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IT'S MY WAY

by Robert Coulson

With luck, we might get two VANDYs into this mailing, since I sent the last one in too late to make the last mailing and told Pavlat to not postmail it unless he received some other stuff he wanted to send out. Of course, now there is the problem of getting this issue into the mailing....how do the weekly apas do it, I wonder?

I guess I didn't mention it last time, but we moved in June. Thanks to the wonders of rural routes, however, we still have the same address. Currently we are almost all unpacked and set up. The fanzine collection is still sitting around in boxes; I bought some steel shelving for it, but at the moment the shelving is serving as a drying rack for strawberry popcorn. Once I get the corn off.....

FAPA ELECTION RESULTS (Speer) Congratulations to the winners and all that. One of these days I'll have to vote, but when 3 out of the 4 officers are running unopposed and I have no particular objection to any of them it hardly seems worth the effort and the 6¢ stamp.

HORIZONS (Warner) I sort of hate to mention it, but possibly the reason that people will read solid print with no illustrations in books and object to it in fanzines is that the books are inherently more interesting? Could of course be simply common usage; books haven't been illustrated for years - ordinary-type books, that is - so people don't expect illustrations. In fanzines, they do expect them. (I have no total aversion to solid print in fanzines - but I also find books more interesting.)

Maybe spiders don't succumb to insecticides because they aren't insects.

Right. A first sentence for a minor crime should probably be light. But habitual repeaters should be put away for as long as the law allows. Rehabilitation is a flat failure 90% of the time and we have more petty crooks running around loose now than we really need.

I doubt if copiers will harm the book business much. As you said, a paperback can still be purchased for less money than the effort required to copy it, even if the would-be copier is stealing time on an office machine. So why copy? Buy the paperback. The people who buy hardcover books - and there are damned few of them, outside of public libraries - want either the lasting qualities of hard covers or the prestige of the "coffee-table books"; a Xerox copy is not going to satisfy them.

I was a more or less active church member when I got into fandom. I was also an assistant scoutmaster then, and expected to live up to high moral precepts - and go to church, too. (Typical middle-class motive; church was The Thing To Do. And I rather enjoyed some of the sermons, though I can't honestly say I've believed in the divinity of Christ since I was 5 years old. Unlike atheists, however, I keep in mind that I could be wrong.)

Considering the statistics of injuries in the various sports, baseball is still about as safe as you can get. Basketball depends too much on where it's played; I've seen one player get two cracked ribs from bouncing off a concrete wall, and another land with the small of his back across a railing at the end of the bleachers; why he didn't break in half I don't know. Baseball doesn't even approach pro football, where one lineman can get 3 concussions, one detached retina, two broken ribs, 1 broken shin, 1 broken thumb, and the ligaments of one ankle pulled loose, all in a 14-year career. (I'm speaking of Jerry Kramer, of course, since his record is handy.) Name one baseball player who collected even half that many serious injuries. And Kramer never carried or threw the football in his entire career.

Tucker mentioned updating NEO-FAN's GUIDE when I talked to him at PeCon. It's about as good a handbook for the beginner as I've seen (about the only one I've seen, come to that.) Encourage him - and find me some customers for the 80 or so copies I have left of the 2nd printing of the 2nd. edition, so he'll have to get to work.

NASTROND (Hulan) Juanita was reading some sociologist-historian recently who commented that the only time in the history of this country that long hair and facial hair for men has not been dominant has been in the half-century (well, say 60 years) just end-

ing, and that things are just beginning to return to normal after a moderately long aberration of clean-shaven short-hairedness. Long hair on me is physically annoying, but I see no reason why you other idiots out there shouldn't suffer for fashion if you really want to.

Dammit, Hulan, you're starting to write my words again, in your comments to Silverberg on prozines. Not the individual titles, but the thrill of scouring the entire area for new titles. (Except that by then I was driving, and my "area" included most of one county plus adjacent counties and states on vacation trips.) Remember 1953, and a new title every week, on the average? Joy! Even if most of them did turn out to be garbage. I remember I always got PLANET STORIES, TWS, and STARTLING at a little drugstore in North Manchester where they hung all the magazines on wires with a sort of giant paper clip. (The drugstore isn't there any more; gone with my lost youth.)

