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APPARATCHIK

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This is the sixty-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. Correspondence can be addressed to Victor at 403 1/2 Garfield Street S., #11, Tacoma, WA 98444, and via e-mail at Gonzalez@tribnet.com. See the back page for availability and trade info, including the addresses of our British and Australian mailing agents. This is Drag Bunt Press Production #263. **Apparatchiki:** Steve Green, Irwin Hirsh, Carl Juarez, Lesley Reece, Martin Tudor & Pam Wells. Don't take chances: swallow it now!

Issue #61, June 7th, 1996

Don't think I won't hit you

Compiled by Andy Hooper

ALONG WITH ALL THE GRIM HEADLINES that we've been forced to write this year, there have been a few happy notes; and how careless of me to have forgotten such a big one as this: Janice Eisen has written to point out that we never printed the announcement she sent us, of the birth of her son Alexander Lawrence Meltsner, born on

March 26th in the Memorial Medical Center at Johnstown, Pennsylvania, and tipping the scales at 7 pounds, 9 ounces, and 20 inches in length. Sounds like a keeper right there, but Janice relates the news that Alexander has become "the incredible growing baby," and should top 18 stone by next December.

Three-time Hugo nominated fan-artists Diana Harlan Stein and her husband David M. Stein are also expecting a new arrival on or around the 18th of June.

Our resolve to publish some remembrance of the late Redd Boggs has been diluted by the continuing series of deaths in fandom. Robert Lichtman mentions in his letter that the upcoming issue of *Trap Door* will feature an obituary, as well as Redd's last "Penseroso" column. Rather than duplicate much of the same material here, we direct our readers to Robert's fine fanzine.

Lichtman also reports that plans are afoot for a Boggs memorial collection, being assembled by Bill Donaho and Dave Rike: watch this space for more details.

Victor reports that Wil Tenino had the fortitude to make a brief appearance at the recent Vanguard party, and announced he'd gotten a new job with another Seattle software startup. This makes four in two years, for anyone who's counting; his collection of T-shirts, coffee mugs, Ship-it plaques and de-gaussed key cards is one of the most impressive in Christendom.

Anyone reading this fanzine who is going to Westercon 49 in El Paso this July, please contact me: the fan program has holes big enough to drive a hummer through, and time grows short.

Charles Burbee, 1915 - 1996

Jon Pertwee, Willis Conover also pass away

This most difficult year for science fiction fans continues with yet more bad news. Charles Burbee, a pioneering figure in the creation of fandom's modern identity, passed away on the morning of May 27th, 1996. He had just turned 81 on April first of this year.

It would be unseemly to compare the "magnitude" of loss represented by each of the famous writers who have died this year, but Burbee's death does bring a feeling of climax to the sequence of recent departures. In terms of his influence on fandom as a whole, Burbee's wit and energy makes him one of the most charismatic and irreplaceable figures in fannish history. While it was not always comfortable to be on the receiving end of Burbee's robust humor, much of fandom found his work irresistible: it is quite impossible to imagine how fandom could have evolved in the same direction without him.

Over the past two weeks, two other notable figures in SF have died: The first was Jon Pertwee, most noted for being the third Doctor Who, and sometimes called "The Poor Man's Danny Kaye." Pertwee brought a certain goofy verve to the part, although he was criticized for applying too many karate chops. His character was an essential step between the crotchety Doctor of William Hartnell and Patrick Troughton and the Muscular time-lord of Tom and Colin Baker.

Even more commented-on is the loss of Willis Conover, most famed as being the host of *The Voice of America's Jazz* show throughout the 50's and 60's, which made him one of the best known fans in the world. He was also a founding member of FAPA, a correspondent of H.P. Lovecraft, and a popular author in several fields. All these, too, will be missed.



IN THIS ISSUE: After the summary of recent events of interest to fandom, turn the page for an excerpt from Robert Lichtman's editorial for the next issue of *Trap Door*, bumped by his obituary for Redd Boggs. Andy then bends your ear at length in regard to the recent 20th anniversary WisCon. Letters follow from H. Wright, R. Lichtman, J. Kaufman, T. Harvia, A. Svoboda, G. Costikyan, G. Flynn, V. Rosenzweig, and D. Rike. Then Victor presents an overview of two pulse-pounding days at the paper. His lizard-logo is by Lesley. As always, the issue concludes with a series of fanzine reviews by Andy. Oh, and the illo at left is by Ian Gunn — the fact that we are running a mass-distributed illo should highlight our need for new art, if we are to become the full-service fanzine that our destiny mandates.

Apparatchik — the fanzine that flames the fans of discontent.

Doorway Outtake

By Robert Lichtman

IN THE NOVEMBER 1995 MAILING of the Fantasy Amateur Press Association, a most amazing item appeared: *Down the Science Fictional Trail With Oklahoma's Dan McPhail*, a 27-page

essay by Sam Moskowitz purporting to be a memoir of the late McPhail, a FAPA charter member and co-inventor (with Jack Speer) of the mailing comment. For this alone, all of fanzine fandom owes a vast debt to Dan McPhail, yet as some fanhistorians are fond of saying, he is largely forgotten today.

Because I tend not to read FAPA mailings in a very timely way, often stretching the experience over several months, it wasn't until early March '96 that I got around to Sam's lengthy essay. I had saved it almost for last so I could devote time to leisurely reading, and I approached it with anticipation, looking forward to learning more about McPhail, who always struck me as a true original.

Instead, I was stunned at the left turn the account takes about a third of the way through. From a fairly straightforward introduction of McPhail and his early fan activity, it abruptly shifted into a rather lengthy and occasionally vituperative rehash of Sam's interactions with Don Wollheim and some of the other Futurians way back when. (Don gets absolutely no credit for moving forward from the "communist" views of his late adolescence to a lengthy career largely devoted to advancing science fiction.) These were situations in which McPhail played no direct role, yet Moskowitz jumps via the hook of McPhail's place in the FAPA firmament during that organization's infancy (he was vice-president during FAPA's first year) into a full-scale posthumous attack on Wollheim. After I finished reading it, I thought Sam's article was worthy of a note in these pages to alert non-FAPA fanhistory buffs of its existence.

