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Horizons is beginning to feel conspicuous and out of place, because it's a FAPA publication which is published for FAPA. This is the May, 1981, issue, representing volume 42, number 3, FAPA number 160, and whole number 165. The stencils are cut by Harry Warner, Jr., 423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, Maryland, 21740, U.S.A., and run off by the Coulsons.

In the Beginning

The Fantasy Amateur: I hope an assessment isn't needed, because I suspect that it would result in unending tribulations. Half of the membership would never get around to paying it within the specified time. There would be endless membership-saving petitions, arguments over proper handling of delinquents since there's no precedent, and probably not enough income from the assessment to meet the need. A temporary shortage of money to put out a mailing might be better met by loans from one or two members to the treasury, to be repaid as soon as dues were raised. 520 07 0328: A three-foot lane through room clutter seems like luxurious living when I look at the condition of the three unused bedrooms in this house which I've been utilizing for things I mean to put away properly rsn. I manage to keep my own bedroom and the downstairs in orderly condition, however. ' I've learned so many horror stories about public and university libraries that I would be inclined to recommend selling the FAPA accumulation to a dealer, as the best way to guarantee its survival. I know a used book store owner who followed up a tip, went to the town dump in a nearby Pennsylvania city, and salvaged there huge piles of rare and valuable books which the town library had thrown away because they didn't appear on the latest list of books every library should own. A former publisher of the American Record Guide willed his valuable record collection to a university library, a decade later someone investigated and found they'd never been unpacked, with many discs ruined by improper storage. Several decades ago, a Stephen Foster fan financed facsimile reprints of all the original editions of all the composer's published compositions, bought metal containers for them, supplied bibliographic information, and presented these sets to various libraries. One library put its set in the basement, never catalogued it or made it available to the public, and three years ago gave it to an organization which was having a book sale where I bought it. ' I'm not a Baum fan but I enjoyed the booklet and wondered if the Louis F. Gottschalk who wrote the music for this squazosh was related to the 19th century composer-pianist, Louis M. Gottschalk. The Aladab &c.: Swedish fandom would seem familiar if any United States fan suddenly found himself in its midst. I wonder if human nature or some metaphysical element of fandom causes so many tendencies and situations to emerge in fanoms in so many nations, independently of one another? Ambiguous Syntax: It would be a good idea to contact C. L. Moore on this question of Henry Kuttner's fictional children influencing Ray Bradbury. She seems to have contributed some things to much fiction published under his name alone, and the prominence of children in several stories published under her name makes me suspect that she may have had a hand in those which appear in stories under his byline. ' I had one strange childhood fear. It started with a tremendous nightmare which I could only half-remember after waking. Adding up impossibly large numbers seemed a part of it but somehow I was also obliged to go through each of those numbers, one digit at a time, from one to the actual figure. The dream recurred several times but worse yet, the panic and fear of

inability to plow through those huge quantities began to seize me in waking hours when I encountered a formidable task of a tedious nature. I outgrew the dreams and the involuntary terrors but I get a suffocating feeling and an oppressive emotion when I consciously bring that fear to mind. I must have been about nine when it first struck. ' ' If the millenium does bring about a catastrophe, it will probably take the form of conflict growing out of arguments over whether the millenium arrives in the year 2000 or 2001. The Bombed Budgie Journal: Whatever is wrong with Joseph Nicholas, it must be contagious. So many fans like Greg Hills catch the invective and bad language disease which runs through his critical writings, when they write about his criticism. ' ' I'm sure dragons found a way to fly. Remember how spacecraft contents needed to be calculated down to the last ounce in science fiction before man actually got into space? As it turned out, no major efforts were needed to cut out a half-pound here and a pound there. I got into an argument once about a story called The Ethical Equations, and couldn't convince anyone that by the time space-travel had reached the stage postulated in that story, a stowaway's weight wouldn't mean disaster. Celephais: I believe Dick Tracy could be added to the list of comic strips in which some aging of characters has occurred. ' ' I remember the Trans-Lux theater if that was the one which ran nothing but newsreels and short subjects. I didn't get to Washington often as a kid, I always wanted to go to a movie theater which had no feature film for the novelty, and there were always too many other things to do. And I wonder if anything survives of the sponsors Arthur Godfrey used to kid so unmercifully when he was doing the WJSV morning show? Uncle Joe Cherner, and Zlotnik the Furrier with the big clock stick particularly in memory. Cloud Chamber: I wonder if anyone else in FAPA has my peculiar inability to hear about Lady Diana Spencer without the urge to titter? She appears to be a lovely young woman, physically and spiritually, but any mention of her name in print or over the air instantly evokes in my mind the sound of Julie Andrews singing from Burlington Bertie from Bow: "I just had a banana / With Lady Diana...."The Curmudgeons: Ten years ago, my surgeon told me I might have a possibly fatal ailment. I regret to admit that my first reaction was disgust at myself for having spent so much time writing locs instead of watching all the movies on television they had forced me to skip. Detours: It would be almost impossible to keep squirrels out of the attic by denying them access to the exterior of this house. There are too many ways to go up the porch posts, brick walls, and so on. Baffles wide enough to block them would soon fall victim to either vandals or the weight of snow and ice. ' ' The Tiger reprint makes me wonder again about a recent tendency in comic strips. Some of them have three or four panels each day, each almost identical with the others except for different dialog in the balloons. Can't the artists find time to draw three or four different pictures each day? Or is it an imitation of today's "animated cartoons" on television which consist of a stationary picture for ten seconds or so in which only a hand or mouth or some other small area is in motion? Or is it just a fad among comic strip creators? The Devil's Work: I'm glad to see Norm Metcalf emitting a larger fanzine than usual. But it's hard to find comment hooks in this one which deals almost entirely with prozine and book fiction I haven't read and war history to which I'm a conscientious¹⁸⁴⁵ objector. The Echo Beach Quarterly: I keep expecting a nasty letter from city authorities over about two per cent of my back

yard. It's sort of hard to describe the situation, but the adjoining alley is about eight feet above the level of the far end of my yard. Several garages with two floors occupy most of the junction, but there's an empty patch about five feet wide topped by a stone wall. I allowed it to grow up into a tiny jungle of weeds and scrub trees to discourage kids from climbing over the wall, dropping to the ground, and crawling beneath the garages where they're invisible from any angle. Technically it's a violation of the city's weed-cutting ordinance and I'm not sure if authorities will accept it as a fire prevention measure if someone ever brings the matter to a head. Fapammentary: Hagerstown managed to save one very ornate theater and against all expectations, it's become successful as a site for live entertainment. It's still running at a deficit, but that would mostly vanish if the city government would recognize what it's doing for Hagerstown and give it a break on taxes, power and water bills. It's offering something perhaps a dozen days or nights each month, selling out for many of its offerings, and just now beginning a new experiment, dramatic productions repeated three or four nights in a row. Recent attractions have included Bob Hope, Cyd Charisse, Tony Martin, Merle Haggard, Johnny Paycheck, Jaime Laredo, Barry Tuckwell, and many others. Stranger yet, another movie house just down the street which had been closed for years is alive again as a dinner theater. This seems to be paying its own way although the building's owner is probably subsidizing in the sense of charging little or no rent. Twenty years ago, if anyone had predicted a future in which Hagerstown would have two downtown theaters specializing in live entertainment, it would have seemed like a Van Vogt story. ' ' Tillie Palmer, Pauline's daughter, is one of the very young editors of that fanzine; I can't remember the other editor's name at the moment. From Sunday to Saturday: I know all about the change in a person which manifests itself in such ways as not opening a FAPA bundle the moment it arrives. In me, it takes such forms as buying some records and not playing them for weeks or months, or taping something on the radio while I'm away from the house, because I don't want to miss the broadcast, and then not listening to the tape until I've forgotten why I wanted to hear what it contains. It's illogical because the older I grow, the more danger there is of never experiencing something if I put it off too long. ' ' I'm afraid there's no illusion involved in the way so many teenagers appear to be alcoholics. One restaurant I frequent has teenagers and women in their early twenties as waitresses; they talk of almost nothing but experiences at taverns and what they have been drinking most recently. Today a youth-oriented radio station used as its call-in topic where a fellow can meet a girl other than at bars. While I listened, he got only one call from someone whose suggestion of a church was immediately hooted down as not suited to today's world. ' ' Grainy prints are just a fashionable thing nowadays, along with ghost images caused by the sun or other brilliant illumination source being reflected off lens elements. In rare instances, grain may be unavoidable, such as a 35 mm picture taken from such a great distance that one small section of the negative needed to be enlarged by an inordinate amount. But under most circumstances, it's an affectation. There are fast fine-grain films nowadays, zoom lenses and telephoto lenses, and fine-grain developers to provide prints almost as grain-free as those provided by large-format cameras. Grandfather Stories: I wonder if I'm the only person in FAPA who was listening to the New York Philharmonic