I know several fans who are practicing Christians or Jews, but then I suppose that YANDRO appeals to the more staid and conventional sorts....

STAR BEGOTTEN (Stiles) I drank Diet Pepsi for a long time, but when they put sugar in it I quit. Now I drink No-Cal Cola, which doesn't taste as good (though it isn't too bad) but won't send me to an early grave, either. Or at least, not from diabetes it won't; I don't really think I want to know the other possibilities. Main drawback is that it comes in non-returnable bottles. A place in Marion is now advertising that it will accept old bottles and do God knows what with them - grind them up to feed to hippies, perhaps - and Juanita is going to take over 6 cases of No-Cal and see what happens.

INSHALLAH! (Hansen) Greenleaf has a fascinatingly reactionary proposition, there. But just who are the current descendents of the Hapsburgs, and have they had any experience in ruling anything? (He made quite a point about being trained from childhood and all; I don't think the current Hapsburgs have been.) There are, however, other outs. Isn't ex-King Farouk still around somewhere? Or maybe we could get Hussein to trade up; he has a forceful way with dissidents that we could use, and he would satisfy the large anti-Jewish element, besides looking the part. Or the Aga Khan, who wouldn't be stupefied by our national budget.

CELEPHAIS (Evans - Hoffman) Interesting, but no comments. Are you still at all interested in folk music, Lee? I still buy a record now and then - they're harder to come by than they were, partly because fewer are made and partly because I have a pretty fair assortment already - and follow folksingers via newspaper accounts. (Josh White is dead, Ed McCurdy is over his alcoholism, Peter Yarrow is in jail; that sort of thing.)

RAMBLING FAP (Calkins) I'm beginning to think about Canada again; fewer people and less pollution. Besides, I would like to live out in the middle of an Ontario woods with my nearest neighbor 5 miles away. But it will probably never be translated into action.

Just realized, I got two copies of HORIZONS in this mailing. Anybody miss one?

SERCON'S BANE (F. Busby) Tell you something, Buz; my net income doesn't amount to \$440 a month, total. You're another of those filthy rich middle-class Americans, you know. But I'm in favor of early retirement, if possible.

I usually remove spiders from the bathtub by pointing at Juanita and saying "Get your pets outa there before I drown them." I'm not sure what method she uses, but it works. Occasionally I use a bit of paper; toilet tissue or an opened envelope or something similar.

KIM CHI (Ellington) Yeah, the thing about basketball is that you drop dead of heart failure at age 40 or so, which doesn't make headlines because you aren't playing then. I had a cousin who looked up the statistics and decided to not play basketball in college, even though he had several scholarship offers. He was well enough off that he didn't have to take the scholarships, so he didn't.

Then of course there is AMERICAN HERITAGE, which is mailed in cardboard book-mailers....

SAMBO (Martinez) Sounds like you had a bit more to move than we did. At least, we got rid of our monster Multilith well before moving. I probably couldn't match you on size of stamp collection, either, though we'd come close on books and records. No photographic equipment, but guns and handloading supplies.

CENTURY SCHOOLBOOK (Porter) Obviously Carr, Stiles and Brown are filthy rich tools of the Establishment. One does not throw out a fanzine, however crappy. One finds a sucker and sells the fanzine to him....unless, of course, one has so much money that a couple more bucks isn't worth the effort.

On to the barricades. I have no particular objection to the lawless masses getting what's coming to them (take that any way you want to) as long as they don't try to get any of it from me.

I fully agree with you; there are more non-good people in FAPA than there are good ones. (Why not? Why should FAPA be an exception to the rule?) But I have a sneaking suspicion that my agreement doesn't necessarily cover the same people.... Right?

You know, this country has been going to the dogs for so many generations that I think it's finally arrived.

ROUNDSHOT (Evers) I sort of wondered when I saw those Pope books if they were any good. But then I decided what the hell, I haven't even read Hornblower yet, and this is no time to begin on imitations.

