

SPACEWARP

VOL XIII No. 6

SAPS Mlg 67 - APR 1964

Issue # 78

As I sit here with fingers in typer and my bare stencil hanging out, it occurs to me that I should become a crusader, and fight against some of the evil and corruption afoot in the world of today.

Too long have our leaders recklessly frittered away the funds entrusted to their custody from our hard-earned wages. No longer does a public servant blanch at the thought of ending the fiscal year with a deficit, or apologise for his unprincipled forays into the public coffers to defray the expenses of his own riotous living.

You can see an example of this sort of managerial irresponsibility spread full across page 3 of last mailing's SPECTATOR -- a decline in our reserve funds, over the space of a single mailing, of fully 3¢, mainly because the OE, instead of keeping his operating expenses to a reasonable level, such as \$1.85, allowed them to pile up to an ~~astounding~~ analoging total of \$1.88. I'm not sure what wild and extravagant junketing is covered under that catchall term of "miscellaneous expenses" but it is perhaps significant that during the very time that he was recklessly scattering the funds of SAPS right and left, the OE succeeded in dazzling one of our feminine members with his display of wealth and power (What else could she see in him?) Oh, I tell you true, things have come to a pretty pass when an OE can spend 3¢ without an accounting being demanded of him. Mainly, I'd like to know what the hell he found that only cost 3¢?

Well, I've decided not to have mailing comments this time, mainly because after reading SLUG I'm too weak from laughter to type any. Hoohaw, dat Wally Weber he funny.

Ole-time SAPS, at least, will remember that fifteen years or so ago Bheerfandom was a popular sideline of science-fiction fandom. At times since then I've crusaded for the preservation of this fad, primarily by illustrating beer labels in SPACEWARP, or better yet, by including samples in 5x5, the CAPazine whose small circulation makes such a procedure practical. (Not that it would take us long to accumulate 38 labels for a SAPS mailing -- less than a week at our current rate of consumption, but the problem of mounting them on fanzine pages keeps us from using them these days while we aren't doing our own publishing). However, I now learn that I've a long way to go to become a BNF of beerfandom anyhow. A German magazine for tourists, called YOU AND EUROPE, carries a cover story in its March 1964 issue called "Beeratology", which reveals that collectors of beer-glass coasters are highly organized (complete with huckstering and conventions), and label collectors are sort of a fringe group of their fandom. Their N3F equivalent is something called the International Association of Drip Mat and Label Collectors, Heinz Schmellenkamp, President, PO Box 494, Duisburg-Hamborn, Germany. Incidentally, one of the BNF's at their last convention was an Austrian named Kurt Ungar, whose collection comprises twenty thousand different beer mats. Science-fiction, anyone?

I wish to protest Bruce's totalling of Mlg 66 as 357.5 pages. He is perfectly justified in granting Eney only half a page of credit for that leaflet (tho it took more thought and effort than many a six-page SAPSazine receives), but it should count as 1 page for mailing-size purposes. Because of this, and in accordance with standard practice, I am rounding off the page total fraction to the nearest even number in my records. 358 pages in Mlg 666, as far as I'm concerned.

ENLIGHTENING THE WORLD: If you are such a neoSAP you don't even know who Megan Sturek was, it is also possible that you are unfamiliar with New Mexico's contribution to the traditions of Christmas, the luminaria. As that epitome of confirmed cynics, the Armchair Fortean, I am ever dubious about so-called American traditions, particularly Christmas traditions; yet even I must admit that luminarias are a genuine American Christmas tradition. You see, back in the days just before New Mexico became a state (so long ago in history; so recently in time) the pioneers had none of those fancy Christmas-tree ornaments which were becoming so popular back East. (Remember, pioneer days in New Mexico, chronologically, coincided with the influx of German immigrants to the U.S., those German immigrants who brought with them "Silent Night" and the idea of a Christmas Tree.)

On the other hand, the pioneers' neighbors, the Pima Indians, had evolved for themselves a unique method of marking the Christmas season. Being mostly shepherders, these Indians had a keen professional interest in the portion of the Gospel according to St. Mark which described the shepherds seeing a new star in the East and following it to Bethlehem and the Christ Child. Like all shepherds, sailors, GI's and others who are forced to stay awake all night upon occasion, the Pimas knew that a bright star in the East makes a lousy azimuth marker for an all-night hike. It might pop over the horizon due East, but it persists in swinging higher and higher into the sky until it is thoroughly useless as a directional guide, unless perchance you're interested in traveling straight up.

Symbolically to provide a more useful guide for their fellow-shepherds, the Pimas, Christianized by the early missionaries, had developed the custom of lighting bonfires of pinon wood, Christmas Eve, atop their adobe houses.

Substituting a candle for the bonfire, the practical pioneers combined this with the best they could do in the way of a Christmas ornament -- they used the brown-paper bags in which they'd carted home their sugar and pinto beans from the trading post. Take a 5-lb paper sack, dump in a pound or so of sand to ballast it (and sand, if nothing else, is plentiful in New Mexico). Embed a candle in the sand, and presto, you have a softly-glowing lantern that combines the glamor of its flickering light with the charm of its rustic materials.

