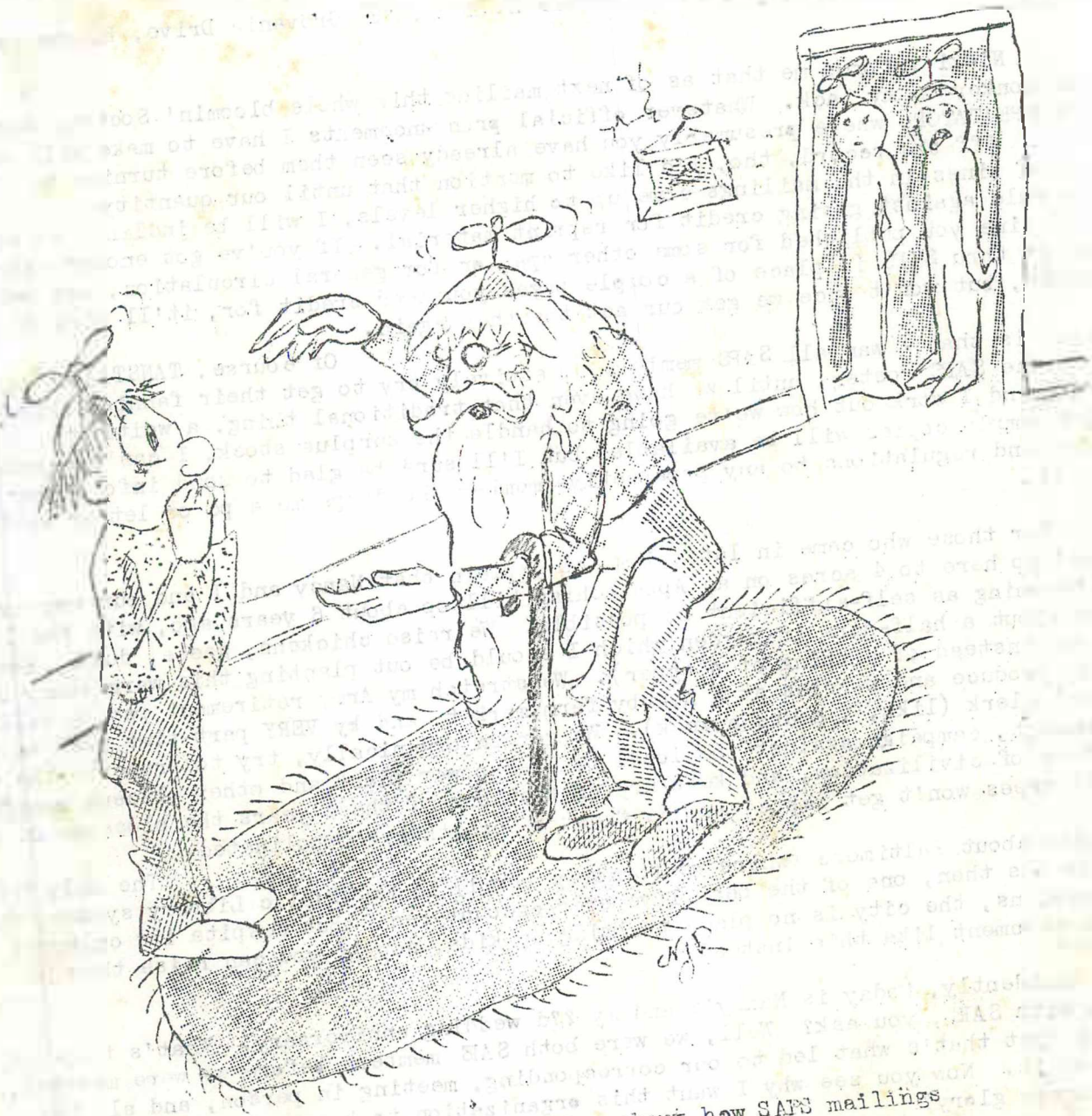


# Spacewarp 128



"There he goes again -- talking about how SAPS mailings were TH<sup>AT</sup> thick when he was a neefan....!"

SAPS 143

This disgustingly typefilled publication seems to be SPACEWARP 1 8, April 1983, intended for the 143d Mailing of the Spectator Amateur Press Society. Investigating the blank spot in the issue number above, I discern that the TWO key has vanished from this typer (I'm sure to the great relief of all regular readers of this publication who have had to put up with it's misalignment for so long). Maphaw, once I get this stencil out of it, I can turn it over and shake the vanished typeface from its innards. I hope so. I can get along without the number TWO, but it would be felicitous and comforting to have the QUOTEMARK that accompanies it. In the meantime I will substitute the questionmark (?), to the utter confusion of all concerned.

This zine is perpetrated by Arthur H. Rapp, 181 Grovania Drive, Bloomsburg, PA 17815.

Nicki informs me that as of next mailing this whole bloomin' Society becomes the monkey on my back. Whatever official pronouncements I have to make will be in THE SPECTATOR, where presumably you have already seen them before turning to SPACEWARP. Off the record, tho, I'd like to mention that until our quantity of members and of zines in the mailings come up to higher levels, I will be inclined to wink at the rule against giving credit for reprint material. If you've got enough extras of a zine you published for some other spa, or for general circulation, and want to run it thru SAPS in place of a couple pages you need credit for, it'll work AT THE MOMENT, but won't once we get our act together again.

Of course, TANSTAARFL, and the catch is that I wan all SAPS members to actively try to get their fannish friends onto the SAPS roster, until we have even that traditional thing, a waitlist. Until Nicki and I work out how we're going to handle the surplus stock, I can't promise that sample copies will be available, but I'll sure be glad to send info on our rules and regulations to any prospective member who drops me a pc or letter asking for it.

