



the rambling fap 73

fapa 155, may 1976

gregg calkins



well,
didn't he
ramble...

As the month of March roars into the Bay Area, the rambling fap is not lyin' when he says he is preparing to take it on the lam. No. By the time this issue hits the streets (Redd Boggs does not have a mailbox in front of his house) I should be relatively well ensconced in my new address in the condominium. Well, townhouse, actually, but out here the terms tend to be used interchangeably if erroneously. Our date for the close of escrow is the end of this month, which will leave me more than a month to finish everything up for the May mailing. This is scheduled to be a gala revival issue--would you believe Burbee and Grennell?--complete with cover and staples. It is also my last publication prior to the Westercon, and I'd like to make at least enough splash so that somebody will know who I am down there. (I have this recurring dream in which I am introduced and the whole audience looks around in bewilderment wondering who the hell I am and why I was chosen. The hell of it is that I have no valid answers...)

Huh? Oh, yes...in a townhouse you also own the land beneath your unit, while in a condominium you may own only airspace as an individual owner, such as a unit in a multi-story building. Very few units in our area fit the latter category, but the word "condominium" has entered the language much as has xerox and mimeograph.

I believe I described the place last time? I may have to go back and reread last issue. We haven't seen the inside of the place since the night we bought it, and now one of our common games is "did you remember if over the..." and "was the color of the..." and "where did they have the..." fill in the item(s) of your choice. The answer is always the same, anyhow: no. So we hope that we like it as well at the end of the month as we did at the first of last month. And so it goes.

Actually, it wouldn't be all that difficult to get back in and check some things out, normally, but this situation has been a little sad. The sellers had reached a point in their lives in which they wanted to move into a new house, complete with private yard and garden, and they bought a new home in Danville. Shortly after we all got everything finalized, the woman discovered she had cancer and immediately went into surgery. Practically overnight, which doesn't seem to be too good, but I really don't know much about the whole thing. Apparently, however, they have decided to go forward with their plans, as much as possible as if nothing untoward happened, but under the circumstances we haven't felt much like disturbing them. I'm sure we'll like what we get.

Actually, we're very eager. I badly want to get into that garage and do some measurements and see whether I can expand on the loft he has already begun or whether (as I suspect) I will have to tear it all out and start over. The reason I think

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the latter is because after looking through a similar floor plan with no partial loft, it looks as though a considerable area can be built in if it is done properly. It's probably better, in that case, to do it all at once rather than add on. Under those circumstances, the loft will not only be my library/den/office but possibly include an extra room as well. It does frustrate me a little that I can't be doing some advance planning and I may just have to see if it isn't possible for me to get in and make some measurements in the next week or so.

For the rest, we know we will be happy. The view remains satisfying (we have been up around the place several times at night) and the floor plan suits us (other similar models are for sale in different locations). And, to top it all off, last month I sold the unit right across the street from ours to a friend of mine!

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The adventures of the boy skier continue.

Winter finally arrived in the Sierras, despite the weatherman tonight muttering about spring being officially only 18 days away. We went to the cabin this weekend, as usual, only to find that by Saturday night it was raining heavily on our already sparse snow. We've had a late and mild winter with the exception of one moderate snowfall in mid-February, and the rain looked like it was taking that away before we had hardly gotten a chance to ski upon it. However, we woke up Sunday morning to several inches of snow that had turned into more than a foot on the patio bench just outside of the dining room by the time brunch was over. We hit the slopes for only a few runs that afternoon, as it was very stormy and visibility was poor, and by late Sunday afternoon learned that the pass was closed and we all gleefully called home and said we wouldn't be at work Monday morning. Monday morning it was still snowing, more than 2 feet by now, and we skied several hours that day before heading home relatively early. At that we barely made it over the pass before the road was closed, not to reopen until this afternoon! On tonight's news, 3 skiers have died since yesterday, 2 by avalanche at Alpine Meadows (our ski area) and 1 from exposure (an experienced cross-country skier, to boot). Sheesh. It snowed here this morning and rained very heavily, and that will be at Tahoe tonight and tomorrow, so things should still be piling up in the mountains.

This weekend, however...ah, this weekend!

Those of you who remember my back operation and hospital stays may be wondering how I am holding up under all of this activity. You may now know that I reinjured my back two weeks ago on a skiing trip. Yes, I did. I was loading the car in our driveway here at home and I leaned into the car to put my keys into the ignition and decided to look back over my shoulder at the same time...ZING! I'm still suffering the effects. Meanwhile I have been skiing twice since then, with numerous falls, and they just don't bother me. The back, meantime, is slowly recovering.

Oh, yes. Take heart, ye physical incompetents and uncoordinated wretches! If I can learn to ski at 40--life beginning almost without choice, as it were--anyone can do anything physical. Now an even greater miracle has transpired! While snowed in during the weekend, I picked up a ski magazine which seemed to specialize on all of the flaws in my technique (I almost felt like I should write the author and ask for part of his check as a collaborator) and read therein two sentences which seemed like they might help. So, the next day, I tried his two suggestions. Charlotte, skiing behind me for a change, roared up beside me at our first stop and bewilderedly asked me what the hell I was doing. I muttered an explanation, apologetically, and she cut me off and told me to do it again. So we headed off down the slope and came

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to another stop and went through the same question and answer period. I was still trying to apologize for my experimentation when she finally got it through to me that I was finally doing something right for a change and she wondered how the hell it happened.

I won't reveal my two secrets here--suffer, you hamburgers!--but as of last weekend I could ski down moderate slopes as fast, if not as gracefully, as she could, and my confidence has increased 100%. Truly amazing. If you don't believe me, look at Charlotte...she still hasn't been able to get the look off of her face.

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I haven't seen the February mailing yet, so I still don't know how Redd made out with my electrostencil, but you can't see my beard (which Rotslor has given a grade A rating) since I didn't diddlymumflux the photograph. I'll do that this time, perhaps...maybe even a fancy cover, or something.

