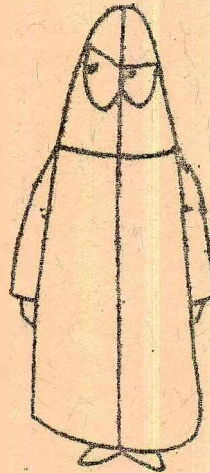


WILD HAIR

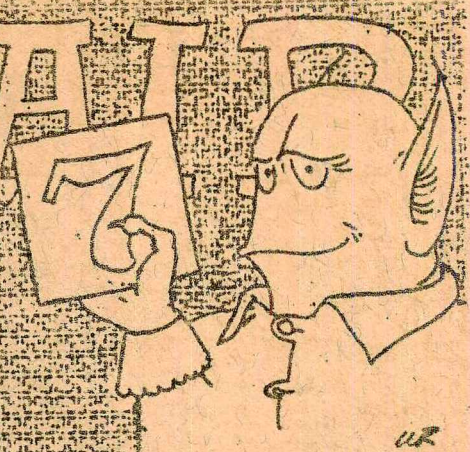
CERTAINLY I'M A RUGGED INDIVIDUALIST. WHAT ARE YOU, CHUM?--IT SHOWS IN HIS FACE.---BUT I CAN'T TURN OFF MY FINE MIND!---I'M ALWAYS PREPARED TO FALL DOWN.---CITIZENS OF TOMORROW IN THE WORLD OF TODAY.---YOU DON'T KNOW IF I'M MARRIED OR NOT, DO YOU?---WE ARE DUCKS, QUACKING!---HE'S NOT VERY CLEAN, AND NOT VERY GOOD.---YOU ARE SPEAKING TO A MEMBER OF YOUR OWN SEX, MY DEAR.---I HAVE MUCH FASTER REACTIONS THAN MOST PEOPLE.---THE DEEPER SIGNIFICANCE OF SCIENCE FICTION.---I HAVE NEVER ENCOUNTERED A SITUATION I COULD NOT COPE WITH ADEQUATELY.---CAN A MAN FALL IN LOVE WITH METAL? MY GOD! I HAVE!---THAT'S A MATTER OF OPINION I SHOULD HAVE BEEN BORN ON MARS. THERE'S NOTHING HERE ON EARTH FOR ME. WHAT'S THE MATTER, BURBEE DON'T YOU LIKE MILK?---THIS IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS IS THE SECOND ISSUE OF MOE.---IT'S GOOD TO BE HOME AGAIN.---I CALL THEM FLYING TYPEWRITER SPOOLS BECAUSE I AM MORE INTELLIGENT THAN THE REPORTERS WHO DUBBED THEM FLYING SAUCERS.---I JUST WANT TO WRITE GOOD STORIES.---THEY WERE REMOVED.---"PUT ON ALL SHUTTERS, AND KEEP PLENTY OF COOLING DRINKS ON HAND," HE COMMANDED THROUGH THE INTERCOM.---I HAVE ALSO INVENTED A MACHINE TO HELP PEOPLE LEARN TO THINK FASTER.---IF THEY WERE SLANS THEY'D UNDERSTAND IT.---THIS IS GOD!---EVER DAYDREAM ABOUT BEING THE CAPTAIN OF A SPACESHIP???---LY LOVES HER.---EVEN THOUGH THIS UNIQUE 64-YR-OLD MAN WAS OLD ENOUGH TO BE MY FATHER. I FELT AS IF MY LITTLE BOY HAD DIED.---WAS CENSORSHIP IMPOSED?---YOU'RE JUST A SURFACE THINKER.---THE CHRISTIAN STEFAN.---THAT FIGURES.---MY FATHER DIED HONORABLY IN WORLD WAR I.---I'LL UNDERCUT YOU IN WAYS YOU NEVER DREAMED OF.---IS YOUR NEIGHBOR A FLYING SAUCER MAN? NO! NOT LA! HOLLYWOOD!---I HAVE AN EIDETIC MEMORY.---FADE OUT OF THE PICTURE.---FANDOM IS NOT A THING BUT A STATE OF MIND.---I CAN CARRY ON A LIGHT INTELLECTUAL CONVERSATION ON ANY SUBJECT.---A SINCERE ACOLYTE OF H.P. LOVECRAFT.---MGM OFFERED ME \$25,000 FOR THE TITLE ALONE.---READ IT TODAY; LIVE IT TOMORROW.---MY BIGGEST REGRET IS THAT I AM PHYSIOLOGICALLY INCAPABLE OF BEING A LESBIAN.---SLOWLY AND PAINFULLY HE LEAPED TO HIS FEET.---WHY HE'S THE DIRECTOR OF THE LASFS: **A REASONABLY NULL-A NUCLEAR PHYSICIST.---HE'S NOT AS FAR ALONG AS WE ARE; HE'S RED.---I'M SMARTER THAN MOST PEOPLE ABOUT SPENDING MONEY.---A LITTLE PROUD AND ARROGANT...---BUT SKEET IS SUCH A SINCERE FAN.---SHAKE HANDS WITH AN IMMORTAL MAN.---I DON'T HAVE TO PROVE ANYTHING TO MYSELF.---YES, WE ARE OLDER THAN WT.---DE PROFUNDIS AD ASTRA.---WILL THAT THING CUT METAL GO OD?---YOU HAVE MADE A BASIC MISASSUMPTION.---FANS ARE SLANS.---N.F.F.F

