

babblings 21

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Neither Peggy nor I have had any significant amount of spare time this quarter. Peggy may postmail since the main drag on her time relaxes some nine days from now. My job pressures are somewhat less predictable.

It would be fair to say that I have a position rather than a job. There are some things I must do by a given time; e.g., much of my time in the last two weeks was spent editing and rewriting a speech against a tight deadline; certain weekly and monthly reports must be put out. This deadline-type work takes maybe two or three days of an average week. The rest is free of external deadlines except as the three of us in the office have agreed.

As an example, we presently have 7 computer systems in our Detroit Data Center--four IBM 7074's and three Honeywell H-200's. An IBM 360/65 is scheduled to be operational there on 15 Jan 71 and within a certain time period all the work is to be moved from the old computers to the new one. We have to schedule the conversion effort over this time frame, by project, depending on whether the system is to be converted as is or redefined and redone from scratch, depending on best cut-over date (some systems are oriented to a fiscal year, some to a calendar year, and a few are essentially once-a-year systems), etc. Tied into this is a new project numbering scheme which can most economically be introduced as a part of this change. It isn't essential, but it is wanted and economical. This affects Machine Utilization Reports, Tape Library, and Work Planning & Control System. My job is to forsee the chain and get the parties responsible (quite often myself) to work. This is but one small slice. Other problems need answers, not because someone up the line needs an answer, but because we do.

That's why I say I have a position. Within rather broad limits, I set my own jobs. It's new to me, a considerable amount of fun, and very pressing on time. There are so many things that we need better answers to or information on.

Now that I'm leaving as a FAPA officer, maybe I can devote an equivalent amount of time to my own fanzine each quarter next year. I'll try, for it is satisfying to have something in every mailing.