For those who came in late, I might explain that Nancy and I and our two sons moved up here to 4 acres on an Appalachian hilltop about 6 years ago, with the idea of becoming as self-sufficient as possible. We raise chickens, geese, ducks, and have about a half-acre in garden (which I should be out planting this warm sunny Good Friday instead of sitting at a typer). We stretch my Army retirement pay by selling eggs, produce and berries at a nearby farm market, and by VERY part-time work as a postal clerk (like, 7 hours a week). We garden organically, try to preserve the environment, campaign against the local nuclear power plant and other obscene manifestations of civilization, and keep hoping that one of these years the blossoms on our fruit trees won't get zapped by the frost before they get pollinated.

The only thing we miss about Baltimore (where we formerly lived) is the Public Library system, which is, or was then, one of the best I've ever encountered. But despite its cultural attractions, the city is no place to bring up kids, not if you can raise them in an environment like this instead.

Incidentally, today is Nancy's and my 27d wedding anniversary. What's that got to do with SAE, you ask? Well, we were both SAE members before we were married, and in fact that's what led to our corresponding, meeting in person, and all the rest of it. Now you see why I want this organization to keep going, and to achieve its former glory?

ART RAPP 1 Apr 1983

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\* The following 3 pages are a continuation of Mailing Comments on SAE Mailing \*  
\* 141 (Oct 1982), which I had to abandon in midparagraph for reasons mentioned \*  
\* in the last issue. Sorry for the delay, folks. Comments on Mlg 142 fill \*  
\*\* the remainder of the issue. Now if I can only devise some kind of cover... \*

...as I was saying before I was interrupted

THE COLONIAL COMMENTATOR 3 (Edmonds): Your house extension seems to have worked out better than ours as far as crifanac goes. When we added one, five years ago, we included a 6x14 foot room that was supposed to hold our bookshelves and typing and mimeo equipment. Unfortunately, Nancy got to it first with her plant tables and fluorescent units for starting seedlings, so most of our books are still in cartons in the attic, and the typing and mimeoing gets done wherever in the house I can find a clear horizontal surface, which takes a bit of searching at times. Luckily my mimeo is the ultimate basic model which, with its feed and receiving trays folded up, occupies only about a "x" foot cube, not much bigger than this typer, in fact. ## Socialism: if you define it as government ownership of the means of production, I suppose Australia is more socialistic than the U.S., but if you modify the definition to government control, there's not much difference between the two countries. The U.S. government seems to prefer indirect methods. For example, the main reason for building the vast Interstate Highway system after WW II was that the Defense Department had seen how much more vulnerable railway lines were to bombing than highway networks. (It was an unavoidable side effect of the transportation policy that the highway system made truck transport economically more efficient than rail transport in most cases, thus contributing to the decline of the existing railway system, which is now all but defunct). In the case of farmers, the government seldom tells them what to grow, but it manipulates prices and subsidies so that the farmer's best hope of profit is to grow the crops the agricultural planners have decided are needed. One of the reasons why Chrysler Corporation got government guarantees of its loans a couple years back is that they have the expertise and the factories to produce military tank engines in quantity. (Incidentally, it is perhaps grounds for optimism that the government as yet hasn't come up with major subsidies for the steel industry: apparently they aren't expecting demand for full-capacity steel production for military purposes in the near future.) In general, I think any modern government has to have effective control of commerce and industry if it is to implement its policies at all. ## yet Joyner about representative government: I am reminded of two local candidates for the House of Representatives in last fall's election. The incumbent had been elected at the same time as President Reagan, and had announced at the time that his first priority as a Congressman was supporting Reagan's policies, and his second, to help the district from which he had been elected. His opponent constantly brought this up during his campaign, declaring "MY first and only priority will be to help the people of this district." (He won, of course). Assuming both were sincere, this raises the question of whether a representative to the national government should view issues from a national or a local perspective. If the latter, then it would no doubt be wise to elect the greatest con-man available, since he would probably be more talented at grabbing an adequate share of the loot for the home folks. But personally I feel there is need for statesmanship in the national government. The problem remains of finding a representative trustworthy enough so that even when you don't agree with him on some issues, you have enough confidence in his judgment to feel that perhaps he is acting in the best interests of the country as a whole. ## yet Jarog about climate: According to my old geography books, your climate in Canberra is Subtropical Humid, same as in the southeastern part of the US. (Tennessee, Georgia, Florida, and such states as that). I'm surprised that you haven't seen snow before, tho (unless you meant falling snow) since the map shows an area called Snowy Mountains just 50 miles or so southeast of you. Or were they named after a person named Snow rather than the white stuff itself?. (Speaking of snow, we just got 14 inches of it dumped on us in a twelve-hour period. Friday afternoon & night, of course (we always get our blizzards on Friday, no doubt because Saturday morning is when I have to drive from here to Riverside to keep up the traditions of the postal service "Neither snow nor rain nor gloom of night stay these swift couriers from the completion of their appointed rounds" -- it is rarely quoted correctly, most people misquote it as "swift completion" instead of "swift couriers" -- anyhow, I put tire chains on my 1966 Chevy and got to work with little trouble, passing several stuck vehicles along the way. O when will spring arrive?