Clearly, reading it had disturbed me (particularly the intensity of Sam's attacks on Wollheim), so when fellow FAPA David Bratman called a few days later to enlist my support for next year's Corflu (Pacifica, March 14-16, 1997, y'all come!), I asked

him if he'd read Sam's article about McPhail. I think I was looking for confirmation I wasn't out in left field with my assessment. Well, no, he'd sort of skimmed it. Go back and check it out, I suggested: you'll find it quite a piece of work.

Several weeks later, a letter from David contained the following paragraph: "The Sam Moskowitz piece on Dan McPhail you mentioned when we talked on the phone is quite a document, all right. Poor Dan, reduced to a supporting role in his own obituary so Sam can fight the Michelist Wars all over again. I just hope that 45 years from now nobody is trying to refight the TAFF wars in the obituaries of those us as peripheral to that as Dan was to this. I noticed that Sam felt put out because Dan's heirs did not send him any info. If they'd read what he'd written, I can understand why. There's remarkably little on Dan's personality or the contents of his fanzines, things Sam should know."

I'd intended to comment along similar lines, but David said what I had in mind so well that I asked for permission to quote him instead. I felt cheated by the turn Sam took, having expected (or at least hoped for) something more along the lines of *Years of LIGHT*, a book on pioneer Canadian fan Leslie Crouch and his long-lived fanzine. That sort of essay remains to be written so far as Dan McPhail is concerned.

[Copies of Moskowitz's essays are available for \$3.00 postpaid from its publisher: Norm Metcalf, P.O. Box 1368, Boulder, CO 80306-1368. Moskowitz has also resumed *The Immortal Storm*, of which installments have appeared on the two most recent issues of Fantasy Commentator. For availability and price, write to its editor, A. Langley Searles, 48 Highland Circle, Bronxville, NY 10708. The book on Leslie Crouch, which includes a full reproduction of a 1948 issue of *Light*, is \$14.75 (US) postpaid from Dundurn Press Group, 2181 Queen St. E., Suite 301, Toronto, Ontario, M4E 1E5 Canada.]



"If you ever conduct a blitz, don't be a gentleman."

How I almost went to Wiscon 20

By Andy Hooper

I SUPPOSE PEOPLE WILL SAY it's what I should have expected, but I still find myself slightly chagrined to have flown all the way to Wisconsin and back to do the same things I do here in Seattle: produce more fanzines.

Not that these could have been mailed in: the fanzines in question were various issues of the daily newszine for Wiscon 20, an ambitious convention which seemed to need an ambitious fanzine to cover it. Jeanne Gomoll placed the task in my hands last winter, with the caveat that I come up with a new name to replace *The Mad Moose Gazette*, which had announced WisCon's approach and events thereat for over a decade. Jeanne has never liked the name, she confided in me, and since she ruled over Wiscon 20 as a benevolent dictator, changing it was just one of the many things on her list of long-delayed things to do.

I struggled for several months trying to come up with something that would reflect Wiscon's focus on feminism and women writers in SF, but that would have a slightly fannish color to it, and be right for a daily newsletter — "A Zine of One's Own" came and went with little serious consideration, as did "The Yellow Hallpaper." And many names even more hopelessly wet paraded by for months, until I finally happened to stumble across a copy of the cookbook *Her Smoke Rose Up From* supper assembled as a benefit for the James Tiptree Jr. Memorial Award. The Tiptree

award is given each year to an outstanding work of science fiction concerning gender, and was founded at Wiscon 15 by Pat Murphy and Karen Joy Fowler. This year, the award was coming back to Wiscon after two years at Readercon and Potlatch, and it struck me that it would be appropriate to reflect that in the newszine somehow.

I hit on the idea of trying to warp the title of a story by Tiptree in a similar fashion as the publishers of the cookbook, and went hunting for a likely candidate. As it turned out, I found five that I really liked — "A Momentary Taste of Being," "And I Awoke and Found Me on the Cold Hill's Side," "Slow Music," "We Who Stole the Dream," and "The Last Afternoon." These were just slightly warped — "Being" became "WisCon," "Cold Hill's Side" became "Collating Rack," "Mimeo for "Music," "Dream for "Zine," and I left "The Last Afternoon" alone — it seemed perfect as it was. So each issue of the daily ended up having a different title, and people fell back on calling it "The Zine Formerly-Known as the Mad Moose Gazette."

Steve Swartz lent his computer and printer for the use of the publications staff (and we beat that printer like a rented mule — it must have cranked out over 650 sheets that weekend, and never jammed or fouled once), and SF3, the umbrella group for Madison fandom, lent their recent-vintage Gestetner mimeograph and e-stenciller, plus the technician who works with them most often, Jae Leslie Adams. Of all the mimeographers I have ever seen, and they tend to be a stolid, forgiving lot, given the

frustrating nature of their charges. Jae was the sunniest, calmest, and most patient that I have ever seen. Despite the friable nature of our deadlines, and the extreme stencil-wrinkling plague we suffered on Saturday, she was always pleasant and entertaining to work with. Plus, she knew what she was doing; being able to produce such clean copy, under the relentless pressure of time, is a skill that could take a person far in fandom.

I have to admit that, even though I had to spend most of the time in the Publications room, I had a wonderful time. Every now and then it was possible to slip out for fifteen minutes and into a panel or party. . . and I had set the publication schedule so that we would start by doing three issues in the first 36 hours, and three the last 84, so as productivity and attention span rapidly waned, so would the amount of material we had to produce. I had planned on five eight-page issues; we ended up doing a total of thirty pages in five issues, and these seem to have slipped badly in level of discourse as the amount of parties we had attended increased over the weekend.

Given the amount of programming scheduled for the weekend, I almost felt fortunate to be missing most of it; otherwise, how was one to choose something? There were well over 200 program items, and during some afternoon hours, ten separate tracks. The amazing thing was that even with so many events, there were fewer cancellations than at any other full-size con I've attended. The organizers — Swartz, Spike, Jane Hawkins — did an amazing job, so that the only real complaints heard came from people such as Patrick Nielsen Hayden, who showed up at the end of the con critique and berated them for scheduling too many items.

