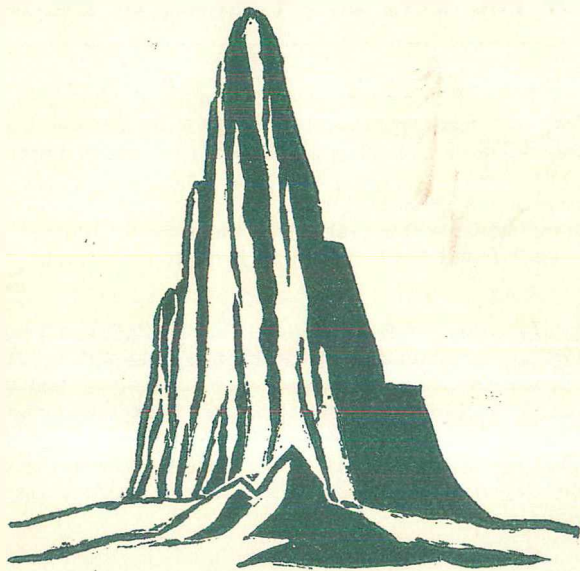


# WASTEBASKET

VOL. 1

NO. 3



*IN THIS ISSUE--*

*"The Bradbury Chronicles"*

# WASTEBASKET

*the subzine that isn't*

Vol. 1

No. 3

PUBLISHED AND EDITED BY  
VERNON L. MCCAIN

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EUGENE, OREGON

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# RAMBLINGS AT RANDOM



From the editor's typewriter...

This issue will henceforth and foreveraftermore be known as the patchwork quilt issue. Last issue we promised standardi ed type and format. Instead, you've gotten FOUR type faces, FOUR different formats, (as compared with two each, last time) and TWO types of paper. This was the result of the most acute financial crisis yours truly has seen in seven years, the acquisition of an unpredictable linotype (all items in this issue were handset, save one), and the necessity of getting this issue into the November FAPA mailing to meet Walt Willis' requirements.

We're most pleased to welcome Walt as co-editor. As most of you already know, Walt is the freshest talent to lighten the dreary scene of fan-humor since Bob Tucker. In addition, Walt is editor of what is easily today's best all-around fanzine. (Those unfamiliar with it will find SLANT listed right below SCIENCE FICTION NEWSLETTER in all the alphabetical reviews.)

So at one fell swoop WASTEBASKET has acquired both fandoms best current writer and its best current editor. Walt's influence has not really been felt as yet but we intend to take full advant-

age of both talents. Walt will be a frequent contributor, though it has been policy for the editor to remain in the background as much as possible in the past.

Our second issue showed tremendous improvement in appearance, none in quality of material. This issue, we feel, shows an even greater surge forward --- but on the contents side. Appearance is, if anything, a bit below our second issue.

Not that we're satisfied with our contents! For one thing, the issue is unbalanced. The Bill Morse article is the only one of its type. We'd like to run more like it. We did have a nicely complementary feature scheduled which we were forced to postpone due the prohibitive cost. This is now scheduled for next issue. We expect it to be our most popular innovation.

Both the subject of this article and Ray Bradbury co-operated magnificently. But both are ex-fans with well-developed senses of humor. What if I should be offered an article on August Derleth, as it becomes known that I'm using serious articles of literary criticism? August Derleth has gone on record as opposing levity when connected with the fantasy field. He would surely fight against having an article about him appear in any magazine titled WASTEBASKET. Now he couldn't stop us, not unless the article was libelous. But the subject's co-operation, while unnecessary, is highly desirable.

So, for the reasons outlined above, I am considering changing WASTEBASKET's title. This magazine is a far cry from the one I mentally formed when I conceived the title but it is estab-

lished under this name now. I'd like to know what you think about this so let me know when you write.

For benefit of new readers, WASTEBASKET is a FAPazine. If you're not a member of FAPA you can't subscribe. But a letter or postcard requesting it will bring you the next issue (but only the next issue) free. Your comments on this issue are avidly awaited by both editor and contributors.

The cover and illustration on page 27 are by Rosco Wright. The puffin on page 2 is by Shelby Vick.

*c.l.m.*

**CHICON IN '52**  
will you be there?

# THE BRADBURY CHRONICLES

by Bill Morse



Generally speaking, by taking the opinions of a cross-section of the public, that public's reaction to a specific condition or occurrence can be predicted with an amazing degree of accuracy. However, as the world saw in 1948, this type of forecasting can still be widely off the mark since it fails to take into account the unpredictability of the individual when confronted with a mass problem. The unknown factor in any calculation is always the individual.

In present day science-fiction, there exists a nucleus of writers whose popularity rests acknowledgedly in their adherence to the creed that Man is not just a good Joe... he is a paragon of all the virtues. His complement, the heroine, is the Fayre and Spotless Mayde of chivalric ballad: desirable (in a pure way of course), beautiful and unattainable to any lesser mortal than the Galahad. Romantic Merritt, (R.I.P.), Swashbuckling Kuttner, Sentimentalist Brackett; these three can be cited as specialists in the style. If on occasion the hero's step falters

on the straight and narrow path-it is because he has been bewitched. If the villain relaxes his evil works for a moment-it is because he has been overcome by the ineffable purity of the heroine.

Give them their due, these writers ring the changes on their themes with a masterly command of spell-weaving, a fitting tribute to the long practice they have had. And the fair reads with a sense of awe at anything otherworldly but oh-so-true. Hope for the masses, in fact.

It therefore becomes obvious that any writer who attempts to depict people as they really are, will burst upon the unsuspecting public with all the devastating impact of a Blockbuster on Mohne Dam. Hands are raised in pious horror; less frequently in unholy glee. They come the condemnations: degradation; sadistic; second-rate E. A. Poe; long-haired precocity; even "suicide". From the other (or Radical) side come drools of delight such as fall upon Hemingway, Steppenbeck, and the early Caldwell.

What, then, can cause this sharp division of opinion (for there are no neutrals in this controversy) over a style? Since Margaret St Clair (alas) only seldom delights the reader with such a story, we can only consider the acknowledged master of the style, Ray Bradbury.

The mildest of his detractors say that he does not write science fiction. For the most part, that is true, if you must split hairs. For Bradbury uses the universe as a back-drop only, and space-travel is just the means by which his characters reach the scene of action--invariably Mars. What he does with them belongs to STF only in the preamble, the opening paragraph. From there on the tale becomes pure fiction, if there is such a thing. It is here that the escapist reader begins to complain.