SPACE WANDERER #6 (Joyner): Private enterprise in Space: In the Aug 61 ANALOG, JWCampbell noted the tremendous propaganda victory the USSR had achieved by putting the first man into orbit. He pointed out that the US Project Farside, a balloon-launched rocket probe that held the altitude record, had been two-thirds financed by private enterprise (the Ford Motor Company picked up the tab after President Eisenhower cut back the NASA budget). And he suggested that the way to beat the Russian propaganda campaign and at the same time make the US space-conscious would be for American companies to orbit advertising balloons (like Echo, but of white polyethylene, not reflectorized as was Echo, so that they would be visible with the cheapest binoculars or telescopes. "The United Fruit Company could afford a balloon shaped like a banana -- RCA could readily divert a fraction of their advertising budget to put a radio tube in orbit. The Coca Cola Company could certainly advantage (sic) from putting their familiar shape -- already known around the world -- into orbit around the world!" (Oh, by the way, the Project Farside shots cost about \$20,000 each. I guess inflation would raise that figure some these days, but surely not into the same, er, astronomical category as Saturn boosters...)

Naked ET's: But clothing is a unique human invention. The normal way a species adapts to unsuitable temperatures is by physiological modification -- like growing a hairy pelt, or a subcutaneous layer of fat. (Arctic Eskimos work stripped to the waist in howling blizzards, or plunge their bare hands into freezing salt water with no apparent discomfort. Surely that sort of adaptation is handier than having to bundle up in artificial coverings every time the temperature drops a few degrees?)

On the other hand, if you're thinking of modesty instead of protection, there's Mark Twain's observation (which I'm probably not quoting accurately) that Man is the only animal that blushes -- or needs to. Have you ever read "Ultima Thule" by Mack Reynolds? It appeared in ANALOG, Mar 61, but has no doubt been anthologized somewhere. 'Tis about a legendary figure called Tommy Paine who goes from planet to planet overthrowing governments. Lots of thought-provoking political philosophy in it (also in many other stories by Reynolds). "Test Ship" was interesting, and so true-to-bureaucratic-life. Did you get any reader feedback from INKY TRAILS on it, by the way?

ALMOST REALITY #2 (Woosley): Stereotypes: Someone (Harlan Ellison, it may have been) had a classic comment on the cast of Star Trek when it first appeared on TV: They not only combined their token black and token woman, but they made her a telephone operator as well! And some people like their stereotypes: Every couple of years the local high school board comes up with the idea of awarding school letters for scholastic achievement as well as athletics; they are dismayed to find that not only do the jocks take a dim view of eggheads invading their territory, but the academic types themselves don't particularly care to be mistaken for athletes. (Which proves, I guess, that all girls aren't fascinated only by musclemen). "The Gonzo Physicist" inspires me to wonder if the local priest, at Galileo's next confession, didn't impose a penance on him for gazing at the chandelier when he should have been paying attention to Mass.

SISU THE EIGHTH (Syrjala): Fascinating info on co-ops. Are you familiar with Organic Gardening magazine's Project Cornucopia? It's a study of the food distribution system in the U.S. Preliminary conclusions are that great savings in energy consumption as well as insurance against disruption by war or natural catastrophe would result if more food crops were grown locally rather than shipped in from out-of-state. Of course there are some exceptions: citrus would have to come from the South, for example. But it really doesn't make sense to ship lettuce from California to Maine, and potatoes from Maine to California, when they could be grown locally and eliminate the energy needed for transport.

THE BELLIGERANT BELLE, O'CO'SE! (Stefl): Teacher pay: One local school district has just agreed to a two-year contract which provides for a \$1400 pay raise (plus fringe benefits) each year for the next two years. That's about 10% per year, at a guess. Meanwhile the cost-of-living increase for military retirement pay has been cancelled by Reagan, as well as a similar provision in the postal employees pay scale. I can get along (I hope) without

a COLA increase, at least if inflation stays at its present rate, but should I be overjoyed that teachers are not required to make a comparable sacrifice, and indeed, that the taxpayers in their district will have to come up with higher taxes to fund their pay raises? The point is that any sacrifices necessary because of the economic mess the country is in should be applied to everyone -- including teachers and Congressmen. Whether teachers are worth their salaries is another question, and my comment on that would be that many are, but lots aren't. I think Howard has a good point when he says that better pay for teachers shouldn't automatically mean higher salaries for administrators. ## I think you may be confusing a dyke with a dam. The dike runs along the riverbank (I guess the Southron SAPS would call it a levee). It keeps the river in its channel instead of allowing it to spread out over the adjoining countryside, so the current runs faster, so there's a higher flood crest downstream because they get all the floodwater in a shorter period of time. Comprehend? ## Is the Red Cross blood donor program affected by the uproar over AIDS yet? According to Sunday's Philadelphia Inquirer, medics in that city are uptight because an epidemic of the disease seems to be starting there, and apparently they don't have any real clues to what causes it. Like Legionnaire's Disease (which was first spotted in the same city, incidently) all over again.

COLLECTOR (DeVore): Saw the effect of postal centralization here last week when we got that 14" snowstorm on Friday night. As I told Leigh, I (against my better judgement) managed to get to work Saturday morning (in similar circumstances last year I ended up in a ditch halfway down the mountain). But with the Interstates closed by the storm, no mail had come in from Harrisburg so there was nothing to do. (Mail a letter from Riverside to Danville, just over the bridge, and it will go into the Riverside sack, be picked up that evening by a truck from Danville, taken there and put on a truck to Harrisburg where it is sorted and postmarked, then come back to Danville the next day where it will finally get delivered.) Anyway, I suggested to Mary, the supervisor, that I take off and come back in Monday when presumably there'd be a two days' load from Harrisburg to sort (I was taking a can of heating oil to my sister-in-law the other side of Danville after work, so it didn't involve any extra commuting). But she was horrified by the idea, "What if an inspector came in here Monday and found you working hours that are on your time card for Saturday?" She's about ready to retire and is a bit paranoid about postal inspectors, I guess. At least, she's the only person around there who keeps warning everyone that they might be watching everything we do. So I spent the two-hour shift selling a couple bucks worth of stamps, sprinkling salt on the sidewalk, dusting counter tops, and such (naturally, Mary insists that you gotta LOOK busy even if you aren't), and left it to her and John to handle whatever turned up on Monday. Maybe they weren't busy then, either. The Bloomsburg carrier made his rounds Monday but all he had was 3d Class presumably left over from the previous week, so I assume the trucks from Harrisburg didn't get to Bloomsburg in time for the mail to be sorted for Monday delivery. (I hasten to assure the taxpaying members of SAPS that it is a rare day indeed that I don't spend every minute of my shift sorting mail at a frantic rate between interruptions to tend to customers at the window.

