

WOODEN NICKEL

WOODEN NICKEL Volume 1 Number 3 Whole Number 3 is written, produced and directed by Arnie Katz (59 Livingston St., Apt. 6B, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201) on a frequent though undetermined schedule for the diversion of his select mailing list of 50 and various hangers-on at this week's Insurgent meeting. If the third issue of WOODEN NICKEL in as many weeks convinces you that I may publish for awhile and you would like to continue to receive it along with the 49 other fortunates, you could provide a memory jogger in the form of a kissy letter of comment. By ghu, here it is, only July 27, 1973, and here I am, pubbing my ish. Makes you wonder, doesn't it?

A FULL CONFESSION FROM THE EDITOR

This is a terrible thing to admit, especially now that I have my "semi-retired BNF" routine polished up nicely, but every now and then I get an uncontrollable urge to publish a fanzine. I cruise along, living a happy and mentally healthy life when -- wham! -- it hits me. Suddenly my mind is filled with baroque structures involving a monthly schedule, focal points of fandom and all the rest of it.

I was the victim of one of these spells in mid-July. I was sitting in the livingroom, preparing to have a fine, non-fannish time at the Insurgents meeting, when Andy Porter waltzed in the door and handed me the first issue of his new fannish newszine chronicle (Brooklyn Heights' other frequent fanzine and 5/\$1). There was a blinding flash and a deafening raport and through sheer reflex action I found myself sitting at my typewriter (well, Joyce's typewriter, but we are a community property household) in a darkened room tapping away at a fanzine. Don't laugh, this could happen to you. Creeping fannishness strikes one in ten.

"I HAD ONE ONCE BUT THE WHEELS FELL OFF!"

How many times have you heard or read that fine old fannish line? Whether it's a discussion at an Insurgents meeting about rock 'n' roll or a passionate debate in FAPA about embroidered doilies, someone is sure to quip, "I had one, but the wheels fell off." Why, "I had one once, but the wheels fell off" is right up there with "it certainly is a wonderful thing" on the list of all-time great fannish cliches. It's the type of scintillating line that even a tin-ear would instantly recognize as the soul of wit and a sure-fire laugh-getting.

It's wonderful to think of "I had one once, but the wheels fell off" waiting quietly in the wings for the hard-pressed fan humorist like a faithful friend, always there to fall back upon when the harried fanwriter finds that "or something" and "ahahaha" have temporarily lost their power to enthrall.

This venerable fan phrase took on new depth and meaning for Neal Goldfarb just a couple of weeks ago. After spending a couple of days at our place, the hedonistic-to-the-hilton, Neal returned by train to Stamford, Conn., to find that his '63 Chevy hadn't waited for him at the train station where he'd left it.

A few days later, the police found Neal's car, slumbering as only a car with 98,000 miles on it can sleep, on a back road near a cemetery. Strangely enough, the

auto had managed to lose several important items on its way to the graveyard, including the battery, the alternator, the tires and -- yes! -- the wheels. "I had one once, but the wheels fell off," Neal remarked to the detective.

"I don't think they fell off," whispered the sleuth as he pulled his hat low on his forehead. "I think they were pushed."

Anyway, don't feel too bad, Neal. **After all**, everyone knows Chevys rattle.

THE FOUR HORSEMEN AT THE COMIC CON

Bill and Charlene Kunkel, who had never been to a comics con, expressed interest in attending the one at the Hotel Commodore beginning July 4th. Joyce and I decided to make it a foursome, mostly to sell some old Marvels I had. Bill, who's sold several scripts to National, and Charl are currently very enthusiastic about comics and expressed the desire to buy mine. I sold them a carton of 150 comics for \$8, but that still left me with a small pile of backdates I knew would bring a premium.

I didn't want to sell the Kunkels the expensive ones, mostly out of embarrassment at the prices I would have had to charge them, but they claimed I was discriminating against them because they're good friends. We finally agreed that if a dealer made an offer for any or all of my wares, the Kunkels would get the chance to match it.

I made the rounds of the crowded, noisy con, pushing my way through mobs of pock-faced junior entrepreneurs. Bill and Charl wended along behind me, ready to make their counter-offers if I got a nibble. When a dealer offered to buy FANTASTIC FOUR #3-5, Charl said, "I'll take them at that price." Money changed hands. I sold an issue of the AVENGERS to another guy, but I found myself left with about 15 comics no one was that anxious to buy. "Hey, Bill," I shouted above the din, "you wanna buy 15 old comics for two bucks?" He did, and money changed hands again.

"You know," I said to Bill once we'd escaped the comic con, "we could have done all this business in my livingroom."

He looked at me as the four of us trudged down the street toward Nathans and lunch. "And you wouldn't have charged us \$5 to get in the door!"

FANDOM BLOOMS IN BROOKLYN

The virtual simultaneous publication of chronicle and WOODEN NICKEL has unleashed a veritable frenzy of fanactivity in Brooklyn. However, since everyone is older and tireder than when fandom last in the borough bloomed, plans are now more modest than in the golden days of ninth fandom (or "last year" as we semi-retired BNFs are wont to say). Besides the one-sheet wonders of chronicle and WOODEN NICKEL, Joyce has announced her possible intention to produce a fanzine large enough to accommodate all the wonderful fannish material which is too lengthy for the Brooklyn fanzines. Her fanzine is projected at a full two sheets (that's four pages) and I, for one, am wondering how she's going to get enough material to fill them. Ghod, tenth fandom isn't two weeks old and already we're mired in the decay of senseless gigantism.