Another remarkable feature was the fan/pro ratio, which I would say was about 3.5 to 1. Women SF writers from four continents were in attendance, and through the largesse of Wizards of the Coast, who donated the airfare, the convention was able to invite back every Guest of Honor from the past 20 years. This was in addition to this year's guests, Ursula LeGuin and Judith Merril, who were quite a draw themselves. Anyway, it was kind of fun to watch little knots of women gathering and beaming at one another, looking around the parties and seeing that *they* were in the *majority* — not something which women get to experience at many science fiction conventions.

I wanted to try and make the newszine look like a real fanzine, and present more involved material than the usual party times and restaurant reviews — although we slipped in a lot of those as well. A few weeks before the con I asked people to write pieces about their memories of Wiscon, or the 1978 ERA Boycott, or noted female fans — and to my surprise, some of them came through! Geri Sullivan wrote a nice essay on "Lee Hoffman Through the Decades," Kate Schaefer wrote something about 1978, Terry Garey wrote about early WisCons, Greg Rihn described Wiscon opening ceremonies of the past — some great stuff too, more than I ever expected. And people showed up at the con ready to write — Ian Hagemann threatened to take over the whole zine — and continued to submit material throughout the weekend, once it became clear that we were going to stick to our schedule. I struck a hopelessly sercon note, trying to discuss the Tiptree stories the titles were drawn from, and I hope I didn't embarrass myself to thoroughly. We even had historic reprints — stuff from old Wiscon program books, and a piece by Susan Wood from 1978.

We'd do our best to lash out clean copy (and my one regret is that the proofing process got a little truncated under deadline pressure, leading to some columns which just stopped in thin),

coax the mimeo into not eating ten pages at a time, and would dash out into the registration area with the piles of damp, aromatic pages, and dragooned anyone who didn't move fast enough into collating and stapling. Word would spread quickly over the floor, and a steady stream of people would creep up to the table as we worked and snag a copy. I got a feeling of weird exhilaration each time we finished an issue, and found it especially powerful to walk into the main ballroom just prior to the Tiptree Award Ceremony, and see nearly *everyone* there reading *We Who Stole The Zine*.

As for the convention itself — well, someone who was there could tell you more. Some highlights including Jeanne Gomoll nearly forgetting to introduce this year's GoHs during opening ceremonies, until Carrie remembered and I reminded her; Ellen Klages' usual bravura performance as auctioneer in the Tiptree Award Benefit, following which she literally collapsed with an attack of diverticulitis and had to be hospitalized for the rest of the weekend; the Tor Books Party Saturday, hosted by Claire Eddy, Jim Frenkel and others, where I counted 41 writers at one point; the fine Minneapolis in 1973 party hosted by Geri Sullivan and Jeff Schalles; the amazing performance of Ellen Kushner and "The Tips," in belting out "There is Nothing Like a Dame," and "I Feel Pretty," during the Tiptree Awards . . .

And the reading/performance of two excerpts from Ursula LeGuin's *Always Coming Home*, directed by Don Helley and performed by an amazing variety of fans and pros. Having heard of the troubled development of the latter project, its success was even more remarkable. Once it was over, I had the strong feeling of being home-free, that there was nothing left that could keep the weekend for being the most memorable of my fannish career.

I grew up going to WisCon: the first fanzine I ever saw was a copy of Janus that doubled as the program book for WisCon 2. It was while working on the WisCon committee that I learned the folly of smoffing and other fannish power games. It was through the convention that I met the patient, generous people who were my greatest mentors in fandom, and where I made my first enemies in fandom as well. And while I've been to plenty of conventions where time-binding was on the agenda, this was the first time I've felt like I had much to offer from my own experience.

While there were plenty of familiar fans at WisCon, I also met numerous new faces eager to hear about the 20-year run of the convention, and full of energy and enthusiasm for the future as well. Most notable were a small horde of women from Australia. Some of these came in to the "Guest of Honor Showcase," a kind of low-key replacement for the art show, picked up some old feminist fanzines from the late seventies and early eighties, and by the end of the weekend they were soliciting addresses of people interested in receiving a feminist semi-prozine. I hope to get on the mailing list myself.

WisCon has traveled a twisty path in the past two decades, occasionally side-tracked into the same stuff every other convention does, but somehow retaining a unique spark of attitude that separates it from any other con I've been to. I'm very proud to say that I've worked at the only recurring feminist science fiction convention in the world, and I hope that I get a chance to go attend more frequently in the future.

[Most North American Apak readers have already received the daily newszine from WisCon, and Australian and UK readers who trade with us will receive them soon. If you haven't gotten a set, and would like one, write me for details.]



Our work here is done, Senator.

AND NOW, YOUR LETTERS:

[APH: I'm happy to lead off with a first time LoCcer, and a famous one, within a certain twisted segment of society, author and game designer (credits including *The Creature That Ate Sheboygen*) GREG COSTIKYAN (304 1/2 Eighth St. Jersey City, NJ 07302) who begins:]

'Sitting down to read issues 55 through 58 in one go. I was on several occasions moved to guffaw — particularly at the image of Don Wegars with a bullet in his shoulder, sitting down to write a story on the People's Park riot then belt down a few at the local establishment before seeking medical attention.

'I did, however, experience sever twinges of irritation at Dan Steffan's otherwise amusing account of his experiences in Britain ("Everywhere I looked I saw weird people with nose rings and funny hair — *and that was just my wife!*", very nice). I mean, the man goes on and on about how nice the Underground is, and how Americans have nothing like it, and what a wonder it is to travel by rail in the UK and how in the US the only people who travel by rail are lowlife scumsucking welfare cheats. At which I am thinking, what suburb did *you* grow up in, boychik? Today I rode the Q, R and PATH (the former Hudson-Manhattan tube), and I regularly ride the LIRR and Amtrak's Northeast corridor.

'Okay, so maybe New Yorkers aren't *real* Americans, but last I heard, they don't stop the trains at the city limits and make you transfer to large gas-guzzlers so you can sit in stop and go traffic and listen to reports about the twelve-car pile-up and sixteen fatalities on the newsradio just like everyone else in this fine, fine country of ours. Of course, when you enter Hoboken, they *do* make you remove any thermonuclear devices you may have hidden in your trunk, but that's another story.'