B-POD BIPED #8 (Johnson): The Bell Bend nuclear plant had an emergency drill scheduled for last weekend. They postponed it because of the bad weather. Now if they can only arrange to do that with a real emergency... ## Your accounts of your apparently hectic life are most enjoyable. ## Did I ever tell you about the time I was writing about memorable remarks and attributed "Veni, Vidi, Vici" to Julius Caesar after his conquest of Gaul? Boy, did I get straightened out on Roman history by SAPS in the next mailing!

THE NOTHING MAN #3 (Toskey): Ten birdies in June and only 2 in July? Sounds like birdies are an endangered species. ## In case you're interested in checking the library for the Castaneda expose, it's called Castaneda's Journey (Capra Press, Santa Barbara, 1976). (I finally located my library catalog, three thick looseleaf binders which had disappeared for several months). According to my records it's a 6x9 paperback, cover price \$4.95. The book itself lurks somewhere in the attic, alas... Oh, yeh, the author's name is Richard DeMille.

# THE GRIPEs OF RAPP

Thru darkest Mlg. 14<sup>th</sup> midst lakes of ink and pools of grue...

SPECTATOR 14<sup>th</sup> (Lynch): SAPS often has its ups and downs; this is obviously one of the down eras. However, it is unusual in that the slump can not be blamed on the OE, who has competently handled the often thankless job of managing this organization during her three years in office. As of this writing (early March) I knew of at least two old-time members who have reluctantly volunteered to be saddled with the OE job if necessary, so I'm confident we will pull out of this slump eventually, as SAPS has in past crises. ## Since postage expenses seem to be running about twenty dollars per mailing, \$3.00 per year dues would be more appropriate than two as SAPS dues (considering the additional income from sale of surplus bundles, the treasury should hold steady at that income level. Luckily we have enough reserve to endure a few mailings at the \$2 rate. If we can build up the membership to 25 or 30, I think \$2 dues would be adequate. Of course, if the members start turning out 30 or 40 pages per mailing, as some did back in the days when fanzine publishing was a more popular sector of fandom than it is now, our postage costs would escalate -- but of course few would object to higher dues for heftier mailings. ## There are three OE members of SAPS at the moment (Toskey, DeVere, and myself). All males, you note. It occurs to me that in past years SAPS activity often peaked during the reign of a female OE. Nancy Share was OE when we first topped 500 pages; Doreen Webbert was OE for the 900-plus-page 100th Mailing, and bundles were thick and lively during the terms of Elinor Rusby and Karen Andersen. (This has been an unsubtle Male Sapien Piggish attempt to instill into the mind of some current femmeSAP the notion of running for office next time we elect an OE).

BARSOOM #1 (Thiel): WELCOME TO SAPS, JOHN THIEL! Where did you get the classic fanzine mimeo paper? Looks like the kind of stuff I used to buy ten reams at a time by mail from someplace in Wisconsin or thereabouts, back in the late Forties. With local stationary stores asking six bucks a ream for mimeo paper that might be whiter and smoother, but no more suitable for fanpublishing than the sort you use, I often vainly wrack my memory for the brand name of the stuff I used to use. ## Racial prejudice: I have never met any Negro fans, tho I understand several have attended recent conventions. The subject was a major topic of discussion in fanzines years ago, with a number of (mainly Southern) fans defending the pre-integration culture of their area. But most fans, being individualists as well as members of a minority culture (science-fiction fandom), have a tendency to resist thinking in stereotypes, and anyone expressing racist views generally got jumped on even back in those days. And of course, there's the fact that when you carry on orfanac via the written word, you have no way of knowing what race your correspondent belongs to unless he mentions it himself. (Which somehow always reminds me of how surprised I was when I met Redd Boggs at the 1948 Torcon and found he had red hair: I'd assumed his nickname was a shortening of "Redford" or something of the sort, and had a mental picture of him as a short, bespectacled black-haired kid.) ## I hate to admit it, but for years I have had a copy of James' The Turn of the Screw and like you, I've tried several times to read it but soon gave up. Could we be clods? ## Hey, things must really have changed in FAPA if an inquiry puts you in danger of joining it! Not too many years ago it had such a long and slow-moving waitlist that most fans spent their entire careers on the FAPA waitlist and gaffiated before they ever reached the top. Could it be that ALL apas are in a SAPSlike slump? ## Your short-page format interests me. I assume those are strips produced by trimming legal length paper down to lettersize (mine go for grocery lists and scratchpaper). The question is, do you have to use a separate stencil for each one (at the current price of stencils, that makes me shudder) or have you some method of stencilling several of those quarter-pages on one stencil and then running them off on the 4"

strips? ## I think the problem with SOUL OF THE MOON is the difficulty of gathering current info on all those organizations, especially since some of them are not accepting new members and therefore aren't especially interested in providing info to the editor of such a listing. I know that I inquired about one of them and the reply I got was that there were no openings, ask again in a year or two, and meanwhile send a dollar if I wanted a sample mailing. No info about rules and requirements at all. It has been my experience that most apas will at least send you a copy of the OO when you inquire about joining, even if they don't have a membership vacancy at the moment. No wonder general fandom sometimes regards the apas as closed cliques. ## Again, welcome to SAPS, John; I can see that BARSOOM will be a valued part of future mailings...