Where the reader's complaint falls down is in the assumption that space-travel will somehow ennoble Man. That is the essence of his dislike of any Bradbury story.

For instance, in "Payment in Full", which aroused an inordinate amount of adverse comment, three humans on Mars witness the blow-up of Earth, leaving them the last men alive. Now any three men, finding themselves marooned on a raft without hope of rescue, could be expected to break down momentarily. What, then, would happen in the event propounded? The cosmic immensity of the disaster would surely be beyond acceptance at first.

Then gradually, as the awfulness of their plight crept into consciousness, the utter loneliness of their future would produce a childishly vicious resentment of the happiness of the Martians. Cold logic, my masters. In this case, the long-term individual characteristics can be ignored in favour of the initial group reaction--which is all Bradbury intended.

Few readers objected to "And the Moon be Still as Bright", because the definition of the characters is sharper in its extremeness. Spender remains an idealist to the very last; Briggs died as he lived--a hard case. The awful irony of the story lies in the fact that Captain Wilder is the epitome of the average reader: vaguely aware that Spender's ideals are too perfect for civilized Man; vaguely nauseated by the brute that is Parkhill but unable to forsake the herd. The dream of being the first to return to Earth is too strong.

"Kaleidoscope", which I place unhesitatingly as Bradbury's best ever is a perfect cameo portrait of that viciousness I mentioned earlier. It ranks with the best short stories of all time. Here you have, again, a group of men who know they are going to die. Their last words echo through one man's radio as they regret their petty meannesses. "Is there anything I can do to make up for an empty and terrible life?"

So perish all of us when our time comes.

So Bradbury, you see, wants to make men look at themselves, put their own house in order before leaving to rearrange the Martian's palace with H&C in every bedroom. To have gained the insight that he has into the workings of the minds of men, he must have started with an all-pervading love for humanity in the mass as well as in the individual. To depict that working with neither malice, exaggeration, nor satire, he must have retained that love. Indeed, had he lost it, he might well have taken up the discarded lamp of Diogenes and walked the streets looking for an honest man.

Space travel must, of itself be at first a small venture-carried out by small groups. Now if those groups are not carefully chosen it will go ill for that world upon which they first set foot. It may go ill for this world, too, should those voyagers happen upon a race equal to, or superior than us in intelligence who may resent their coming and retaliate upon them and then upon us. If one man can be found in authority who will consider this point and act on it before the first manned space-craft leaves the earth, then Bradbury will not have written in vain.

In a field such as Science-Fiction, there are enormous possibilities for the true short-story writer-the man who, given a limited space, can fill it with a story having a beginning, an ending, and a middle; a story clear to the

reader, with all the loose-ends tied in. This is the essence of the trade, that the reader cannot mistake the meaning of the writer; otherwise, if the ending can be interpreted in more ways than one the weaver of the tale has failed in his intention. He is, after all, the direct descendant of the Eastern Teller-of Tales -- an artist in his own right.

There is no short-story writer in the field of Science-Fiction who, when held up for comparison with his fellows, can produce such overwhelming evidence of his superiority as can Californian Ray Bradbury. Here is a man who has stirred up controversy on all sides by his insistence on realism and logic. Though he began by writing only for that closed circle known as Fandom, his writings have entered the far greater field of magazines of national - and even world - popularity. His material must, therefore, be 'way above average.

Fortunately for the analyst, Doubleday has published two volumes of stories by the Master: one concerned solely with Earth-Mars, the other a more general anthology. In the first the author appears as a crusader; in the second as a teller of tales. In both, he offers imaginative food for thought; in neither is he boring. It is a rare crusader who is entertaining, but Bradbury manages this with superb ease.

In the first book--"The Martian Chronicles" we are offered a



collection of short stories, each complete in itself when first printed, which have been edited to form a record of what might happen when Man first reaches the planet. To deal with each is beyond the scope of this writer in the space which can be allotted to him, but every tale-and its connecting paragraphs - bear the unmistakable stamp of Ray Bradbury. Each carries his thesis that any man, regardless of outward appearances, has weaknesses and strengths which will show themselves at times of stress-a fact known and used by even the most amateur psychologist, often with alarming results.

The book opens with two tales of sheer imagination, tales of Martians only, with Earth men unseen, unspoken, but felt. Since Mars has for so long been considered the most likely of the planets to bear life-forms similar to ours, it is, at least, plausible to assume that such life could be comparable to ours in all ways, though possibly evolved to a greater extent in many.

Of "Way in the Middle of the Air" I, as an outlander, can say nothing: it deals with matters of which I have no knowledge.

The rest of the book bears the cool clear light of Bradbury's logic and the deep understanding he has of the human race. Where he is speculative, as in "Mars is Heaven", he is also realistic, following the thesis that Martians may be humans in most ways, and fearful of the effects of Earthmen upon

their civilization. Where he deals with the effect upon ordinary men of awareness of being on an alien planet, millions of miles from earth his conclusions are impossible to refute - always considering the character of the men he stipulates. And there lies both the weakness and the strength of Bradbury. He is assuming that the men who make the crews of the first space-ships will be ordinary men as we know them today. As a prophet he can possibly be proven wrong when the time comes: as a counsellor he is without fault.

This last, however, is purely personal speculation. The story unfolded in these chronicles is intended to set the reader thinking whether Earthmen must not alter their values before they set out across the skies. The characters delineated are real-you know them yourselves-- Spender, though a fanatic, exists: so does Captain Wilder, so does Sam, with his Hot-Dog stand. The boy who, confronted with a Martian, is unable to accept that simple fact (he is in a hurry for a date) lives down the street. When the world begins its last and most disastrous war, the people who go back to Earth to die with their fellows are ordinary people, who cannot bear the thought of having to live out their lives on this distant planet-they would have gone home to die in any case. And the great Exodus begins.

There were, of course, a few who preferred to remain on the red planet: three of them to be exact. The first two play out a brief com-

edy of being the last man and woman alive until he sees and hears how empty she is and decides on solitude. The other has, with his peculiar family, kept from all contacts, until Captain Wilder pays his second and last visit. The death of the man, Hathaway, allows Wilder to discover the truth of the strange family, and we are left with a vivid little cameo of them, knowing neither what they do nor why; doomed to an eternity which is meaningless to them.