[VMG: Dan might have been trying to point out that, outside of New York and parts of Washington, D.C., subway travel doesn't exist. It is insane to own a car in New York; those who do often use the subway anyway. And in other parts of the country, the rail system has decayed, and only a few lines between major cities are active. If a person isn't going to fly and the prices are competitive with train fares car travel seems to be preferred.

Now, some brief comments on #60 from GEORGE FLYNN (P.O. Box 1069, Kendall Sq. Stn. Cambridge, MA 02142):]

'Apparatchik 60 received. . .

'If "unfannish" is perceived as insulting, do we need to invent additional terminology to express the concept of fannishness (whatever that may mean) neutrally?

'I don't think Mimosa has become "uncool," so much as that the competition (present company included) has improved over the last few years.

'And on the copyediting mailing list, last week someone asked for what to call the act of setting new words to an existing tune, and eight people came up with "filk," which it seems has oozed outside fandom the way "fanzine" did. Particularly striking was the (secondhand) report of someone who wrote "Christian filksongs" and was horrified to learn of the term's origin, since SF is of course the work of the devil.'

[APH: I hope it was clear that I do not myself especially subscribe to the critical straw man I put out to be pummeled in regard to Mimosa; I'm fully aware that a majority of its readership still think it is neato-spiff, and it is quite likely to win another Hugo award to prove it.

Words now from TEDDY HARVIA (701 Regency Drive Hurst, TX 76054-2807), who also questions my critical aplomb:]

'I think you hit a low point in your blunt review of Tom Sadler's *The Reluctant Famulus*. Your sharp wit came across as dull. I too would like to see Tom put more of his person and personality in his publication, but everyone doesn't have to equate fandom to life to be fannish. Tom may seem easy prey, one who will silently accept verbal wounds rather than turn on his attacker. But beware your words don't come back to bite you. I already see them nipping.

'I don't believe in the truth, especially when professed by a writer in defense of his ideas. It is the first refuge of the intellectually indolent. I still remember the radical paper that during the Viet Nam war reported B-52s bombing into oblivion a village suspected of harboring Viet Cong. Even after the facts proved to be pure prevarication. The editors stood by the "truth" of the article. Even with the facts straight, the truth is not always the same for everyone or all the time.

'Occasionally it would be refreshing to hear you guys admit that your utterances are opinions, not absolutes. Opinions are more difficult for others to assail, and you don't have to be emotional to show emotion!'

[VMG: All my words, being uttered by me, are obviously opinions. The problem people seem to have is countering my opinions with better reasoned ones. If there is such a thing as "the truth," it will be discovered through the careful comparison of arguments, not emotionalism.

A good friend suggested many years ago that I get a T-shirt made that reads, "In my opinion . . ." Since then I have concluded that all who complain that I don't present my ideas as opinions aren't really capable of answering them.]

[APH: I find people who fall all over themselves asserting "Of course, this is just my opinion" to be a waste of time. If your opinion isn't worth defending on its own merits, why should I bother listening to it? Of course what we write here is opinion; we're a fanzine of analysis, as Victor is fond of saying. And what I write about fanzines is opinion to the exclusion of almost everything else. It might be instructive to recall that whatever I said about TRF, I did relate it highly enough to spend my time reviewing it, which is more than fan editors can say.

Now, a change of address from JERRY KAUFMAN (still e-mail at JerryKaufman@connect.com):]

'Here's the official stuff: Our new address will be 3522 N.E. 123rd Street Seattle, WA 98125 and the phone number will be: 367-8898.

'We're moving on Sunday June 16th, missing the Fremont Solstice Parade, but opposite the annual Alan Baum/Donya White Solstice Party. This means that Bob Doyle, Karmic Moving Debtor, will once more miss a move. But that's not your problem.

'The new house will have a room with nice wood paneling that can double as our office and guest room. We won't have to move half the furniture out of it like we have to do here at the old place to turn it into a guest room (which has been our excuse for years for not putting up Kim Huett, etc.). After I won DUFF in 1983, I felt obligated to put up every traveling Australian for years afterward. This resulted in several delightful visits and several horrible ones. In recent years it seems like Janice and Alan have taken on all except Jean Weber and Eric Lindsay (who has a permanent reservation with Cliff Wind and Marilyn Holt). We'll see what we can do about this. (Suzle has warned me, though, about extending too many invitations. For one thing, we won't have a real bed for that room for some time.)

'I think Waxen Wings and Banana Skins should be retitled

The teeth were found, but without a head it was impossible to conclusively prove the body wasn't Belle's.

Banana Wings. Much thriftier and more obscure.

'So did you also tell Lesley about the older meaning of "sercon," that of taking science fiction and science fiction fandom too seriously, of thinking of them as possessing the power to change and improve the world, and therefore of the need to impress the world at large by wearing ties to conventions?'

[APH: Hosting fannish visitors is always something of a gamble — unless you've already imposed on them, it's hard to know what they will really want or need, and equally hard for them to know the rhythms of your life and household.

(Note we corrected your spelling of "Lesley," saving you much embara — never mind.)

DAVE RIKE (P.O. Box 11, Crockett, CA 94525) writes:]

'Unless I'm mistaken, in your obit of Bob Shaw you forgot to mention the collection of Bob's speeches published by NESFA in 1986 when BoSh was the pro-GoH at Atlanta, *Messages Found in a Oxygen Bottle*, which was bound with some fannish pieces by Terry Carr, *Between Two Worlds*. Terry was the fan-GoH for that his last Worldcon. Outside of asking NESFA I don't know where you can find copies of the book for sale.

'Congratulations on achieving your 60th issue. You keep on like this and someone will draft you to work on the daily newszine at a Worldcon someday. Mike Glycer seems to have been falling down on the job. Maybe he has found something else to do besides fanac, as the late great Charles Burbee might have suggested.