SPACE WANDERER #7 (Joyner): A local letter-to-the-editor writer had almost as good an idea as yours about where to put the MX missiles. He suggested hauling them around on the Conrail lines that are pending abandonment in this area, hooking passenger and freight cars on behind them, and thus not only improving rail service but allowing Conrail to make a profit so they can stay in business. I was halfway thru his letter before I recognized that it was satire. ## Gov. Thornburgh has come up with an idea to ease Pennsylvania's budget deficit. He wants to issue two-year renewals of driver's licenses instead of the present one year (at double the fee, of course). His political opponents, plus the public, pointed out that this merely means there won't be any money coming in from license renewals the following year, but he doesn't seem to care. After all, that'll be after the elections. ## I've read all three of the Hitchhiker's Guide books, which the wife and kids all raved over, but must sadly report I found them merely silly. Same with Centaur Aisle. I'm not insisting that any of these are poorly-written, merely that they don't appeal to my current taste. Which is strange, since I enjoy Marty Fleischman-type humor on TV, as well as MAD-type humor in print. Another disappointment was C.J. Cherryth's Port Eternity, in which the style seemed stilted, the characters wooden, and the ending so confusing that I'm going to have to go back and read the last chapter or two over again someday in order to figure out just what happened. One vital defect was that the book is based on the King Arthur legend, and even tho I'm familiar with the general outline of that story as presented in Tennyson, from an English Lit class 35 years ago, I didn't recall the details well enough to follow all the allusions in Cherryth's story. (Either the Idylls of the King we studied was an abridged version, or Cherryth is referring to the Mallory rather than the Tennyson version of the legend: in either case she should have detailed it more fully for the benefit of readers who know even less about the subject than I do. A good story based on a classic saga or myth could cause me to reread the source, but I'm damned if I'll read Beowulf or the Odyssey or Morte d'Arthur because it is necessary to do so in order to understand what a stf novel is about. A competent author doesn't put that sort of demand on the reader, not least because reading the source is plain asking for unfavorable comparisons between the literary ability of the classic author and the stfwriter. On the other hand I just read Heinlein's Friday and thoroughly enjoyed it because of RAH's unsurpassed ability to picture in detail the future societies of his imagination, even tho in the midst of this book I knew that it was in essence a juvenile only with plenty of gratuitous sex added. About on the age level of Have Spacesuit, Will Travel or Podkayne of Mars, but with Heinlein you can ignore or excuse a juvenile plot because of his sheer genius at creating suspense and his skill at characterization. Maybe I'm being unduly harsh on Cherryth and Adams, but then, while waiting for Mlg 142 to arrive I was rereading old stfzines, and current stf faces stiff competition when it is matched against Herbert's The Dosadi Experiment or Dickson's Soldier, Ask Not. ## Incidentally, it was saddening to read those quarter-century old issues of AMAZING and GALAXY and FANTASTIC and ANALOG, despite all the sense-of-wonder evoking stories in them, because the pulp paper has deteriorated so that it is now yellowed and brittle, and tends to flake off as one tries to turn the page, except for the rotogravure sections of ANALOG, which were solidly stuck together and had to be carefully separated with a knife, not always successfully, alas. (I know the best has been anthologized, but there is also charm in the minor tales, where engineers do their math on sliderules and spacemen wonder if the Lunar surface is fathoms deep in dust. Reminds the reader how swift the changes are.

Mar 21, 1st Day of Spring... and according to the news, Detroit had 8" of snow today. It's not real springlike here, tho we did get our precipitation in the form of rain, with thunder even, and the temperature got up to 50. Owell, we had some warmer days than that last week, and I got the onion sets and sugarpeas into the ground, also the sugarsnaps and a couple rows of potatoes. Guess planting will be held up awhile now tho until the ground dries out some. Spotted a pair of bluebirds, a downy woodpecker a pair of cardinals and a robin at the Birdbath this morning (not all at once, silly) which is another sign of approaching spring. The eggplants and tomatoes Nancy started a few weeks back are 6" tall already (our solar sunporch works great), jeez, it'll be another 6 weeks before they can go out into the ground. That means, I guess, I've got to build some kind of plastic-covered cloches so they can be moved outside sooner to make room for the rest of the oncoming seedlings...

TEMERAIRE #5 (Zielke): One of the little towns you list in your working itinerary rings a faint bell: Muscle Shoals. Isn't that the site of one of the earliest TVA hydroelectric projects? Seems to me I remember reading about it in Popular Science and places like that way back before WW II. \*\* ARC Con: Biscuits for breakfast, now there's a Southern custom this Yankee would be glad to adopt. Beats ole soggy cereal anyway you look at it. Unfortunately, the only way I'd get fresh biscuits for breakfast around here is to bake 'em myself -- otherwise, the only time I get 'em is when some are left over from the previous evening's supper. I eat 'em with butter and peanut butter. Is that in accordance with Southern tradition, or would it get me lynched in Tennessee? \*\* Games: I suppose if you have a personal computer you can use Games Theory (the mathematical discipline) and maximize your strategy, or wouldn't that be ethical? Or do they work like poker, where you study your opponents in order to figure out what they'll try next? \*\* Electricity: The Public Utility Commission is currently holding hearings around the state on PP&L's request for a 40% rate increase (now that Unit 1 at Bell Bend is ready to go on line). One thing brought out at the hearings is that it won't be just a 40% increase in rate-payers' electric bills. A representative of a local school district pointed out that at least a 2-mill increase in school taxes will be necessary if the increase is granted, and the same applies to municipal taxes because they have to buy electricity for street lighting and such. Local industrial and agricultural people testified it will result in increased prices for their products. I spoke at the local meeting, pointing out that Reagan had frozen Cost-Of-Living increases for Federal workers as well as pensioners, and many workers were agreeing to contracts that cut back wages because of the recession, and a rate increase at this time would not only be inflationary, but a hardship to an area where unemployment is 75% in some areas. (No doubt the increase will be approved nevertheless). One enterprising localite is distributing bumper stickers reading SHAME ON YOU, PP&L!

