

# WOODEN NICKEL

WOODEN NICKEL Volume 1 Number 13 Whole Number 13 is written and produced by Arnie Katz (59 Livingston St., Apt. 6B, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201) for fifty people of rare and discriminating taste. If you would like to continue to count yourself among this circle, remember the old adage, "the way to a faned's heart is through his mailbox." I'm not saying that you must immediately sit down and write me a wryly humorous and insightful letter of comment, but it wouldn't hurt. Publication date is September 14, 1973. All stories new -- no reprints!

**FOWL NEWS** John Berry came to the Insurgents meeting last Friday, and it was hard news that he brought with him. "My rooster died," he announced just before a sudden lull in the conversation. "It was the noisy one," he added with a faint touch of satisfaction.

"Too bad it was your rooster instead of your duck, John," I said.

"Why's that, Arnie?" His tone made it plain that he didn't think it was too bad that his rooster and not his duck had gone to the Big Barnyard. I guess the ducks don't wake him at sunrise.

"If your duck had died, I could've written in WOODEN NICKEL, 'John Berry's duck died.' That would have been a wonderful thing." I sighed for the lost golden opportunity. "Roosters are just not as intrinsically funny as ducks. Ducks are funny."

Please forgive me, readers. If it had been within my power, it would have been John Berry's duck that died. Look at it this way, we're all in this WOODEN NICKEL thing for the long pull, you on the mailing list and me at the typewriter. Right now, it's only a mundane, prosaic rooster that died, but someday, someday, you'll open your WOODEN NICKEL and there it will be right on page one (or maybe page two), Berry's Duck Dead. I mean, how long can those poor dumb ducks hold out against the massed wish of the WOODEN NICKEL mailing list? And when the duck has finally died, we will all nod our heads sagely and laugh, thinking about the old days when all we had that died was a rooster.

**ALJO SVOBODA OBSERVES:** "Creeping publishing midgetism, like some dreaded tree fungus, has struck at the very roots of fandom. Brooklyn Fandom was hit first and hardest, but the nice folks at Fabulous Fannish Fandom are back with their revolutionary development, Zines Without Staples.

"Arnie Katz started the whole thing when he realized an essential truth; fans feel threatened by staples. Staples can cut fingers and chip teeth, and the last page falls off anyway.

"Brooklyn Fandom recognized this as a definite problem and vowed to devote their mentalities to it full-time until a Solution appeared. They sacrificed months and months they could have given to their favorite thing, fanzine pubbing. By the time they'd hit upon Zines Without Staples, it was too late. Exhaustion from prolonged and furious mental activity forced the gaffiation of these brave souls.

"The only survivor of this holocaust was, of course, Arnie Katz, driven by the Slan Within to get the truth he had found to a fandom waiting for the news with baited

breath, and all that, before collapsing of an extreme case of hyperfanac, unsung hero of tenth fandom.

"Zines Without Staples will certainly be In in years and fandoms to come. The back page can't fall off, after all. WOODEN NICKEL will come to be a legend in its own time and peace will reign in fandom, for Staple Wars will be a thing of the past." {I think you've got it all wrong, Aljo. Far from having worked on Fanmags Without Staples for months and months when I could have been doing my favorite thing, I was doing my favorite thing all that time. But even my spare moments weren't occupied by the question of Zines Without Staples. Instead, I devoted my fannish energies to an even more experimental approach to fanzine publishing. Unfortunately, that entire line of investigation proved a complete failure, so it's unlikely that you'll be seeing Zines Without Paper any time soon.)

CAN CIVIL WAR BE AVERTED? Must the serenity of the WOODEN NICKEL mailing list be shattered and the fabulous fifty be split into two truculent twenty-fives? That's the question perplexing me at the moment.

It's all because of TAFF. Now, TAFF and I have gone our separate ways for the last few years, neither paying the other a moment's notice. On the one hand, no one's ever asked me to stand for TAFF and, on the other, the candidates who've been shuttling back and forth across the Atlantic have inspired little excitement at 59 Livingston St. Since recent administrators haven't exactly been publicity-hounds, I've managed to more or less forget the whole business.

Now those damn English fans have gone and spoiled it all by nominating not one but two people I'd actually like to meet. I've known Pete Weston since we were both fannish wunderkinds and SPEC is about my favorite sf-oriented fanzine. He's always shown a lot of interest in fannish fanzines, so it can't really be said that this TAFF race is a fannish vs. sercon match. Pete Roberts is also a worthy fellow and is, by all odds, the leading English fannish fan who hasn't made the trip. I can imagine pitched battles between the Weston and Roberts factions on the WOODEN NICKEL mailing list, as friend battles friend and husband locks horns with wife over this weighty matter.

I thought about campaigning with the slogan, "Vote for Pete!" I suppose that won't cut it, so you can mark me down as a Weston partisan who'd still be pleased to meet Pete Roberts. With our luck, some mystery fan from Germany will win the race on a write-in campaign and I won't get to meet either of them.

F.M. BUSBY INFORMS: "Because of the energy shortage, I intend to buy a giant sea tortoise and break it to saddle and bridle. I am planning a trip to New York by way of the Panama Canal. Arrival time is approximately 1983. The last (and only) time I ever say anyone ride a giant sea tortoise was out of the john in a rundown bar in Mexicali. The rider was drunk and fell off, shouting, 'Hiyo, Silver!' The tortoise seemed pleased." {I had really hoped you could get here before 1983, Buz, since Burbee has also announced a cross-country expedition. Burb is going to be taking the overland route, hopping along on the back of a giant, overstuffed rabbit named Meyer. He says he can beat your old tortoise. I just bet him twenty bucks, more money than I make on an issue of WOODEN NICKEL, and now you tell me you're going to lose to the hare, and an overstuffed hare at that. That isn't the way it was in the books, Buz.)

DICK GEIS WRITES: "I, too, admire those with boundless energy and drive. I'm lucky if I manage a small hop every day. That's my fate -- to hippety-hop through life among herds of disgustingly active kangaroos." {Am I to take this mention of kangaroos as an indication that you'd like to enter the race?}