the babble that
is fandom



BUT HE PUBLISHED ONE OF THE FIRST FANZINES THAT EVER WAS.---MOST PEOPLE ARE DULL EYES, BUT SOME OF US ARE BRIGHT EYES.---THE ANGELS GREW LONELY, AND TOOK YOU TO SING FOR THEM ONLY. WE'RE LONELY TOO, JOLEY BOY!!---LOOK AT ME: I'M PERFECTLY NORMAL!!---DID YOU DRINK YOUR DINNER DALE DID YOU DRINK YOUR DINNER DALE DID YOU DRINK YOUR DINNER DALE??---REMEMBER, BLUEBIRDY HOW EASILY YOU TAKE COLD.---BURBEE, I SAY TO YOU IN ALL SERIOUSNESS I'M GOING TO BE RICH.---IT'S GOOD FOR A CHILD TO KNOW THAT SOMEONE OUTSIDE HER OWN FAMILY

WILD HAIR



W I L D H A I R number seven. Editors: Charles Burbee, F. Towner Laney, William Rotsler and our guest editor this session: John Van Couvering. Published 30 June 1951 at the (newly) ancestral manse of Charles Burbee, 7628 South Pioneer Boulevard, Whittier, California. No price listed; published every 14 months.

CHARLES BURBEE: Yes, every 14 months we get together, the Insurgent Element, and put out some kind of a fanzine. They're usually larger than this tiny effusion, but this time we used up a lot of time making spools of wire for strictly limited circulation. No, Jacobs, we will not send you a spool, not while you are Frenching it. This time our guest is John Van Couvering, who very deliberately did not walk through our glass shower door.

WILLIAM ROTSLER: And I thought Alhambra was a long way out! Whittier, I think even Burbee will agree, just about stretches Southern California to its practical limits. But that's strange from someone so recently removed from far-off Camarillo. But all in all it was worth it. We had both light Pilsener and intellectual-type banter, Dixieland instead of a Beethoven quartet and a wire recorder for an electronic Boswell. Plus excellent food by Mrs Burbee; many, many fine unprintable stories about Big and Medium Name Fans; and Laney's revelation of his new spaceship landing cradle blueprints.

JOHN VAN COUVERING: I am aware that this is an honor extended to few fans, or anti-fans, or anyone. I listened with gaping ear to the gay anecdotes of the seamier side of the old days, to Laney shouting, "We are ducks, quacking!", to Bill Rotsler striving to make the step from an arty feller to a fabulous Burbee-like character, the sardonic Burbee himself flashing darkly in esoteric and vital conversations. To the terrifically interesting talk we owe the short (but undeniably meaty) character of this publication, which would be much longer if we had printed Burbee's hilarious "Four Letters to Victory" or FFL's libelous "I Talked to Van Couvering on the Phone Last Night." So much is wasted, alas, and so much is talked out until the urge is gone. The story (or stories) behind the punch-lines on the cover would be beyond our financial reach, both for publishing costs and the claims assessed upon us later for defamation and slander. But the wire hears all, and this dynamite is merely preserved, not dead.