I don't think it would be too hard to make a movie out of Tolkien, given enough money and a producer who knows what he's doing. (Maybe it would be pretty hard, at that.....) It isn't all that tightly plotted. For one thing, almost the entire middle book could be eliminated with no damage to the plot. (The movie would, of course, have to dispense with all the side issues and stick to the main theme, as other movies made from big novels have done.) It could even be an improvement on the book in some respects - the love stories could be either eliminated as unnecessary or built up into something that an intelligent viewer might halfway believe. One sure thing; the movie romances can't be any worse than Tolkien's ideas on romantic love.

DESCANT (Clarkes) I'm not sure which mailing this belongs in; I managed to get mailings #131 and 132 mixed up. Come to think of it, I'm not even sure it belongs in FAPA, but since the organization is mentioned in the first line I suppose it does. Anyway, it was fun.

Well, my, my. I seem to have half a page left over, and very little to say. Last issue I commented on all our vast fannish traveling, but that's over for the year. Maybe for more than a year, inasmuch as one or the other of our cars - sometimes both - have been laid up for repairs since PeCon. Not that I've actually had to spend that much on them; I could tell you about the things we went through before getting a radiator for the Rambler, but you wouldn't believe them. (But if one FAPAn says "Oh, you should just have picked one up at a junkyard" I will come over there and hit him.) Anyway, we no sooner get one car fixed than the other collapses.

I have been reading, somewhat frantically at times, and my stack of to-be-read books is now approaching 300 anyway. There are more interesting books being published than I can read, but I keep on getting them. Comes the collapse of the book industry and I can keep going for a couple of years on my previous purchases. (The 300 are only the books I intend to read, When I Have Time. There are easily twice that many in the house that I haven't read, if I include those I have no real intention of reading.) I did get through Jerry Kramer's Farewell To Football, a fabulous treatise, especially recommended to any pre-med students in the audience. And the biography of Goddard, This High Man (you can't count yourself a stf fan if you haven't read about the father of rocketry. Besides, it's quite good.) And The Glass Teat, which is a fabulous book even if, as in my case, you can't stand Ellison personally. Plus such items as Killer Smog (London, 1952; 4,000 dead), Lloyd Alexander's "Prydain" series of juvenile swords and sorcery (much better than most of the "adult" books in the genre), The Bastard War by A. J. Barker, Jesus Christs by A. J. Langguth (very highly recommended; I might even nominate it for a Hugo), The Last Redwoods (The only Ballantine-Sierra club edition that I've seen that has beautiful photos and interesting text), and of course numerous books of, uh, what's that stuff? Oh yes, sci-fi.....

EGGS & MARROWBOVE by Juanita, being mailing comments, etc. Meaning, I really must get something down on stencil today so I can mimeo this and Harry's Horizons and we can get it to the OE on time. I have always managed (knock plastic) to get Harry's zine to the OE in adequate time, but often let Vandy go hang. But it seems it would be so much simpler to do the whole thing(s) at once.

FA As Buck admitted, we didn't vote, and for what reasons. I find it hard to get excited about fannish elections, I'm afraid. But as ever, I voted in our state primary and will vote for senator, congressman, state legislators and proposed constitutional amendments in November. That I consider worth getting out for. Probably this time I will even walk to the polls. Where we used to live a good share of the distance (which was, I admit, longer) was on a dangerous highway, and getting to the polls just might have been the last thing I ever did; it was scary enough driving there. Now we're on a country road for most of the distance, and it'd be a couple of miles round trip to the polling station. I walk down to the mom-and-pop grocery near the school/polling station with some regularity. Takes me about twelve minutes and makes sure I inhale all that refreshing pollen and corn-blight laden air. All of which may explain why I lack enthusiasm for FAPA elections.