'No fan that I know of has been out gunning for Star Trek fans, nor used any other weapon against them except perhaps their rapier-sharp wits. Tom Shippey in "Burbo-Centrism," a review-article discussing some books about Star Trek that was in the 23 May 1996 London Review of Books supports my observation that Trekkers are off in their own sub-world:

'*Yet one of the peculiar features of Star Trek is that it does not, on the whole, appeal to people who actually read science fiction. The late James Blish, a distinguished author with a foot in both camps, guessed the audience overlap in the Sixties was only about ten per cent; and in their study of science fiction audiences, Henry Jenkins and John Tulloch note the continuing rejection of Star Trek by 'the male establishment of literary science fiction fandom.'*

'Hey, Kim Huett is an all-right dude! He made no mention of the US as Evil Empire, but that may have been because we were, while at a party at Alan Bostick's, on the border of the People's Republic of Berkeley. If he did I would have argued that the US and most of the other governments are mere running dog lackeys for the multinational corporations, who are as far as I can see, multicultural rather than run by one particular ethnic group or another.

'The theme of the party was to bring weird beer for Kim to sample, considering that he was undoubtedly an experienced world traveler I limited my selection to domestic US brews including some Tie Die Beer and a vintage can (1993) of Harley Davidson Beer. Someone else had a bottle of Crazy Horse Malt Liquor. This brand is no longer available since the Sioux Indian tribe claimed that the brewers were using their trademark without permission. Unfortunately I wasn't able to find the brew I consider to be the weirdest so far, Seagram's Cherry Chocolate Jubilee flavored malt beverage; this was bottled in California, tho I believe Seagram's is a Canadian corporation, no doubt part of what I think of as the Evil empires that constitute the ruling class of the planet at this time.

'I was disappointed that Kim had to leave so soon since I was

hoping he could come up and stay with me in Crockett and get a view of another side of the US. Walk down to my union hall, join in the picket line at Port Costa Materials, hang out at one of the parks in town, go target shooting at the gun club I belong to, besides checking out thrift shops and book and record shops in the area, and (of course) listening to industrial strength music on my hi-fi. Oh well, maybe next time he comes over.'

[APH: It was brought to my attention that it might not have been all that nice of me to print Janice and Alan's reactions to Kim's visit, and I hasten to point out that they and everybody else who met had generally positive things to say about him. J & A freely admit that any friction was partly their fault for not being willing to share a visiting fan with the rest of Seattle. My only problem with Kim's visit was that he gave me a cold while he was here. . . .

But VICKI ROSENZWEIG (33 Indian Road, # 6-R New York, NY 10034) seems to have liked the piece:]

'Thanks for another fine issue. The first page isn't aimless twittery: I can practically hear Andy, Janice, and Alan talking. And it might be a useful warning to anyone else who's considering inviting a virtual stranger, or for that matter an old friend, to spend 17 days in their spare bedroom.

'Irwin's column reminds me of a bit in Greg Egan's novel *Quarantine*, in which the lead character observes that he and everyone around him knew that the end of the world couldn't be happening in Australia. (It was, of course, happening all over the world, but the perception, even in Australia, was that it was somewhere else.) Americans, on the other hand, assume that everything really important will happen here: if the saucers don't land in Washington or New York, they'll land in Kansas, not in London, Nairobi, or the Amazon.

'Lesley has the basics: we write for, and publish, fanzines because we want to. My own understanding of fannishness is that it has to do with an attitude toward the audience, and a style that grows from that attitude. Gertrude Stein said that she wrote for herself and strangers; when I write as a fan, I write for my friends, and for a community of people who I might one day meet. And one of the things that defines that community is that most of the people in it write, and nearly all of them read. This sketchy definition could probably be extended to distinguish science fiction conventions from academic and business conferences: fannish activities have little or no distinction between participants and audience. This was very clear at Wiscon, where the panels were structured to encourage everyone in the room to participate.'

[APH: On that pleasant note we welcome ALVA SVOBODA (P.O. Box 10604 Oakland, CA 94610) to our pages:]

'It's taken me three or four months, but I've finally begun to adjust to the notion that I'll be receiving Apparatchik every couple of weeks for the rest of my life without having to do so much as lift my left big toe in response. I'm settling into the bi-weekly routine of perusing Apak, my sole window onto fandom just now, attempting to discern the familiarities and gradually building up a little reserve of self-consistent information solely from the reading itself. The experience is a little uncanny, hinting at the Proustian almost in that it evokes that period of several months during which my initial sense of fandom was built up exclusively out of the reading of Focal Point, a similarly postmodern newszine.

'Andy Hooper's opening remarks in #60 were brilliant fan-writing. There's a use of non-sequitarish conversation in the nest fannish humor that proves the need for this particular genre on

Moli's brought his smooth stroke to Minnesota

the planet, because to my mind it's found nowhere else, though one may suspect that Jane Austen would have been a fannish writer if she'd had the chance. Lesley Reece appears to be developing a similar talent for capturing conversation under the apt tutelage of you editor folk. For my part, by the way, I prefer both a crisp definition of genre form that might indeed exclude more serious reportage from the camp of fannish writing, and the inclusion of Victor's reportage in the zine whether or not it "qualifies." Qualifying's for horses and boxers, not people.

'Also stellar was Dan Steffan's fanhistorical loc, from its brief eulogy for Redd Boggs to its perfectly told exegesis of the phrase "he's been sick." One can't help but feel a strange nostalgia for an age when such peculiar abuses of power as that of J. Everett Osbourne, as opposed to the increasingly outright brutality four own age's conservatism. But politics aside, the economy and yet expansive style of Dan's style never ceases to astound and charm me, on occasion of exposure to some which is to say

'Thanks again.'

[VMG: "If only you knew," Lesley replies. I also appreciate your comments, although I wonder if boxers aren't also people? Or perhaps you referred to undershorts; for example, "She would have slept with me, but my boxers didn't qualify."

Now, brace yourself for another letter from HOWARD WALDROP (Box 5103 Oso General Store, 30230 Oso Loop Road, Arlington, WA 98223) — this will be on the final, people:]

'Dear Andrew and Victor:

'Either this fanzine goes, or I do" — Oscar Wilde

'Thanks for the lavender/puce/astrobright mauve Apak 60.

'Something I forgot last letter, and was reminded of by KPLU's DJ the other night: "Pennies from Heaven" is about Zeus and Danaë.

