end of TAFF IS largely 'owned' by fanzine fans. If you think about it, we could hardly arrange it differently if we want to keep it viable. Without fanzine fandom there would be no contact between European fandom and US/Canada fandom.

"How would you publicize TAFF without fanzine fandom? It was set up as a fanzine 'thing' and has, almost always, operated successfully within these limits the only time that fanzine fandom didn't more or less control it was when Bob Madle won with only one Brit vote to his credit. Nobody knew him. And nobody knew the horde of unknown US people who voted for him. Since then the rules have been tightened up. You now need 20% of the votes in the 'host country'. This ensures that you are, at the very least, known to the people who are going to welcome you, and, hopefully, will have friends that you've made by correspondence who will make your visit far more memorable than it would have been otherwise.

"And, let's be honest, we have another problem -- European fandom shares so many languages that within fanzine lines of communication and the burgeoning interest of continental European fans, who will eventually outnumber British fans, you could well finish up with a candidate with personal communication problems.

"(For a very similar reason I never stood for TAFF myself. I'm deaf and a poor lip-reader. It wasn't until the Minneapolis Corflu when Geri and the others paid my fare, reassured and cosseted me, printed scrap pads so that everyone could write things down for me, and gave us one hell of a fine time, (are you still anchor man for fannish periods?) before we traveled across to Seattle -- and don't you dare knock Amtrak in my presence, I thought it was a marvelous railway -- where Suzle and Jerry and a crowd of others were waiting for us at the station all ready to start another terrific week for us.)

"I know there is talk of changing the TAFF rules again, but, like you, I don't think they need changing. If it works -- and it does -- don't fix it."

[Hmmm...you must be basing this assumption on a small cross-section of my commentary on TAFF. I still feel that the only real change that cries out to be made in TAFF is to relax the destination requirements to allow candidates options besides the Worldcon and Eastercon. Imagine a trip in the summer, that took in Readercon, Archcon, Midwescon, Westercon, or other regionals where friendly fans reside - wouldn't these represent better opportunities to really meet fans than the faceless throngs of Worldcon? Wouldn't these conventions make more note of the delegate, and expend more of their resources to support the trip and the fund? The next time the Worldcon is being held in Europe or Australia, and the TAFF race is scheduled to come to America, I'd like to see the administrators consider that course of action as an alternative to postponing the race altogether.

While we are on the subject of TAFF, here's a proposal for change from a former administrator, AVEDON CAROL (say it with me: 144 Plashet Grove, EastHam, London E6 1AB U.K., e-mail at [avedon@cix.compulink.co.uk](mailto:avedon@cix.compulink.co.uk)):]

"I actually don't think anything has to be done about expanding TAFF's field. What I would like to see is something that more firmly stresses that an interest in going to see an exotic foreign city is not sufficient reason to stand for TAFF, nor is it simply a reward for the fact that you've been nice to your friends, nor is it a beer-tasting excursion.

"Of course, this might be helped if certain TAFF platforms indicating that the candidate thinks he is really too good for the fans in the other country would be considered de facto inadmissible.

"I suppose it would be a bit much to create an official TAFF entry form for candidates that says: If you can't honestly say that fans on the other side have expressed an interest in meeting you, and that you are genuinely interested in meeting them, you shouldn't be standing.

"But, in view of the fact that we have eliminated the write-in, I don't think it would be amiss to have a TAFF entry form, that the candidate would have to request from the administrator, fill out, and return with the fee and nominations as a single package."

[I don't think this is a bad idea, but I'm not exactly sure what purpose it would serve. After all, even a moose can be trained to fill out complicated insurance forms.

It occurs to me that one of the main problems with our on-going discussion of the pre-requisites for standing for TAFF is that it has focused on the personal motives and attitudes of the potential candidate. When I first heard about TAFF, I thought it was an interesting phenomenon and quietly imagined what it would be like to take the trip. But I never seriously considered standing myself until after numerous people had suggested it to me, without any especially vigorous prodding from me. I should hope that long before one began the process of actually soliciting nominations, or considering what they would say in their platform, one would have a sense that other people would actively support their candidacy, including people in the "host country."

And now a few words from JOSEPH NICHOLAS (15 Jansons Rd., South Tottenham, London N15 4JU U.K.)]

"Thank you for Apparatchik 24 and 25, and for printing such a large chunk of my letter (but no thanks for mistaking my emphasis: I wasn't suggesting that TAFF should be broadened, only the disjuncture between pretending that it's for all fandom while actually aiming it at one particular subset of fandom) - but, oh dear, you have moved me around the corner into another house entirely! See address on label above; see address as printed in issue 25; spank self soundly!"

[Ah, the return of the English malady...seriously, I imagine my misinterpretation of your thesis had more to

do with my own fear of such "broadening" than it did with your letter. It's one step in "improving" TAFF that I hope we can avoid.