when the news of Pearl Harbor was broadcast? That's what people are normally pictured as doing in dramas and books on the matter, but in actuality I've never found anyone else engaged in the same occupation. ' ' I don't remember having seen Fanciful Tales listed in any dealer catalog for a long while. With that lineup of writers, it must command an enormous price today. Hawai'i: Chinese food is a sore subject with me for a ridiculous reason. The local hospital for some reason served a Chinese dinner once while I was very sick. It achieved what seemed impossible by making me feel even worse. Thus are senseless prejudices born. Helen's Fantasia: The Case of the Unique Accomplice is a neat pastiche. It makes me wish I could nudge myself into committing to stencils the one I've wanted to write for a long time, about how Sherlock Holmes encountered the very first British fandom. And the conreport on the detective story group is intriguing. I wonder if crime writers talk mostly about making money at such events, or if this just happened to be a topic on this one particular occasion? Horizons: For some reason, I forgot to add something to my comments about surplusstock. I meant to propose a change in FAPA policy in this respect: don't offer it for sale but store it away for twenty years. Then sell it at the rate of \$45 per FAPazine as Anne Sherlock does. Money pouring into FAPA's treasury will thus make it possible to send out the mailings by first class mail as soon as the 21st century arrives, and make it unnecessary to collect dues. Interjection: It wasn't necessary to go to all the trouble and expense of making changes in Baltimore to stun a visitor. I've been stunned by Baltimore every time some awful necessity has forced me to go there, right down through the years from my first trip on. Le Moindre: Sincere environmentalists would never live in caves. Caves contain special types of living creatures whose ecology might be disrupted by constant nearness of humans. ' ' I doubt if wailing over conditions in Africa has ceased. The media merely fails to play up the wailings when they don't emanate from the left. ' ' There are several possibilities for the apparently unmotivated laughter in the televised performance of Fledermaus. If it was a stage performance, not something created solely for television cameras, there may have been bits of business occurring somewhere out of the camera range. But more probably, the audience had never heard before the lines which created the laughs. This operetta, like The Merry Widow and a few others, is almost always subjected to all sorts of changes in each new production. Music is amputated, other music is inserted from other operettas by the same or another composer, dialog is rewritten, new gimmicks are thought up for the cast to do physically, and in extreme cases the entire plot and libretto are tossed away in favor of a completely new book to go with the original music. I saw a live production of Fledermaus a couple of years ago which left out completely two of the nine principals in the plot, had an Adele who was twice the size of Rosalinde making impossible the portion of the plot which causes the maid to wear her employer's gown to the party, had a baritone singing the part of Eisenstein, and did many other revolting things. Of course, almost every elaborate production of Fledermaus nowadays also jettisons Strauss' score for perhaps a half-hour in the middle of the second act so a recital of songs by various composers and dances of all description can be tossed into the very pourried pot. It's dreadful, because this operetta is blessed with an almost ideal book. ' ' A local radio station encountered trouble a while back when it played a

Spike Jones record without giving any details about it. A woman called the poor dj and gave him a terrible tonguelashing: she'd been openminded about rock music up to now, but if rock had developed into something as suggestive and vulgar as that record, she wasn't going to let her children listen to any more rock music. Lines of Occurrence: I'm glad to know that people in Czechoslovakia didn't use that kind of language to refer to science fiction or any other type of fiction, presumably. I wish fans didn't today, in FAPA. ' I started to reread the Foundation books a year or two ago. The old magic lasted about fifty pages, then vanished and I never succeeded in plowing through anything but the first novel. Past, Present and Future: Arnie Katz might be able to find information on Prince Ilaki Ibn Ali Hassan, if anyone can find Arnie. Arnie published for several years a semiprozine about wrestling. I believe the older Los Angeles fans are still in occasional touch with William L. Crawford. Phantasy Press: The little sketch of Solor's cover makes me wonder again something I've always wanted to know: was this the first of the many fanzines which had misspelled titles? I was glad to read about the second mailing, one of those I didn't join in time to receive. Shadow of a Fan: I hadn't known about the new series of books drawing on unpublished Mark Twain writings. Maybe I'll drop a hint to the local public library since they're probably expensive enough to frighten me away as a potential purchaser. Shadowfax: Offset printing would be bad for fandom if everyone decided it's the only way to go. The equipment is so expensive and bulky that many young fans living at home on limited budgets would be inhibited from publishing fanzines. ' I take sleeping pills perhaps a half-dozen times a year. But I may have taken my last one. It stuck in my throat at 2 a.m. I had to get up at 7:30 and I thought for a while it wouldn't melt and start taking effect until too late for me to rouse at that hour and I couldn't cough it up. The Speed of Dark: I've never tried to save a few dollars on a tax return by buying a book on how to do it. I reason that the price of the book and the value of the time I'd lose reading it and reworking my calculations would probably exceed the economies in the return. Static Electricity: The importance of John Michel has been exaggerated by the accident that a few of his friends and enemies wrote extensively about that period in fandom. He was another Roger Elwood: much publicity in certain places briefly, to no permanent effect. Tekeli-Li: The story is uncannily real-sounding. I felt sure it was something out of Ken Faig's own experiences until I reached the sections which seem to disprove that explanation. And I read it just after undergoing an offer to become a bookstore owner of the secondhand kind myself. I was mildly tempted, if only because the store has so many books I'd like to own. But its profitable operation seems to depend on a husband-wife operation which frees him to seek stock replenishment while she runs the store and I'd probably lose money if I tried to pay full-time help. Vainomoinen: It seems strange. Guy Lillian has been active enough in fandom for me to have been encountering his name for at least a dozen years. And after all this time, I finally get my first detailed knowledge of him through his arrival in FAPA. There ought to be a fannish custom which would cause each fan to produce every five years an account of himself along these lines and distribute it widely, to eliminate any danger of damage to the old theorem that all knowledge is contained in fanzines. Of Members and 'Zines: As always this is vastly useful and even interesting to read just as if it were a long article about the year in FAPA.

The Worst of Martin

(Continuing the appendectomy saga whose reprint began last issue:)

"Feel that?" Play it smart, I say to myself, feel everything and he'll give you another shot. "Certainly!" I say. This goes on for a while, jabbing pins, and I can't see a thing 'cause I have a screen over my throat, when one of the nurses remarks brightly: "My, he looks like a pin ball machine." "Have you left all those pins in me?" I demand. "Don't be silly," says the doctor. But they all crowded around my south end, and since I was frozen by the spinal I couldn't feel anything, but they began manipulating something. I let my fertile imagination pursue possibilities for a while and just as a jolly thought occurred to me I was convinced of it when I felt something roll up my chest, rattle around, and start down again. "Tilt!" I shouted and they broke it up.

Finally Dr. Aseltine wanders in. "How are you doin'?" he asks. This I think is a rather asinine question, he's supposed to tell me. But I suppress it: "Fine! How have things been with you?" "Great!" "Seen any good movies recently?" "Yes, I did. . ." For a moment I thought he was going to lean back and tell me all about it. . . But he gets down below the vision of my screen and begins probing around. All of a sudden something drops on the floor with a ringing crash. "I really did need it out, didn't I?" I ask, brightly. Not a laugh. . . He keeps probing, plucking, and twisting, and every once in a while one of the nurses spirals around my middle with a cold sponge, like she's mopping something up. Meanwhile they keep whispering to each other in shocked undertones. This makes you feel attractive. "Pretty soon we're going to start," he says.

Ah, ha! I tell myself, he's using child psychology on me. He's already started. He can't fool me. In no time at all I figure at just what stage of the operation he's at. Now he's doing this--now he's doing that. There--now she's mopping up the blood again. Blood! MY BLOODS! Ah, well, easy come. . . Now he's snipped it off. Now he's stuffing all the stuffings back. . . "Has everybody got their rubber gloves?" I ask. No one pays any attention to me. . . Now he's sewing me up and he's making believe he hasn't even started yet. Man, this mental tension is wild, even if you can't feel a thing. . . "Make pretty stitches, hey, doc?" "Stitches? What are you talking about? I haven't even started yet. . . Scapel!"