But I did learn that you no-good bums elected Tackett over me as Veep. What is it you have against Tackett, who seems a nice enough chap? I was prepared to suffer for my sins, and I don't know quite what to do with the reprieve.

I'll get even by publishing this issue. Why, I may even do mailing comments! I have a drawer-full of unread mailings, for that matter, and I sure don't want to move them all. If I do me's then I can put them in the fireplace, now that we once again have use for one, solving both the energy and pollution crises at one fell soot.

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This issue will be more informal than most, with items interspersed here and there. For instance, TABEBULIAN, from the Jenrette's. I still get a few fanzines from here and there, mostly in trade for TRF but occasionally from curiosity-seekers, and this item from a former OOPSLA! cover artist never fails to intrigue me. I don't know whether I am more fascinated by the name Mardee Sue or the fact that Mensa members seem not all that much unlike fans, albeit generally lacking the sense of humor except for this group. All in all an enjoyable publication, one which makes me feel special in a way I haven't felt since the Days of Dogler.

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Chauvenet, once again shadowing in DETOURS, offers some interesting speculations into the origin of "as independent as a hog on ice." This is a phrase common from my childhood (my father, I think) and I always interpreted it without thinking as an example of stupidity. I always pictured the hog with all four legs widely and rigidly braced and the slightest change of position would cause him to fall on his head. Which is what usually happens to independent people, anyhow.

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CLASSICS OF SCIENCE FICTION from Hyperion Press, presumably from Sam Moskowitz, is an interesting catalog. It almost makes me pull out my money and order, but I think that while I may buy some of SaM's reference works, I may settle in the aim of economy for rereading my back issues of FAMOUS FANTASTIC MYSTERIES and FANTASTIC NOVELS. Although (I have heard) often edited into much smaller novels, those were two mighty fine magazines and many of Hyperion's items appeared there. In fact, they would do well to research those magazines for future book selections.

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Of MOTAs I have several, and I hope Terry Hughes will accept this insignificant bit of egoboo as sufficient reason to send me more. I appreciate Terry Hughes, not the least for the occasional loc's he has sent me, all too few in these cold elder days of my fandom. Anyhow, MOTa is still one of the better faaanish fanzines, with a strong flavour of QUANDRY, and I enjoy it very much. That do it, Terry?

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There is a whole stack of things in this drawer. Most of them are (I think) FAPA mailings, but I intend to just ramble upon things as I come to them. Next, in no discernible order, is THE FANTASY MATEUR for the November mailing. I see that Redd is 180 degrees from my stand on franking, and I must admit that I never thought I would play the liberal to his conservative! It just goes to show. :::: After that, noting that Boggs was OE for four mailings (was it more, Sharlie?) through #64 and now back with #153 leads me to wonder idly if that means I will return with #241? Somehow that stretches over my sense of wonder. :::: I must admit to being awed by Redd's orderly mind. Putting things in the bundle in the order received is a larger chore than you might think if you haven't been the OE before. Personally, I always listed the bundle in the order of the members present helping put the mailing together. Thus the FA was first, TRF was second, and all was as well with the world as it was likely to get. :::: Hell, I don't see why FAPA contributions should be limited to English...Speer would probably claim that many of them have not been written in English for years, anyhow. For that matter, it seems I remember an item several years ago which was in...well, not what I could read, anyhow. No, I vote for submitting it in whatever language you like. It's just that if you want mailing comments you have to take certain things into consideration. :::: The S/T report is very neatly done. I wish I'd done things like that. :::: DAG dropped? I protest. (I did, too. DAG may appear here this very mailing!) Now where in Phowie Lyons?

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A bunch of BINGSUND stuff is next listed in a slightly confused chronological order, but you know how the mails are these days. (In fact, there are so many hippies and flower children in the USPO Dept these days that we have gone back to peony express.) At any rate, John, if I haven't said so before, I love your typeface. (Well, maybe not love, exactly, but at least it's a strong physical attraction.) :::: Your title reminds me to ask if you ever heard of the legend of the giant that cooked drarvos in wine before he ate the mulled stunts. :::: Dwarfs? :::: If anyone else but John is still reading this far, be warned that tonight I am not looking up anything in the dictionary/files/musty tomos. What you got is what you see. :::: You know, I remember SFR! Unlike you, however, I have always been the rambling fap. However I change, it always fits. :::: Well, Walnut Creek is near San Francisco according to your terms of reference. I mean, even with public transportation I see The City less than once a month, on average. If I had to walk the distance, I might never see it again. This relativity reminds me of the time I was working in La Habra, a suburb of Los Angeles, and a co-worker drove his wife to LA International airport to fly to her home in El Paso, Texas. The drive is 30 or 40 miles, in heavy traffic. After seeing her off he drove back to work and walked into our office and sat down at his desk. Glancing at his watch he observed that his wife was due to land in El Paso in 5 or 10 minutes... which only goes to show that El Paso is as close to Los Angeles as is La Habra. Or something. :::: I don't know about Walt Kelly, but Pogo said "we have met the enemy and he is us." Kelly may have been the motivating force, but somehow I have

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always regarded the individual characters as just that, individuals. To regard El Pogo in the same light as Churchy seems absurd, therefore I cannot regard both of them as Walt Kelly. Sorry about that. Anyhow, as I remember it they met the enemy. A fine point, perhaps, but important if military hardware is in the air...
:::: In regard to all of this, yet nothing in particular: you are one of my favorite FAPA people, John. (Or is it Jack?) :::: You need some of our socialized housing services. For instance, FHA is a government project which would allow you to buy a \$45,000 house for \$3750 down payment. Even converting to L\$ that isn't bad. Your L\$30,000 would be available for L\$2500 to you, which would buy a 3 bedroom home in Canberra, which is at least a start. :::: Not to worry...Jack Speer always takes things too seriously. And too literally. :::: Geez...PG 31 has a HUGE typofacet I hate it! (Well, how about a strong physical dislike?) :::: And now, several pages later, I find that the small face IBM is Gone For Good (even though a peek ahead in time finds it used in PG 32)...oh, sheesh! If clarot did that to the IBM, think of what it must be doing to your insides. Oh, you did. :::: Oh, Jeez... now you decide you are not satisfied with the Optima. This cutting mc's on stencil has some severe drawbacks, doesn't it? Where the hell are you now, Bangsund? :::: Egad, another typeface. I give up.