Multiply by a thousand or so, and you have Albuquerque or Sante Fe at Christmas -- if TV didn't display this spectacular sight to you during the past holiday season, surely the network talent scouts were either utterly unenterprising or so brainwashed by New York that they refused to admit anything existed between the Hudson and Las Vegas.

Of course, there are many transplanted Americans in Vicenza, Italy, who know what luminarias are.

Far as I know, tho, we were the only transplanted Americans in Vicenza to display them this past Christmas eve. You see, the Army is real stuffy about inflammable Christmas decorations in its government housing areas, but since we are not living in Government housing, we were untrammelled by such considerations. One thing DID hinder us a bit --the lack of sand for ballast. For awhile we contemplated giving our two dozen luminarias an authentic Italian touch by using flat slabs of marble as ballast -- but the snow well-camouflaged all the chunks of scrap building material which were left scattered about when they constructed this building. Besides, for best results the candle should be at such a height that the flame is about the center of the bag.

We solved the dilemma in, if not an Italian, at least a fannish way. To
(CONTINUED BOTTOM OF NEXT PAGE)

THOUGHTS I HATE MYSELF
FOR THINKING...

A rival publisher, intent upon wiping out JWCampbell and his magazine, needs only to launch a competing zine, with the title CARDIACLOG, The Heart of Science-

Fiction....If the sociologists' concern with the underprivileged continues, eventually we will be rewarded with newspaper headlines: HALF OF NATION EARNS LESS THAN MEDIAN INCOME, SAYS PRESIDENT, LAUNCHES CAMPAIGN TO CORRECT INTOLERABLE POVERTY.....How many people do YOU know who want more education and are unable to get it for economic reasons? I know a goodly number who WANT more education, but their main obstacle is that it involves work, to which they have a deadly allergy. Eventually, I suppose, the authorities will get around to recognizing that it is socially undesirable to deny people credit for higher education merely because they don't have the aptitude for it, and any right-thinking (or voting) citizen will be able to obtain the diploma of his choice by applying at the nearest federal office and certifying that he would have taken the required courses except for various socio-environmental factors which he could not control.....One of the factors which defeated Goldwater in the N.H. primary was his remark that Social Security should be a voluntary-participation deal. This alienated everyone who someday intends to retire on Social Security, because, as Goldwater's opponents gleefully pointed out, all the money which has been paid into the Social Security fund in the past has already been spent, and the whole system will break down unless contributions at any time in the future are sufficient to pay all current expenses. Seems to me if any private-enterprise insurance scheme got into such a fix they'd charge the officials thereof with embezzlement and toss them into the clink for a considerable period....I wonder if making it legal will take all the fun out of life for the Burton-Taylor pair?why does Bradbury persist in such book-length fiascos as SOMETHING EVIL THIS WAY COMES, when he should know by now that his caricature-characters won't stand up under the microscopic examination required in a novel? O.Henry, and even Poe, were content to gain their fame in the short-story field, why not Ray?

hold the bottom of the bags open we cut rectangles from cardboard -- the requisite material being readily at hand in the form of the interior partitions from Löwenbräu cases. To add weight and keep the wind from blowing the whole thing over, and at the same time to raise the candle to the proper height, we simply set a 7-Up can in each bag, and placed the candle on top of the can. It worked fine. Our luminaria-lined balcony was quite spectacular, and no doubt utterly croggled the local citizens, who no doubt had a few words to say about crazy Americans as they proceeded to and from Christmas Eve mass at the church in the next block.

Just to give you an idea of what a procrastinator I am, the preceding essay on Christmas celebrations was started probably around New Year's -- and I added the last few sentences to it today, which happens to be Easter. Mighod, at this rate I'll never win Pillar Poll votes. Let's face it: it's not that I'm losing interest in SAPS or anything of the sort -- but after a long strenuous day of battling a typer for the US Army, it's pretty hard to put myself in the mood to do more of the same when I get home in the evening. So what little SAPSac I do gets done on weekends, after I've had a chance to rest up from the rigors of the week. Where did this silly notion get started that GI's spend all their time goofing off?

On the other hand, I thoroughly enjoy my work, mainly because I'm working at a job I'm not supposed to be holding (there's no position vacancy in the TO&E for it) and most of the work is stuff I developed myself in accordance with Parkinson's law that the work expands to fit the available manpower. For example, we have to report monthly to higher headquarters the percentage of people with Savings Bond payroll deductions, based on figures supplied us by Pay Section. But I decided more use should be made of the data, so I (1) got a hunk of cross-section paper and made a graph for the office wall showing our progress month by month; and (2) stencil and distribute a monthly bulletin to each unit commander in Msl

Comd, showing the percentage of participation for each battery-size unit; also whether it has improved or otherwise since the preceding month. Knowing the psychology of the Army, I am sure that the commander of any unit with a comparatively low percentage immediately begins to sweat over his next efficiency report, and starts thinking up ways to increase the number of savings bond purchasers under his command. And that, after all, is what my boss, as Msl Comd Savings Officer, is supposed to be doing -- encouraging savings in the command.