Naströnd (Hulan) It took me a while to learn to like Heyer. Or rather to accept her universe. I felt a little like Boardman must have when he criticized Tolkien's universe (I'm going on hearsay here from, I believe, Dick Lupoff): that I kept thinking of the poor and lower-class elements who supported, willingly or otherwise, the aristocracy Heyer was writing about so charmingly. But I gradually acquired the ability to overlook those raggedy shadows in the background. I think I've even discovered a character I could feel comfortable portraying at a masquerade (if I ever get the nerve) -- Jenny Deveril -- and not feel traitorous about, because she is, after all, a Cit.

Yeah, we know quite well what you mean about US farmland. That's why, though our address is the same, we are now at a different house. Our former landlord tried to sell 100 acres of his nearly 500 acres (age and ill health were making it impossible for him to handle that much land) and discovered, to his sorrow and ours, that no one would buy it from him unless the house went with the land. Plain old land is a bit of a drug on the market, it seems. The more land, in the US, the greater and more expensive the amount of equipment and time needed to reap a profit from the same.

Example: at the panicky time before we happily latched on to this present place we were going the tour route with a realtor. As we went past this h*u*g*e old farmhouse with rambling land and trees we exclaimed simultaneously, "that's what we mean!" The realtor looked dubious, and nodded when we admitted on the heels on our shouts that we knew we couldn't afford that much house and land. He went on to say he imagined he had just the sort of place we'd love to have; three stories, eleven rooms...fine so far, and we're drooling...and 550 acres. We change our minds hastily. The realtor said that was exactly the problem; the present young couple occupying the place were declaring bankruptcy, because "they didn't realize just how much of a debt \$50,000 was." That's before interest. We related this to our present landlord and he wasn't impressed; says he knows farmers who are \$200,000 in debt -- and this is not the million acre syndicate farm area, either -- and assumes what will happen is that their heirs will declare bankruptcy to get out from under, if that's possible.

Star Begotten (Stiles) Anent the space program, I see the US now has its own versions of Lovell (who always endears himself to me during manned space flights by starting off with "it'll never get off the ground" quotes and graduating with the continuing success of each mission to growing enthusiasm, ending with "I knew it all the time"). The administration finally found itself some heavy names to agree with them to junk the manned flights. Van Allen should know better. He's spent too much time in his cloud chambers.

My attitude on smoking is not that of the addict who has been there and quit. It may be a point-of-view that's extremely unusual: you're reading someone who has never smoked. I have had a cigarette in my mouth once, for about three seconds, when I was desperately trying to get one lit so I could force a tick that had latched onto Bruce to back out of the burrowed-in site it was sucking, enough so I could grab it with a tweezers. All I did was half choke myself. I ended up taking Bruce to the doctor and letting him rattle with the beastie. I had to have been grimly determined, or I never would have got that far with the weed.

You see, ever since I can remember (and I have a memory that goes back to pre-age three, confirmed by my mother, with some amazement) I have loathed the sight and smell of cigarettes. Up until the above mentioned tick incident I had no opinion on the taste; but I now include that. Call it a pre-natal trauma or something. I can remember, as a child, being somewhat embarrassed watching adults smoke, as though I had caught them playing in the toilet or eating something particularly hideous. And the sight of cigarette butts ground into dishes or tossed into a john has always made me want to barf -- I am not speaking emotionally but physically, an actually roiling of the stomach and rising of the gorge like you wouldn't believe. I can put up with other people smoking the things, but some of the subsidiary habits are, to me, ugh.

Very top of the urge-to-kill list is the smoker in the restaurant. Now I try to accept the fact that, to him, an after-dinner cigarette is part of the meal, a kind of pacifying dessert. Unfortunately, it all too often occurs during some part of my meal; and his smoke drifts over to my table, saturates my food, makes my eyes turn red and tears run down my cheek, gets me a good start on a rousing sinus headache and in general makes me feel like I might as well have eaten my money instead of spent it for good food.

Or, as Shaw said, you cannot have freedom for the smoker and the non-smoker simultaneously. All I can say is, the smoker seems to get the breaks in our society...unless the non-smoker wants to get really obnoxious in asserting his rights. And don't think some of us haven't been mightily tempted. I have this grotesque urge when some clown next to me at a lunch counter lights up and exhales his tars and nicotines all over my just-arrived meal to blow my nose in his napkin.