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I'm glad the cover of PHILISTINE QUARTERLY #7 didn't come along when I was OE. In the old days the OE used to have to watch for this sort of thing, as even such innocent items as Rotsler wimmen used to be suspect. Now, I guess, anything goes.

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Milt Stevens gives me MINIMUM OPUS in which he comments on my wine and quinine H2O and I must admit that I haven't drawn as much fire with that revolution as I had expected. All I can say is, like scotch and milk, is is much better when drunk than when digested. I mean, it's better to drink it than think about it. Not that I am a coin o'sewer of wine, as the Irish say...my vin ordinaire is Red Mountain Burgundy at \$2.99 per gallon, vintage last week. Damn good, I say, in the times when I can still verbalize. HOWsomever, I have to agree with you on Smirnoff and root beer. Elik is undoubtedly spinning in his grave. :::: I have never been a big fan of Asimov's fiction, but thought I was the only one. As a natural philosopher, however, he is second to none. :::: Celebacy?

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Speer on SYNAPSE. Your comments, Jack, that you'd like to hear arguments that FTL is possible reminds me that you are a jurist rather than a physicist. I can't remember whether it is insane or psychotic or whatever it is that has no "legal" definition, even though the rest of the world muddles around with the terms at great length, but you might say the same with respect to physics in that the term "impossible" similarly has no definition. In fact, when you get stuck you refer to difficult concepts as "undefined" and let it go at that. The rules of physics (some starry-eyed PhD card-holders refer to them as laws) are constantly being reviewed, and this year's impossibility is next year's red face. FTL travel is "impossible" because the rules as identified currently seem to indicate that it won't work without breaking one of them. If you choose to think that ends all argument on the subject, you are stuck with the laws of precedent. (Now there is one of the more ridiculous concepts in law, seemingly saying that while at one time there may have been a first time for everything, there certainly isn't room for anything new since before the first time for everything happened. Of the laws of man and the laws of physics, at least the latter change when the evidence demands, without a bunch of artificial support. :::: Regarding the former, I am much amused by a

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recent newspaper article in which a proponent for gun law legislation bitterly denounced the fact that although he didn't manage to get any support for his wonderful lawmaking he was confident that the public would rise up and demand his vindication! It never ceases to amaze and amuse me that the gun law advocates can fail with such astonishing regularity and still proclaim the vast majority of their support! When the NRA is pointed out as the lobby frustrating this tremendous ground swell of public opinion, as a former NRA member I have to sit back in awe of the fabulous power I used to (and presumably still must) bash around. The truth is that the public doesn't really want any more laws than it already has and they'd be damned well satisfied if the courts would just do the job they've been selected and given the mandate to do. But let's not get started on this, or I'll get serious. In our world, that is not a course to be taken lightly. The day I will really be taken aback is that day I play the liberal to your conservative! Still, we come dangerously close when you do as you did on page 12 and call me a nitpicker!

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Among the debris of the drawer is HITCHHIKE 25, a fanzine by one of the consistently more interesting people in fandom, John Berry. (Although our personal relationship has been quite limited, John remains for me one of the more impressive fans in my memories of fandom, and his writings do nothing but enhance the image. This issue has an interesting exchange between Berry and Boggs, and although I often find myself at lance-points with Boggs, his letter is another solid testimony to his solid craft as a writer. The man, as a writer, is fabulous, whatever you think of his arguments or politics. Nice issue, John.

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Ency in OH, BLOODY HELL! recounts the trials of the recent election, and of course we are all familiar with the recent protest of Tackett resulting in (I understand verbally from Boggs as of this date) his election as Voop. Among the things I find most amusing in all this are the fact that I have never seen substantiation from Evans that Tackett did indeed file and that he forgot to list his name, instead accepting the protest at face value, and also the fact that among the voters listed by Ency, my name does not appear even though I was the first person to vote, since I mailed my ballot the day the mailing went out (whatever day that was). Should I have protested this and won the election 16 to 15? I don't figure it matters much, one way or another. The other thing that amuses me about the whole thing is Roy Tackett's apparent complete misunderstanding of Ency's description of the "Australian ballot." Well, Dick, I appreciated the pun!

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Patrick Hayden in THANGORODRIM bounces into my mailbox with almost a fanzine out of the past. It seems that he has recently picked up some years-old FAP mailings and as an outsider decided that TRF was "...the most palatable, well-crafted, well-stirred apa-zine" that he had seen. Not only did I appreciate the egoboo, but I wanted to make sure that the rest of you didn't miss it, either. Besides that, this is an interesting fanzine, reminding me somewhat of days long ago.

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FROM SUNDAY TO SATURDAY is Don Fitch time, although I suspect it doesn't work out quite that way. But your description of me as a Scorpio, or vice versa, is quite close. I've never been able to reconcile how easily I can be persuaded with my quiet but firm resistance to pressure, but you've hit the nail on the head there.

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You can talk me into almost anything, but I don't react to force very well, even when I seem to knuckle under to it. Or maybe especially. :::: As for Burbee, as I know the man he retires from the world of alcohol one month out of twelve, just to prove he can do it. He always picks February as the month, for obvious reasons, although the extra day therein this year must have sorely tried his patience.