ZAP Winter 8 (Briggs): We didn't get any trick-or-treaters last Hallowe'en either. I suspect the custom is dying out because of the widely-publicized incidents of boobytrapped treats. Around here, Catawissa holds a big parade on Hallowe'en, to give the kids something else to do. \*\* The local library accepts any books (hardcover or paperback). If they don't want them for circulation they sell them at an annual book sale to raise funds. That seems the sensible way to do it. \*\* The thing that worries me about the present administration is that sooner or later they will decide that the way to get the economy out of the doldrums is to get involved in a war. After all, they're too old to have to do the fighting themselves. (So am I, I hope, but my sons aren't). Someone commented about the new Viet Nam memorial in Washington that with all those thousands of names engraved on it, not one is the name of a member of any Congressman's family. \*\* I'm trying to find hekto ink because I developed a process years ago for combining mimeo and hekto to give multi-colored artwork without separate press runs for each color. And with about 1/10 the labor involved in using masks and spatterpaint, which is the only other inexpensive way to reproduce multicolor artwork. Agree that hekto for text is best left forgotten in the mists of history. \*\* I'm registered as an Independent. Unfortunately, that keeps me from voting in the primaries, which is where most of the worthy contenders for office get eliminated. Have never voted a straight party ticket in my life. Throw the rascals out (and vote a new bunch of rascals in) is my attitude.



THE COLONIAL COMMENTATOR 4 (Edmonds): Very interesting account of your travels around SE Australia. With the aid of an atlas I was able to follow your journey pretty well, even the names of the smaller towns and almost none of the roads were shown. Incidentally the forest fires in that area were extensively covered by newspapers and TV back in January or February. Disasters always interest the news media. Is drought the reason behind the dust storms, or can part of the blame be laid on overgrazing and/or plowing of lands suitable only for grazing, which was caused the dust bowl conditions in the U.S. back in the Thirties? \*\* -10°C is plenty cold enough to make you hate winter; around here it occasionally gets down to -10°C, but only for a day or two (or nights, more often) each winter. Last month (Feb) the minimum weekly average was about -15°C (17°F -- I'm converting mentally, so I don't vouch for the accuracy of the comparison). We're lucky, being on a mountain: our nighttime lows are several degrees warmer than in the valleys. Since the weather patterns sweep from West to East across the corrugations of the Appalachian range, which runs more or less North-South, detailed weather prediction for this region is mostly guesswork anyhow. There are too many local variations. \*\* Illiteracy: An article in the Philadelphia Inquirer a couple weeks ago said that if every literate adult in Philadelphia agreed to tutor one illiterate adult Philadelphian, there wouldn't be enough tutors for the job. The big cities must be getting more like jungles every year. Come to think of it, Nancy tells how she was discussing books with Mike one day when the neighbors' kid (in high school) contributed to the conversation by proclaiming that once he had read a whole book. And not long ago a prominent educational expert announced that, with TV, there is no longer an essential need for people to be able to read and write. (Of course, that was just an attention-grabber for whatever educational theory he was pushing, I guess). \*\* The trouble with having the Federal government collect the taxes (at least in the eyes of opponents of such a system) is that the agency controlling the cash can dictate standards which must be met by the States in order to qualify for their share of the funds. For example, the Pennsylvania state legislature doesn't think emission testing of exhaust gasses is a necessary part of motor vehicle inspections, but Washington withheld huge chunks of Federal highway construction funds until they gave in and passed a law requiring it, at least in metropolitan areas of the state. It's all part of the eternal States' Rights v.s. Federal control which seems to be built into the U.S. Constitution. (Does Australia have a written constitution?)

COSMIC DEBRIS 19 (Lynch): Isn't THE DARK CRYSTAL supposed to be aimed at children? Of course, that's no excuse for slow pacing, unless the producer had some erroneous notion of how quickly children can grasp an idea.

STALKING THE WILD ECLIPSE (D.Lynch): Excellent photos, Dick, even in photocopy. Too bad we don't have any colonists up there to report how it looked from the other end...

KITHARA No. 1 (Davis): WELCOME TO SASS, HANK DAVIS! with an introductory zine of high quality indeed. ## Your discussion of Blish's novels was great reading (tho I must confess I've not read them, only a couple of the stories which were incorporated into the series. But anyone who enjoys Blish and Heinlein has to have tastes in stf similar to mine, which is refreshing to find in this decadent age. Speaking of which, the Phila Inquirer book section treats stf as a respectable genre of literature, on a level with mystery stories at least. I don't know if that is true of other publications nowadays: most I've seen just seem to ignore stf as much as possible. But serious criticism of stf has its drawbacks, too, judging from a lengthy critique of Doris Lessing's Genopos In Argos, Archives, Documents Relating to The Sentimental Agents in the Veayen Empire (Knopf, 180 pp., \$12.95). (A title like that tells you already this ain't likely OUR type of stf). The reviewer seems to regard it as more a statement of philosophy than a story -- as near as I can make out it is a political satire. The critic says, "...true to her philosophy that language is a dangerous weapon, Lessing refuses to wield it against her readers. By avoiding any easy emotional hooks, such as character or plot, she insists that we respond to the novel on its own abstract, intellectual terms." Gives