So I'm one of the few people to go through two appendectomies in one day. . . And don't let anyone kid you about those spinals being conclusive. . .

I still think he shouldn't plop everything back and then shake me until it settles. . .

The doctor said it was the worst case he's ever seen--so I took it back and gave him cash instead. . . What a scrawny little bastard--and I never even knew I was pregnant. . .

I was pretty sick at first but as time wore on the nurses got prettier. . .

All this in less than eight hours and you want to know what I've been doing all year?

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Forgive Us Our Press Passes

It was two or three years ago, I suppose, when inspiration pounced, just as I'd decided it was impossible to think of a way to fill up the next issue of Horizons. Copy off some of your newspaper columns, it advised me. That way, you'll have something faintly resembling the old Hagerstown Journal and you'll be spared the agony of creativity. I'm not callous enough, after all these years as a journalist, to do the same thing again so soon after the first transgression. So this time, it's going to be a bit different.

Maybe I can describe some of the columns for FAPA. This might provide a comment nook or two for a few members, without the risk of losing activity credit for reprinting. And I'll be spared the mental quest for subject matter, even if I must translate the original columns into something more suited for fannish reading.

A couple of recent columns might be significant in a couple of ways. I think I was the first person to seize upon the society pages as a source of certain types of statistics for Hagerstown and vicinity. As far as I know, none of the local planning agencies or other trend-spotters had taken the trouble to go through wedding announcements for data, as I did. But while I was proud to find myself an apparent pioneer in this activity locally, I was simultaneously chagrined to find myself taking the easy way out. If it had occurred to me to do this twenty or even ten years ago, I would have leafed through the files until I'd compiled data on perhaps 500 wedding announcements. A sampling of that size would have had more validity than the quick and easy way I did it: I stopped after tabulating 60 newlyweds for job patterns and 100 wedding announcements for migratory instincts. So what I found may or may not be indicative of the true situation; obviously the findings aren't particularly reliable when coincidence involving a half-dozen or so couples could weight the statistics so much. Additionally, there's the built-in flaw in my research involving the kind of young people who have wedding writeups in the newspapers. They're mostly upper income and middle income newlyweds. The low income people who get married are less apt to have the money to spend on the professional photograph which is generally necessary for the reproduction quality of the bride's picture. If the patterns I found in the newspaper items don't hold good for low income marriages, my findings are even more meaningless.

So, for what it's worth, I found confirmation for my belief that there's a significant tendency for young people to get out of cold winter areas and settle in more moderate climates. I jotted down the facts from 100 wedding announcements on where the couples would be making their homes after marriage. About two-thirds of them, 65 in all, were to make their homes within 50 miles of Hagerstown, too close to this city for the winters to be significantly colder or warmer. But, out of the 35 couples who would be living at more distant points, only ten couples were going where winters are either about as cold as in Hagerstown or colder. Eight of the 35 couples who were going to live more than 50 miles from Hagerstown would be living in the Deep South or in parts of the West Coast where it's really warm in the wintertime. The other 17 couples who would live more than 50 miles from Hagerstown were going to areas where the winters would be somewhat milder than in Hagerstown but not in the sun belt category.

I doubt if many of these newlyweds had chosen their residences

solely on the basis of a dislike for cold weather or knowledge of how much it costs to heat a home in cold climates. But those must have been significant factors in some of their decisions. After all, Hagerstown isn't in an excessively severe winter area. Local couples migrating to big cities like New York City, Chicago or Philadelphia would be going into colder climates than Hagerstown's and I'd guess that only about one-third of the nation, geographically, has substantially warmer winters than around Hagerstown. It was possible to guess from some, not all, the wedding announcements why couples had decided on this or that city for their residence. A few couples obviously had no say in the matter because one or both of the spouses were in the armed forces. Others apparently made their choice because one or both were still attending college, but obviously the choice of college could have been influenced by winter conditions.

It falls into line with the trend I've noticed in fandom for years, the tendency of so many fans to move from the cold winter parts of the nation to California or other states where wintertime is substantially milder. So I'm convinced that young people are following in significant quantities today the same urge that first emerged when elderly persons decided to move to Florida after retirement. This would explain much of the commotion over 1980 census figures: most of the howls and charges of inaccuracy came from cities that have cold winters. Moreover, unmarried young people who move from cold to mild winters wouldn't leave as many clues to their migration patterns as most population elements, because few of them would buy or build a home in their new place of residence immediately, or increase school enrollment figures, two indicators that planners and others intent on population patterns keep checking. I don't think the price of fuel oil, gas and coal is high enough yet to cause many married couples with children and middle-aged people who haven't retired yet to imitate the exodus to warmer winters; those groups have various things tying them down like job seniority and the desire to let the kids finish school with their friends. But it's conceivable that energy costs will reach in a few more years a level which will cause the migration to spread to those population elements, too. Already, the cost of heating a good-sized home one winter in some parts of the nation is about the same as the cost of moving to a warmer climate. The urge to move might become irresistible when a winter's heating bills are twice the moving expense and a family knows it can save perhaps ten per cent of its annual budget by living where heating costs are minimal.

I think I pioneered locally on my other checkup on marriage announcements. Glancing over them for my own curiosity's sake, I got the impression that a surprising number of young people had government jobs nowadays. So I took notes on 60 newlywed couples' employment as revealed by their wedding writeups. I was startled by what I found. Twenty-nine of those 60 couples had either one or both members holding government jobs of one sort or another. I did this before the Reagan administration began, so the column I wrote on the basis of my findings didn't have the significance that it would possess today when it seems possible that there's finally to be a cut-back in government hiring.

Admittedly, it was hard to draw the line on what is and isn't a government job. I didn't count several brides and grooms who were employed in industries that depend almost solely on government business. I could also have inflated the total above 29 couples if

I'd counted hospital employes as government workers. After all, an enormous hunk of any hospital's business nowadays comes from patients whose bills are paid by government plans like Medicaid or by local welfare departments.

I found that 13 of the 60 couples had one or both members on the federal payroll, not counting three other couples with a member in the armed forces. One oddity of my survey was that only five of the 120 newlyweds had jobs in education. At first, I considered this a proof of how unreliable such a small sampling can be. In this county, the public school system alone has more than 1,000 teachers, and there are another hundred or so teachers in private schools, out of a total population little more than 100,000. But then I remembered how hard it is for a young person to get a job as a teacher nowadays, when the supply of young teachers is bigger than the demand, so maybe the statistics are simply an indication that the predominantly young people who get married aren't as likely to be teachers as they once were.

This tabulation gave me another surprise. Only eight of those sixty couples would be living on the income of only the bride or the groom. The other 52 couples would have both members holding jobs. I suppose this is partly the result of inflation which makes it hard for two people to survive on one salary and partly the outcome of feminism and the unwillingness of many women to sit home and be supported by their men in today's world. But the tendency for both husband and wife to hold jobs must have something to do with the inability of both husband and wife to find a job in some of the families on welfare or drawing unemployment checks. Only 24 of the couples with both members employed were getting all their income from non-government jobs, my column says, I no longer have my notes, and I'm not sure if I got that right or not. It doesn't seem to jibe with the high percentage of government jobs.

Once or twice a year, I reach such a condition of desperation in my frantic search for something to write a column about that I cheat. I grab some famous piece of literature or a celebrated public document from the past, and I examine it in the light of how conditions are today. The last time I did this method of escaping the need to dig out facts, I picked on Longfellow's *The Song of Hiawatha*. I doubt if it's much read in schools today but I felt sure it would be familiar to many adults around Hagerstown. I surprised even myself in the quantity of blasphemous and heretical passages I found in a quick glance through the long poem. For instance, this section:

"From his pipe the smoke ascending / Filled the sky with haze and vapor, / Filled the air with dreamy softness, / Gave a twinkle to the water, / Touched the rugged hills with smoothness, / Brought the tender Indian summer." If Shawondasee did such a thing today, it's easy to imagine the immense consequences. The anti-smoking element (like me) would cite statistics about the dangers of smoking, the air quality authorities would descend upon him with orders to stop degrading the atmosphere, and a half-dozen or more law suits would be filed in the nearest courts over the illegality of this form of weather modification. At another point in the poem, the Indians:

"Leaped into the rushing river, / Washed the war-paint from their faces. / Dark below them flowed the water, / Soiled and stained with streaks of crimson. / On the banks their clubs they buried, / Buried all their warlike weapons. / ...And in silence all the war-

riors / Broke the red stone of the quarry, / ...Broke the long reeds by the river, / Decked them with their brightest feathers." I speculated in the column about how many things in today's codes would cause these activities to be classified as Indian atrocities. The Indians were mining without a preliminary environmental impact study. They were dumping waste materials into a tributary without first constructing a sewage treatment plant. They had established a landfill at a point which would almost certainly be impossible because of severe contamination of groundwaters. We all know what happened to the palefaces who used to put bird feathers on women's hats.