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Chuck Hansen in DAMBALLA 29 is talking about the FAPA mailing in which the elections were uncontested and so I didn't bother to mail out ballots. Chuck thinks that as a practical thing to do, that weren't too smart (well, actually he says idiotic) but I confess that I still don't feel badly about the whole thing. An uncontested election for all four offices is not worth worrying about. Chuck nevertheless worries about the possibilities of skullduggery, and all I can say is that I find it difficult to imagine anyone expending the energy required for skullduggery in an election where the other 64 people can't find enough energy to find time to file for office. Besides, I don't think the constitution requires the OE to provide ballots, although as I said earlier I am not prepared to look the matter up. And what, pray tell, would happen, anyhow, if a dictator did decide to take over the FAPA? Several old members would pass away from the shock of actually having something happen, but inasmuch as it would probably take several years to notice that they were gone, the effects of even so radical an operation would hardly cause a ripple.

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I learned with interest but not much surprise in CELEPHAIS that the caloric values of foods are in the most part based on works done around the turn of the century. I might have guessed. And, I suspect, the analytical process went something like this. Take a subject, weigh him. Feed him nothing but salted peanuts for two weeks, and weigh him again. Divide by the number of peanuts. Holl, the more I think of it, the more sure I am they did it this way. And what, per Adelle Davis, about the changes in food composition from nineteen-ought-ought to the present? :::: I still remember with awe the physics lab experiment in which I verified the charge on an electron as classically determined by Millikan. For the uninitiated, you squeeze a spray of oil droplets, which are thereby charged, and let them fall between the two electrically charged plates of a condenser, meanwhile observing all of the exciting details through a microscope placed between the plates. With all of the oil sprayed and whatever, my condenser plates got shorted through to my microscope eyepiece, and when I bent forth to look I got more of a shock than was originally called for by Mr Millikan. Electrons are charged, I can testify to that! :::: Hoy, another fan who remembers the elevator service at Chicon III! It was something to remember, all right, but my favorite memory is of the time GM Carr got her head caught in the elevator doors! It wasn't funny for her, of course, but it got a lot of laughs, just the same. :::: Your comments that after age 40 weight goes on easier and comes off harder is nothing different than what I have experienced since age 18, which is about when this all began. :::: My favorite Nevada slot machine is one which hums. You put in your quarter and it plays blackjack against you. You push a button to be hit and another one to stay, and the hand is played as it would be at a table. I like it except for the fact that I feel the deck is stacked against me, and ties pay off to the house.

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Ah, Helen Wesson, did I really say that about "a luscious Mexican wench named Marta"? No wonder she hates me.

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Walter Breen thanks God that "land sharks can't get 18% on mortgages thanks to federal and state laws" but as far as I know there ain't no such animal. The 10% usury laws only applies to poor individuals such as us'uns, Walter, not big business. Ol' Home Savings & Loan can go on up and up, and I've seen regular home mortgage rates up to 11% in my day, short as it is. It's all based on the general demand for money and the money supply, and if supply and demand force the home mortgage rate to 18%, I don't know of a federal or state law to protect us. :::: Perhaps F.I.P.A. activity is what it is because the egoboo therein is insufficient to sustain life other than that in suspended animation.

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The canticle from Labowitz follows my theme...buying a house, heh? Lots of fun, no? I really dig it, myself, which is probably why I'm in the business. :::: As for how I can break into my flow of thought in order to correct an error, I offer two solutions: (1) I don't make errors; (2) the flow is so turgid that the time delay is not discernible. Pick one. :::: Ye Gods, so that's where Trokkies come from! :::: Charlotte is in the bathroom and I just read her your story about "the father, son, and the goalie host" (which is tremendous, by the way) and just about all she said is "where did you read that?" But I think she said it admiringly.

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Oh...hi there, Terry Jeeves! You still a member? I mean, you never pay your dues, or anything, and I just wondered.

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An apartment is really a terrible place to live...or so, Milt Stevens, I feel about it at this stage in my life. I guess I just have too strong a need for proprietorship. My last two experiences were the two months I spent in New Orleans (really bad!) and the 9 or 10 months here in Walnut Creek (not so bad, but not good, either). Actually, here with Charlotte is only a partial improvement, because in reality the house is entirely hers and I am a tenant. Because of limited closet space I have my clothes in the closet in the back bedroom, which doesn't really give me a sense of solidarity. Things are definitely improved since I've put my desk in the third bedroom and surrounded it with some of my books, etc, which gives me a specific place which is "mine" but even so... When our townhouse closes the end of this month, however, all that will change because it will definitely be half mine and half hers. Anything that has my name on it, I guess. Anyhow, what I started to say was that even if Charlotte and I hadn't happened to get together, I was still about to move out of that apartment and buy a small cottage or townhouse for myself, anyhow. In a sense, a townhouse isn't all that different physically from an apartment--but the feeling of ownership makes all the difference.

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I am interested in Roy Tackett's remarks to Silverbob that a number of climatologists have suggested that we are in for some rather severe and long winters. It just goes to show to what lengths nature will go to thwart my plans...I mean, I've disrupted that whole scheme. For instance: last summer was the first one I've had in which I lived in a house with a swimming pool. It got hot enough to really enjoy the pool for only a handful of days last summer. In fact, we regarded it as not really having a summer at all. This winter I joined a ski cabin, and guess what? We haven't had winter, so far, and it is mid-March as I type this. :::: I think I've spoken elsewhere in regards to the house Charlotte and I would like to build, but just in case

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I forgot, I wanted to tell you that we are tentatively planning on taking advantage of every government subsidy available for the utilization of solar power, and we are also considering a design which will allow for a built-in windmill without distorting the skyline. As you doubtless know, recent design in windmill technology has been staggering and they now have devices which work well regardless of wind direction, which means you no longer need the big swivel and tail. Watch this spot (concentrate)--I'll keep you posted.

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Getting deep into the pile, now, and hard to tell how old some of these mailings are getting to be. But you were always one of my favorite FAPs, Jim Caughran, and I was pleased to see this issue appropriate of nothing in particular, although I was taken aback to find you quite legible. At any rate, as you doubtless know by now, changing fields was one of the best things I have never done and even though it has caused some major upheavals in my personal life I still think I was damned lucky. At least I feel alive, where once I was daying if not dead. Now there's an interesting typo, so I won't rub it out. Dying day by day, I suppose my subconscious meant. I have also decided to let the typo in line 5, above, stand also...the best things I have never done. Did I mean never done before? Or did I mean that I did not really do it this time, that I always was and will be as I am and it's just that from time to time I am perceived differently? (By myself as well as others...)