'*The Baron of Arizona*: a 1949/1950 movie with Vincent Price as Reavis, directed (unless memory has cropped up on me and it was Nicholas Ray) by Sam Fuller, so *you know* it was out of the ordinary. (Even when I was 10 years old, I knew *Run of the Arrow* was out of control . . .)

'Was going to do a western story (until Louis Lamour's *Western Magazine* went belly-up 3 months ago) called "The Cows Come Home to Roost" that points out that, although Billy the Kid wasn't Jesus (the usual iconography, e.g. *The Left-Handed Gun*, etc.), Lew Wallace was Pontius Pilate. (He was dealing with the aftermath of the Lincoln County war as New Mexico Territorial Governor *all day long*, then going upstairs at night and writing *Ben-Hur*. This is the part of the story that's always fascinated me.)

'Hope you and everybody else had a great time at Wiscon (or "Wilson" as I pronounced it in the opening ceremonies when I didn't have my glasses while doing the opening skit oh so many years ago).

'Yours in non-Eurocentric mythology, Howard.'

[APH: The Western, and the real history of the American west, have always struck me as remarkably fertile material for fantasy, and the artistic license taken with the William Bonney/Lincoln County saga over the years seems proof of that. I've been to Mesilla, where Billy busted out of jail; I can see why few had the energy to pursue him into the malpaso.

Nowhere near the malpaso is HEATHER WRIGHT (418 E. Loretta Pl. #107 Seattle, WA 98102) who taunts us:]

'Apparatchnicx! Consider yourself poc'd with a pocsard from Maui, land of geckos, weird plants, vowels and "any wave is a dangerous wave." Thank you for sending all those 'zines.

'I'd like to buy a consonant.'

[APH: So would we all, Heather. We finish with ROBERT

LICHTMAN (P.O. Box 30, Glen Ellen, CA 95442) who writes so often we might add him to the masthead:]

'Your lilac 60th issue surprised me by arriving in my mailbox so early. I'm surprising myself by having read it and stopped to write, so quickly (within an hour of receipt). Late last night I was doing my semi-annual putting away of fanzines. You'll grasp just how often it is that I can muster up the energy to open up and file stuff in every one of my many boxes by the fact that there were fifteen issues of Apak waiting to be filed.

'Meanwhile, as one of my many diversions to put my mind elsewhere than on the passing of Redd Boggs, I've slowly been repopulating the four-drawer file cabinet that formerly resided in his apartment. I think part of this is a reaction to my observation of the incredible orderliness Redd maintained in his own life, about which some more some other time. The bottom drawers have various "special publications" in them — TAFF and DUFF reports, fanthologies, the Boondoggle file, the Fanzine Index (and the Peter Roberts/Vince Clarke U.K. fmz index), Fancy II and A sense of FAPA, several fannish cookbooks, The Incomplete Burbee, an oddity like D. Bruce Berry's A Trip to Hell, and of course my bedside Fassbeinder. The top drawers are various fanzines, mostly older, I want to have better treatment than Life In A Box. This all makes me acutely aware of my desire to get all my fanzines out of boxes and into filing cabinets. Why is it, I'm wondering, that I've longtime refused to put out the chunk of cash necessary to accomplish this? Now that I can experience the ease of accessing, say, my Hot Shit file, how can I put off expanding this ease to the rest of my collection? More decorating changes may be in store for me soon . . .

'As I said in my last letter, I'm writing up Redd's final weeks and my appreciation of him in the upcoming Trap Door. There's lot's more to tell, but I'm not really up to writing about it, at least at the present time. It's still too close in time. Meanwhile, there will be some sort of memorial volume/anthology of Redd's writings; Bill Donaho and Dave Rike are coordinating this project, though I'll be providing them with much source material since I have Redd's file copies of his publications.

'In reply to Irwin Hirsh's musings in No. 60 about using retro-Hugos to "correct perceived wrongs performed in the past," it's impossible that the '93 vote for semi-prozine would be rerun since the retro-Hugos are specifically for the years before the awards came into existence. Oh, and is there any significance to Irwin's naming his column after a life form in a Phil Dick novel?

'I'm pleased to read that Tucker and Rotsler got to spend extended periods of time together over the recent Nebula weekend, and I had similar reports of Bill's being "alive and well and happily kicking" from others — including Bill himself. And I was happy to read Dan Steffan's accurate retelling of the J. Everett Osbourne incident that inspired my comments in No. 59. I would never have been so flip if I hadn't already known Bill was doing fine. And I definitely agree with Mike Glicksohn's rephrasing of the slogan. I not only followed that advice, I did it twice.

'Several issues ago, you reported on the availability of *A Load of Old BoSh* from Becon Publications' Roger Robinson. I took this cue to send away for a copy, which has now arrived and is being enjoyed. I don't know how many copies are left, but I'd encourage anyone who hasn't got one to do so before they're gone. An excellent publication!'

[WAHF: Gary Farber, Christina Lake, Murray Moore & Martin Tudor. Next time: A late (well, we found it late) letter from Craig Smith.]



Help, I've fallen, and I can't reach FI!

Autopsies and Acid: Two days on the job

By Victor M. Gonzalez
Staff Writer

IF THE NEWS TRIBUNE were a baseball team, I'd be a utility infielder. I'm often asked to play several positions, and I come into the game in the late innings a lot.

To begin with, I work Sunday through Thursday, from 2 p.m. until 10:30 p.m. Since the paper goes to press about 11:30 p.m., I often stick around until then. On a typical night, I might be asked to cover one or two straightforward traffic fatalities, cover a "hole" left in a day reporter's story, and maybe do a short feature on a school fair or handle a late murder.

It varies a lot. Some nights all the trivia can mount up until I'm working very hard. Other nights I sit with my feet on the desk, listening to the scanner and the Mariners game. Every now and then I'll get up, check the fax machine, and smoke a cigarette.

But what happened this week gave me a real sense of pride. It started slowly, but on Monday another reporter asked me to check out a rumor that something called "Blue Star Tattoo acid" was spreading through the region. It is a new form of LSD that was marketed to children as a "lick and stick" tattoo, warned a fax sent to hospitals, schools and even a veterinary clinic.