Finally, we have a glimpse of the new Martians arriving on the deserted world. A man and his little family, an ordinary enough group, on whom the hope of the future must rest. They are no longer Earthmen, for Earth no longer exists, but Timothy, playing along with his father until his brothers can accustom themselves to the loneliness of Mars, before he goes off by himself to cry a while is the stuff of which world builders are made. We can hope that the second rocket arrives.

The Chronicles are of such towering merit that anything would be anti-climax that followed them. It is a pity, therefore, that Doubleday have followed them up so closely with "The Illustrated Man". Make no mistake about it, this new volume bears the imprint of Bradbury all through but it suffers one further disadvantage, the connecting link. In an effort to imitate as nearly as possible the serial construction of the Chronicles, the stories have been tied together too loosely by the title

piece. A man's body is covered with tattooed representations of the future; these pictures come to life in the other tales, and in the epilogue. Unfortunately, this does not supply sufficient cohesion for a connecting link; had the stories been left to stand individually and the title piece kept in as one more short, the book would have carried more impact. Even as things stand they have the considerable merit of Bradbury's unexcelled imagination, but the presence (in the back of the reader's mind) of the tie-rod detracts from the force of the individual story.

To do the publishers justice, they have selected most of the best of the remaining Bradbury writings. The collection contains the story, "Kaleidoscope", which ranks with the best short stories of all time, regardless of theme. At a time such as this when the members of a rocket-ship crew are adrift in space with no hope of rescue the underlying character of a man becomes most clear, and Bradbury draws upon his great knowledge of humanity to make this story haunt the reader.

As they fall away from each other across the limitless void of space (they feel) first the vague acceptance and queer abstraction of mind that is their initial reaction to the disaster; it couldn't be happening to THEIR ship, to THEIR crew; to others, maybe, but never to them. As the truth sinks in and their helplessness becomes apparent, they feel a need to hit back at some-one to compensate for it,

and all the concealed and half-concealed dislikes come to the surface at last. Hollis, over whose radio we hear them all, shows us what we are all made of -- a mixture of strengths and weaknesses, eternally trying to gain control of us. When it is too late to be of use, and they want to die with the thought that the others regard them as good fellows, they try a pitiful, lonely, attempt at friendliness. "Is there anything I can do", thinks Hollis, "to make up for a terrible and empty life?" Ironically enough, there is: a child sees him as a falling star and happily makes a wish.

We get a bitter comedy of the adventures of the Martians who invaded Earth. There are two stories dealing with another of the author's favorite theses: the antagonism of children toward their parent. A sardonic twist is given the story of the man who decided to leave a robot replica of himself while he sought fresher fields. Father Peregrine finds Truth, while Captain Hart goes from world to world in search of The Man, who is always a step ahead--and always will be, till the seeker first finds humility.

It is in "The Rocket Man", "The Last Night of the World", and "The Rocket" that the author's love of the ordinary, unpublicized people comes to the reader most plainly. The rocket man is torn between love of family and the strange nostalgia that afflicts the space-traveller. He knows he is breaking his wife's heart and is

wretched for it. She, in her love for him, never openly tries to hold him back, but still hopes to keep him, if only she could stop the stars from shining. Almost, she succeeds, with the wonderful silver trap of a Thanksgiving Supper, but 'the blue stars of evening were there, and the red planet Mars was rising in the East'. On the next trip, his ship fell into the sun. 'And for a long while, the only days we went out to walk were the days when it was raining and there was no sun.'

While "The Last Night" is deliberately underwritten, and "The Rocket" comes close to sentimentality, they both have an extra acuteness of perception that puts them into the category of excellent reading. The wife leaves the water running in the bathroom, so she and her husband can hear it as they wait for the end. Bodoni is an arrant sentimentalist about his children -- and what Italian father is not?

I repeat, Doubleday has published most of the best of Bradbury's stories. It is a pity that the connecting link is so weak.

For a man with the consummate mastery of the short story that Bradbury has it is surprising how seldom he falls into mechanical slickness, though he does, occasionally, skim close to the edge--as in "The City". But, for the most part, he employs the technique which has served him best: given a set of circumstances, what will these three, four, or five men do, in their mental and physical attrib-

utes are such and such? Success at this method requires a better than average knowledge and understanding of the minds of men in the individual; this is what makes Bradbury the master of the short story which uses the scientific imagination to locate its action.

To date, I have only read one longer story by this writer--"The Fireman"--and this, as I read it, fell into three separate parts; it would, I think, have been better published that way. Since there may well have been other longer stories which I have been unfortunate enough to miss, I would be committing the unforgivable sin of arguing ahead of my data to base any definite statement on that particular example. The fact remains that for originality, imagination, and logical treatment, there is no writer in the realm of short-story fiction who can hold a candle to Ray Bradbury. In his writings there are no paragons of virtue who know instinctively the right and proper thing to do in the face of any disaster, no matter how cataclysmic: there are only human beings who vacillate in times of stress and grow vindictive when frustrated. No man, today, is so perfect that he can truthfully claim that he would not, under the same conditions, behave in any other way than did Hollis, or Captain Wilder, or Hitchcock--or Fio-

rello Bodoni.

The critical tributes printed on the back cover of "The Illustrated Man" talk of Bradbury's imagination, talent, and prose technique: they omit the obvious compassion he has for humanity, stemming from his understanding of his fellow-men. It is implicit in the subtle shading of his characters, so that no man appears all good or all bad, and the unexpected though logical weakness of the strong -- and stubborn strength of the weakling -- help to make the incidents of which he writes live more vividly in the mind of the reader. It is this, I think, which the reviewers refer to when they print their ravings over Bradbury's unique talents. For a logic which is as unvarying as that of Orwell in his monumental 1984, yet never so relentlessly grim in its wording; for the unusual ability that he has to make the reader stop and think before putting his stories aside; and for his gentle insistence upon holding up a mirror to modern man--when he could have used the bitter, twisted disillusionment of Juvenal. I contend that Bradbury deserves to take his place among the acknowledged masters of the writing craft -- if not in the leading position, in which I would, without hesitation, place him.