Now, a very welcome letter from everyfan's best friend, WALT WILLIS (32 Warren Road, Donaghadee, Northern Ireland BT21 OPD), who finally got his great big bundle of Apparatchiks:]

"Apparatchik 11 to 25 have arrived safely, in two installments, and have been read with avid interest. I shall try to make sense of the various marks I have put in the margins.

"Boggs' letter is the first mention I have seen of fanzine readers in Ulan Bator. The way things are going we will no doubt see a nomination for Ulan Bator as a possible Worldcon site.

"Thank you for the much needed illumination on the baseball strike. We only get a superficial treatment of the dispute in the media over here, and you make sense of it for the first time.

"I was interested to read Don Fitch's reference to Tey's Daughter of Time. It seems to be one of those books that influence fans. I know it fascinated me, so that I remember it vividly though I last read it some 30 years ago. Possibly because it has overtones of time travel.

"In #18 you reprint excerpts from D. West's attack on me, reprinted in Fanzines in Theory and Practice. I was surprised to see that even after all this time it still had the power to hurt. I think it's because it seems so unfair that there's nothing I can offer by way of defence. How can you rebut an accusation of insincerity? It's no good my saying that I have never written a word I did not believe to be true, which I believe to be the case, because it will immediately be dismissed as just more self-serving.

"Your account of Mike Resnick's conversation at the Niagara Convention was illuminating in a depressing sort of way. Your other comments, on Joe Maraglino and Linda Michaels, are welcome too in a more congenial way, as supplying a corrective to the Ted White criticism of both.

"Your denunciation of the Republican view is the first I have seen of reasoned Democratic opposition to the current Gingrich proposals, and very powerful it is too. I would have expected something more like this from the President.

"I was very taken by your description of Mimosa looming on the horizon, eight hundred feet tall and blazing trufannish vigor like a flaming oil well. It reminds me of my own description of Patrick Nielsen Hayden's prose style as "like an aircraft carrier steaming through a war zone, discharging flares and missiles and VTO aircraft in all directions." Yours is better though. "[I'm glad you liked it, although I did feel like it was perhaps an inopportune metaphor in view of the fire which the Lynches suffered right about the time I published the review. Fortunately, they and their fanzine collection seem to have emerged unharmed....

It had occurred to me that you might not be all that pleased to see Don's criticism, however ancient, reprinted once more. I hope that it comes as some comfort to you that latter-day opinion seems to universally regard it as having been a ridiculous assertion.

The proposed Ulan Bator Worldcon loses points for remoteness, but perhaps makes up for it by being in a relatively peaceful part of the region. The rest of western and central Asia don't strike me as being places I'd like to visit right now.

Also covering sundry issues is ROBERT LICHTMAN (P.O. Box 30, Glen Ellen, CA 95441), who opines:]

"No. 23: While I agree with you in the bit Jeanne quoted about needing 'some overture. some moment of contact...before I can consider a person a fan,' I also agree with her that such a viewpoint is too solipsistic from the TAFF-administrator point of view. the definition she and Abigail are using, so she says, for the '95 TAFF race is the same one I used during my tenure, and the only reasonable one for TAFF to subscribe to since it professes to include all fandom. And I don't think you *can* exclude those 'who just go and wander around without interacting with other people or doing anything beyond passively *watching* the convention.' This would describe a certain number of extremely shy, socially retarded, teenage neofen whose early convention experiences were just that but who considered themselves fans for all that and who went on to greater things fannishly speaking."

[Those fen who go on to greater things will see my attitude change and action taken to redress my hasty judgment. I'd reckon they make up a tiny minority of people idly drifting through a big convention. But keep in mind that the only real result of this prejudice on my part is whether or not I'll offer someone a copy of my fanzines. TAFF has a very different set of requirements, and I think I'd probably apply Jeanne's criteria if I were saddled with the task. Back to you: -aph]

"Editing letters. Of course I will correct spelling and obvious bad or awkward grammar, and I'll sometimes omit a lengthy digression if I need the space provided that it's absence doesn't detract from what remains. But beyond the above I'll only delete whole sections of a letter rather than take a little bit of everything. I believe in presenting the writer's whole thoughts on a subject. "No. 24: Yes, there were some pleasant surprises in the latest Mimosa, but by and large I'm afraid I agree with much of your commentary on the zine. I find myself skipping over the long reminiscences by some of their contributors; maybe over time it's become too much of a good thing. I certainly have no objection to fannish reminiscences; even at their dullest, they are grist for future fan historians. And no one can say the editors aren't successful in their efforts to attract such writing. So far as the Lynches' editorials are concerned, I've always felt they were among the weakest parts of the issue. Nicki is much more forthcoming and fleshes herself out more in her SAPSzine. If you didn't know Dick and Nicki

FANZINE COUNTDOWN, JANUARY 27TH TO  
FEBRUARY 9TH:

#1: Bento #6, David Levine & Kate Yule [Probably the best issue yet, with unexplained alternative-history fanfic (a genre I thought I had the corner on) among four very solid pieces by David, interesting personal writings by Kate and a lively lettercol.]