"It is a small piece of paper containing a blue star. They are the size of a pencil eraser, and each star is soaked with LSD," the fax states. "THE DRUG IS ABSORBED THROUGH THE SKIN SIMPLY BY HANDLING THE PAPER."

The tattoos are also laced with strychnine, the fax asserts, and, "This is very serious. Young lives have already been taken."

Alarm bells went off. Clearly an urban legend, I thought, and said I'd call the local hospitals to check. A spokesman for one hospital sent me a copy of the fax, and later that evening, on a lark, I used AltaVista to search the web for "blue star tattoo lsd."

I found an extensive page dedicated to the myth, and started trying to get in contact with the man who'd created it, to verify his qualifications. My editor said the story had A1 potential, so I sent copies of the same message to four email addresses I found for its creator, Dave Gross. Two bounced back Monday night. I asked the day reporter to try to find Gross.

I came in on Tuesday. The story was aimed at A1 for Wednesday, so I'd need to get all the reporting finished, and then write it by about 8 p.m. The other reporter had interviewed Gross earlier, and I sat down, called the University of Utah, and got ahold of Jan Harold Brunvand, the well-known urban legend writer.

I was lucky, the 63-year-old professor told me. He was in his office just to pack up his desk, as he was retiring. He confirmed that Blue Star was bullshit, and said there'd been a resurgence of the legend in recent weeks, including hits in Germany. He said it was one of the most common legends right now, up there with the kid-ney theft story.

In that tale, Brunvand said, a tourist in Las Vegas picks up a woman in a bar and the two go to a motel room, where the tourist passes out. He awakes in the bathtub in a post-operative haze, covered with ice, with stitches in his side. A note states that he should call 911; his kidney has been taken.

Sometimes the note says both kidneys are gone.

After interviewing Brunvand, I worked on other angles of the story. There were school principals, clinic directors, law enforcement officials and parents to interview. Some of this was very fun: I'd ask why they'd posted or faxed the flier in their clinic or school; they'd tell me they were concerned for the welfare of children; I'd tell them the flier was bullshit; they'd turn pale and say they'd rather be safe than sorry.

My editor started asking why I wasn't writing yet. About 5:30 p.m. I began, and about 6:30 I had the story half-done and went

outside to smoke. I had it well in hand, I thought; it would be a funny story on the front page.

When I walked back in the news room, my editor said, "Forget it. You have to do this now," and handed me a fax. Pierce County's director of public safety was resigning in the wake of the medical examiner scandal, and I had to produce a 20-inch story about it by 9:30 p.m. The story would take the space on the front page that had been allotted to the Blue Star story.

Heavy sigh. I hadn't written anything about this story, because another reporter normally covered it. But he was on vacation, and I raided his Rolodex and started making calls.

In short, an autopsy assistant had been fired last year for insubordination. He sued the county for discrimination, and settled his \$500,000 claim for \$140,000. It turned out that two sets of photographs had been used in the negotiations: one set, used by the former assistant, showed the medical examiner bare-chested, standing next to a stripper in a white bustier and garter belt. Various stories of "truth-or-dare," hot tubs and bared breasts came out as well, involving people in the ME's office. The other set of photos showed two regional politicians, former Washington state governor Dixy Lee Ray and former Mayor of Tacoma Jack Hyde, dead on the dissection table. These photos apparently had belonged to the autopsy assistant, and knowledge of their existence was used by county officials to lower his claim.

In the wake of all this, the medical examiner was eventually fired, and now his boss, the public safety guy, and one of the top five people in the county's executive branch, was falling on his sword. His boss, the county executive, after all, is trying to win reelection this year.

I got the story in on time, and we got it into the paper. It wasn't a bad job. When I was finished I did some more reading from Gross' web page, and then went to the local tavern.

Wednesday I came in and kept working on the Blue Star story. A librarian came up with a 1987 News Tribune story that also debunked the myth, and I found out that that story had even been quoted in a 1989 Brunvand book that called the legend a lie. The reporter who wrote the 1987 story is now the spokesman for the City of Tacoma, so I interviewed him, giving me the grist for an interesting sidebar.

My editor kept the story on A1, and I continued writing, finally filing the stories about 6:30 p.m. After that I sat around in a peaceful self-congratulatory bliss until about 10 p.m., when I checked the fax machine. The widow of former mayor Jack Hyde was going to file a \$3.5 million claim against Pierce County over the taking of the autopsy photos.

I read the fax to my editor as I walked back from the machine, and for the first time ever, he put his head into his hands. Then he and I, helped by another reporter who happened to be around working on a different story, put together a 30-inch A1 story and delivered it to the copy desk in 55 minutes. I talked, she did background, and my editor put what we gave him in some sort of order. It was high-five time when we finished, and I picked up a paper off the press when I left work about midnight: two front page bylines.

Hell, all I got Thursday was another medical examiner story — the relatives of Dixy Lee Ray were going to consult an attorney — and a man who killed his elderly mother with a knife honer. Piece of cake.



If you'd like to surf over to Dave Gross' Blue Star tattoo page, try www.nepenthes.com/tattoo/. There's other fun stuff around there, too.

Hmmm . . . I did do a glass-truck v. bridge abutment brief the other day.

FANZINE COUNTDOWN, May 20th to June 6th

1.) Fearfully Tremulous Tiggers (FTT #20), edited by Judith Hanna and Joseph Nicholas, 15 Jansons Rd., South Tottenham, London N15 4JU UK: Five utterly superb articles and a tightly-edited letter column mark the 20th issue of this most challenging of genzines. I found Yvonne Rousseau's "Cheng Ho in Australia: Some Historical Documents Investigated" most fascinating for its alternate historical complications, but close behind was Judith's breathless account of a trip that seemed to take in nearly every inch of the U.S. and part of Mexico, and in which every person she encountered appeared to be racist, insane, cryptically hostile, obese, sadistic and mostly drunk. Y'all come back now, Judith! Joseph's column "Cleopatra Grip" is a superb contemplation of the folly of the Newbury Bypass, featuring discussion of a lot of the historical processes whose product would be functionally obliterated by it — but at the end he falls back on a familiar hobby horse, the coming obsolescence of the automobile, which always sounds to me like predictions of the paperless office. And this is another fanzine that declines to fill up its interior with "irrelevant little pictures which seem intended for no other purpose than to give the readers' brains a rest between all the dreadful long words," an attitude I applaud.