*Bill Morse*

## *A Question of Title*

by Walt Willis

---

In QUANDRY 8 there was an article about fanmag names. The writer pointed out how lacking they were in originality and inspiration. He called for "sparkling, eye-catching titles". He rightly astigmatized as "dull and insipid" such titles as 'Fantasy Review', 'Universe', etc. Altogether there was nothing in the article to which any right-thinking fan could take exception.

But suppose the curious neofan notices the author's name --- Bob Tucker. "Ah," he asks, "what then is the sparkling, eye-catching title this Mr. Tucker has chosen for his very own fanmag? What evocative, glamorous, semantically powerful name has his inventive genius conjured up?" The answer falls about his ears like a soggy rice pudding --- 'Science Fiction Newsletter'.

"No doubt," will say our warm-hearted neofan, Mr. Tucker was stuck with his title before the light dawned on him, and fears to change it lest he lose his goodwill?" Alas, no. Bob Tucker HAS changed the name of his fanmag recently, but only like the man in the old joke who went to immense trouble to change his name from Joe Stensch to Harry Stensch. His mag used to be called 'Bloomington Newsletter'. Not an inspired title: it did not sparkle noticeably. But nevertheless it had some merit. It had local colour. It was distinctive. One

imagined the inhabitants of the quiet town of Bloomington sitting in their rose-covered cottages listening to the newsboys pattering up the peaceful street. "Newsletter...Newsletter...Boggs raps Campbell...Vance is Kuttner...Read all about it...All the news that's fit to photo-offset...Extra...Extra...Vance not Kuttner...Newsletter...Newsletter." As the childish voices fade away into the distance the gentle people of Bloomington say to one another, "God bless Mr. Tucker for bringing such fame to our little town.

And then Bob ruthlessly wipes the colorful name of Bloomington off the map and substitutes the epicene words 'Science Fiction', as if he were afraid the readers might start looking for gossip about the Bloomington Sewing Circle. What possible justification can there have been for this? A small matter, you may think, but how superior was the old name to this new epitome of dullness and insipidity. 'Bloomington Newsletter.' It rolled ripingly off the tongue. It was memorable. It had tradition. And furthermore, it started with the second letter of the alphabet.

This last is a very important fact, as all you Wilson's and Young's will agree. If your name begins near the bottom of the alphabet your whole life is overshadowed. You sit in the back row at school. Your name is always at the end of lists. It is called last on every possible occasion, from viva voce examinations to firing squads. You follow where the Adam's and Bonaparte's lead. You assume the role of an enlocker. For your fanmag it is equally serious. If its name begins with a late letter it comes far down the review columns at that

point where even Rog Phillips is beginning to run short of superlatives, and where the inattentive reader has already started on the little advertisements offering fancy articles in plain envelopes.

(continued on page 34)

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# THE BLUE PENCIL

by *Shelby Vick*

I *liked* ROCKETSHIP X-M!

Really.

The only thing I'm criticizing is fandom's reaction to the picture.

Tho I haven't seen it, I imagine I'd even have liked THE MAN FROM PLANET X.

And I was *nuts* about the Flash Gordon serials!

It can't be my second childhood -- maybe I just haven't outgrown my first...

In any case, I think it would be a good idea for some Hwood film company to dig up those old FG and Buck Rogers props and launch a line of B-grade steffilms -- VENGEANCE OF MARS, starring Jon Rogers and his spaceship, Trigger!

Seriously -- they could write out most of the troublesome physic phenomena; lack of gravity, for instance, can be done away with by grav-plates (or -belts). Same thing for variance of gravity on other planets. And most of the aliens could be explainably humanoid, or similar to the many monsters left over from horror movies. Or why couldn't Disney draw in the monster -- or George Pal fix up a puppet? And it's simple enough to rig a man up in a space suit and breather helmet. Alien scenery? Hollywood has never been at a loss for that -- tabletop stuff does good for distant shots, and they can always arrange props for close-ups.



Harmful?

You think such out-and-out spacepics would ruin science-fiction?

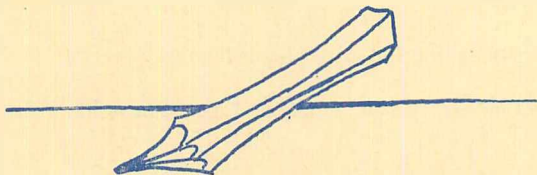
Why?

What harm has been done by the Saturday Western epics to the classic Technicolor extravaganzas? Have they caused such authors as Luke Short to cease turning out slick-quality material for Satevepost, Colliers, or book publication?

With the science minimized, such films could help spread the popularity of sf; an introduction for beginners, or such-like.

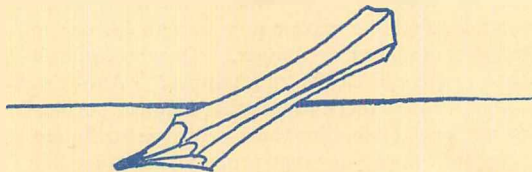
And I'd sit in the darkened mezzanine, joyfully masticating popcorn and shouting to Captain Putrin:

"They went thataway!"



Is it necessary to tack -con or -vention onto the name of every sf con? It's getting monotonous. The Little Men produced at least a favorable variation at the Nolacon -- they proposod calling the convention (if they got it) the Leprechon. And Chicago is in favor of certain changes -- calling the '52 con the 10th *Annual* SF Con instead of the usual '10th World SF con' -- it's never truly been a world con.....now if they would go a step further and call it something besides the Chicon... Maybe, since the gals are supposed to be in charge of things, they could call it LADIES DAZE...

--OKAY! I don't like it either. But there should be *some* bright fan who could come up with a good suggestion. Might be they could hold a contest...



WAW with the crew in fifty-two!

And it has a meaning.

Yus.

WAW, decoded, reads: Walter A. Willis. The crew is, notchesly, fan  
dom. And what is the important fan event of the year of our Lord, nine  
teen hundred fifty two A D?

Chicago, of course.

Meaning, let's have Willis at Chicago. We can do it. After all, we  
*only need money.*

And cooperation.

Well?

*Shelley*

---

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NOSTALGIA  
by A. Bertram Chandler

I

And as our tangled tales we write  
We weep awhile into our beer...  
Where are the Knights of Yesternight?  
Where are the Lords of Yesteryear?

II

Where's Dracula, who lapped up blood  
And flapped around his castle drear,  
Slept in a coffin full of mud?  
Where are the snows of yesteryear?