Inshallah (Hansen) I do not understand all this vindictive plotting against spiders at all, at all. Of course, maybe you have poisonous varieties out there. Except for a few rare cases of the fiddler sort (the one with the red violin marking) spiders in the midwest aren't all that much of a nuisance (allowing for a few hypersensitive people, the same sort who react to wasps, bees, etc., with especially severity). I don't allow spiders to crawl around on me, certainly, but I do encourage their residency in unobtrusive areas of the house and especially outdoors. My friendship paid off marvelously this summer. A number of large, beautiful black-and-yellow garden spiders took up hunting licenses in our garden, especially in the sweet corn. The result was lovely, and delicious, to behold. Our sweet corn looked like something you could display in Gourmet magazine -- bug free to the nth. As a result we had so much usable corn much of it went to waste. Dare I gamble my eight-legged friends will be back next year? In which case I will plant less corn, because it will certainly go further.

Thank you for the kind words. I hope whatever I do this cover (haven't the slightest idea what my starting point will be right now) will please you equally.

Celephais (Evans?...but it's LeeH....) Very interesting, and I'm glad you didn't leave FAPA too.

I think some copyeditors just like to blue pencil to prove they're alive. It was rather funny to see the edited copy on Buck and Gene's UNCLE books. The editor had rather arbitrarily gone through changing 'said' to 'commented' and 'commented' to 'said'. Absolutely no coherency, or reason, for any of it. My own favorite (the type that makes you laugh dirtily up your long mandarin sleeves) occurred on SINGING STONES. I ran over the wordage, which is not unusual for gabby me, and the editor was chonking out some fair-sized chunks. According to those whose opinions I trust, he/she did it

(the ms) no harm and may even have tightened it nicely. But at one point about half a page had been removed...and then retyped and pasted over the previously penciled-out section. It laid groundwork for a fairly important plot development further on,, despite its, apparently, unnecessary quality at the time the editor first read it. Made me feel like thumbing my nose and saying "Nyah, I knew what I was doing; now maybe you believe me, since you had to go to all that extra trouble."

Evans can self-preserve you any time at all (or does that sound obscene?).

Rambling Fap (Calkins) Hope you made the teaching job you wanted...maybe even the Ft. Lewis one...at least you weren't "overtrained" if they were looking for a doctor. That seems to be a big problem in the Midwest, particularly in Ohio. (Ohio has an archaic constitution which insists all public school costs must be paid for by property taxes, and property taxes only. As a result a lot of the schools close before the end of the calendar year -- like they're starting to right now, announcement of the "first of the school year" in today's paper -- and reopen in January. Also, as a result, Ohio is starting to refuse to hire MAs in public schools; BAs are cheaper, and they can always tell the MAs they're "overtrained". Lotta bitter out-of-work school teachers with MAs over in Ohio right now.)

I must say of the areas we went through on our way west in 68 the one that impressed me most was central Colorado. Of course, I don't know how we'd make a living there. But it is beautiful, even foggy and rainy (and us with a busted windshield wiper on the driver's side). Funny, the two places I've admired the most have been central Colorado and central Ontario, and it was pouring rain both places when I encountered them; maybe I wouldn't like either place during nice weather.

When we went to Cal we stopped off with Kay and Gary Anderson in Oxnard, and I got my first look at LA smog from their car. Actually we made several trips down into LA from Oxnard, so many that I got so I could recognize the slight rise that signalled the point from which you got a first vantage point of the valley...which was hideous indeed: a blue miasma as far as the eyes could see. Oxnard was pleasant, much like Indiana (rural) in the springtime -- damp and green and comfortable.

Recently some friends of ours (the Lavells) watched the new Cal 500 on tv and understood what we were talking about in trying to describe LA smog. Jim said (I didn't watch it, not being an auto racing fan) they were forced to stop the time trials several times because the cars couldn't see well enough to race...and that pans of the crowds in the bleachers were appalling for their limited visibility.