:::: I still don't know about waterbeds and backs, my only experience with the former being unrelated to sleeping. Even on a firm mattress, however, I still get up in the morning feeling the worst I do all day. (Reminds me of the joke about the man who takes pity on people who don't drink...when they get up in the morning that's the best they are going to feel all day long!) :::: Nothing conflicts with our planetary homes...your planet further from the sun is the same as mine with a longer day--and year, for that matter. Like you, I see well in the dark (in fact, darkness really turns me on and I am Fascinated by the absolute darkness of caves, etc) and I am definitely not simpatico with our sun, being too warm most of the time and burning with great regularity regardless of previous exposure of a conditioning nature. :::: You've got me wondering if you did it on purpose. On page 4 you are commenting on TRF and on page 5 you say "Oops!a cont'd." The original word, as you probably don't know, was coined by my mother. I had just discovered sf and entered fandom and was enthralled to the point where I was ignoring my 16-year-old chores around the household. My mother did not swear, but one afternoon she found me in my bedroom, reading when I was supposed to be out shoveling the now quite deep snow off of the sidewalks, probably getting ready for the first issue of my then-untitled fanzine, and in anger and disgust she asked me if I was reading that...that...that OOPSLA! again! I never asked her how she spelled it, but the term obviously meant science fictional writings of dubious value and I adopted the name without further ado. That's why the title always had an l when correctly spelled. :::: As for keeping in shape, I belong to a local health club and try to get down there three or four times a week, usually unsuccessfully. Mostly I plan to play handball with my business partner, but he recently gave up the sport for a sissy game called racketball, calling handball a tedious sport but in truth it was because I beat him 4 out of 4 the last time we played. I have yet to beat him at racketball, mostly because he is a good tennis player at worst and I am a mediocre anything at best. My weight is currently 212--low for me--and I'm still aiming to get under 200 by the end of the month. I oscillate...or is that assalot?

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Another Jeeves item, which in a margin seems to say he finally got his \$7.80 dues credit. I am almost as amazed at that as the fact that Ken Slater is still around...

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The last stencil on hand, corflu all gone (you've noticed?)...will this be the last page this mailing? Stay watching this spot. . Well, since your attention has been distracted to this, all I wanted to say was that I really appreciated Terry Hughes' kind words. Thanks, Terry, quite a lot.

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As FAPans get older, I like to think they get more appreciative of Sam Moskowitz. In my younger days I used to fret over Sam, and there has from time to time been a battle or two designed to Cast Him Out, but in "A Canticle for P. Schuyler Miller" he once again reminds us why we need him in FAPA. I suppose the kicker about PSM being the actual inventor of "Planet of the Apes" is designed to be the shocker for us all, but I have to admit it left me in shambles. There ain't no justice; is about how it feels to me. I also remember that when I was a young fan, first becoming interested in science fiction, one of the books of the time that I always wanted--and never got--was GENUS HOMO.

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Sifting down to the bottom of the goodies now, I come to Effemanie Busby, a bisexual (let it stand) from Seattle, where the climate does funny things to people. Speer can tell me about their 80 cloudless days a year, which I don't believe, but please note he has fled to the desert before doing so. Anyhow, Buz, whyfore should I skip the intro, just becuz I'm an oldtimer? Lots of good things therein. For instance, when you say you used to be a digital-communications engineer, does that mean you used to talk in sign language through your fingers? Or that you repaired broken fingers misused by over-articulate talkers? :::: Items of interest are that Andy and Jean Young are still around. Funny how much impact some people have made upon our lives from time to time, and it's somehow reassuring to find that they are still alive and well after All These Years. And all the more so once you've become old enough to personally know some who aren't. :::: I'm not all that experienced a flier, but I've never been to a john on an airplane. Flights just aren't that long? Or maybe I just hold it in uncertain circumstances. :::: Hi, Elinor! Long time, no hear. Your cat cartoon on the last page is muchly appreciated. See you in July?

+ + +

I liked the offutt article, Mike Glicksohn, and I have to admit that the thing that has always grated me about the Gestalt Therapy Prayer is the last line, which I think is a gigantic cop-out. But as for offutt's last line, maybe he should go back to his basic Heinlein. RAH always characterized man as the roughest, toughest, meanest critter ever to be developed by the evolution of the universe, and as far as the evidence shows I have to think he's right. Howcum offutt and others keep being attacked? Man just basically isn't a nice, inoffensive critter, that's all. If you expected otherwise, you've had your head ~~ap/that/ass~~ in the sand.

+ + +

The bottom of this page arrives with about a dozen of the meatier articles from the past three mailings still untouched. I hope to get to them before May, but I won't promise. In this hasty overview of several mailings in 1975-76 I hope I have caught up on my mailing comments without slightly anon unduly (let that stand, too) and I plan to get back with a regular TRF in the future. Meanwhile, there still may be more following this page. Hold your breath, and watch this spot.

the rambling fap xii

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Times have changed somewhat since you ignored my admonition on the previous page to watch that spot. Since you are here, you may have noticed some changes. For one thing, I ran out of stencils and since my cheap supply is in San Francisco and I won't be going there for several weeks, I ran down to the local AEDick store and bought a quire of my old favorites, 1160's. Wow...\$5.20 a quire! Furthermore, since this typewriter doesn't cut a very good stencil, and never has, I decided to cut these stencils using the cushion sheet, something I do not do ordinarily. To the eye, these letters appear to be much more thoroughly cut and may make quite a difference in readability when mimeographed. And, last but not least, the change that you won't see, my new bottle of corflu. I haven't bought a bottle of the stuff since won't before I went into the Marine Corps, I don't think, at which time I was cutting stencils for a daily living and appropriated enough corflu to last me all the rest of my life...only now I've lived too long. The last bottle was ghastly... so thick it took a strong man to get the stopper out of the jug and so sticky that it not only filled in the letters to be corrected but left a corflu Mt Wilson on the stencil afterwards. This new stuff is so thin it looks like gasoline...and it smells great! I can hardly wait to use it for the first time.