III

Where's Tarzan,<sup>2</sup> swinging through  
the trees,  
With rope of grass and home-made  
spear?  
His crocodiles and chimpanzees?  
Where are the snows of yesteryear?

IV

Where's Carter,<sup>3</sup> Lord of all Barsoom,  
Leaping across her deserts sere?  
Whose son emerged from egg, not  
womb...<sup>4</sup>  
Where are the snows of yesteryear?

V

Where's Valeron, long leagues away?  
And *Skylark*, with her super gear?  
Her crew, whose names I cannot say?<sup>5</sup>  
Where are the snows of yesteryear?

VI

Where's Kinnison, who wore the Lens,  
Who dressed in grey and knew no  
fear?  
Where's Tregonsee, and all his  
friends?  
Where are the snows of yesteryear?

VII

Where's Lazarus, surnamed the Long,  
Who faced old age without a tear?<sup>6</sup>  
The Families, tradition-strong?  
Where are the snows of yesteryear?

VIII

Where's that Big Ship, that onward  
sped,<sup>7</sup>  
With culture, crew and customs queer?  
Where's Joe-Jim, with his double  
head?  
Where are the snows of yesteryear?

IX

Where's Tom, who still escaped alive,  
Though he was chased from there to  
here?  
Where's Daisy, with her Diesel drive?  
Where are the snows of yesteryear?<sup>8</sup>

X

*And as the printed page we scan  
The salt tears splash into our beer...  
The idols of the old-time fan  
Are with the snows of yesteryear.*

1 In *Hollywood*.

2 And him.

3 Last seen consorting with Lemurians.

4 Run, don't walk, to the nearest Dianetician.

5 I can't remember the bugsters' names. Anyhow, they wouldn't have fitted the rhyme or the metre.

6 Between stiff covers.

7 I wonder how far she HAS got?

8 Have you checked my pro-murk slush piles lately? Ed.

# HOW TO BUILD YOUR OWN SPACE-SHIP: PART III

by Norman E. Hartman

In this, the third and final article in this series, I shall include details not covered in the first two installments of "How to Build Your Own Space-Ship". So far I have told how you, Mr. Average Fan, can build the hull and power plant for an authentic space-ship capable of going to Mars and back, so this article covers such details as steering controls for the ship, instruments and navigation, space-suits, air, food and water, and refreshments and entertainment.

The first and most important of these is the steering mechanism. Such a large and heavy vessel needs an adequate means of turning it, and a makeshift device, such as steering vanes in the jet-stream, would not only be inadequate, it would be silly. The velocity of the powdered iron stream would cause it to slash through tempered tungsten like a hot knife through wax. A non-mechanical method of steering is far more preferable, one which needs no moving parts and is not likely to break down in mid-flight. The simplest, easiest, and most effective method, considering our abundant supply of available electric power, would be to place powerful electromagnets at the base of the solenoid tube and use them to slightly deflect the jet-stream. The controls for these would be almost entirely automatic, keeping the ship on course with no effort from the pilot. Auxiliary gyro-stabilizers can be used for rapid maneuvers and for swinging ship while in free fall.

Of course, before you start on your trip, you will get your course all charted out; any observatory staff will be more than glad to give you a hand. Therefore, you will need only a gyro-stabilized sextant for getting angles between planets and stars, an accurate chronometer unaffected by gravitational changes, and a pocket calculating machine. A few more instruments would probably come in handy, but for the beginning navigator these will be sufficient.

An interesting problem is posed by the possible need of repairs or outside observations while in space. Of course this requires space-suits, but should these be of the self-contained type or the dependent - or umbilical - model. The former type allows much more freedom of motion, but the dependent model is lighter, allows telephone communications to the inside of the ship, will not run out of air, and gives the occupant a feeling of security as he is solidly fastened to the ship by an air hose. Your choice will be dictated by preference alone, in this case.

In the last article, you will recall, the plans for the hull specified living quarters as being the top two decks, with room for supplies in the dome-shaped top of the ship along with the ship's engines. The recreation room and air supply are located on the lower deck. The most efficient air renewer ever invented is ordinary plant life, so we'll use an arrangement which is both efficient and a morale booster. The ceiling tubes will produce light very similar to sunlight and the floor and walls will be covered with vegetation -- grass on the floor, with hedges and beds of more efficient oxygen producers. With the entire deck disguised as a terrestrial park, you can imagine how it will feel to float around under free fall, swinging from one tree to the next, or just floating leisurely about, pretending you're a bird or maybe a blimp. It is the ideal cure for tense nerves. This arrangement provides not only air and relaxation but, handled properly, yields most of the fresh fruits and vegetables necessary to a balanced diet.

In such a ship, especially when manned by a group of science fiction fans, it is inevitable that the pleasant topic of (no I don't mean sex. Don't jump the gun, Junior) alcoholic beverages will arise. What will you do when that fateful day arrives, about half-way out to Mars, when you run out of liquor? The last bottle of Old SpaceRanger is drained and there isn't a single drop of that marvelous extract from the fountain of life nearer than Earth (which at the moment is between eighty and ninety million miles away). The obvious answer is to brew your own liquor. The first thing to do is ferment some of the grains from the 'garden', then set up a still and distill out the alcoholic contents of the mash. This sounds easy, but the first time you try it you are apt to find foaming mash squirting out of the end of the condensing tube as the mash boils with no gravity to hold it down. Result, one fine run of drinking alcohol plumb ruint. You can avoid all this trouble by simply taking into account the peculiarities of liquid behavior under free fall. The surface tension of the liquid will tend to form it into a sphere; in contact with material that it will wet, the liquid will flow over the entire surface, covering it fairly evenly; in contact with material that it will not wet, such as oily or greasy surfaces, the liquid will pull itself away and form an independent sphere.

Taking these characteristics into account, you will find it a simple matter to construct your free fall still. You can choose between two alternatives. The first one is to have the mash floating in the center of a globe of metal with a heating element inserted into it. The alcohol will evaporate off the surface of the globe of mash and condense onto the inside of the metal sphere. This end product is reasonably drinkable. The other method is to release the mash into a similar sphere of metal where it will, upon contacting the inside surface, wet it and cover the inside of the sphere fairly evenly. When the outside of the sphere is gently heated the gases formed will escape from inside the sphere through a non-wetting tube inserted into the space left when the mash clings to the metal wall of the sphere. When the gases are led through a cool tube they will condense and be easily captured. Prosit!