Similarly, since our office handles MP and accident reports, we had a vast mass of data on such matters, in the form of a card file that was used only to check on any member of the command who applied for permission to purchase an automobile (lower-ranking men, who are not authorized to ship a vehicle from the U.S. at government expense, need the approval of the Msl ComdCO in order to get a driver's license for a privately-owned vehicle in Italy).

Well, everyone frets about the POV accident rate over here, but much to my surprise I found out that no one was keeping any figures on how we were doing compared to other commands -- at least, no current data; the Post headquarters safety officer published statistics quarterly showing the figures for about six months past. So I inaugurated an end-of-the-month mimeo'd letter tabulating serious and minor accidents, plus traffic violation reports, for each of our units, together with the comparative accident rates. Having a lot of blank space going to waste on the stencil, after the first few months I added to the statistics a summary of each incident reported, emphasizing the cause and the monetary value of the damage, if any. I don't know if this has impressed any driver sufficiently to cause him to avoid an accident he otherwise would have had, but it sure made a big hit with every inspecting officer from higher headquarters, who say it is an excellent safety-campaign idea, and cart off sample copies of the monthly letter to show to other units.

The accident rate, by the way, has been dropping the past few months (I keep another wall chart on this: graphs impress visitors) and is currently about 70% per annum. Or in other words, one out of five US drivers will be involved in an accident this year. But since I read somewhere that the Italian national accident rate is 50% per annum, I guess we are not doing so bad at that.

I've found a few other things to occupy my time, too -- for one thing, I maintain the files for the headquarters, and since they did away with the old reliable War Department Decimal Filing system which served so well for so long, filing (or rather, finding anything in the files after you've once filed it) is now a complex art in itself.

All in all, I've made myself valuable enough so that they can't afford to shift me to any other job -- which is quite a trick, since I am also drawing Proficiency pay (Superior Performance) in an electronics MOS which has been designated as a critical skill, and only through a complex series of stratagems am I able to work with typewriters instead of electron tubes. (One being that, although working for the Adjutant, I'm carried as a member of the S3 Section, which is authorized an electronics expert for reasons which we won't go into now. Another being that, my particular missile field being now obsolescent, I'm supposedly eligible for schooling in some more up-to-date missile skill, but such training is available only in the States, consequently I can perform other types of duty for the remainder of my overseas tour).

This brings up a couple of disadvantages: the obvious one being that, since I'm not in an authorized slot, I'm not in line for any higher-grade vacancy in case a promotion quota should come down. Secondly, by not working daily with electronics equipment, my knowledge is gradually becoming rusty, so that when the annual Pro-Pay testing comes round, I probably won't re-qualify for Superior Performance pay this time. Well, you can't have everything, and meanwhile I'm doing OK, as far as I'm concerned. Three years and two months more to do until I'm eligible for retirement.

FADS

We're scientific as can be,
Studying Astrology
And asking, What will Campbell think of next?
Will he dispell the mystery
That hovers over Palmistry,
And preach us all a sermon on that text?

While ANALOG's slickppages
Detail his latest rages,
It would be a scientific sort of curse
If the auditors should find
Circulation had declined
Because the fiction used gets worse and worse.

Deadline

You write 16 pages and what does it do?
Gets you two more mailings, and some small egoboo;
OE, don't you call me to account for my failings;
'Cause I owe six pages in the next two mailings.

IF

If you can write a zine while all about you
Are drinking beer and spilling it on you;
If you can cut a stencil with a ballpoint,
Without an error, 'cause there's no corflu;
If you can sneer at Campbell, yet still read him;
Consider "Zap!" the sound made by a gun;
Your's is the Sevagram, and maybe Hugos,
And what is more, you'll be a FAN,my son.

Ghaop

(Tune: "The River Seine")

If you find yourself in fandom
Then your mimeo will hum,
And a Hugo-winning fanzine
Will come whirling off the drum;

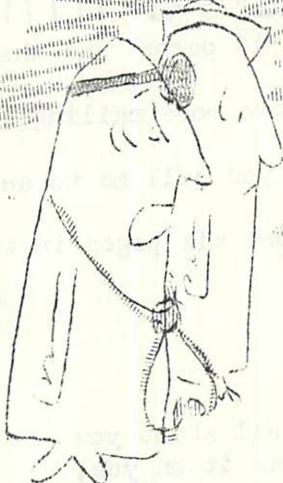
But there is one croggling hazard
--It's enough to green your blood;
If you lose your sense of wonder,
Then your zines will all be crud?

it's worse than
measles w/ it's a
RASH OF LITTLE
N3F EMBLEMS!

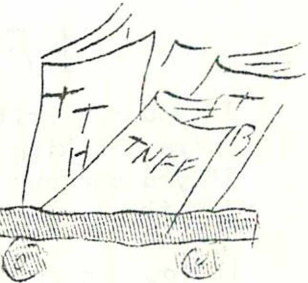


73

ARMY
INDUCTION



73



THERE'S
ANOTHER 4F ON
MENTAL
GROUNDS



He said his
FIRST WORD TO-
DAY - "NFFF"!

73