FRANCIS LANEY: This has not been the sort of WILD HAIR session I had anticipated. None of them ever are.

The next one may be different.

All I can say is that in August 1952 WILD HAIR, the only bisseptemensual in the world will again go to press. Even if I have to do it all by myself which I want.

Edith is now talking about pants that I cannot wear, so I'm going to go make wire for Boggs to transcribe.

. Thank god here's the bottom. See you in 14 months.

I MEET A BIG NAME FAN

BY JOHN VAN COVERING

Claude Williamson Degler came to my house one nippy evening in the infant days of 1951. Up until that time, what I had heard of Degler could be loosely classed under the heading of hearsay; his name, or so I was given to understand, was the butt of jokes and a proper object of derision. Degler, like Burbaz, was a legend in the flesh and one of the seven Wonders of Ancient Fandom of pre-1945 glory.

Then the doorbell rang. I opened the door and stood looking at this apparition. "Is John Van Covering here?" it asked. I said I was, and asked him in.

The wonder of him expanded rather than shrank under the light. He was wearing a muggy blue chalkstripe suit that fit his bony frame like a skin he was in the process of shedding. The shoes he wore were of the featureless black type that imitate style in a hopeless manner, and his socks fell listlessly upon his insteps to reveal thin pasty-fleshed ankles.

He introduced himself as Don Rogers, a Portland fan who in cooperation with another Portland fan put out a Portland fanzine. Since the names he used were unfamiliar to me, I have since forgotten them.

I noticed that he had with him a paper market bag stuffed full of magazines, mostly Ziff-Davis publications. I had the impression that he was perhaps coming from a book store raid, and said so. He sadly put me aright, and told me no, it was his luggage. "I am hitch-hiking," he murmured bravely.

"My God!" I said, "all the way to Portland?"

"Well," he said, "I was down in San Diego trying to find my uncle. He promised me a job when I came down...radio; I left a pretty good business up in Portland. But I couldn't find the address he gave me, and then I found out from my mother that my brother had died while I was on my way down...the letter must have passed me on the way, but I didn't call for any mail until after I couldn't find my uncle..."

This monologue was delivered in one of the most unusual styles of speaking that I have ever heard. It was not his tone or his choice of words, but more the attitude of jumbled rehashing of an old, old story...like a man with mike fright blowing a poorly-written script.

My hormones churned madly, and I began to feel like a wise old uncle. I would have felt like a mother, but not even a mother...



I tried to straighten out his yarn. I prodded and guided his story like an interlocutor and finally arrived at two concrete conclusions: he wanted to keep on traveling and he had no plans as to how to do so. Feeling very glowing and generous, I offered to give him a ride to the J a r line in South Gate to help him on his way.

He thanked me kindly, and off we drove. During the ride, I found that he had gotten my name from one of the letter sections in the prozines (though I gave up letterhacking over two years ago) and that he planned to visit several San Francisco fans whose names and addresses he had obtained in the same manner.

"Rogers" continually retold the causes of his unfortunate situation as we drove down Firestone boulevard. His dark features took on a pallor that glowed through the darkened interior of the car as he went on and on, back and forth, about his uncle and the letter that must have passed him and the way he had used the last of his money to ship his trunk back to Portland. His state of affairs was so pitiable that I pressed all the money I had on me upon his grateful and admonishing person... a matter of 50 cents. The conversation, as he got out of the car (it took him five minutes to close the door) went like this:

Degler: I guess I have enough to get through Los Angeles.

Van C: Don't you have any more than that? How much do you have, anyway?

D: Oh, I have some money. I spent most of it on doughnuts in Laguna Beach, I think.

V: Well.. say, I have a little here that you might eat on in case you don't get a ride right away. After you get going, the guys who pick you up will probably buy you coffee and stuff... you can kiss 'em up a little.

D: I guess so. One fellow bought me some shrimp in Oceanside. He took me all the way to Santa Ana.

