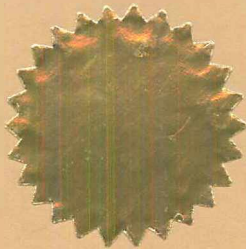


# SERENADE

is produced for The  
Spectator Amateur  
Press Society by  
Richard Bergeron at  
110 Bank Street, New  
York City 14, New  
York... This issue  
will appear in the  
53 SAPS mlg.. This  
is issue number one  
and is dated Oct 60

# SERENADE





# DO WE NEED AN O.D. BALLOT BOX? by Art Rapp

"I've been wondering," a correspondent of mine said in a recent letter, "Do soldiers vote?"

Wincing slightly at this indirect evidence that the Army's public-relations people haven't been getting their information about Life in the Armed Forces to all civilians, I hastened to reply to the query.

"I regret to say the answer is 'no'," I told him. "On the other hand, if you had asked 'Are soldiers eligible to vote?' the answer would be emphatically yes."

The Army (and other services as well) expends a great deal of time, money, and paper every year to advise each member of its forces that being in service does not cancel his right as a U.S. citizen to participate in local, state and federal elections. Every company or battery in the Army has one of its officers designated as Voting Officer, whose duty it is to render assistance and provide information to any soldier wishing to exercise his right to vote.

'Twas not always so. In fact, if memory fails me not, the first time that efforts were made to give the men in the armed services an opportunity to vote was during the Presidential election of 1864, when Abraham Lincoln, running for reelection, ordered that the armed forces be allowed to cast ballots. Apparently these votes were tabulated separately from those of the civilian population, for the history adds that the armed forces voted overwhelmingly in favor of Gen George McClellan, Lincoln's Democratic opponent.

This no doubt had quite a bit to do with causing the soldier-voting system to be set up as it is today.

The principle is quite simple: a soldier votes, not as a resident of wherever he happens to be stationed, but at his legal residence. Normally, this is the location at which he was residing before entering the Army, or in some cases the location as which he owns property or a business enterprise.

The catch is, since each State has its own laws governing registration of voters and casting of ballots, the army can't set forth any clear and simple instructions to its men on how to go about voting. The best they can do is gather and pass on to the Voting Officers information furnished by each of the fifty States about when its elections are to be held, how to apply for an absentee ballot, and so on.

Though all States permit absentee voting, a few do not allow absentee registration -- which effectively disfranchises any of its residents who neglected to register prior to entering service, or those who were too young to vote when they entered service, but have since passed the minimum age.

In any case, there is so much red tape, mailing of forms back and forth, and general confusion connected with casting an absentee ballot, that only a small percentage of the men in the armed forces bother even to try. If they are not career servicemen, they usually reason that they'll have plenty of opportunities to vote in future elections after they get out. And to those who are making a career of it, their semi-permanent separation from their home states destroys much of their concern over who is getting elected in a local or State government. They are interested in the outcome of national elections (particularly if the candidates have expressed varying viewpoints on national defense policies), but seldom enough so to bother voting.

Well, that's the situation. Soldiers can vote, but only with quite a bit more effort than is required from the average civilian who chooses to exercise his franchise. Could the set up be improved?

The most obvious alternative is to allow soldiers to vote as residents of their duty station. But if you were, for example, Congressman from a southern state which was already deeply divided over school integration, would you be inclined to permit several thousand Yankee soldiers to participate as voters in your state elections?

How about having the armed forces vote (in Federal elections only, of course) as a sort of 51st State, tabulating its ballots separately from those of the civilian voters? This would be a simple and workable method -- but would be utterly unacceptable to the Army itself, for it would destroy the traditional separation of the armed forces from civilian politics, with consequences far worse than the disadvantages of the present voting system.

The founders of this country were much concerned to ensure that the armed forces should never become a personal force used by the head of the nation (even though he is Commander-in-Chief). There are many legal provisions on this subject, including the one under which a recruit's oath of induction commits him to support, not the President or Congress, but the Constitution.