Now if only I'd make a mistake...

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I am once more reminded about how far behind things are when Ted White talks about what happened to him in 1974, with spring 1976 only one day away. Sorry to hear about you and Robin, Ted, but I have to admit that I have come to pretty much the same conclusion that you have. Marriage isn't a state in which I survive well. I don't know exactly what it is, but my first wife once accused me (as she was leaving) of being so independent and complete within myself that I didn't really need her, and while I don't totally agree with that assessment, I have come to the point where I can see that she was right enough, as far as she went. Still, Charlotte and I have lived happily enough for a year and a half now...in every sense but the legal one, we're married. And society's pressures are still strong. It is sometimes awkward to introduce ourselves--people our age don't just "live together"--and next month when we move into Ridgeview and get into the thick of the social scene there I am sure we will cause some forehead damage due to wrinkling and excessive eyebrow motion. And getting a loan was a struggle. Additionally, had we been married we could have used my GI bill and paid around \$3000 down instead of the \$11,000 most lenders want and the \$5500 we still are trying to get. So, who knows. The legal complications of marriage are a pain, however...there just isn't a simple way to solve even an agreeable dissolution. I'm still married to Rea, technically, although we can pick up the final if we choose almost any time now. And it's still a tremendous mental burden, although if there weren't children to consider it would be greatly lessened. :::: Congratulations on your amazing success, I think it's been fantastic! And I'm still going to send you my first story Real Soon Now. Just as soon as I get the taste of "The Moon Garden" from COPS LA! #1 out of my mind. :::: What? Seductions at sfcons? Hmmm...come on, Westercon!

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the rambling fap xiii

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And if you think this isn't much in the way of comments, Bill, you are sooo right. This goes into the 'save' pile. In our new townhouse will be 2½ bathrooms and at least the ½ will be reserved for my reading room. At last I will be able to get caught up...

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the rambling fap xii

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the rambling fap xiv

ending seemed inconclusive; they felt robbed because I neglected to spell out everything for them. I suppose I shouldn't have expected them to think it through for themselves; science fiction fans aren't noted for literary competence and the ability to read between lines and flesh out unstated story inferences."

I can't believe you wrote that, Bob.

THE LEWD LUNG SILENCE, by Boob Tickler

Gil Gamush was an oddball by any of the standards of the 23rd century against which you wished to measure him. His preference for sexual intercourse via a hole in his chest, concerning which he steadfastly refused to speak, had already marked him as...

...

...staggered and fell, turning one last unconquered look towards the night city of Aaaargh before he triumphantly died.

-- The End of a 60,000 word novel by Boob Tickler, the bulk of which will, of course, be fleshed out by the average reader, except for the occasional science fiction fan who would be well advised to read the story of a similar title by Vargo Statten.

+ + +

Now we come to several BEST LINES ON THE FLOOR things. I am tickled to see my "official" FAPA duplicator honored in the title. :::: Gee, you learn something every day, dept. This is the first I knew there was a Chas Burbee variety one-shot and a Lee Jacobs variety. I guess the only one I knew was LeeJ, where there was one typewriter and all took turns. My only participation, at Busby's place in Seattle, was of this variety. Speaking of Lee Jacobs, I miss my old baseball and foot ball fan friend. Lee and I saw several Pro Bowls and many a Dodger game, including a playoff game or two, and he was a friend. I also miss Ron Ellik, although we weren't nearly as close by half...it just seems that in my mind I associate Burbee and Rotsler with LeeJ and Ellik, among others. Hey, Burb, remember all those poker games we used to play with dumb old Edith Ellik? Only we always lost? :::: This initial edition contains some interesting things, not the least old Chuckie Burbee's article on Walt Daugherty and Joquel and Forry Ackerman, but also including DAG's mention of my old thunderstorm in a glass of water, a la tempest in a teacup which I thought was terribly clever but I don't think over ten years anyone else even managed to notice. Not even when explained. At length. Several times. But DAG, of course, is unique. :::: Ed Cox, you are being humorous about whether or not to be clipped, but since the subject is becoming of great interest to me just now I have to admit that I read it all. If

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I have written of this earlier in this issue, please forgive me and skip the next few lines. Anyhow (for those of you still with me) the subject is rapidly coming up to #1 status in my mind. I've always had a superstitious attitude towards being "fixed" with the idea being that as soon as I did it, my children would suffer fatal accidents. Having had one child die that way, it isn't as silly as it sounds. But, trying to get all of the animal emotion out of it, what it boils down to now is that, at my age and economic status, it really isn't very likely that I would have additional children no matter what did or did not happen to my present family. It is probably correct to speculate that Charlotte and I will be together for some time into the indefinite future, and since she really does not want children of her own (or, at least, not "babies") that only pushes my decision further into the future. As a matter of fact, by any logical argument you wish to pursue, there really isn't any reason why I should not go down now and have a vasectomy.

Except, as you point out, the problem of persuading my balls to get into the car with me.

I am pleased to read Burb's Westercon speech, because now I have something to crib from for my own. I am very appreciative. Considering that I have been writing mine since 1974 and still do not have a line on paper, you can understand that I need the help. (Did Burbee make the subject Westercons solely because he could repring his speech?)
:::: The thing I wanted to say about the music issue, Burb, is that I promised Charlotte a meeting of the Hot Jazz Society while we were down over the Westercon this year. Would you take care of that, hmmm?