2.) Crowdaddy! New #12, edited by Paul Williams, Box 231155, Encinitas, CA 92023: The absolute highlight of this issue is "A Brief History of Crowdaddy! (even America has samizdat)" by Paul, originally written for a Moscow zine called Pinoller, relating a critical piece of fan history, namely how sf fanzine energy transmogrified into rock and roll fanzine energy, and more or less set in motion the development of rock and roll journalism. The issues also features Paul diving into the new release from Brian Wilson with such paroxysms of ecstasy and appreciation that one is almost embarrassed to read on. Other good reviews, including an album of Tom Waits compositions by Holly Cole, and a helpful editorial from Paul. Trading for Crowdaddy! always makes me wish Apak was better.

3.) Plokta Vol. 1, No. 1, edited by Steve Davies (52 Westbourne Terrace, Reading, Berks RG30 2RP UK) and Alison Scott (42 Tower Hamlets Road, Walthamstow, London E17, 4RH UK): Subtitled "The Journal of Superfluous Technology." An intriguing document from what appear to be yet another clutch of relatively newish Britfans. . . but since they are all called Alison or Scott or Steve or Dave, I find it hard to keep them apart, and suspect that one or more may eventually turn out to be a hoax. No matter: here we have the classic three-column rag, blistering fast little columnettes with funny little photos and titles and fillos . . . damn, it's nearly exhausting just reading it! This seems to be thread of UK fandom from which we might eventually see new TAFF candidates emerge, as they seem to have the tolerance for fan geekery that they would need to enjoy traveling amongst American fen. Lots of in-jokes, and enough energy to propel any gormlessly cheerful US fanzine. One must suspect that it is a great shame to its culture of origin.

4.) The Best of Anzapa, Vol. 12 - 14, edited by Perry Middlemiss, GPO Box 2708X, Melbourne, Victoria 3001, Australia: More interesting reprints from an apa with a unique multi-continental membership, dating from 1979 to 1982. Some of the material featured here recounts events and personalities that one won't come across in too many reprint specials; and some things, like Denny Lien and Joyce Scrivener's respective farewells to Susan Wood, speak to larger fannish issues and ideas. Plus, the presentation is impeccable, superbly readable and attractively produced. Good work.

5.) Thyme #109, edited by Alan Stewart, P.O. Box 222, World Trade Centre, Melbourne Victoria 3005, Australia: Ah, I'm too tired from my trip to go over all of the cool stuff in this fine sercon offering yet again: but Ian Gunn threatens to break loose from his moorings and run amuck, filling all fanzine everywhere with art, art, art! Plus, where else can you read timely Australian con reports?

6.) Opuntia #28.1A, edited by Dale Speirs, Box 6830, Calgary, Alberta, Canada, T2P 2K9: I think the people who keep calling this fanzine boring (yes, I mean you Mike Sidda!) must simply be too lazy to read type as small as Opuntia features. Every time I start to think that our text is too small in Apak, I look at what Dale uses and realize we're really quite generous. I find Dale's reviews of books to be unique, and his article on the Internet is actually rather useful, and he always seems to list a few fanzines that I don't get.

7.) Pinkette #15c, written and edited by Karen Pender-Gunn, P.O. Box 567, Blackburn, Victoria 3130 Australia: Another tiny installment of Karen's GUFF report, and other light entertainment. But Pink does seem to have stalled in the mire, doesn't it? We understand, Karen, and we sympathize.

— Andy Hooper

Also Received: SAM #14, Skiffle # 1 — 3, Steve Stiles, bless his soul; DeProfundis # 289, 290, edited by Tim Merrigan for the LASFS; Challenger #4, Guy H. Lillian III.

APPARATCHIK is the Mal Henri Furcot of fandom, an armed robber sentenced to death in 1902, in the town of St. Pierre on the island of Martinique. Locked in the maximum security dungeon in St. Pierre, three stories below ground, he waited for months to have the governor of the island hear his petition to have the sentence commuted to life imprisonment. When the answer finally came, he was scheduled for execution on the 8th of May. But before the sentence could be carried out, the island of Mt. Pelee erupted nearby, inundating the town with super-heated sulfur dioxide that suffocated or incinerated every other living person. In his deep cell, Henri pressed away from the door as it grew searing hot, and waited. Over a week later, amazed rescuers freed him from the cell; he was pardoned, and fled Martinique to fade into obscurity. His survival was remarkable enough that several pretenders to the story, notably one "Ciparis" who worked for Barnum & Bailey, toured America and Europe as "The Man Who Would Not Die." ☉ Apak is still available for the usual, but note that trades must be sent to both Andy and Victor (see the front colophon for both our addresses), 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 copy of the last issue of the Intersection daily newsletter. For readers in the United Kingdom, Martin Tudor will accept £10.00 for an annual subscription, £19.37 for a lifetime sub, from 24 Ravensbourne Grove, Off Clarke's Lane, Willenhall, West Midlands, WV13 1HX, UK. Australian Readers can subscribe through Irwin Hirsh, 26 Jessamine Ave. East Prahran, Victoria 3181 Australia, for \$4.00, \$16.00 and \$26.31 Australian. Lifetime subscribers: Tom Becker, Judy Bemis, Tracy Benton, Richard Brandt, Steve Brewster, Vince Clarke, Scott Custis, John Dallman, Bruce Durocher, Don Fitch, Jill Flores, Ken Forman, Margaret Organ Kean, Lucy Huntzinger, Nancy Lebovitz, Robert Lichtman, Michelle Lyons, Luke McGuff, Janice Murray, Tony Parker, Greg Pickersgill, Mark Plummer, Barnaby Rapoport, Alan Rosenthal, Anita Rowland, Karen Schaffer, Leslie Smith, Nevenah Smith, Dale Speirs, Geri Sullivan, Steve Swartz, Tom Whitmore and Art Widner. Okay, who ordered the ML Bellyache?