Well, I'm sure there are many ingenious minds among the readers of this article. How would YOU make it simpler for a soldier to vote, while at the same time not infringing on the sovereign rights of the States, nor turning the armed forces into a political football?

(Note: All views and opinions I've expressed in the foregoing are my own, not necessarily those of the Army or any other organization. Far as I am aware, the Army is perfectly satisfied with the present voting system.) -- Art Rapp

## MOST SUBTLE HUMOR OF THE MONTH

The following is a verbatim quote from the transcript of President Eisenhower's news conference of August 17 as reported in The New York Times on the following day. Of course, it is stripped of the color of personal delivery and, unless the text contains some intrinsic wit which escapes me, some explanation or speculation of what vaudeville accompanied it is perhaps necessary for total enjoyment. Nevertheless, always on the lookout for the diverting in the news, I present:

"Lambert Brose of the Lutheran Layman: 'Mr President, there has been some criticism in the press of the hopeful signs you gave of our economy at last week's news conference. And Newsweek magazine has taken some of the Government statistics you quoted and shows that, according to Newsweek, that they are not so favorable. May I quote several of them to you?'

"A: 'It's all right with me.' (Laughter)

"Q: 'You said last week: 'Retail sales continue to go up at a record,' and Newsweek says, 'total retail sales dropped during July to 18.3 billion (dollars), lowest level in the three months. It is no higher than it was a year ago, despite rising population and rising prices.'

"And then you said last week: 'Right now, they are building houses at a rate of one and three-tenths million, which is, I think with one exception, as high as we have

ever been.' Newsweek says: 'Home builders are in fact having their worst year with one exception, since 1954.'

"And one more -- (laughter) -- I just want to mention. You stated: 'Employment is almost sixty-nine million, another record.' Newsweek says: 'Unemployment, which the President didn't mention, is over four million, a high 5.4 percent of the labor force.'

"My question is: Do you think -- (laughter) -- the public may have received a slightly more favorable outlook of the economy at last week's press conference than really is justified?

"A: Allowing for the possibility that any man can always misspeak himself a little bit, I don't admit that I made any error. But I will tell you. You are talking now about a quarrel between Newsweek and the Council of Economic Advisers, and I ask you to go and meet them, and see what they have to say about. (Laughter)"

## ORTHOPTERA by Rudy DeZan

It was about ten after one. The air was damp. All was silent. The moon trickled its silvery light through the venetian blinds onto the wooden cupboard, to shimmer on the gas range surface nearby and to glimmer on the marble sink opposite the range. The pallid rays fell on the wall and highlighted long tapering horns that parried up, then down. The hair-like things, which protruded from a small crack a little distance from the cupboard, were whisking the air, the wall, and the area around them, feeling it as one feels the water before going in for a swim. Then the horns inched forward.

The crack revealed them to be connected to dark small heads joined to long sleek bodies maneuvered by numerous legs rapidly crawling down the wall. On reaching the floor, the slim creatures scattered in all directions. The opening gave forth more dark forms of various sizes: fat ones, short ones, tiny ones. All swung their antennae vigorously. Some climbed into the garbage pail. Others, more refined, roamed the top of the cupboard in quest of cleaner particles. Those more daring scaled the gas range for cooked remnants. A few went still farther, to the sink, to loll in the humid marble; wet with water drops.