+ + +

Well, Harry Warner, I still miss my four seasons country, I have to admit. Even going skiing in the Sierras every weekend during the winter doesn't compensate, somehow, probably because two days of snow sandwiched between two weeks of California wintery sunshine doesn't seem like winter is really happening. I really liked Salt Lake City --you might consider that, as the winters tend to be mild and sunny and the icy sidewalks don't last longer than a day. Or, if you can't take the Mormons, Flagstaff or Albuquerque. :::: It's almost a relief to hear Harry's fanac will slack to merely twice normal levels, even though I have a strong interest in the second volume of his history of fandom. I don't believe I've ever encountered such a long-lived pessimist as you, Harry, and I am amused/dismayed at your note in the first of the four issues of HORIZONS at hand that you predict the disappearance of a "clearly dying" FAPA by the end of 1975. You, of course, are one of the true individuals in fandom over the years, so I suppose it is not too surprising that you see life only in the ways it directly affects you but it is sometimes a little unsettling for the rest of us. Do you recall the sf story of a number of years

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ago in which it turned out that the entire world was created solely for the benefit of the protagonist and that when he died there would be no need for the creation to continue? Sometimes you give me the feeling that FAPA will die when you perceive it as dead, but then I shake myself all over and get my thoughts back on track again...when it comes right down to it, I am the protagonist! :::: I think I've said it before, Harry, but your reprinting of Martin's material has not served to show the perpetrators of Martin's blackball that they were wrong but, rather, that they were justified. :::: One gets compliments for the funniest reasons. I always read while otherwise employing the toilet facilities, since I bore easily when my mental engine is running on idle, but I have never considered the practice notable. Recently, however, in describing to a friend how lazy I was getting, Charlotte sprang to my defence, citing as an example of my refusal to waste even a moment's time the way I read in the head. I never thought of it that way...but I sometimes read a few paragraphs even when I am vertical. You've got to hold your own in this world, you know. I have to admit to your notice of the fact that the reading material is often misunderstood...at Standard Oil, for instance, they used to misinterpret the newspaper for the trip to the john, rather than vice versa. :::: HORIZONS got shoved out of its last place status by Koch only because of last minute necessity. I didn't like it, but... I always listed you last because I felt HORIZONS was the solid base upon which to build a mailing. :::: Sorry, but in my own book of records, a .29999 hitter just doesn't qualify as a .300 ball-player, even though I understand the rationale of your mathematics. And 199 ribbies isn't 200 rbi's, either. (Arent...sorry, Jack Speer.) :::: Your analogy was in the right direction but misses in intensity. Instead of a frayed spot on a sheet compare it to a frayed spot on an IV tube. :::: This HORIZONS is from a younger mailing, and I see your egocentric view of FAPA still has you seriously considering it "better" to close up FAPA rather than let the organization perish (if in fact it will) in any manner unsuitable to you. If you cannot understand the "inaction during recent crises and power ploys" perhaps you should take a giant step backwards and consider that perhaps other people do not feel, as you apparently do, that a late mailing is a real "crisis" or that Boggs' whimsical settling of an electoral situation is a "power ploy." Fandom may indeed be a way of life for us, Harry, but it is not life itself and perhaps it should not be taken too seriously. :::: I think a source of your disenchantment with FAPA may be rooted in your subconscious awareness of the fact that as the end of your term on earth approaches, however important the event may be to you (or to each of us when it happens) the world will take but short notice and still go spinning merrily upon its way. Not as well as it did in our day, of course! You have been a member of FAPA for so long that it is impossible for you to conceive of the organization operating without you, hence your desire to shut it down, make it quit before you do. Naturally you, as a moral person, would not wish this if the organization were still healthy and flourishing, so you have to see it as view it as a perishing and unhealthy thing,

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best put out of its misery "for its own good." Even though you admit to the knowledge that "no matter how loudly members trumpet their delight in FAPA" you still profess this is a desirable thing. The sad fact is, Harry, that one of these days you--and I--will pass away and FAPA will continue and there will even be "the best mailing in all of FAPA's history" even though neither one of us is present. :::: If you have a fear of cremation, as you mention, think of how you are going to feel if they perform an autopsy. You had better hope that you die in very routine circumstances. Personally, I opt for cremation...I never liked the idea of them pumping out all of my blood and pumping in all that embalming fluid! (Actually I'd prefer to drop in my tracks in the mountains about 50 years from now and my body never be found.) :::: One of the few concessions I make to my advancing age is the time it now takes me to heal, versus what it used to take. The arm injury suffered during my first ski trip is still painful in a minor way. As a youth, a broken arm would have been healed by now. The other concession is my need for sleep. As a college student I missed about one full night a week without ill effects; now if I miss a major portion of one night's sleep I am out of sorts for more than a week. However, I hear this is only temporary that that you really Old Pharts need hardly any sleep at all, 'tis true? :::: On the tother hand, Harry, you may be right about the apathy of present FAPA members...today is March 23rd and I haven't yet received the February FAPA mailing from Berkeley and I'm only beginning to wonder if I am not supposed to Do Something. How late can a blitzkrieg begin and still qualify? Redd, where are you? :::: The latest "Worst of Martin" only reinforces my viewpoint.

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Unless Burbee and Grennell appear out of nowhere, the next stencil is an even number and time to stop for this issue. I won't have any ink until my trip into The City on April 1st for a meeting (I won't go into that one) and since I'm moving to Ridgeview the weekend immediately following, who knows when these stencils will be mimeographed? Hopefully in time for the May mailing.

+ + +

My next project is my Westercon speech, now that Burbee has shown me how long one should be and what it should be like. Much the same as Burb, I haven't been much of a convention goer for many years and I really haven't much idea of what or how much I'm supposed to say. Oh, well, I have a topic I have been rehashing during sleepless nights (on the occasions when they occur, that is) for the past year or two and I should be able to bash that into shape.

Most of you in FAPA will recognize it.

Is fandom a way of life, or just a goddamned hobby?

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It is now late April and this is the first stencil from the new address, which is...