any lover of stf the old urge to rush right out and get the book, doesn't it? Ech. ## The main purpose of the law is to make lawyers wealthy... you say. By a genuinely strange coincidence, we were just notified today that the law sometimes works. As readers of my last issue noted, it was somewhat truncated because I had to spend much time on an incident last January where a neighbor's dog killed or ran off two of our chickens and five geese. (We later recovered two of the geese by running an ad in the Lost & Found column -- assisted by a mention in, of all places, the newspaper's weather report. Remember I said this paper requires its meteorologist to impersonate a duck? He couldn't resist inserting a paragraph in his forecast to the effect that the missing geese were probably headed south for the winter). Anyway, we were still missing three grey African two-year old geese (females) and two Light Brahma cockerels, and the neighbor whose dog did the damage refused to compensate us for them, so we filed suit in Small Claims Court for \$150. (At the time we figured that a fair value, based on the cost of feed we had invested in them. Later we learned geese of that type are quite rarely offered for sale (just like chickens, you can't buy hens until the end of the laying season when farmers cull their flocks) and the only hatchery that would quote a price at all wanted \$105 a bird for them! Anyhow, what the case boiled down to was that we caught the dog in our yard that night, tied it to a post while we phoned neighbors to try to identify it, and by a magnificent fluke of luck I went back outside in time to see its owner untying it. (If not for that, we'd probably never have known whose it was). A few minutes later I checked the goose pen and found it empty, and hunted fruitlessly around the fields and woods with a flashlight. Next morning at daylight I checked again, found one of our six geese in the strawshed, unharmed, and one rooster dead on the boundary between our land and that of the dog's owner. So when I phoned him and asked what he intended to do about it he replied "You can't prove my dog did it." and I got on the phone to the State Dog Warden, who came out, looked at the evidence, and when the neighbor suggested the rooster had been killed by a fox told him "No, that wasn't a fox, it was a dog -- a big dog." (The dog in question is a Husky). And then he wrote him out a citation for letting his dog run loose. But there was, of course, no eyewitness to the actual killings. To cap matters, about a week later we caught the same dog in our yard attempting to dig into the duck pen, this time in daylight. I hauled him into the car and dropped him off at the SPCA where his owners had to retrieve him.

Anyhow, come hearing day Nancy and Mike and I came to court armed with all the evidence we could think of, including a map of the area concerned, and even a certificate showing that our watchdog had been spayed a couple years back, in case they wanted to blame her for luring the Husky into the yard. This was the first time any of us had ever been in a civilian court, tho I had extensive experience with military courts-martial in the Army. The other side turned up with the town's leading lawyer to represent them. (Strike One) The Dog Warden, our main hope of bringing out the facts, failed to show up. In fact, the lawyer told us, he had been called away on urgent business to Williamsport and wouldn't be on hand at all. (Strike Two).

"Are you going to conduct your own case?" the Justice asked me, and I answered "Yes, Ma'am," suddenly realizing what you hire lawyers for: so you can sit back and listen while they figure out what questions to ask of the witnesses.

First the defense produced registration papers showing the wife owned the dog (which made me extremely grateful to the lawyer we had consulted, whose only advice (aside from going to Small Claims Court rather than Common Pleas Court had been to file the suit against both husband and wife, not just the husband alone). He'd also said we would not need a lawyer -- and didn't charge a consultation fee either.) (At times during the ensuing events I recalled the old sayings, "He who argues his own case has a fool for a client," not to mention "Free advice is worth every penny it costs.") So in turn, I, Nancy and Mike took the stand and described what we had seen and done in detail, as well as presenting evidence of the value of the missing birds and the money we had spent in feeding them during their lifetimes. Defense cross-examination centered on the fact that no one had seen the dog actually chasing or attacking any of our poultry, that the dog was friendly and playful rather than threatening toward

us, that there might have been other, unseen dogs out there in the darkness, and most of all, that none of us had seen any blood or feathers on the dog's face. This was a beautiful bit of psychology -- after awhile everyone, including us, was picturing a dog that had just killed at least one rooster as necessarily looking like Dracula in a B-movie. (Later we realized that when a dog kills a chicken there is usually not even a visible wound, let alone great amounts of blood. A dog usually kills any small creature by biting its spinal cord, shaking it, and thus breaking its neck.) Luckily, without realizing its significance, all of us had previously mentioned that we had handled the captured dog as nearly at arm's length as possible because it had obviously been rolling in fresh horse manure (the neighbor keeps a couple of horses). But the defense did keep us from testifying as to what the Dog Warden had said, on the grounds that it was hearsay, tho I was allowed to describe his physical actions, where I did the best I could by describing how he had looked at the dead bird, called his assistant over to examine it also, then approached the neighbor, pulled a pad of forms from his pocket, wrote something on one, tore off the top sheet and handed it to him. I had to admit I didn't know what he had written, but I think the inference was pretty obvious.

Then the neighbor was put on the stand and testified how gentle and unaggressive the dog was, and that it had never bothered any of his livestock or poultry (a lie: we've heard from his own kids that it had killed most of his chickens and other small animals. But we didn't have any proof of that). That's where a skilled cross-examiner could have torn his story to shreds, though; he was a very nervous witness. But I didn't know how to go about it so the opportunity passed.