Smog is all over, though, horrifyingly enough. Going to St LouisCon we went through a midwest-wide temperature inversion and drove through this orange-yellow blech all the way from eastern Indiana to St. Louis. Okay, freakish weather. But no. When we went to PeCon we encountered the same yellowish haze the moment we hit the Illinois line..and this in an area where there is relatively little industrialization...just lotsa farms and grain elevators. We've decided the Illinois plain provides some sort of perfect smog cooker. The broken, hilly country of western Indiana is correspondingly free of the stuff...updrafts from the river, maybe.

Your comments about Nehwon are much appreciated.

Bet you get some comments on the astrological thing. I'll just say I'm Aquarius, Buck's Taurus and Bruce is Scorpio, and I can tell an astrologically knowledgeable type that and nine times out of ten he/she will go into a spasm. Yet I sort of like the stuff for alathat.

Horizons (Warner) My own objection to drinking is the alcohol in the particular varieties I find palatable -- which isn't too many. If I could find a non-alcoholic beer, sloe gin, or some types of sweet wine I would be quite happy. I dislike, much, anything which depresses or distorts my perception...alcohol, ether, various drugs. I didn't particularly want ether when I was having Bruce, but I got it anyway (I couldn't argue physically because this was a hospital that tied the laborites' hands to the table). It's also the reason I have now more or less abandoned drugs, even comparatively mild ones like super aspirin, for use against my painful sinus/pseudo migraines.

The side effects are distortive, mentally and physically. Pain at least is real, and I prefer coping with reality to having it blurred (besides which the various drugs don't do all that much to the pain). I'm going the injection of a protein desensitization bit instead. Painful, but so far as I can tell utterly without perception distortion. We get such a short time here, I want to be as alert as possible to the whole thing. I begrudge sleep a little, except for the dreams. (Maybe that's it; my dreams are so wild I don't need the blurry phantasms produced by drug and alcohol states.)

You must watch a different brand of basketball than we do. Around here it's 99% fast break and the problem is making sure you're keeping up with the action. Tv cameramen don't, always, which is irritating. I have a feeling they pulled some guy off a football game; he tends to focus on the basket for a full ten seconds after the ball has gone through, ignoring the fast break which has carried the ball down the court and set up a basket for the opposing side.

If the blown punchline was the fault of the stencil being dirty I apologize. I try to keep an eye on such things, but they do slip by now and then.

I developed a permanent loathing of Popeye and his song when Bruce was much younger and addicted to cartoons. Ditto for Woody Woodpecker and almost any other animated cartoon character you care to name.

Orff...I'm not too familiar with the rest of his work, but I do like Cartulli Carmina. But then I'm a retreat kraut, so maybe that confirms your theory.

Hotel expenses and people: Leigh Couch recounted to us that she got in a friendly discussion with one of the bartenders serving the StLouisCon masquerade. At one point she explained who all these crazy people were and how they got there, and the man's reaction was horrified and awed: "You mean they all paid their own way?" He went on to speculate, "Gee, you all must like each other." Well, perhaps, except for such things as trying to lynch the toastmaster and like that.

Detours (JWhite) Marwin sounds like a couple of acquaintances I've had; I later decided they weren't worth the effort. Opposites don't attract that much.

I know nothing about photography but the shots of Central Park seem very attractive. And depressing. I keep thinking of all these poor city mice who find Central Park such a marvelous escape because of all that greenery and open space and all. Is there any point in the park where you can not raise your eyes or turn your head and become instantly aware that beyond all this greenery there are buildings? And how are the trees doing in the smog, by the way?

From (RHickey) Better spell that out...Rosemary, not Richard, though hi there Richard. Another city mouse. But you're not the first to discover Queen Anne's lace is wild carrot. I recently had a couple of other big city Jewish girls here visiting, and they were hard to convince that this as-yet unflowered weed they'd pulled up was not some exotic kosher vegetable. I don't recall what they kept insisting it was, but I kept insisting it was plain old Queen Anne's lace/wild carrot. I think I am going to send Euell Gibbons a ticking package. Thanks to his STALKING THE WILD ASPARAGUS we've found out burdock root is just as hard to gather as he said it was and considerably harder to cook to a palatable state. Next I have to make edible cattails and milkweed pod, which he assures my Nature Boy are delicious and nutritious and all sorts of good.

