DAGON

THE MINISTRY OF MISCELLANY

This is **Dagon**, a a monthy fasnzine of commentary on science, science fiction, fantasy, mystery novels, comic art, role-playing games (RPGs), and anything else that seems like a good idea at the moment, is published by John Boardman, Room 108, 2250. S. Semoran Blvd., Orlando, Florida 32822-2704. My land-line telephone number is (407) 270-5613. The number of my cell-phone is (718) 736-4901. **Dagon** circulates through **APA-Q**, an amateur press association (APA) edited by Mark L. Black-man, Apt. 4A, 1745 E. 18th Street, Brooklyn, NY 11229-2119. His telephone number is (718) 336-3255, and his Internet address is <marklblackman@juno.com>. The qopy qount for **APA-Q** is 15 print qopies.

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Dagon also goes to others who have indicated an interest in its subject matter. Subscriptions are 10 issues for $10 in the United States, and for $25 elsewhere. I also trade with other amateur publications.

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With this issue I am trying an experiment, with which I would like the opinions of readers. I am using much wider margins, which might make it easier to read. The recent issues have had very narrow margins, which allowed the use if more material but might have made that material look very crowded and more difficult to read.

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The results of the elections of 6 November 2018 are difficult to interpret. particularly in the closely fought elections in Arizona, Florida, and Georgia, and in a number of election districts in other states. A number of contests were so close that early votes, absentee voters, provisional ballots, and mailed-in ballots had to be collected and examined closely. The House of Representatives has definitely gone to Democratic control, but the Senate is up for grabs, and numerous representative and legislative districts will also need recounts. I am aiming this issue of **Dagon** for the December

ber Distribution of **APA-Q**, which, I believe, will be #615, and will be qollated and mailed out by Mark Blackman on Saturdey 8 December 2018.

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At present the United States Postal "Service" apparently announces changes of postal rates in January of each year, and recently has done so in 2016, 2017, and 2018. For some reason unknown to me, these changes are not widely publicized by the media, and I only hear of them considerably later. Apparently in 2017 the cost of "Forever" stamps rose from 49¢ to 50¢, and the cost of the first ounce of postage for a large envelope of first-class mail remained at twice the cost of a "Forever" stamp, thus becoming $1. The cost of each additional ounce of a first-class large envelope remained at 21¢ up to the maximum of 13 ounces, so that the cost of a first-class envelope of maximum weight only rose from $3.50 to $3.52. But we can apparently expect another rate increase for January 2019. When that month comes, go to a post ioffice and ask a live clerk for the new rates, preferably on a printed paper form.

The same rule applies to a small emnvelope, but to a lesser maximum weight. And for these, an odd circumstance exists. One flier from the Postal "Service" asserts that the maximumn weight is 3½ ounces. A later flier gives the rather unusual maximum weight of 3.53 ounces. However, it comes clearer if you discover that 3.53 ounces is prrecisely 100 grams. It seems that the USP"S" anticipates that the United States will be the last nation to go over from the medieval to the metric system of weights and measures, and the Celsius temperature scale.. This realization has already been made by the (British) Commonwealth of Nations. So if you drive your car into Canada and see a sign that tells you that the speed limit is 90, don't floorboard your accelerator. It means "90 <u>kilometers per hour</u>", which is about 58 miles per hour.

The reason for this change will certainly be an improvement in American exports, Today, if an American manufacturer hands a list of his product specifications to a potential importer, he is likely to be told: "Pounds? Inches? Gallons? Vot iss dis shtuff?"

There will certainly be Americans who object to this necessary and long overdue change. In a sense, the United States is already on the metric system. The legal definition of an "inch" in this country is exactly 2.54 centimeters.

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The recent "mid-term" election filled all 435 seats in the House of Reprehensibles - er - "Representatives", about a third of the Senate, and numerous seats of state and local officials all over the country. The common predictions of a loss of seats by Republicans to Democrats were largely supported by the returns. However, strong Democratic vote gains did not change the political pictures in Florida and Georgia. Gpovrernor Rick Scott (R) of Florida, prevernted by a term limits law from seeking a third term, ran instead for the seat of Senator Bill Nelson (D) and narrowly defeated him in an election that caused hotly contested recounts, particularly in the heavily Democratic counties of Broward and Palm Beach Counties.

And in Georgia, a Republican candidate for the U. S. Senate narrowly defeated the first woman and African-American to run as a Demiocrat in that state. In Congress, the House of Representatives went by a wide margin to the Democrats, but the Senate narrowly remained in Republican control.

<p style="text-align:center">*</p>

Lately I have been playing dominoes with some of the other residents here at Excellence. (Chess, which in my opinion is a better game, seems to be unknown to them.) This has got me to thinking about the mathematics of sets of dominoes. Each domino has two halves, and each half may have on it from zero to a maximum of N dots. where N can be any number, No domino in a set duplicates another. In practice, I have only used sets for which N is 6 or 9, though sets exist for which $N = 12$. If $N = 6$, the set contains 28 dominoes, and if $N = 9$ it has 55 dominoes. As a general rule, a set which goes up to a double-N domino would have $\frac{1}{2}(N+1)(N+2)$ dominoes, from the doublre-blank up to the.double-N. Double-12 sets would therefore have 91 dominoes.