Just one line of the poem would cause a lot of people to call radio talk shows and write letters to the editor today. Those who can't see why money should be spent on the space program would be unable to remain silent when challenged with a line like "From the full moon fell Nokomis." And think of the experts on rearing children who would issue stern warnings if today Nokomis "Rocked him in his linden cradle, / Bedded soft in moss and rushes, / Safely bound with reindeer sinews." Everyone knows in this civilized world that an infant must have a firm support for his back and that awful consequences to the child's psyche will be caused by any restraints, whether composed of reindeer sinews or not.

The bear in Longfellow's poem is named Mishe-Mokwa, not Smokey. That probably explains the fact that Gitche Manito got away with what he did with his pipe: "Breathed upon the neighboring forest, / Made its great boughs chafe together, / Till in flame they burst and kindled." But then Mudjekeewis does something even worse: "Then again he raised his war-club, / Smote again the Mishe-Mokwa / In the middle of his forehead, / Broke his skull, as ice is broken / When one goes to fish in winter." The game warden would certainly have investigated the legality of this action in the light of fishing season dates, and the only thing that would have saved Mudjekeewis from the wrath of the environmentalists and the animal protection leagues would have been their attention being diverted by Nokomis' method of acquiring those reindeer sinews.

Late in the 1979-80 school year, I did something almost nobody else in Hagerstown does. I watched the daytime programming of the local public television station. On school days, it transmits nothing but televised lessons during the hours when classes are in session. The local school system doesn't use them, using instead its own television education tapes prepared by its own staff, hardly any of the public television lessons are aimed at a level of advancement which is apt to attract people out of school who might want to pick up some more knowledge, and the entire thing seems sort of absurd. It results from the fact that the local station has its programs fed from the Baltimore public television station, and almost never originates any programming of its own. But I was horrified by two tendencies which I found repeated in one television lesson after another. They were the tendency to depict children as superior to adults in commonsense and behavior and the frequency with which a middle-aged or elderly man was starred as a fool, an incompetent, or some other demeaning role. For instance, one segment of "Mulligan Stew," which I believe is a nationally syndicated series, had two adults among the cast, both white males. The two men expounded different theories about nutrition. One of them was a fumbling, bumbling man whose theories followed the textbook recommendations and students were asked to believe that he was right in spite of his incompetence because he defeated the other man in competitive sequences. "Uncle Smiley Goes

Planting" was meant to be instruction on the environment and preservation and it did indeed illustrate the evils of littering, illegal trapping, and carelessness with fire in forests. But there were many episodes in which Uncle Smiley suffered a series of pratfalls and other accidents, almost always accompanied by a scornful comment by one of the children about how dumb he was. Uncle Smiley was portrayed by a middle-aged white.

I know how firmly most kids believe that all grownups are nincompoops, so it seems like a waste of film or tape to deliver so many redundant messages. But maybe it's instructional telecasts like these that are partly responsible for creating that image in kids' minds. If there must be comic relief to hold the kids' attention, I don't think it's too much to expect that the kids should be shown in halfwitted behavior part of the time or that the stupid adults should be women half the time. I realize how sensitive the race issue is for educators and maybe it's too much to expect that a black should sometimes be shown in such demeaning roles. But I keep thinking about Amos 'n' Andy, which is so often cited nowadays as an awful example of how blacks were the victim of prejudice and bigotry on the airwaves. A while back, a local friend was in Washington and decided to attend a revival of an Amos 'n' Andy feature movie. He entered the auditorium just after the lights had gone down and the first reel had begun. When his eyes adjusted to the dimness, he was startled to see that perhaps 95% of the others in the audience were blacks. He almost panicked and fled from fear that they'd come to stage a demonstration of protest or to riot. Then he noticed something was happening: huge guffaws were arising from all over the auditorium at the dialog and visual gags. The laughter grew all the way through the remainder of the movie and when the lights went up, everyone in the audience had obviously had a wonderful time. So it is possible that minorities are not as bothered by certain things as the propagandists and theorists claim.

I was also distressed at the background music for many of the televised lessons. There was a preponderance of loud, driving rhythms even for things on the screen that weren't compatible with such accompaniment. I got nervous from time to time because of all that musical tension. Maybe it's linked with the commotion today about so many hyperactive children and the difficulty even normal kids have to sit still in classes. My hearing isn't what it used to be, so I'm not a reliable judge, but I had difficulty understanding some of the dialog and voice-over messages because the background music was so loud in certain lessons. Not even small children have uniformly perfect hearing and I wonder if it's right to put anything into televised instruction that may increase the difficulty of catching every word.

Here's another column which resulted from a survey which would have been better if I'd had the patience to make it more comprehensive. I became curious about something in the birth announcements and jotted down the names given to about 150 newly born boys and girls in the local hospital in the past few months. This list of names confirmed what I'd suspected. Some of the most popular given names have gone out of fashion around here and certain names have gained favor without apparent cause. Not one of the more than 50 female babies was named Jane, Jean, Joan or June in my sampling. I found only one of the old-fashioned, simple given names for girls bestowed on more than one baby in my list: there were two Julies. There were several Maries and one Mari but no Mary. But five of the

baby girls were named Angela. I've racked my few remaining brains without succeeding in thinking of any reason why this name should suddenly be so popular around here. Angela Lansbury is the only famous possessor of the name whom I could think of, but she hasn't been particularly prominent on television or in movies for quite a few years. There was a television series entitled Angie on the tube during the time these names were compiled, but it wasn't very popular, I didn't hear many people talking about it, and I hardly think it would have inspired parents to select a name which could be converted into Angie as a nickname. Looking at it from the opposite direction, I couldn't find much reason to believe that people are naming babies after celebrities very often nowadays. Among the girls, the only names that seemed possibly inspired by current stars were one Kristy, one Tanya and one Crystal. Lynn turned out to be the most popular name given to girls in my sampling. Nine of them got that name, and curiously, it was the second given name in every case, and it was also bestowed on one boy.

The old favorite given names for boys seem to have retained popularity better around here. I listed three Michaels, three Daniels, two Davids, two Roberts, two Johns, and two Josephs. Unexpectedly, there was only one James: these names were given before Carter left the White House and naming baby boys after presidents used to be a frequent occurrence in this area. You'd be surprised how many Grovers and Woodrows turn up in lists of senior citizens. The closest things I could find to new popularity for boys' names involved the three Adams and three Brians. Adam seems to be the only boys' name with strong Biblical associations which has held popularity here, but it was bestowed much more frequently in the 18th and 19th centuries than in most of this century. I can't think of any cause for Brian being popular, unless there are more Monty Python fans in Hagerstown than anybody suspects. I'm not sure if I reasoned accurately why traditional names for boys seem to have retained favor much better than old favorite names for girls. I theorized that it could be linked to the fact that it's much more common to name a baby boy for the father than to give a baby girl the same name as the mother.

Yet another survey was inspired in part by something I saw in a newspaper about a man who counted how many pieces of junk mail he'd received in a specific period of time. But I decided to vary the procedure by calculating how much money all that junk mail would cost a person if he didn't have adequate sales resistance. So I saved for three months all the junk mail which came to me if it tried to sell me a specific item or solicited a subscription to a magazine or asked contributions to some cause or other. I didn't count mail order catalogs offering a variety of merchandise or the flyers advertising department store sales or auction announcements or anything else which couldn't be pinned down to just one specific sales pitch.