The defense concluded with a summary full of legal citations, including ones that supposedly indicated we had sued under the wrong law, against the wrong person, and should have filed a claim against the State instead of the owner of this dog who just happened to be in the yard the night our birds vanished (or maybe got killed by a fox). In my brief summary (I couldn't think of much to say I hadn't already said) I emphasized that we weren't accusing the dog of killing anything except the one rooster, we merely claimed his owner was responsible for his driving off the missing birds.

The Justice announced that we would be notified of her decision within 5 days, and the other side left the court congratulating the lawyer and each other on having demolished our case, while we went glumly home pointing out to each other all the points we'd failed to make.

So it was a rather unexpected and pleasant surprise to get a notice this morning that we had been awarded damages in the amount of \$172. As I said to Nancy, "Well, that's what judges are for, to listen to both sides and decide which one is lying and which is telling the truth." Incidentally, suddenly there are no stray dogs roaming around this area -- I guess the word has spread... (Now the other side has 30 days to decide whether to pay the judgment or to appeal; that'll be too late to tell you this mailing how it all comes out. Stay tuned!) If you're still with me, Hank, let me conclude this digression by assuring you that 38 is practically juvenile compared to some of the old fogies in SAPS, and furthermore, I'm looking forward to reading future issues of KITHARA.

THE BELLIGERANT BELLE, O'CO'SE! (Stefl): Maybe you can get a clearer idea of nuclear physics if you visualize it as a room full of fans. Now, of course, there will be, here and there, groups of ENF's huddled together, because they are strongly attracted to each other. Those are called nuclei. Incidentally, they come in two sexes, protons and neutrons, and when the number of males equals the number of females, the group is very stable. Drifting around the fringes are LNF's called electrons, which are indistinguishable from one another. Most of them are bored, so this is called a Bohr atom. But if an electron (or LNF) leaves one group and joins another, it changes the nature of both groups. The sex ratio will no longer be balanced, so the group will have an attraction for some other group where the unbalance is of the opposite gender. Also, if a very energetic ENF crashes into a stable group, the sheer force of his arrival may shatter

the whole group and send its protons and neutrons scattering in all directions. Maybe Jim can carry this analogy further for you... ## Another garden trick that worked for us was to take 1/2" x 1-1/2" boards (salvaged from old pallet lumber) and nail them together into a rectangle about 3-1/2 ft x 6 ft, then use six 3-ft lengths and a ridgepole to make a sort of pup tent-shaped frame, which we covered with clear plastic, leaving the ends open. These were light enough to carry around wherever we needed them, and didn't have to be weighed down to keep the wind from blowing them over, unlike square-shaped coldframe covers. They lasted about 3 years before the wood on the bottom rotted enough so they fell to pieces. (For cold nights we propped boards across the ends, otherwise the ends were left open.)

ORION RISES #6 (Woosley): Speaking of rubber-band-powered spinning space stations, I spent several minutes trying to visualize a system where liquid "falling" from the axis to the rim would drive turbines thus extracting power from the centrifugal force, but soon realized that, just as with perpetual motion gravity-powered devices on the Earth's surface, you'd need some way to pipe the liquid back to the axis. But jeeze, trying to picture the forces involved left me with a spinning brain and crossed eyes before I reached that conclusion! ## How about a TV series featuring a mad evil mathematician who dabbles in the occult? It could be called *The Witch of Agnesi*.

THE NOTHING MAN #4 (Toskey): Why not carry some sort of heating device around the golf course to warm the ball before driving it? Or wouldn't that be considered ~~gol~~ cricket? ## The trouble with unions is that they are exempt from the sort of laws that prevent employers from combining forces to achieve their ends. What is the difference between two steelmakers conspiring to fix the price of steel, and an industry union striking all the steel plants in order to force a uniform wage scale on all employers of steelworkers?

B-POD BIPED (Johnson): Busy streets after midnight -- ah, you live in another universe from mine. Catawissa has two traffic lights, and one of those is the kind that stays green for the main highway unless a car coming from the cross street triggers it. (The other is at a 5-street intersection where two state routes intersect). (They switch that one to blinking red & yellow at 11 p.m.) After six p.m., or maybe nine p.m. on Friday, the shopping night, the streets are all but deserted anyway. Even the parking spaces are mostly empty, except near the taverns, or the parking lots of the Elks Club, VFW, and American Legion. Bloomsburg is a larger town (about 10,000 pop.) and not quite that deserted, but after ten p.m. there is hardly any traffic on the streets there, either. You city slickers would think they were ghost towns. Most of the serious accidents happen on the Interstates and involve tractor-trailers. At any rate, I'm glad your collision turned out as beneficial to you as it did.

COLLECTOR (DeVore): Howard, you ought to run for a position on the Dearborn School Board next election; there might be enough other people in the community who agree with your views so you can get elected. It sure sounds like politics around there needs cleaning up. The school boards around here aren't a bunch of crooks (as far as I know), and seem to be doing the best job they can; the problem is that between the power of the teachers' unions and State regulations, they don't have much leeway to accomplish anything. ## Next time there's a big con in the Detroit area, why don't you hold a Finnish garage sale? You could turn all the old typers and mimeos and presses and whatnots into C\*A\*S\*H, thus securing your reputation as a huckster for years to come. ## Keep up the cartoon and comic strip reprints, they are hilarious.

Which winds up comment on Mlg 14? Oh, one thing I wanted to mention about the Greeks and rainbows in dewdrops... wasn't it the Greeks who liked lots of fountains in their gardens (or was that the Romans?). Anyway, before garden hoses were invented, spray from a fountain was probably the most common place to see little rainbows, and obviously those exist invisibly in the air and are only glimpsed when they happen to get wet. What kind of optical theory would THAT lead to?