Now you have the full instructions on how to build your own spaceship. Don't forget to drop me a postcard from Mars.

*N.E.H.*

## So You Want to Be a Critic!

by Bill Venable

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If you will but peruse the letter column of any prozine you will discover that each and every fan is a self-appointed literary critic, of a rather poor sort. At least most fans are willing to stick their necks out as far as to say, "This was a good story," or, "This was not a good story." However, when it comes to getting down and reviewing a book or magazine for a fanzine there are very few fans who can do this sort of thing. At least, the field at present is hogged by ten or twelve Superior Minds who are able, on the least provocation, to sit down at a typewriter and turn out a searching criticism of anything that happens to be in their line of vision. It seems too bad that more fans cannot develop this sort of skill. However, with a view toward remedying this situation I have *carefully studied* the techniques of these paragons in the field of criticism, and believe that any fan with a brain, or even half a brain, can acquire the art of criticizing.

The prime requisite of a Big-Time critic is that he is able, *without the slightest provocation*, to pre-judice himself on any type of literature in a very short time. This is a skill which he must have taken years to acquire, and we cannot treat it too lightly. Thus any prominent critic has already figured out, at least six months in advance, what he is going to say about all the forthcoming novels during that time. Of course we cannot hope to carry this around in our heads, as the expert critic does. Until the skill is acquired it must painstakingly be written down. It would be best for the would-be critic to take a pad and pencil and write down a listing of this nature:

"First novel: Terrible.

"Second novel: Mediocre.

"Third novel: Stupid.

"Fourth novel: Brilliant. Etc.."

A really professional critic, does all this best when he is absolutely ignorant of what the forthcoming novels will be. He has to figure on what his public wants, and what has gone before. Thus, if he has treated six or seven books in a row pretty decently it is now time for him to really smear one. Or if he has condemned to hell all but two of the last ten books he

is ready to praise one to the skies. This randomness also lends a note of originality to his criticism. When everyone else is praising the latest Bradbury anthology our critic, according to his list condemns it as juvenile babblings. While the populace is not in agreement with him they respect him for daring to say such things about Bradbury. In fact, it is the character of a critic that he is able to say terrible things about the best authors, things you and I would never dream of saying. This shows he is head and shoulders above the crowd.

The second greatest asset of a critic is his ability to classify any book at a moments notice, to classify it in a way common people never think of. Thus when a new book appears one critic writes, "This is a book." while another critic states, "This is not a book." The third critic asks, "Is this a book?" while the fourth uses a different approach, "The new SIMON AND SCHUSTER s-f novel is just another tale turned out by the Eniac under the pen-name of Ray Bradbury." Ray Bradbury, the Eniac! Who'd have ever thought it?

This does not end our catalogue of the necessary qualities of a critic, however. It has been recently discovered that the best critics are people who know nothing about that which they are criticizing. Thus a great art critic looks at a painting done in the modern style. "The color," he says, "is rotten."

"Where?" asks the artist vehemently.

"My dear fellow, I don't know *where*," says the critic. "I am color blind." And turning a withering look on the ruined painter he walks away.

Similar characteristics were uncovered in one of the prominent s-f critics, at an interview





at which I was fortunate enough to be present. "Have you done any writing yourself?" the reviewer asks the critic.

"None," says the critic, polishing his glasses.

"Are you familiar with the great literary works in the English language?" says the interviewer. "Certainly not," replies the critic. Asked if he can read or write, the critic turns away to the window and mutters, "No."

The interviewer asks then how does the critic do his work?

"Simple," says the Great Man. "I grind up the book and mix it with my dog's RED HEART. If she eats it, I praise the book. If she turns away, I condemn it. Great lover of literature, that animal."

The interviewer is astounded. Just then the animal in question enters the room. The interviewer sees her. "Is this the dog?" he asks.

"No," says the critic, "this is the one who does my typing."

However, to fans who do not like dogs we offer a note of hope also. Recent experiments indicate that monkeys and duckbill platypusses are also capable of that sort of thing. Otherwise you will have to train your own animals.

*Bill Venable*

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*The Way to a Venusian's Heart*

by Lee Hoffman

Koshay waved his knife and with a deft twist of the wrist stabbed the largest piece of Umku. He stuffed it into his mouth, chewed, swallowed, and grunted to his companion, "Y'know, Gilrun, these Venusians are the best cooks in the solar system.

"You're telling me." the Lunite replied. He picked up an Ifyul stalk on the point of his knife and looked it over, "and there's not a Venusian living who can cook like Yoz."

The big yellow decapod behind the counter gurgled a typical Venusian expression of contentment. He tossed another chunk of Umku onto the platter and gurgled, "On the house."

Gilrun winked at his companion, and the Earthman winked back. "In my years haulin' freight from Earth to Saturn I've eaten in plenty of Umku joints and I've never tasted cooking like Yoz."

Yoz gurgled again and slipped a Frangh onto Koshay's plate.

The two spacemen finished their meals and lit up a couple of Chym cigarettes. Gilrun inhaled and then let the smoke out slowly through his nose. "Mild." he muttered. Koshay did likewise and then asked, "How much, Yoz?"

The Venusian gurgled, "\$ interplan'ts."

"Sure thing," Koshay muttered, leaning back. Carefully he knocked his ashes on the floor. "Yoz, did I ever tell you about a Venusian I knew by the name of Zamuc?"

"No."

"Well, this lad, Zamuc, was good-lookin' in a Venusian sort of way. He was a good five feet tall and almost green. Well there was this little gal, Suca - she was a cute little thing as Venusian dames go - she was nuts about him and he was pining away for a lass from up in the high country where the orange Venusies come from. She was almost red and had the softest, sweetest gurgle you've ever heard."

Yoz emitted the Venusian equivalent of a sigh and leaned on the lunch-counter.

"Well," Koshay continued with a flourish, "she, bein' an uplander, considered herself to be better'n Zamuc. And all the while this little Suca loved him. Zamuc went upland and got a job with the orange gal's old man, who was a big rocket with Venus Inter-Space. The old man put Zamuc to work in the main office. Now get this." He leaned toward Yoz, "Zamuc worked right across the room from the upland gal."