I don't belong to many organizations, I'm not a member of a church, I don't possess any credit cards or charge plates, so I'm sure I'm not on as many junk mailing lists as many other persons. Nevertheless, I discovered that if I had yielded to every request to buy something or donate something, I would have written checks for \$782 in those three months. This sum assumes that I had been as conservative as possible, buying the cheapest edition of a book or the shortest term subscription to a magazine, or checking the little box beside the smallest donation suggested on a charity appeal. That sum of minimum spending would have been \$120 higher if I'd add-

ed to my list the junk mail appeals to me to join this or that organization. In a couple of cases, pitches for donations came with no suggestions about how much to give, and I assigned five bucks to each of them since that's usually the lowest contribution suggested on most charity appeals nowadays.

There were some dillies in the junk mail. The National Trust for Historic Preservation wanted a contribution because 71 trees had been "lost" in a windstorm on property it owns. I supposed the custom of saying the SPCA put a cat or dog to sleep was the ultimate in euphemisms but I know better now. West Virginia University wanted me to send \$200 for its marching band because it needs to replace a lot of tubas and sousaphones "many of which were purchased in the 1950s." I'd rather send such a sum to Heifetz who has been trying to make music on a fiddle which is even older than those big horns. One magazine subscription form not only had a box to check if you wanted to subscribe, but also included provision for ordering every back issue it had ever published for a staggering sum. Another subscription appeal involves a publication specializing in one professional football team. It must be edited by individuals who went through college on athletic scholarships because it lists the name of the team as the Pittsburg Steelers.

In a sense, junk mail could reduce a trifle the financial burden for the recipient who just can't resist because there were a few other items which didn't ask any money but instead offered free gifts if the recipient was willing to have a salesman call or would visit a store to inspect merchandise. One gift was a "colonial mug in honor of the bicentennial". This left me wondering if it had been manufactured by far-sighted artisans before 1776 who not only sensed an impending American Revolution but also realized its 200th anniversary would be celebrated four years before I received this advertisement. Another firm offered a "solid state radio" which seems sort of unremarkable, because it's been almost impossible for a dozen years or more to buy any other kind of radio.

Nine years ago, when the newspaper management informed me that my mission in professional life would henceforth be to write columns instead of report on news events, I received very little revelation on the precise nature of how I should accomplish this. But I did learn that I was expected to include plenty of nostalgia. I arbitrarily decided that I would divide up my five weekly columns into three columns on current events and two on the past. The nostalgia type are much easier in a sense because it's always possible to find subject matter by looking at old newspapers or in the local history room of the public library or coaxing up personal memories. In fact, I've promised myself that I'll change the ratio to three nostalgia for every two contemporary columns, if I encounter too many difficulties in finding contemporary things to write about in the 21 months between now and retirement. Regrettably, if the nostalgia columns are easier to write, they're also fraught with direr consequences in the form of telephone calls and visits to the office and letters from elderly and often incoherent people who remember things difficently or have something else to communicate about a column. I've always been proud of the fact that I'm one of the few local journalists who can be quickly found in the telephone directory (many of the others have an unlisted number or live outside the area covered by the Hagerstown directory or have their listing in the name of someone else to evade vox populi) but I'm increasingly tempted to invest in the extra buck per month to stay out of the

phone book. In any event, if there's any lasting value in what I'm doing on the job nowadays, it probably is in the form of a few of the nostalgia columns. If microfilms of local newspapers survive a century or so and there are still people around here able to read them by then, an occasional nostalgia column will be found to contain information that might be unavailable elsewhere and otherwise lost to posterity.

For instance, I did one column on stoops, not dullwitted people but the tiny porches that used to stand in front of most Hagerstown houses. I don't know of anything else that has been written about them in Hagerstown and photographs don't always give an accurate indication of just what they're like. Until I started to gather material for that column, I hadn't realized how nearly extinct the old wooden stoops are in this city. When I was a boy, they were scattered all over town. For reasons I haven't figured out, they've vanished entirely from some neighborhoods but still survive in fair quantities in certain blocks. When you think about it, the fact that wooden stoops are still to be found anywhere is surprising because they were usually unprotected from snow and rain, rarely were painted regularly, and most of them got hard treatment from pounding feet and kids romping over them.

The stoop seems to have gone out of fashion in Hagerstown about the time the 19th century turned into the 20th. You can drive out some of Hagerstown's streets and see the exact point where stoops vanish and are replaced by large front porches, as the city grew and a particular new block was built up some time around the century's turn. I didn't look up the matter in histories of house construction in the United States, but it's obvious that until around the turn of the century, most local homes except in the rich families' sections were constructed narrow and deep, leaving no room for anything more than a stoop in front, then for some reason, perhaps the lower cost of sites further from the center of town, it became more customary to build houses wider and less deep, permitting a porch to go at the front.

Most of the stoops that survive in Hagerstown today are the concrete type, although a few brick stoops can be found, some of which I suspect to be comparatively recent replacements for wooden or concrete stoops. I'd like to find the time soon to do some photography of stoops to preserve the various designs which predominate: the simple squared-off type, those that feature curves, and a few with ornamentation. I don't think it's outlandish to speculate that the switch from stoops to porches for most local homes had an effect on family life and neighborhood solidarity. The stoop was so small that people were forced to cuddle up close together when standing or sitting on them. It's easier to have a long conversation on a stoop when everyone is only a few feet away than when a porch occupants are scattered over an area of perhaps 150 square feet. Stoops were perfect for kids to play jacks or tiddlywinks because the equipment for those games couldn't scatter easily. The supports on either side of a stoop were just right in summertime for cats to sit on and jump in any direction in case a dog approached.

I also went to a lot of trouble to collect information on Hagerstown's five and tens, when I realized one day that this type of store was extinct as far as nomenclature is concerned and was transformed almost beyond recognition with respect to the merchandise. I don't know how much of the nation referred to stores like Woolworth's and McCrory's as five and tens and how many areas called them dime

stores. But I had never encountered the latter term until I started to run across it in books and magazines. It was always five and tens in Hagerstown conversations. Younger readers of Horizons might need to be briefed to the effect that these stores really did sell a great deal of their merchandise for a nickel or a dime at one time, although that pricing had already suffered severe inroads by the time I was growing up in the late 1920s and early 1930s. As far as I could determine, the first five and ten in Hagerstown was McCrory's which is first listed in the 1903 city directory but may have been operating several years earlier since directories weren't published every year. Woolworth's five and ten first shows up in the 1910 city directory. For some reason I can't begin to understand, those stores and almost all the other five and tens in Hagerstown's history were established in the same downtown block although some of them moved several times from one spot to another in that block. My mother worked in her teens in one of the five and tens, six days a week, ten and twelve hours a day, for the salary of \$3 per week, which might be one clue to the secret of how the five and tens had such low prices. And my grandmother went to work as a cook at Newberry's lunch counter after she was widowed with several half-grown children to support. Somehow, the memory of the place in the cellar where she did her thing remains crystal clear for me even though I was terribly young when taken down there.

The five and tens are involved in a lot of other personal memories. There was my fascination with the dime store which had a piano and a young lady to play it at the sheet music counter; a potential customer who wasn't sure about making a purchase handed her the song and she played it to demonstrate how it sounded. Then there were the exciting moments at Newberry's which had an extensive pet bird department, every time a bird slipped out of its cage. The clerks became quite skillful at turning off the ceiling fans fast because an escaped bird almost always headed straight for the nearest whirling blades and a half-second later was pelting down in segments onto customers' heads if the fans weren't stopped in time.

I found the stores identified as five and tens in all the city directories until the 1917 edition which changed the category to "five, ten and twenty-five cent stores" so wartime inflation must have been an influence. Two years later, one of the five and tens had changed its identification to "variety store". Then in 1929, Newberry's stopped appearing in the city directory as a five and ten and was instead identified as a department store. In the same directory, the category as a whole stopped appearing as "five, ten and twenty-five cent stores" and became instead "department stores, five cents to \$1.00". Curiously, it wasn't until 1974 that a city directory appeared without a category which started with "five cents" even though I doubt if there was much available for a nickel in those stores by the 1960s. Whatever they're called, they've fallen on evil times in downtown Hagerstown. Both McCrory's and Newberry's stores were torched about ten years ago during some sort of reprisal campaign against the chain or chains (I forget whether they'd merged before the arsonists went to work). McCrory's was eventually rebuilt but Newberry's wasn't. About a year ago, Woolworth's closed down. So there's only McCrory's left in downtown Hagerstown, although there's a Kresge's at a suburban shopping center and the downtown section has a couple of stores with such junky merchandise that they would be considered dime stores if they were operated by one of the national chains. One of these establishments is called

The Dollar Store. I can't think of a better commentary on inflation, and I keep wondering if that name will become inappropriate by the end of this century.