V: Say, I just had an ideal. Rick Sneary lives over here in South Gate... I'm sure he'd be glad of the chance to meet an out-of-town fan. He'll probably fix you up a couple of sandwiches..

D: Oh, no, no, I wouldn't want to bother him.

V: Oh, come on, I'm sure he'd like to meet you. He's the gregarious type; he always likes to have a nice friendly gab with other fans..

D: Oh, no, I really wouldn't want to bother him. It's too late to drop in, anyway.

V: Hell, Rick never goes to bed until late. I'm sure he wouldn't mind..

D: No, I really have to be getting along. I'll write him later.

V: Oh, well, if you insist..

I thought that he was being rather inconsistent, since he had not hesitated to drop in on me half an hour earlier, and must certainly have had to

have his current benefactor drop him off in Downey, since that bit of suburbia is not the type of town that people usually end their travels in. He also stated his intention of visiting all the fans he knew of on the way.

If I had been up on my Fencyclopedia, I would have known that Don Rogers was Claude Degler's pet alias; but I fell hook, line and sucker for the trapped-by-circumstance attitude and the pitiful air of shabby-upper-middle-class that clung to him. Degler's brother did actually die around that time, but in Indiana, not Portland. Some of the more eager gossipers put out that Clod himself had pushed off, but these rumors were almost immediately found to be baseless when the one and original master of the Cosmic Circle was identified in L.A. shortly after I entertained "Don Rogers" in Downey.

His visits through the City of the Angels, as far as I have been able to discover, fell upon the newer members of "active" fandom and avoided any contact with those who would know him.

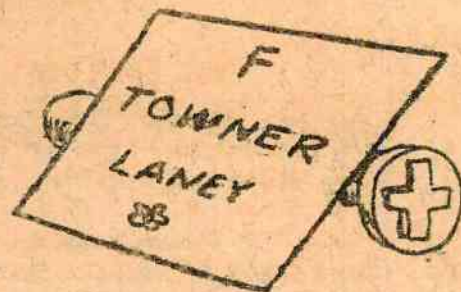
His first stop, that same evening, was at the house where Dennis Lynch, one of the downtown group's bright hopes, and his charming mother lived. They came home together to find that same shopping bag on the front porch and its owner nowhere to be seen. A few minutes later he knocked and introduced himself, again as Don Rogers. The Lynches, who are gentle and gracious people who think fans, individually and collectively, are wonderful, invited him in as a matter of course, although it was getting around 10:30 p.m. After some talk, he was asked if he given to eat, and food was produced. The action which followed was fast and furious, ending in a bare supboard at the Lynch home and three helpings for Claude. (He probably still carried my four bit piece in his pocket, the hound!) He departed soon afterwards, without asking to spend the night on the living room rug.

The next day he made two more tries, one at the residence of Freddie Hershey and the other at the working place of Anna Sinclair, now Moffatt. Freddie, who had seen and heard of him on his previous visits, told him to get the hell out of there. Anna, of a more gentle nature, merely asked the good doctor for whom she worked to tell Mr. Degler she was not at home. In both cases (it being a new day) he used his real name, and made his attentions to unattached and fairly little-known fannes. Where he got their addresses is a mystery, since the ex-Mrs. Hershey had but recently returned from parts abroad and Anna Sinclair lived quietly in a wholly undistinguished part of town.

This example of what can happen to any fan then vanished as unheralded as he came...perhaps for San Francisco, perhaps for San Diego...the story he gave the Lynches was essentially the same as the one he gave me, save that he said he had been in Portland when he had heard of his mother's death and was heading for San Diego. Perhaps he meant to return to the hinterlands of Indiana and begin the great work of breeding the super race, with or without the benefit of dianetic training. Like Halley's Comet, Claude Degler had reappeared for a brief moment and then returned to the unknown regions from whence he had come; and it had fallen upon me, an unknown and amateur observer, to be the first to observe his mysterious volations. I have met and talked to Claude Degler; I have walked through a glass door; what more can life hold for me?



DO WE WANT CENSORSHIP?



WILD HAIR does not usually carry "straight" articles. This one is not a satire, a take-off, slapstick, or anything else but a serious, straight-from-the-shoulder essay. I make this stupid statement merely as a bow to the well-known lack of humor among our collective readers, who have been told that WILD HAIR is a humorzine and accordingly laugh themselves sick over everything in every issue.