Yoz gasped appropriately.

"All the time Zamuc worked there poor little Suca was eatin' her cardiac muscles out. Well, this orange gal decided to string Zamuc along. She played him for about a month and then up and eloped with a yellow space-pilot. Well, he was all broken up."

"Did he go back to Suca?" Yoz gurgled.

"No," Koshay sighed, "he walked behind a firing test rocket and melted himself."

Yoz gasped.

"And Suca went into the swamps and was never seen again." Koshay sniffed.

The Venusian's soft yellow body heaved and deep croaking sobs gurgled from within him.

"So long, Yoz." Gilrun muttered, "We'll see ya again next time we're in port." Koshay nodded and waved as they left.

Outside the shop Gilrun grinned, "That's the fifth time you've told Yoz that story."

"Yeah," Koshay replied, "and it's the fifth time we've walked out without paying, too."

As they walked toward the terminal, Yoz' gurgled sobs echoed thru the night.

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## Book Review

WORLD OF NULLO, by C. Lamp de Sprague; STFan Press, \$3.50.

This reviewer has long been conscious of the inadequacy of the manner in which most books are reviewed at present.

The average book reviewer (an unsuccessful author) receives his free review copy (carefully stamped FOR REVIEW PURPOSES ONLY, NOT FOR RESALE in huge red letters) and, if his whiskey supply is low and his little red book of telephone numbers yield only masculine voices, dutifully sits down and reads the book from cover to cover, then pens a few hundred well-chosen words devoted to the author's complete lack of talent.

But this is wrong. The average writer takes anywhere from three months to two and a half years to write his book. This involves a tremendous amount of thought and effort. How patronising and unjust to expect a reviewer, in the space of a few days, to toss off a competent assessment of such a project.

The spirit of fair play alone demands that the reviewer spend at least as much time on his review as the writer spent on his book. Otherwise he is apt to overlook some of the writer's most carefully thought out and subtle gambits. Only by studying the story thoroughly with all the intensity and devotion of a Fundamentalist preacher perusing his bible can a truly fair reviewer work. The reviewer worthy of the name must be as familiar with the novel (preferably more so) as the author, himself. I am sure every conscientious reviewer has already seen the justice of my argument and is determined to deal more fairly with authors in the future. This is as it should be.

Of course there are a few slight difficulties. Even critics must eat. (We will ignore the individual who just shouted "Why") Reviews seldom pay over \$10 while many reviewers are recompensed only by the free copies. And books, while well known as food for the mind, do little to fatten the waistline unless used on cold days for padding, due to their insulating qualities.

Obviously, few critics can spare three months to two and one half years for the fee of \$10. (I might add that the true critic will devote his full time to the review. Otherwise, mundane distractions are apt to color his reactions unfairly.)

There is one solution to this dilemma, one which I have used in my review of Mr. de Sprague's splendid new novel "The World of Nullo". If intense study is required to review a book, and the reviewer has limited time to devote to the project, the obvious alternative is to limit his study to one section of the book, ignoring the rest. This has worked magnificently in isolated instances in the past. In 1936 George Jean Woolcott fell asleep after reading the first chapter of "Gone With the Wind". His review was due the next morning and, faced with the impossibility of reading 350 pages, he reviewed the first chapter only, though he did not mention the fact. The review was an immediate sensation. Other reviewers hastened to agree and sales zoomed.

In 1943 a Kansas newspaper editor accidentally obtained a copy of an obscure adventure novel with all except pages 138-224 missing. His review resulted in an unprecedented demand for the story in bookstores all over the country. Unfortunately, the book had been out of print since 1902 and it developed that the only remaining copy was the mutilated one possessed by the reviewer.

I, myself, once reviewed a fantasy magazine in which over half the pages were illegible. The few decipherable stories were unreadable but my review of this issue drew enthusiastic praise and that issue is now a priceless collector's item, illegible pages and all.

So, in the case of "The World of Nullo", I have deliberately utilized this much fairer to the author method of not reading the entire book. Though the casual reader will doubtless find the adventures of hero Cymbal Cinnamon engrossing throughout, I, as a reviewer, found Chapter 14 especially worthy of attention...

...this may have been because I looked at no other chapters. However, for the reader with only six months to devote to the book, we definitely recommend Chapter 14.

Having only two nights to spare, myself, I was forced to eliminate even further. Page 183 seemed especially appealing and I had no sooner commenced close examination when I spied IT!

Customarily, I should have selected first a paragraph, then a single sentence, for detailed study. But destiny intervened.

In line 17 of page 183 between the words 'he' and 'said' is a space. But not an ordinary space! This space has a personality, a flavor all its own. This shows the advantages of close study. What casual reviewer could appreciate the toil expended here?

This space is truly unique; there has never been such a space before, there will never be another--only crude imitations. It expresses *joie de vivre*, exuberance, humility, and passion, all condensed into one small space where a cruder writer would be forced to struggle for pages. I am convinced we are entering a golden age which will date from this achievement of sheer monumental genius. De Sprague can never, regrettably, surpass this.

This space belongs to humanity, now. Steps should be taken to see that it is properly preserved. I would suggest the next edition of this book be given special attention. Perhaps the author and publisher can reach an agreement whereby the space can be expanded to the length of a full sentence or, better yet, a whole paragraph. It actually deserves a full chapter to itself.

Someday the space will probably be expanded to encompass the entire 280 pages of the book. Actually, had de Sprague as much good taste as talent, he would have arranged it thus before the book's first printing. The novel would have benefited immeasurably by the change.

## WASTEBASKET'S CONTRIBUTORS - - - -

# LEE HOFFMAN

Despite protestations that no deception was intended, the most successful fan hoax since ODD TALES failed to appear was unveiled at the NOLACON when an attractive female registered under the name of Lee Hoffman.

Unknown a year earlier, Lee's progress had been meteoric. Undisputed kingpin of the mimeod fanzine field, Lee was voted number one editor in the last NFFC poll though her QUANDRY received nary a mention. Her renown as an editor has overshadowed her talent for Thurberesque drawings and her even greater aptitude for producing Cuppy-styled prose.

One of the brightest lights in the current fan scene, this 19-year old wants to someday emulate Burr Tillstrom. In the meantime she occupies her time with fandom, horseback riding, Saturday matinees, fervent admiration of Roger Price (author of something called "In One Head and Out the Other"), and being one of your editor's favorite people. And his star contributor.