One investigation into column material made me aware to some extent of another fandom: band fandom or maybe it should more properly be identified as band music fandom. Dr. Peter Buys was director of the Hagerstown Municipal Band for about forty years. He also taught music, conducted for quite a few years the local high school instrumental groups, and composed a great deal of music which was published and widely used by bands all over the nation. Not long ago I started to hear rumors about the availability of a recording of some of Dr. Buys' compositions. No listings appeared in Schwann, band members who had served under him knew nothing of such a record, and I'd about decided that it must be one of those custom pressings of concerts by high school or college musical groups meant only for local consumption. One day I happened to be glancing through the local public library's record shelves, and bless me, there was the record. The jacket identified it as volume 23 in the Heritage of the March series, one side of which contains six of Dr. Buys' marches. But the jacket contains no address of the producer, the record label simply repeats "Heritage of the March" where the name of the line of records normally appears, and it wasn't for sale anywhere I looked. More or less by accident, I found a band music enthusiast living not far from Hagerstown who told me where the record came from. Up in New York State there's a very wealthy man named Robert Hoe, Jr., who is a march fan. He has been financing the recording and production of this long Heritage of the March series with the cooperation of the Military Academy, Naval Academy, and Coast Guard Bands which make the records. Each record features a sampling of the output of one or two celebrated march composers. Hoe doesn't sell these records, but gives them away to universities, public libraries, and radio stations. Previously, he'd issued in the same way another series of lps which contain most of Sousa's music for band. My informant also told me some other things about band fandom. For instance, there's one organization which devotes itself to providing bands with copies of the parts for virtually any composition for band which is out of print and not protected by copyright, through its extensive library and copying machines. A school music instructor in nearby Pennsylvania devoted his master's thesis to Dr. Buys' career.

So I wrote a column about the discovery of the recording and about the desirability of someone recording other forms of compositions by Dr. Buys, who wrote many overtures, tone poems and fancy arrangements of familiar melodies. Unfortunately, we'll probably never learn for sure the answer to one big question about his career. As a youth, Dr. Buys had been a member of Sousa's Band for a half-dozen years and Sousa never replaced him in one sense because he couldn't find anyone else who could play the little E flat clarinet in tune the way Dr. Buys had done. But Dr. Buys continued to work for Sousa for another dozen years as an arranger after ending his duties as a performer, and there's some reason to believe that he wrote some of the music published under Sousa's name. There is nothing exceptional or illegal about such a procedure, if it happened: everyone knows that Duke Ellington, for instance, had little or nothing to do with composing some of the music on which his name appears. Unfortunately, Dr. Buys's widow died soon after his death, their only child died a few years later, there were no

other immediate relatives residing in this area, and a great mass of his papers and documents were burned. Among them might have been evidence of just how much work he did for the March King.

But when you come to think about it, you wonder why bands in general and marches in particular don't receive more attention as a peculiarly native form of music in the United States. Bands in this nation are quite different from those in European nations and the American march is a musical form as distinctive to this nation as the blues. But you almost never find the music magazines publishing material about this segment of the nation's musical life, and band music records are usually reviewed for their high fidelity characteristics than for their musical content. The Hagerstown Municipal Band is one of a dwindling number of town bands that survive in the nation, now that most band music comes out of high schools and colleges. It's municipally financed and members receive a modest salary. The other town band that survives in this county is remarkable both for the fact that it lives in a very small village, Rohrerstown, and for its antiquity, having existed continuously since early in the 19th century and being among the oldest town bands in the nation. It's all volunteer and even owns its own building in Rohrerstown. The older Rohrerstown Band members keep lamenting at the lack of interest by young fellows in the area which will cause the band to break up any day now, but those complaints have been coming out of Rohrerstown for at least 38 years, the length of time I've been working for the newspaper, so somehow it survives.

I don't remember any published claims for the distinction of inventing the nostalgia craze which has been so prominent in the nation for the past couple of decades. I speculated in one column that a Hagerstown native might have some right to that status and nobody went to the trouble of disputing me. Admittedly, Agnes Rogers started to turn out nostalgia stuff some years before the main outburst of enthusiasm for the recent past and I don't seriously think it all started as a result of her books. But maybe she could be included in any list of the true pioneers in the field. Her books are almost forgotten now, she was middle-aged when she was turning them out, and I assumed that she'd been dead for some time when I was hunting them out to write a column about them. But I couldn't find a date of death in any of the reference works which include listings for her as an author so I inquired around Hagerstown and I found someone who assured me that she's still living in New York City, although extremely advanced in years and quite infirm.

Agnes Rogers published some books under her maiden name. Others were collaborations with her husband, Frederick Lewis Allen, who was a Harper's editor for years. I think one of their most important collaborations was "I Remember Distinctly" which was published in 1947. It was a picture book with a fair amount of text, described as "a family album of the American people 1918-1941". It prophesied the recent nostalgia pattern by emphasizing everyday people and objects rather than the celebrities and rarities. It reviewed such things as dance marathons, how typical homes were furnished, political campaign buttons, and other things which result in much of the flea market merchandise nowadays and the subject matter of movies and books about those years. Allen himself wrote a text-only book which was a sort of companion, "Only Yesterday," which is much easier to find in second-hand bookstores today than their picture book. Agnes Rogers also published a picture book in 1949 that seems like a link between the old women's suffrage movement and

the later women's lib outburst. I'm not sure that it would go on the recommended reading list for feminists if it were still in print today, because it contains such heretical statements as her belief that the colonel's lady has "more in common with the colonel than with Judy O'Grady".

Around Inauguration time, the media bombard everyone with all sorts of odds and ends of information about the presidency. I'm not sure if anyone was desperate enough this January to dig out the oddity which I rehashed in one recent column. A house which stands today about a dozen miles from Hagerstown was the home of the mother as well as two daughters-in-law of Presidents. It sounds improbable but it doesn't take too much knowledge of American history to figure out which Presidents were involved since there has been only one instance of a grandfather-grandson combination in the White House.

The house in question stands just a short distance over the Pennsylvania line west of Hagerstown. The Irwin family owned it early in the 19th century. One day, two of the Irwin girls, Jane and Elizabeth, went visiting an aunt in Ohio. While there, they got acquainted with two sons of Gen. William Henry Harrison, who had been a hero of the War of 1812. Jane married William Henry Harrison, Jr., and Elizabeth married John Scott Harrison, after a respectable number of years had passed for a suitable courtship. Their father-in-law was elected President in 1840 and was soon to win distinction as the President who served the shortest term of office, dying a month after Inauguration Day. Jane Irwin Harrison was the White House hostess during that month, because her mother-in-law was ill. Alas, Elizabeth never knew that her son, Benjamin, would become President. She was dead when that happened in 1838.

I was resigned to suffering an outburst of telephoned claims to relationship with the Irwins after my column appeared. But not a soul announced distant descent from the area family. There are still quite a few area residents with Irwin as a family name, so they must be part of an entirely different clan of the same name. None of the Irwins who married into the presidential succession ever came back to this area to live, as far as I could determine. And for some reason there's next to no tourist publicity for the Irwin home, even though it's also supposed to be the oldest extant settlers' house in that part of the valley.

A couple of years ago, Horizons offered a lengthy description of how Pen Mar Park in the mountains near Hagerstown had come back from the dead. The unexpected success of the recreated park in terms of patronage was mentioned in that article, I believe. I'm happy to report that the resurrected park (which is apparently the only example in the nation of an old amusement park restored as a public park) continues to attract increasing numbers of visitors. Moreover, I was able to write last summer another column about it, telling how a new multi-purpose pavilion was ready to be dedicated. The only structure from the amusement park which was rebuilt for the new county park when it first opened was the scenic overlook, and that one was faithfully designed to the exact specifications of the original one except for a wheelchair ramp at one corner. But the new pavilion doesn't imitate the old dance pavilion which was never big enough in the amusement park era and wasn't suitable for any use other than dancing. Fortunately, the new pavilion looks like an old-time park structure, even though it's quite big, 36 by 84 feet in each of its two wings which intersect in an L shape.