But this thing I am going to talk about is anything but a laughing matter.

Immediately after the last FAPA mailing came out, an individual who shall remain nameless did some all-out top-blowing about the purportedly dirty and obscene stuff in BURBLINGS and FAN-DANCO, especially the latter. The threat was made to turn BURBLINGS, FAN-DANCO, and the FANTASY AMATEUR over to the postal authorities. The complaining member finally agreed to take the matter up in the mailing instead, a compromise engineered by Redd Boggs.

Well, now.

I wonder if everyone realizes what a narrow squeak this was not only for FAPA, but for other fan and amateur publishing.

It is a very easy thing for someone in a fit of vexation to set a postal inspector on someone else's neck. But has it occurred to everyone that neither FAPA nor fandom generally could stand a full-fledged investigation?

And I'm not thinking especially about the angle of obscenity, either, though an inspector would no doubt find some grist for his mill if he looked very hard for it. I don't consider that either FANDANGO or BURBLINGS were unmailable on the basis of obscenity—else neither of them would have been submitted to the mailing. But in the same mailing was a magazine entitled ORGASM which consisted largely of off-color anecdotes and liquor recipes. How would a puritanical inspector have liked that one? FANDANGO at least, though in poor taste, was not primarily dedicated to skirting the line, as one would naturally assume about a magazine named questionably. Or how would this inspector have liked Crutch's Anglo-Saxon comment of a few months back? Or if the investigation spread, how would the last issue of FANVARIETY have fared? Obscenity is largely a matter of personal definition. The wrong inspector could find it almost anywhere.

We are living in an age of pressure groups, of investigations, of perse-prose/cution of minorities of all sorts. Some of these investigations are long since overdue, it is true—but the net effect is a gradual lessening of personal liberty. We are becoming more and more of a police state.

A thorough investigation of FAPA would prove that it was founded by active members of the Communist Party. The fact that none of these founders have been with us for some years would carry far less weight than the fact that FAPA has frequently carried articles of a definite reddish hue, particularly to an outside reader who is attuned to such things and reads them with his own bias. Such a reader would not realize that these were but adolescently idealistic musings from some teenager, and to be dismissed

accordingly.

The constant attacks on homosexuality some of us have leveled during the past few years would very likely lead to an investigation. Several of these "people" would be found not to have registered with their local police, as such people are supposed to, and would get nailed for this misdemeanor violation. It would not surprise me to find a draft evader or two among fandom's serried ranks. And of my own knowledge, during my membership in the LASFS, the clubroom was used as a hideout by two different truants from high school. And so on.

There is the further disturbing prospect of trying to explain fandom, FAPA, and all the rest of it--with its hundreds of esoteric aspects and phrases, to an inimical outsider. Who wants to try this?

I realize some of this may sound a bit far-fetched. Any investigation might well be shut off at once by the inspector's deciding it wasn't worth bothering about or that it wasn't obscene or something similar. Or it might well be more or less localised. But inspectors have plenty of time to investigate; we might have the ill-luck to draw one who was petty enough to try to make something big for himself. After all, we are an ideal minority group to investigate--we have no influence whatever, and the fact that we are so insignificant and harmless might well be overlooked by someone who wanted headlines for himself.

Even in the more probable event that any turn-in would result in a mere routine investigation, it would still be a hell of a lot of trouble and inconvenience for anyone involved, an annoyance that would go far to make the investigee say to the devil with a hobby that caused him so much grief. The loss of some of our better members would not help FAPA a bit.

On a more exalted plane, the entire idea of informing should be highly repugnant to all of us. The imposition of some form of dictatorship or censorship or other coercive force would probably result in much faster action for the person who initiated it. This fast action, on the other hand, would be entirely undemocratic, another tiny step towards the police state.

It is totally unsporting, selfish, autocratic, and a few other things to turn in or threaten to turn in any of us for anything which we may have in our magazines.

After all, there are democratic ways of attaining the end of making the mailings more to someone's liking.

In the first place, our constitution specifically directs the official editor to censor anything questionable. He may consult with the other officers at his option, but if he himself feels unsafe in mailing it, he is not expected to run the risk.