#2: Maverick, dated February 1995, Jenny Glover; [No single piece in this zine, even those by Vin & Clarke and Dave Langford, or Dave Mooring's meditation on Robert E. Howard is especially riveting, but the effect as a whole is that of a perfectly-satisfying genzine. Good to see material by Lynne Anne Morse and Jan van't Ent, as well as Scott Patri, whose Zero-G Lavatory was one of the most thoroughgoing crudzines of last year, but whose persistence in sending material to other people's fanzines bodes well for his prospects of improvement.]

#3: Project Z #2, Luke McGuff. [Some very good essays by Luke here, which I can do no justice in summary. Strongly recommend you send trade or \$1.00 to him at Box 31848, Seattle, 98103-1848]

#4: Ansible # 91, Dave Langford. [An especially pithy issue from Dave, including Scientology-bashing, the identity of the mysterious prankster "Rachel Oliver" revealed, and a good idea passed on from Bob Shaw (recovering from exploratory surgery, and let us beam our best wishes his way), namely, sending spare SF books and mags to Yuri A. Mironets, Oktyabrskaya St. 2, Apt. 15, Vladivostok, 690 000 Russia, an English professor with no English-language books to work with.]

#5: File 770 #107, Mike Glyer. [Awfully good for fifth place, but it was a good fortnight. Mike exorcises his anxiety over Langford's primacy in the newszine firmament by producing a one-page parody; "Ansifile," which manages to contain most of the substantive news in the entire 31-page issue. Good Winnipeg coverage by four authors, not all of whom are SMOFs or Worldcon Apparatchiki.]

ALSO RECEIVED: De Profundis #274, Tim Merrigan for the LASFS; Detours #52, Russell Chauvenet; Machinations #18, The Seattle Cacophony Society; MSFire V.1, #1, Henry Welch for MSFS; PegaReport #29, Scott Nickell, for Pegasus Games; Situation Normal, dated Feb. 1995, Joyce Katz for SNAFFU. All appreciated muchly, thankee.

you wouldn't get much of a sense of them through their editorials. I'd like to see them get down a little bit.

"Not wanting to get sucked all the way back into the maelstrom of discussing fan funds, let me only say that I agree with Vicki Rosenzweig's observation that 'fan fund voters should be people who care about the result, not merely be voting in order to make some odd point about having the right to vote.' Right on!"

[Now, a digression on another recent topic by TRACY BENTON (3819 Monona Drive # 19, Monona, WI 53714):]

"Thanks for the Cobb review. Sounds completely opposite of the hideous Tom Selleck vehicle Mr. Baseball, which Bill and I rented recently. While both movies are about unlikeable ballplayers, at least Cobb has the excuse of grounding in reality. Mr. Baseball is just another ugly-American-in-Japan story and I was too busy being embarrassed to even dislike the guy.

There aren't too many baseball movies about people, really. Some combine interesting characters and the games successfully, like Bull Durham, but mostly they spend their time at the ballpark, and that's OK. I like Major League and Field of Dreams, although The Natural is flat. However I avoided Angels in the Outfield like the plague!"

[Hmmm...character-driven baseball movies. As you say, a pretty small sub-subgenre. The 1971 production of Bang the Drum Slowly, with Robert DeNiro and Michael Moriarty, comes quickly to mind, and I recommend it as one of the best films ever made with baseball as its background. Many other films present baseball itself as a character, often the most dominating personality in the film; Field of Dreams falls into that category. But baseball is a communal endeavor, and as such it naturally lends itself to ensemble story-telling. For sheer number and variety of characters, you can't beat John Sayles' Eight Men Out, an unjustly neglected film with a marvelous cast and wonderful period look. It's still my favorite baseball movie, although I do have a perverse affection for the old William Bendix vehicle Kill the Umpire....

That's all for now, folks. Next time, I'll be back with a long letter from Pamela Boal that I can't fit here. Thanks for continuing to correspond so faithfully -aph]

APPARATCHIK is the Porridge Bird of fandom, doomed to extinction by its inexplicable drive toward aerial reproduction. 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 field guide to the Late Devouring Period. Lifetime subscribers are Tom Becker, Don Fitch, Lucy Huntzinger, Luke McGuff, Janice Murray, Alan Rosenthal, Anita Rowland, Karen Schaffer, Geri Sullivan and Art Widner.