So now the miracle of Pen Mar takes on additional marvels. Ev-

en in the years when Pen Mar Amusement Park was most popular, there was never a live production of a Broadway musical comedy there, like the one that was staged in the pavilion soon after its dedication, or a concert by a full symphony orchestra, one of the attractions coming up this summer. The pavilion is also being used for dancing to big bands and various types of large-scale meetings, in addition to its basic purpose as a site for picnics. In fact, it can serve two picnics simultaneously, thanks to a moveable partition. Four and five thousand persons have been showing up on some Sundays at Pen Mar for the big band dances, about twice the average crowd attracted by a big name rock group in Hagerstown.

I'm not sure if any more big structures are probable for Pen Mar in the immediate future, to go with the pavilion, overlook, museum and comfort stations. The most obvious addition, the one that would undoubtedly please the old timers the most, would be establishment of a little amusement park in one corner, like in the old days. But that would go against the non-commercial policy maintained up to now (admission is charged to some pavilion events but there's free listening for those who don't want to spend money to get close) and it might swell crowds beyond control of the primitive law enforcement arrangements. There has been next to no trouble with crowd control so far because of careful choosing of the type of attractions which aren't apt to draw the unruly elements in the population. But I'd love to live to see the day when a merry-go-round and roller-coaster would resume operations at Pen Mar, with proceeds perhaps divvied up among charities after expenses were deducted.

Someone with more patience than I possess should write a good analysis of a matter which I just described superficially in one recent column. It's the question of what is the ideal income for an individual or a family nowadays, taking into calculations the amount of money and services that are available free to people whose income falls below specified "poverty" levels. Such a study would require much digging for information and more math for analysis because the cutoff point of maximum income differs for various welfare programs. I think it's quite possible that you could eventually find after enough research that there is a just right income for a single person, another for a married couple, yet another for couples with children, and so on, which enable them to live much better than they would if their income suddenly increased by several thousand dollars. The situation differs from state to state, of course. The best I could do, in the time available for one day's column-writing, was to assemble a few figures on the more prominent giveaways. The average food stamp recipient in Washington County gets more than \$1,000 worth of free food annually. Free heating fuel donations averaged \$225 per family for those eligible for the program last winter. Imposing sums can be saved by those who qualify for rent subsidies, which usually provide the difference between one-fourth of the occupants' income and the established rent. I believe school lunches cost 50¢ locally, so there's nearly \$200 per year saved for parents of two children in a year if their income is under the cutoff point for free lunches. Elderly persons who qualify can call a choreman service to take care of minor repairs and maintenance around the house, and those who use it only twice a year might save upwards of \$100 now that most firms bill you at \$20 per hour or thereabouts for odd jobs by plumbers or carpenters. The state has a medical assistance program that can save huge sums for those who qualify for it, and so it goes.

Moreover, I discovered that the cutoff point for enjoying some

of these benefits is higher than I'd imagined. A family of four with an income around \$12,000 or \$13,000 is eligible for Hagerstown's public housing (the limit is \$11,400 but that's after certain deductions can be taken from higher income). This might not seem like much income for a person living in New York City or suburban Washington but it's more than thousands of wage-earners receive in this city. The Maryland social services plan which offers all sorts of welfare services but not actual money has a maximum income of \$9,760 for a single person. Starting school teachers who receive \$10,600 in this county can qualify for some poverty programs if married and possessing a child or other dependent.

So I don't know if there is a magic figure for an individual or family which if surpassed will cost it a lot of money and non-monetary benefits. But it's obvious that a very small increase in annual income can cost many low income people many times more than the gain in lost welfare benefits.

I cheated to get material for one column. I didn't attend a talk but I listened to a tape recording of it, and so I was able to write about a Washington County resident who is in an unusual situation. He and his family occupy the only house in town. Most large maps of Maryland still show the town of Weverton, down in the southern tip of Washington County, not very far downstream on the Potomac from Harpers Ferry. Unfortunately, there's only one house in Weverton nowadays, occupied by the Ronald L. Pitts family. He thought it was sort of strange when he moved into the house that he had a town all to himself, and did a lot of research which he embodied in the talk which I heard on tape.

Weverton had 200 residents a century ago. A half-century ago, it had 50 residents. And at one time it seemed as if it might become a really big city because a colorful man named Casper Wever, who had helped to design Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, bought up a lot of land around Weverton in the early 19th century and promoted it as a major industrial center, after calculating that the 16-foot drop in the river between Harpers Ferry and Weverton would provide as much horsepower for factories as any site in the New England industrial areas. Wever built a lot of homes for workers and several factory buildings, a few industries actually occupied the site, but he suffered financial reverses, floods knocked down some of his structures, there was more damage from the Civil War, and by the end of the century Weverton was just a residential community. Then came the automobile. The road running north from Weverton was widened, forcing the razing of some of the town's houses. Later the east-west road running through the community was widened, and the geography of the spot forced the destruction of all but one of the remaining houses. So now it's a one-family town. The entire course of events strikes me as slightly frightening for its symbolism of how the automobile is driving out human beings. Whole blocks in Hagerstown have been downed to make room for new streets or wider streets or railroad overpasses. Long rows of houses have vanished for the sake of parking lots. I hope motor vehicles can't communicate with one another because I'd hate to think of them gloating over the way they're not only killing and maiming their human occupants and polluting the air they breathe but also driving them out of house and home.

I don't normally get delusions of grandeur. But when writing a recent column, I found myself fleetingly suffering from Jack Speer delusions. I'd bought several high school yearbooks at a yard

sale. Glancing over the messages which schoolmates of the owners had jotted on the flyleaves and in margins, I decided they were a colorful enough commentary on today's high school education to be perpetuated in print.

The owner of one yearbook must have been quite popular because the messages penned in it included: "To a vary nice guy." "It's been a lot of fun know ya and having ya in all most all my classes." "Your a fun guy."

Some of the other things written in the yearbooks dealt with time to come. Examples: "Have fun in the futture." "Be good over the summer if possible. But that's unusal for you." But one student was thinking about the past: "Another school year is over. Good." Another wrote: "Remember always the times we did spend together and espically the time at your house."

An assortment of the other forms in which yearbook messages evidenced the benefits of education:

"Your a good lookine girl and you wan't have trouble getting a boy freind. I'm ownly kidding." "It's been along time but whe finally got together." "36-21-31, their're not my measurements." "You and Marge been friends I don't know how long."

The strangest thing about these yearbooks is the contrast provided by the printed portions. I don't know if the editorial staff or the publishing firm was responsible, but the printed lines were remarkably free from bad grammar, typographical errors, and similar booboos. When you stop to realize that firms which publish yearbooks must be sort of rushed to get them all out at about the same time, this seems impressive.

The turnover among Hagerstown journalists is awesomely high. So some news items are overlooked simply because nobody on duty at a given time has been around Hagerstown long enough to recognize them for what they are. I was shocked when an obituary of a friend and former neighbor didn't mention the phase of his life that affected the greatest number of people, so I remedied the oversight in a column. Bob Irvine, you see, was Hagerstown's only radio Santa Claus for about three decades. As a human being, he had as many good qualities as Santa, too. He was a fine singer, had a happy home and successfully raised very good children, and gave a hand in many community projects. But he never publicized his identity as a radio Santa. Even though he made no particular effort to disguise his voice over the air, hardly anyone who knew him identified him with the radio Santa because his other radio appearances were as a singer, not as a talker. I didn't know until after the column had appeared and I received a thank you note from his widow that even the Irvine children had listened nightly to Santa and didn't know that their father was Santa until they were in their teens.

I talked to two of the old timers at Hagerstown's first radio station to try to pin down dates. They weren't sure but they think Bob Irvine first went on the air as Santa in the late 1930s, and continued in that capacity until around 1971. There was only one radio station in Hagerstown during the early part of his tenure, and the stations that sprang up later didn't introduce Santas of their own until late in Bob's career. There was only one break in that span. Nobody could remember why, but one December Bob didn't broadcast and the station gave the task to an announcer. Local parents spent most of that Advent season trying to think up a logical answer to the questions their children asked after hearing a very thick southern accent coming over the radio from the lips of an old gentleman who

resides at the North Pole. The denouement of "Miracle on 34th Street" hinges around the fact that the post office sends the mail addressed simply to Santa Claus to the Macy Santa. But long before that film was produced, the Hagerstown post office was doing exactly the same thing. Bob also established a continuing character in the form of Roly Poly, an elf who helps Santa and was first portrayed by a very unselfish announcer named Bill Paulsgrove. Roly Poly survives to this very day on the station's Santa broadcasts, even though others have taken over both the star and supporting actor parts.