LEE HOFFMAN & BOB TUCKER \*

\*BOB TUCKER IS NOT A CONTRIBUTOR TO WASTEBASKET, BUT WE'D LIKE TO REMEDY THAT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. HOW ABOUT IT, TUCK?



## A Question of Title (continued from page 16)

Furthermore, take the case of the neofan sending out sample copies of the first issue of his fanmag. He starts at the top of the column and writes labels for every address. Then he begins to get tired. He starts missing out names. If he is a very innocent neofan he might even miss out Bob Tucker. There may come a day when a new fanmag of promise starts up and Bob doesn't know about it. That will be the beginning of the Dark Ages. If Bob Tucker doesn't know everything in sf, what security is there left in the world? No one will know where he is. The corner stone will have been removed. Fandom will fall into anarchy.

Well may you blench. I trust you see now the importance of having a name for your fanmag which starts near the beginning of the alphabet. And it's not difficult to choose one, when you remember that a fanmag name does not have to shout at the top of its voice that it is connected with sf. No one will be in any danger of thinking it is not a fanmag, for no one but a fan will ever hear about it, and he will always hear about it in circumstances that leave no doubt as to the type of magazine it is. No need to assume that your fanmag is going to be out on a newstand and have to distinguish itself from the 'Poultry Breeder's Gazette'.

So let us pick a few names from the first pages of the dictionary. I hope you don't mind my throwing out a few suggested slogans, too—by the look of them I'm afraid they should have been thrown out long ago.

ABACUS—"The fanzine you can count on."

ABASAMENT—"A really low story every issue."

ABBATOIR—"This fanzine will slay you."

ABBESS—"The Superior fanzine."

ABDOMEN—"The fanzine with guts."

ABROAD—"The Femfanzine."

or even

ABSINTHE—"The fanzine of spirit. Be conspicuous by your ABSINTHE.

Had enough? But of course there ARE other things to consider when picking a name for your fanmag. For instance, the name should be very short so that irreverent fans can't make embarrassing abbreviations of it, and so that it doesn't take up space in your reviews which might have been filled with egoboo. It should also consist so far as possible of straight letters, which are far easier to draw and to cut in line.

So you want a short name, one with straight letters, and beginning as near the front of the alphabet as possible. Well, of course you could just call it 'AAA' ("The mag with the indefinite articles") but I feel that the ideal title should have a little more significance. You want a word that fulfills the three desiderata above and also carries some suggestion of innovation, of mutancy, and if possible of fannishness, some hint of some typical fanned characteristic. There is only one word that answers all these requirements. I offer the ultimate in fanmag titles. The word 'AI'. I need hardly explain to all crossword puzzlers and Lexicon players that this is the name of a three-toed sloth, known for the "feeble plaintive cry which it utters while in search of its kind.

*Walt Willis*

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# THE PALEOZOIC PRIMER

## I. The Archeopteryx

This space was reserved for a picture of an Archeopteryx. Unfortunately, no Archeopteryx willing to allow his photograph to be printed in WASTEBASKET could be located.

The Archeopteryx is a cross-bred sort of animal, half snake and half bird. I would like to have been around and watched this interesting event happen. I find it hard to conceive of such a thing. But evidently the bird didn't. Nor the snake.

The front half of the Archeopteryx is powered by two feeble wings on which it flops around disconsolately, unable to leave the ground. The rear end of this creature foils this - it trails out along the terra'n, making like a tail-heavy plane trying to get air borne. This is probably the origin of that popular expression: "It's sure draggin' today."

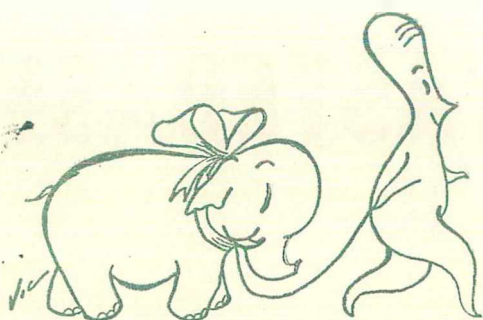
This mixed up snake-bird was a prominent political figure of the paleozoic age. Its direct descendant is the mugwump of the present day; that well-known beast so called because of its habit of sitting straddle of the fence. (cf. Dean Acheson).

It is impossible to determine the sex of an archeopteryx from casual observation. And to try and cop a close-up view would brand you a very fool-hardy schnook indeed. The safest way, if you *must* know this, is to obtain the information from his driver's license. Although it is scarcely worth while going to all that trouble as this animal, like the mule, is doubtless a hybrid, or neuter.

It might be very amusing to a dianetician to audit the Archeopteryx. He should have some pre-natal memories that would be dillies!

I thank you. Next lesson - Tyrannosaurus Rex.

*Rory Faulkner*



## TALES OF HOFFMÁN

### II. The Care and Training of Elephants

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. It is not infrequent that a fan will find himself being followed by marigated members of the order Proboscidea, commonly known as elephants. Often the fan will find that one or more of these mammals has taken a fancy to him and desires to make its permanent home with him. A kind and understanding fan will not reject the domestically inclined pachyderm. Instead he will open his home to the animal.

There is no finer household pet than a friendly elephant.

It is advised that if the pet-desiring fan is an apartment dweller, he obtain a young elephant to begin with as full grown members may not fit the elevator. It is also advised that the fan give the animal a room of its own, or a corner of the family bedroom which it can come to think of as its own special place. This 'special place' should be provided with an adequate sand-box or it will be necessary for the fan to 'walk' his pet several times a day.

Once the new addition to the family has been established in the home, the fan may desire to teach him a few entertaining tricks, to amuse company. One very amusing trick is to have a friend lie on his back on the floor and have the elephant place his foot on the friend's nose. This trick is suggested only if the fan involved has an abundance of friends. . . and a linoleum floor covering.

Another amusing trick that will have the fan's lady friends 'oh-ing, and ah-ing' is hat removing. Bring 'Junior' into the living room and point out a lady wearing a hat. The well-trained elephant should reach out with his trunk and remove the hat, gently. Before choosing a young lady for this stunt be certain that her hat is not pinned on, or you may be forced to make embarrassing explanations to the police.

*Lee Hoffman*