Most people do not know that the suits in a deck of cards have a social significance. Remnants of this fact may be found in the rankings of bridge suits. Why does a bid of three spades overcall a bid of three hearts? Because "Spade" comes from the Italian *spada*, which means "swotd", and swords are the weapon of the nobility. Hearts symbolize the clergy. Similarly. diamonds stand for wealth, the weapon of the bourgeoisie. And clubs are the weapons of the peasantry, the lowest social class.

<p style="text-align:center">*</p>

FAMILY MATTERS - III

My daughter Deirdre has recently turned up on the Internet some information which appears to contradict what we had always believed about the first Boardmans to arrive in North America. I had been convinced that these arrivals were two cousins who were married to women who were sisters from a family named Betts. This led me to suspect that, since all the Boardmans in this country were descended from women named Betts, we might be distantly related to "Mookie" Betts, the star right fielder of the Boston Red Sox, who won in October the major league baseball play-offs, culminating in a five-game World Series against the Los Angeles Dodgers, winners in two consecutive years of the National League championship.

However, Deirdre has discovered that Samuel Boardman, one of the two immigrant cousins, did not marry until 1639 in Connecticut, where the Boardmans had moved the year after landing at Ipswich, Massachusetts. The move to Connecticut remains in the record, and at present several Boardmans do live there, though my own forebears began a series of westward moves. Mhy grandfather was born in Minnesota, my father was born in South Dakota, I was born in California, and my nephew Dr. Dana Boardman, has continued the process by recently moving to Hawaii.

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There is, however, one way in which these reports can be reconciled. We might be able to assume that Samuel Boardman arrived with a wife who died soon afterwards, and in the following year in Connecticut he married a second wife. We can safely conclude that there were no experienced physicians or midwives with the emigrants, and a death in childbirth is always a possibility. And if the Boardmans had emigrated with small children, Samuel Boardman may have married in Connecticut to give his children a step-mother.

Perhaps further on-line research by Deirdre can straighten out this apparent contradiction. If this happens, I will inform readers in a future installment for "Family Matters".

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Elsewhere in this "Family Matters" column I hope to be able to give the names and addresses of relatives who were not included on the most recent "**Dagon** Directory" column, which was printed in **Dagon** #701 (September 2018). A full "**Dagon** Directory" will be printed in the January

2019 issue of **Dagon**, and in every subsequent January issue of **Dagon**.

I hope to add to "**Dagon** Directory" the names and addresses of my brother Karl's oldest son son Flint Wayne Boardman, who lives in Colorado, and Karl's son by his second marriage, who lives in Austin, TX. I may also be able to includ3 the other children of my Aunt Jean. Two of them, Jonna Muldowney Wierda and Daniel Muldowney, are in the Directory in **Dagon** #701. but I also hope to get those of Terry Muldowney and his youngest sister, whose name I believe is Judy. I have already received a phone call from Danny.

And of course any information about these relatives that could be furnished by readers of "Family Matters" would be appreciated.

In the last "Family Matters", published in **Dagon** #702 (October-November 2018) I cited the career of an ancestor of my great-grandmother Anne Gates Boardman, a woman warmly remembered by my parents' and grandparents' generations. He was Resolved Waldron, the last Dutch sheriff of Nieuw Amsterdam, a city which you may know by another name. After the British took over the Dutch colony in North America, he remained as a constable, and his descendants intermarried with Dutch, English, and Huguenot settlers. Among their descendants were the Roosevelt family, one of whose members, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, compiled a genealogy of his lineage, and eventually became our greatest president since Abraham Lincoln. Almost all American presidents were descended from English or Dutch families who were in America before its independence, including Barak Obama on his mother's side. (The only exceptions were Dwight Eisenhower. John F. Kennedy. and Ronald Reagan.) The Boardmans are about as distantly related ti the two Presidents Roosevelt as they were to each other.

THE MINISTRY OF MISCELLANY (continued from page 3)

The recent death of Senator John McCain (R, of course-AZ) has left out some very important details about his career and motivation. We were even told that he was shot down while bombing Hanoi, and held as a prisoner of war for five years. But, as we learned at the time, the American invasion was not, and should not have been, a war declared by Congress as the Constitution provides. You may have noticed that, while Americans loudly hailed McCain's military record, there were no celebrations for him

in Vietnam. In fact, at the time McCain was bombing Vietnam, all the Americans who had the best interests of both countries in mind were therefore strongly opposed to the war, resisted or urged resistance to the draft, fled to Canada or Sweden to avoid it, and eventually forced the abandonment of it. *These* Americans, and not warriors like McCain, were the heroes of that era. Reports of the recent death of Senator John McCain (R, of course-AZ) has left out some very important details, including these. For my own part, I strongly opposed the support for the American invasion of Viretnan by the AFL-CIO, and in protest I resigned from a local of the American Federation of College Teachers, in which I had just been named treasurer. If the AFL-CIO was to become America's largest supporter of war, I began crossing picket lines wherever convenient.