Century School Book (Porter) Well, the definition of FAPA used to be of a mail-order party variety, so maybe the outfit has reached the twenty minute-lull, or maybe it's moribund and lotsa people will start asking for their coats. Or maybe Harry (who has been around and active long enough to opionate about the organization) will just tell us somebody went out for ice cubes and it's all going to get very lively realsoonnow.

I doubt if there will be any barricades in the burgeoning metropolis of HCity. I doubt if we even get fallout from the somewhat larger and more potentially excitable areas around us. And as for Roll (the nearest concentration of population...like about 150 people), most of the potential rioters don't even know it exists. As for our attitudes, on black civil rights we're pretty far left, and have been since the early 50s. Other problems, we'll see when the time comes. If the Indians try to take it all back,

we'll probably turn renegade and help them out.

Chronion (Patten) I think next time I'm at a con I'll check the movie schedule and see if I can't squeeze in a few. You've got some heavy nostalgia there.

Kim Chi (Ellington) Bruce too is entering junior high this fall, only they're calling it "middle school". His school system is switching to a 4-4-4 system...which is going to make it confusing come highschool, because the other county school system (Hartford) is staying on the 6-2-4. Again he's going to a brand new school, so new it isn't quite built yet. It should be a dandy when they get done...a fine little science lab with a move-at-your-own-rate, individually initiated experiment curriculum. If they really follow through and don't just talk about it...

I enjoy your continuing reports on the wobblies. How much agitation can there be in NSW?...as you say...

Indiana, northern section in particular, is currently getting all kindsa grants from the gummint and having root-out teams and I don't know what all trying to eliminate marijuana. Which I gather was started as a cash crop during WWII and now has gone very totally wild and is about as common in this area as Canada thistle. (They've tried to eliminate the latter weed, too, for a good many years -- cash penalties for not mowing the stuff and all -- with no success at all as far as we can see. In fact it seems to be thriving. Gold finches are really common around here now, and they make their nests from thistle down; so they must not be hurting too much...plenty of building materials.)

Sercon's Bane (Buz) I must say it sounds like Wally was very wise. The shivaree is still disgustingly popular in this benighted area, and every time I see some poor pair being raucously honked through the streets and being "escorted" beyond all patience I am exceedingly grateful we had no such "friends" when we were married. They wouldn't have been friends afterwards, if we had possessed such. Not "childlike"..."childish", with a vengeance.

I was chatting with some mundanes on the music fringe just last Saturday and conversation hit on BEYOND THE VALLEY OF THE DOLLS. I don't think they really believed me when I said I knew the scriptwriter when. In fact I think we published one of Rog's first pieces of fiction to appear in a fanzine...fairly early at any rate. Rog also distinguished our pages by writing a love poem to Maggie Curtis Thompson before she added the last name...a courtly sigh over the news that she was engaged. He also distinguished himself at a Midwescon by trying to turn into a lampshade after Tucker gave him one...count it, one...beer.. He couldn't find a lampshade so he used a wastebasket.

Ament nothing in particular, Buz, I wanted to assure you I don't downgrade you or intend anything personal in my earlier remarks about cigs and liquor. I only object to such things when they impinge on my freedom. Like a drunk is okay until he starts pawing or wants to talk and can't or...as at this year's Midwescon...gets literally falling down drunk and falls down all over me. Ditto with cigs...I only object when the freedom of the smoker louses up my freedom to breathe or eat in peace. And I find pot smoke much less irritating to my eyes and sinuses than tobacco, for some reason. Now if the legality would clear up so I wouldn't have to feel nervous when I'm at a party where there's grass... Marion Bradley once described some eastern cult of "awareness", sans any outside help, called subbud or some such. I don't dig the mysticism, but the attitude is close to mine. I'm gradually educating my metabolism to function without stimulants as much as possible (though apparently I have to have thyroid for medical reasons, presumably for the rest of my life)...then I'll feel I'm getting exactly what I want out of my various senses. I'm leary of almost anything, even those things which are said to "enhance", which promises to change my observance of what I see; smell, taste, hear... My own personal thing about reality.