As a stay-at-home, I sometimes have trouble deciding if a phenomenon is special to the Hagerstown area or is instead a nationwide situation which I just haven't happened to encounter in published or broadcast sources emanating from the remainder of the United States. I tried to fill one column with the peculiarities of language in this area. I don't know if the absence of corrections means that they are special to this area or if the newspapers' circulation is too confined for many outsiders to see how wrong I'd been.

For example, is "no admission" used only around here to mean exactly the opposite of its literal significance? Time after time, a newspaper story or advertisement or a radio announcement will contain a sentence along the lines of "There will be no admission." I've never heard of anyone being scared away from attending such an event because everyone seems to understand now this should be translated: "Admission is free." It's been happening for at least 38 years, my entire span as a journalist. I suppose the odd usage began when a writer or advertising man got careless and absentminded from typing too many times "There will be no admission charge" and began dropping the final word.

Then there's the fact that "for" and "against" have become synonyms in Hagerstown in one particular situation. Publicity for fund drives and charity causes confuses the two hopelessly. You'll find a plea to give money against cerebral palsy and the next day someone will ask you to give money for cerebral palsy. There are many fights involving muscular dystrophy, almost equally divided into the fights for muscular dystrophy and the fights against muscular dystrophy. In this case, it must be a sort of verbal shorthand which merges the idea of a campaign for funds for the fight against a disease, alternating unpredictably on the omission of one preposition or the other. But what really scared me was the time someone put up on a few bulletin boards around Hagerstown a sign bearing the words: "Fight Mental Health!" Hardly anyone saw anything amiss.

I cheated a little by including an annoyance which I know is national in scope. It's the custom of calling personal appearances by rock and country music groups "concerts." There's a perfectly good word for their appearances: "vaudeville". They have strange costumes, tricky lighting effects, jokes, grotesque physical gyrations, and all the other hammy routines that entertainers utilized during the vaudeville era. If that's a concert, then what is the proper term for a program which consists of a formally attired musician walking onto the stage, performing a series of musical selections, bowing and walking off again? And what would the popular music fans call their appearance if a rock or country and western group performed in the same manner? I don't think the noun would be printable.

A friend alerted me to a local angle on an internationally important news story that I had overlooked, along with all the other media people in Hagerstown. But it seemed unlikely that there could be a local angle when Sir Oswald Mosley, the most famous British

fascist, died this past winter. Nevertheless, his first wife had been the granddaughter of a man from the small town of Leitersburg, four or five miles north of Hagerstown. Levi Leiter, who came from the family for which the town was named, had gone west to make his fortune as a young man, and unlike most youths who undertook such a venture, he succeeded because he decided to enter the retail store business in Chicago with another young fellow named Marshall Field. Eventually Leiter and Field disagreed, Leiter sold his interest in the business, and then spent much of the remainder of his life multiplying his wealth in other ventures. Several of his children married into the British nobility. One of them became the wife of Lord Curzon, a famous viceroy of India, and their daughter became Lady Cynthia Mosley, Sir Oswald's first wife. I couldn't find a whole lot about the Mosleys in the Hagerstown library, but one book on British fascism in general speculated that Sir Oswald might not have become so notorious if Lady Cynthia had lived longer. Their marriage had been a major social event, including the King and Queen among the guests, and one historian described her as "an intelligent girl, bred in an intense political tradition, and was of special service in smoothing her husband's social relationships" with people like Winston Churchill, who became a close friend of the Mosleys. Her grandfather inadvertently took a place in British controversy, when Sir Oswald exhibited increasing fascist tendencies and his enemies speculated about this from a man whose wife was Jewish. In actuality, the Leiters had always had a fondness for giving their boy babies Old Testament names causing wrong assumptions about a family Aryan enough to satisfy even the Nazis. Lady Cynthia apparently had little part in British fascist activities, although just once she was seen in public giving the fascist salute. Then she died in mid-1933. Sir Oswald cut himself off from his social contacts and devoted himself to the British Union of Fascists. One friend termed him completely changed in character and nature after her death. Sir Oswald married a second time three years later, this time in Berlin where Hitler gave them a bridal party.

I also expected the telephone to ring after this column was published, because there are a few people still living around Hagerstown who are distant relations of the Leiters of Leitersburg. But nobody seemed to mind that a distant relative had married into British fascism or that I'd written about it. You never know what's going to happen. Several years ago I wrote a column which seemed absolutely guaranteed to cause me no problem, about the last hanging in Hagerstown. The male lead in that drama had had neither kith nor kin in his lifetime. So a few hours after the newspaper hit the streets, I had a thorough scolding from a very elderly woman whose father had been the sheriff who brought down the final curtain and I should have known better than to bring up again matters which the sheriff had tried his best to forget almost a century ago.

Maybe it's wrong for a science fiction enthusiast to write a column about the obsolete inventions of the past and to intimate that they might be more useful today than the latest technological wonders. But I did it. Among the gadgets which I praised in their desuetude are:

Bootscrapers. I theorized that they lost popularity long ago when once muddy streets and roads were paved to accommodate automobiles and when municipal regulations forced every property owner to build sidewalks. But in more recent decades came the flight to the suburbs, where there were rarely sidewalks, and where many houses

even lack concrete walkways to the back door or side door. There's almost as much mud getting on shoes now as in the pre-auto era and nothing but a bootscraper is capable of getting it off the arch part of the sole. Lightning rods. I doubt if a hundred houses in this county still possess them, and I don't even see them on newer barns nowadays. Every year at least a structure or two burns down in this county from lightning. Why have they lost favor after saving so many properties when they were fashionable? Chains for auto tires. They were a terrible nuisance because they were hard to put on when it was cold and snowing, and they often came loose in the middle of a trip with consequent flapping and clanking. But they provide much better traction and more safety than snow tires in certain winter driving conditions. Shutters. I've seen advertisements for a book or two on shutters as an energy conservation expedient. But I don't think there's a store in Hagerstown where you can buy shutters to install on houses, I've never seen them advertised by mail order firms, and even the sermons by the preachers of energy gospel rarely mention them. But they must have more value in reducing fuel consumption than such widely publicized measures as insulated power sockets, and they can also reduce considerably the need for running the air conditioner in summer. All over Hagerstown you can see hundreds of shutterless houses with the hook or hinge hardware still in the walls beside the windows, evidence of how many shutters were removed when they suddenly went out of fashion. Hats. People continually complain about how cold they are in the winter and how hot it is in the summer. But they don't wear hats, except perhaps in the most extreme frigidity, and that's where the body suffers so much heat loss in cold weather and receives the full brunt of the heat in the summer. I didn't add in my column the fact that Mike Shoemaker and I are apparently the only people in fandom who wear hats for temperature control purposes, as distinct from those who wear funny hats as a trademark or symbol. Brick sidewalks. The only new brick sidewalks that have been laid in Hagerstown in recent decades have been the new-fangled type that consist of a concrete slab underneath the layer of bricks. That type of brick sidewalk has all the faults and none of the virtues of concrete sidewalks. The old type of brick sidewalks had a tendency to grow slightly uneven after the passing of a century or so. But they had a remarkable ability to cool off in the summer after the sun went down, instead of storing up the day's heat and rationing it out at intervals throughout the night the way concrete sidewalks do. Moreover, brick sidewalks of the old type permitted trees to flourish everywhere in town, in both residential and business districts. Enough moisture from rain and snow can seep between the bricks to meet the requirements of even large trees. When it's a concrete sidewalk or brick-on-concrete, the only way to have a tree is to create a hole in the sidewalk and fill it with dirt which keeps washing out, or put a metal grating around the tree in which women with high heels can get stuck or most repulsive of all, plant little trees in large pots which immediately become litter collectors, have their sides banged up, and obstruct the passage of pedestrians.

I once heard Murray Leinster give a talk about all the knowledge which can be found only by reading old editions of encyclopedias. I think the same situation exists for many inventions which have gone out of favor. I forgot one when writing the column: the slate, a fine memo pad which never needs refills or fills up wastebaskets, the way pads of paper do when you use them for memo purposes.