Yet the newspapers continue to report, with approval, reports of American troops in military actions in distant parts of the world. Or sometimes they do not report them at all. We learned that American troops were in action in Niger, a formerly French colony north of Nigeria and bordering the Sahara Desert, only when reports of casualties among them revealed the fact. And American troops are aiding Sodding Arabia, an odd ally indeed for our secular republic, in making war against a Yemeni faction variously called the "Hooties" or the "Hotties". Meanwhile, our government is trying to justify and defend this alliance even though Prince Muhammad ibn Salman, the heir and apparently the regent for the senile king, has just ordered the murder and dismemberment of a disapproving journalist for the *Washington Post*. And Afghanistan used to be a figure of speech for a region remote from and unconcerned with American interests. But now American troops have been conducting a long and desultory war against somebody or other in Afghanistan. What will we next have to employ as a metaphor for such a region - Antarctica? With perhaps rumors of a threat from Communist penguins?

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On the morning of Friday 30 November 2018 we heard reports of a strong earthquake around Achorage, AK. Most reports did not take up the meaning of the reports of the earthquake's strength of 7.2. Earthquake strengths are measured on a logarithmic scale, which means that a 6.0 is ten times as strong as a 5.0. a 7.0 is ten times as strong as a 6.0, and a 8,0 is ten times as strong as a 7.0. The strongest earthquakes on record are in the neighborhood of 9, and seem to occur mostly on the eastern edge of the

Pacific tectonic plate where it presses against the North American and South American plates. There are usually a number of aftershocks as the Earth's crust rearranges itself following the initial shocks. I have experienced a few 2s and 3s in southern California, where they resembled the shock of a heavy truck passing about a block away.

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Several times I have mentioned in **Dagon** the odd place names which occur in Florida. But apparently I was mistaken in one of them. There is a cape on the eastern coast of Florida which for centuries has borne the name of "Cape Canaveral". In the 1960s it was the site of several research centers on space travel, which led to that region being called "the Space Coast". In his inaugural address, President Kennedy called for a manned landing on the Moon in that decade. After his death, which was followed by the realization of this hope, the cape was renamed "Cape Kennedy".

However, recently I have heard the region once more being called "Cape Canaveral". I thought that this was the result of a deliberate attempt to wipe the name of President Kennedy off the map, perpetrated by people who disliked his policies and beliefs, or perhaps his ethnicity and his religion. In more recent times we have seen similar attacks made against President Obama. However, I have been told by people whp seem to know, that the appropriate government agency has restored the name "Canaveral", feeling that President Kennedy had been adequately honored for his role in promoting space flight by the name "Kennedy Space Flight Center" for the research center on the Space Coast.

But the other oddly named locations in Florida remain as mysterious to me as they had when I first encountered them. So we still have to wonder how the names "Kissimmee", "Holopaw", "Yeehaw Junction". and "Dinkydock Beach" had been arrived at. Or how any further marvels of nomenclature may emerge in tomorrow's weather reports or traffic news, leaving us to wonder how they got such names.

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There is a television set in each resident's room here at Excellence, but now that the baseball season is over, I mainly watch it for news and for animated cartoons. Baseball is the only sport that really interests me, though I sometimes watch soccer, and also sotball, a game that might be called "baseball light", which seems to be mainly played by girls' teams

from colleges or high schools.

Perhaps what attracts me to baseball is the fact that its play is highly ritualized. Other sports are played with close attention to the remaining time, to the point where, towards the end of the game, the clock is often the "third player". But a baseball game sets its own pace. This is even true for the end of the game. If nine innings of play (or seven for a softball game) leaves the score tied, then the game continues until an inning ends with one team ahead of the other, or the umpires end a hopelessly tied game. (The record length for a major league game is 26 innings.)

American football, originally an outgrowth of rugby, has become an instrument for the production of concussions rather than a sport. So many major injuries occur, even in high school games, there is talk of changing the rules drastically to prevent major injuries. And basketball is so fast that it is difficult for even players to follow the game.

Fortunately, the typical professional baseball season runs for six months, seven if the playoffs are included, and eight and a half if the broadcasts of spring training games, often televised, are included. The relatively slower pace of baseball means that the players are not worn out by the almost daily sequence of games, and can spend more time developing their skills. So while other sports fans try to keep up with the action, or follow the carnage, of other sports, baseball fans merely have to wait out a few winter months that are not good baseball weather anyhow. I will be doing this until February, and then see what managers and coaches have dreamed up during the winter.

Dagon $703 (APA-Q #615)

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interest to you on page ___/