71 (Foyster) Okay, I'll buy that, but don't expect us to attend. Understand, we'd love to...and take a side trip to Coober Peddy and the Sydney Harbor bridge and run bare-foot through the opal diggings and all that....but somehow I don't think we're going to inherit that much before then.

Esdacyos (Cox) Glad to hear things are straightened out interiorly and on good tracks now. Sounds like no pleasant experience, but it could have been worse and all that...

New Cat Sand (Demmon) Ditto. Glad you're all still with us. I've never been run into by such a dangerous clown, but I well remember that utterly helpless feeling of The Auto-Accident...plus the urge to shove someone's teeth somewhere considerably more painful than down his throat.

Vukat (Patten) What with Kay Anderson's gee-it-was-great report for us in Yan and now this it's enough to make me wish we could have gone. Vicarious goodies or something.

I must say I heartily applaud Bjo's needed-to-be said comments about the name-tag decoration thing. Apparently it has gone from a casual request to an obligatory thing everybody feels they should have and gotten completely out of hand. Everybody who dabbles a little bit in drawing or doodling runs, now and then, into a request from a relative or friend to do a sketch for a poster for his kid's class or some such. But imposition is something else. I surely will not bother anyone again in that department without thinking in terms of fair price.

Sambo (Martinez) I'd druther upstate Indiana than any part of Oklahoma I've yet seen. Oh well, the view from the Will Rogers' memorial isn't bad, but mostly Oklahoma seemed a place to be gotten through quickly on one's way to somewhere else...which unfortunately for us turned out to be Texas at night. (To be fair I was suffering from a violent allergic reaction to some poison ivy medicine and couldn't have appreciated anything by that time. After an allergy shot for the allergy shot for the allergy in Carlsbad, I was feeling almost normal by the time we got to the cave.)

Descant (Clarkes) You have better luck with PO types than I do, Gina. I gave up long ago. They see me coming and immediately start thumbing their Special Rate Air Mail Express catalogs or whatever and demand \$2 to mail a postcard. I let Buck dicker with them and show them their error of their ways...which he does so convincingly that they ask him to settle arguments they're having with other patrons. Impartial and by the book, that's him.

Oh boy do we recognize the signs, but not so well as the Lavells do down in Naptown. Within the last couple of years all these publishing-crazy neos popped out of the wood work down in the state capitol, descending on Lee as an expert and old fan and tired and all that. Their enthusiasm was absolutely appalling. Was I ever that goshwow? I must have been, but it's croggling. The first flush has worn off now, fortunately, and they seem to be traveling at a more sedate pace or even gradually gafiating. But that first horrendous discovery of publishing is always a bit frightening to watch.

Dick and the drawers and readers of comics...Don Thompson iterated that this summer. He mentioned some comic...Archie?...forgive me if memory elides certain items, Don... being slightly resurrected and cover-splashed to give it a "Now" look, and being naively blurred by its well over 30 creators, "Happy, Hilarious, Hep". Very very now, indeed.

Doesn't matter. Current comics of the superhero class are sort of lying there waiting for the vultures anyway.

Probably the best deal we had on a tv was having ours burn up in the repair shop. Very good repairman, if a bit gabby. He hates to take things into the shop and will always replace tubes and whatnot in your home, even if it takes a couple of hours. But this time he said it was something he would have to do in the shop because he didn't have the test equipment. Apparently while he was running it on the bench it burst into lovely flames...and it could just as easily have done the same thing while in its cabinet in our house. Anyway, he had insurance and said the repairs on the thing, if he'd had time to do them, would have run \$25, and for that he would replace it with a comparable set, which he did and which we are very happy with. It pulls UHF and VHF with a UHF antenna, 40 miles from UHF stations, 80-100 from VHF ones. Plus we got one perfectly good empty tv cabinet which works as a handydandy storage place...good solid wood and all that. Now if Indiana would just get an NET station...

SCHLUSS