A long slim creature stationed itself at the opening of the kitchen to guard the supping brood. The long slim ones were the elite of the tribe. Besides being the biggest, their long tapering horns, and their ovular-streamlined bodies covered with smooth, armour-like skin made them the speediest of the group. They could outdistance any possible attackers, and were able to get to food long before the smaller ones did. Being slow, the small insects, when searching for food, had to remain in the vicinity of the hole. However, some, tired of being outrun for choice comestibles, would wander to distant areas, like the china closet above the sink. They would return to the hole raving of new finds like sugar granules, and they would advise that colonies be started at new cracks that they had discovered. One boasted of having reached the bathroom, a place so far that its existence was considered legend. Another recounted how it outwitted a menacing human. Since most of them had built up their immunity to DDT, the human would usually push them to the floor and step on them. This insect, however, had escaped by standing absolutely still on a floor pattern, appearing thus camouflaged, instead of running as most did. This tiny one believed that if an insect fell on its back, it was best that it play dead until danger passed. Were it really necessary to run, it was best to do so in a zig-zag fashion, never in a straight line.

When threatened, the tiny species were capable of hiding in crannys or tiny kitchen utensils to which no bigger insect would have given a second thought.

The slim guard grew restless. He was certain that like other nights when he had been on duty, no one would enter the kitchen. He was hungry. He felt he could leave his post momentarily to get a crumb. He decided on something cooked. He rushed to the top of the stove. He spied a large particle being nudged by tiny brethren in the middle of a gas jet. Instantly, and to the annoyance of the others, he began devouring the meat.

Click! The light opened. It was blinding. Stupefied, they stood rigidly still, their horns dangling in the air. A heavy hand pushed some of the bewildered things from the cupboard top to the floor. Black slippers crushed them. Others escaped behind the white stove; some ran under the tan cupboard. The gas jets opened and hissed loudly. The long insect running from his meat, was pummeled back to the jet and embraced by scorching blue flames that sizzled its skin; causing its heart to break.

Dashing to the sink the man opened a silver faucet and the lollers floated past a golden drain. More creatures rushed frantically on the wall. They felt the air pressure change as the fingers struck. The floor came up fast. Dizzy from the impact, they uttered a pleading squeal as a gigantic foot interrupted the wail and left grey lymph, twisted horns and smashed legs hugging the floor. A spot, twinkling, crossed the floor, confused, and felt its brown back broken. Another ran.. Another dies. Still others hid.

The man stopped. While catching his breath, he scanned the room. Again, he looked up, then down. Nothing moved. The dead lay still. He, then washed his hands thoroughly. He drank a glass of water. He shut the light and went to bed.

The silent kitchen like a dark tomb welcomed the solemn light of a watchful moon. A soft ray caressed a tiny creature standing very still on a dark floor pattern. Its tiny horns shook a bit... soon more vividly. Its tiny legs moved. Quickly, it went to the wall, scampered up the cool surface and after a good while paused before the crack. It rested a few seconds; then ran in. -- Rudy DeZan

## BOILER PLATE

Here is a complete news item from the August 22nd issue of The Star: "SPECIAL SCREENING A special screening of the new Jack H Harris Production, "Dinosaurus," will be held at the Universal-International projection room tonight for writers, artists, editors and actors in the science fiction and fantasy fields. Among those attending will be members of representatives of The Hydra Club, The World Science Fiction Society, Eastern Science Fiction Association, New York Science Fiction Society, and" Obviously the writer was struck down in mid-sentence :: Brendan Behan, playwright: "Like all Irishmen I suffer from agro-phobia -- fear of agriculture. In England farming is a hobby or an affection. In Ireland it is a tragic experience." :: Joby Baker, Columbia contract player, has been sent for a top comedy role in "Gidget Goes Hawaiian," Jerry Bresler Production for Columbia release. :: From "Information about the Bahamas": "The Indians Columbus encountered in the Bahamas belonged to the so-called Taino culture of the Arawak language group. Their ancestors had come to the Bahamas from the mainland of South America, known as the Siboney. They were, Columbus reported, gentle, handsome and hospitable. Within a few decades these happy inhabitants had been wrenched from their homeland to labour in the Spanish mines and sugar mills, and in a tragically short time they were extinct and the Bahamas depopulated." :: Sea Floor, Bahamas -- world's first undersea post office opened in the Williamson Photosphere (August 16, 1939).