* * * 431 Ridgeview Drive, Pleasant Hill, California 94523 * * *

We are in, if not settled, and our escrow is even closed! It weren't easy, neither. Found our 90% loan right at the last minute and then went through several delays and finally closed two weeks late but what the hell. So I have a few more grey hairs, at last I know where my pillow is to rest them upon.

The loft is about 75% finished. The main structure is completed, and I just tonight finished designing the stairs into the main house. I will cut that wall out tomorrow night and finish the stairs. After that I have to sheetrock, build bookshelves, carpet, and put in the skylights. As soon as the stairs are finished, though, I'll move my desk up there. Right now I am operating out of the garage...shades of my first fannish days in Salt Lake City! Only there my fingers used to become too numb to type, it was so cold! My goal now is to get this in the May mailing somehow.

Oh, yes...guess what? As I was re-routing some vent pipes in order to cut the doorway, I happened to look through a small hole into the closed off area over the kitchen.

Gee, I think that area could be made into a nice loft.

+ + +

Eighteen pages so far? I'll hate myself when it comes time to do the mimeographing. Speaking of which, the February mailing just dropped in and I see that my picture which Redd was kind enough to run off for me just didn't make it at all. I'll try again next mailing. As for Redd, I'm sure sorry that circumstances have laid him low as far as being OE is concerned...I understand the problem. Transferring things to Perdue is okay by me, but I wonder what the more militant interpreters of the Constitution will say?

+ + +

Rosemary Hickey has an interesting line in COGNATE to the effect that "have you ever considered the possibility that a very fast typewriter is recording what you're thinking before you can recognize the words in your head?" I know you meant that as a funny, but actually I have the opposite trouble so badly that it is almost a handicap. I mean, I just won't write anything by hand. My thinking is geared to my typing speed (well, more or less) and if I try to write by hand my mind is so far ahead of my pen that I become bored trying to write

the rambling fap xix

all of the "old" stuff down and I quit after a few paragraphs. If I don't have a typewriter handy, I just don't write anything.

+ + +

A line or two for Bill Evans, mostly to say that our abbreviated version of "My Fair Agent" was a big success and we are planning on putting on a full-scale effort later this fall. I've got some writing to do between now and then, of course... Where is Lowe now that I need him? :::: Chemistry was always one of the subjects I did not understand and therefore detested. Organic chemistry double so. How all of those C's and H's and O's can make all of those similar yet oh so dissimilar things still astonishes me. :::: The tiny amount of reading I have done on wind and solar power seems to indicate that, yes, there is sufficient energy available for cooking, etc. And, of course, the local electric company is always available for occasional odd days.

+ + +

"The Best Loins Are On The Floor" indeed! This is getting out of hand. Presumably it will all stop when Burb becomes a member. Burb, I have to admit I enjoyed the Laney article very much. Do you know that I have yet to read ASI (as I call it)? What do I do now? I also have not bought the first volume of Warner's history of fandom, but I have placed an order for it this week.

So, okay, so I'm no great shakes as a time-binder. But I remember Bob Silverberg when he was just a kid.

+ + +

What, another 520 by Elmer? Can it be another year already? Still one of the finest things the 365 days produce, at any rate. The photo of Ouray was worth the price of admission. That is one of my very favorite towns and, for once, the picture does it justice. Kris remarks that it looks like a town built in the Swiss Alps by American prospectors et al but doesn't say that the town bills itself as being in the Alps of America, or some such, which it does. It is really a spectacular place, and I'd like to see it again this summer.

I haven't been back to Utah in several years, now, and it's about time for a camping vacation. Charlotte hasn't seen any of this part of the United States except for the south rim of Grand Canyon, and since I regard the four corners area of the US as home, I think I'll take her there this summer. Maybe as far east as Ouray, for that matter. The burning question now is whether just the two of us will go in an uncomplicated fashion, or whether I should take my two young children with us, both of whom would enjoy the trip and for whom I feel such adventure is a necessary part of growing up and learning to

the rambling fap xx

appreciate the country. At this moment, I haven't the foggiest how it will all be decided, although I suspect extraneous matters will have a large influence. So I'm not planning, just now. Deliberately.

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Once again I finish out a mailing with Harry Warner, my favorite for the last spot because he is consistently the best. Aren't you one of those people who always save the best for last? Fie on you, sir!

Sometimes it really frustrates me to have everything packed up in all of those godknowswhere boxes. What do you mean the 1974 election was not valid? Who ran in 1974? I forget. Anyhow, now what do we do, have you publish a separate Fantasy Amateur the way it would have been if the proper officers had been elected, a la your Martin material? No, really, my actual question about what do we do now is because I want to know how you feel we should go about rectifying an electoral mistake? Do we accept the first valid election following; or, does the invalid election ruin life on earth forever, and before we can become pure again we have to go back to the starting line again (do not pass GO; do not collect \$200) and hold all of the interim elections in order to Get It Straight? I mean, if an invalid 1974 election just ruins all future elections, we might as well give up, because there ain't no way we is going to get that 1974 baby re-run, nohow, nosir. FAPA might as well pack it in. But, then, you've been crying doom for any number of years now, haven't you, Harry? Well, maybe one of these days you'll be right.

Don't feel badly about forgetting when the OE changes, Harry. I had been OE for so long that I really didn't think much about it, and it sometimes takes me by surprise to realize that many fans have come and gone while I was OE and just didn't know anyone else. Why, two mailings after I left I still got letters inquiring about FAPA material, and since we have been in our new place I got a long distance telephone call about the February bundle, although admittedly this caller knew Boggs was OE, just not how to reach him.

My God, can you be only 12 years older than I am? Talk about regaining one's sense of wonder...

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Twenty pages, that's not too many. Now to find time to run them off during the next week or two and I will be well satisfied. Just one more weekend of skiing to go and that will be done. I have to report that I am turning into a really enthusiastic skier and--if I do say so myself--I'm getting pretty good. Considering that I can't even walk and chew gum simultaneously, that's an accomplishment.

So is this STARFLAME PUBLICATION.