If some member feels stuff is getting into the mailings that shouldn't, he can take it up with the OE. If the OE does not respond to his satisfaction, he can initiate action either to remove the OE or force him to comply with any given course of procedure. This might necessitate a special election.

Furthermore, we are all, presumably, writers and publishers. It is certainly not only within bounds but the best possible procedure for us to write and publish our own views on any of these controversial matters, rather than yell for outside help. If our views are such that the rest of the members can be gotten to go along with them, we will see them put into practise--democratically.

Quite a few million people have died to set up and maintain the democracy and freedom which all of us enjoy today. Who are we to spurn a democratic approach to our hobby group?

A VIGNETTE OF THE L.A.S.F.S.

by William Rotsler

Way back in the dim recesses of time, far back in mist-shrouded 1948 when I was younger and a bit more drier I was a member of - whisper that name! - the LassPass. It was here that I met Burbee, Laney and Al Ashley. It was there that in small rooms that I first saw EElvans, Oy Gondra and one or two others of the star-begotten.

A few months later a Deputy Sheriff from Los Angeles came all the way out to the next county, to Camarillo where I was living at the time and told my folks that Biscailuz - LA sheriff - had seen my name on a list of members of the LASFS that his vice squad men had brought in to him. They had some sort of "undercover" man casing this Citadel of Tomorrow's Thought for various illegal - though fascinating, I'm sure - activities of a bedroomish nature.



A side-light on this is that one of my grandfathers got Biscailuz his first job many years ago and has been something of an infrequent friend of the family ever since. Whether this is to be considered favorable is for future generations to decide.

So I kept away. It was not a hard decision.

Then I forgot about it until a few weeks ago when Sheriff Biscailuz called about an accident my mother had. In the course of the conversation he mentioned the matter. My mother asked what had happened.

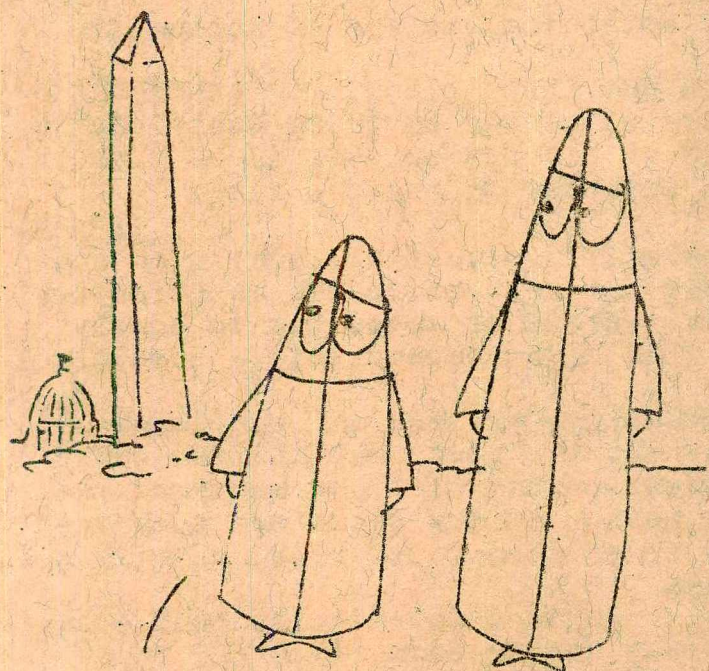
"Oh, we dropped the whole thing," he said. "They were just a bunch of harmless crackpots."



...ANOTHER GLORIOUS SPOOL...

There is now in existence another glorious spool of wire. It explains the stories behind the punchlines on the cover. Most of the talking was done by F Towner Laney and S Charles Burbee, with crowd noises by C William Rotsler and F John Van Couvering. This priceless wire will be sent to such fine people as Redd Boggs and...uh...uh... well, there must be other fine people with wire-recorders.

Most of you will never hear the wire, I guess. And none of you will get to read the two Burbee articles which he rejected before publication (with an eye to the Post Office).



DO YOU THINK IT HAS ANYTHING TO DO WITH HIS BEING THE FATHER OF OUR COUNTRY?