

# WOODEN NICKEL

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WOODEN NICKEL Volume 1 Number 6 Whole Number 6 is offered for the scrutiny of an elite mailing list of 50 by Arnie Katz (59 Livingston St., Apt. 6B, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201) in the hope that they will find it both entertaining and worthy of a letter of comment laced with the heady wine of egoboo. Today is August 10, 1973. Happy Smile Week!

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**DOWN THE TUBES, BUT NOT OUT** A couple of weeks ago I brought the 50 envelopes containing WOODEN NICKEL #3 to my office so I could get them out before work. After a stop at the post office for stamps, I used my Tab-moistened tongue to affix one to each envelope, while Joyce slew various local fan ogres with barbed words.

I'd noticed that my building had a mail chute, and I decided it would be expeditious (and less work in the long run) to drop them down the chute immediately, instead of waiting until noon to carry them across the street to the regular mailbox.

I pushed a few copies through the slot and watched them waft down the glass-inclosed channel. About a dozen had been dispatched when I looked down and saw that a bunch of mail was struck in the chute at floor level. At the top of the bottleneck were the 12 copies of WOODEN NICKEL, possibly including yours.

I called Joyce over to see the tragedy which had befallen WOODEN NICKEL #3. "Some people never use mail chutes," she said. "There was a building torn down on 34th Street that had a mail chute, and they found some letters from 1908 inside." With this pleasant thought firmly in mind, I attempted to contact the powers that be in the building to get the paper jam unstuck. After repeated pestering through the day, they finally told me that the chute was technically a mailbox and could only be opened by a postman. Eventually the post office was informed, but by that time the 12 copies of WOODEN NICKEL were buried under a welter of letters dropped down the chute from the floors above.

I don't know if they rescued all those WOODEN NICKELS or not, but if you don't get your sometime in the next 65 years, I guess you'd better drop me a line. Better not drop it down a mail chute, though.

**ROY TACKET SEZ:** "Bob Vardeman is giving up his position as a janitor with the Sandia Laboratories to take a job as a fishmonger. Queried as to how he expected to get fish in the middle of the New Mexico desert, Mr. Vardeman revealed that his vast scientific training had enabled him to develop an 800-mile-long fishline. He is currently engaged in research on a reel for it."

**JUST TWO STAY-AT-HOMES** That's Joyce and I this Labor Day, I'm afraid. After the Lunacon, with our fannish enthusiasm approaching its nadir, we agreed that the cost of Torcon would be prohibitive. If we spent all that money and the convention turned out to be a dud, we reasoned, our interest in fanac might never return.

As our friends' plans begin to unfold, it becomes increasingly obvious that the Torcon is going to be a great fannish scene. Now we're both wistful about not going, even though my work situation probably wouldn't have permitted the trip anyway.

Joyce and I would feel a great outpouring of warmth and good fellowship to those of you kind enough to send us a few paragraphs about whatever you find especially interest-

ing at the convention. Maybe we could even print the best ones for the benefit of other stay-at-home readers of WOODEN NICKEL like Bill and Charlene Kunkel and Chris Couch and, more on the personal side, Joyce and I would feel just a little less left out of things. Oh, and if any of you are going to be passing through New York City before or after the Torcon, we'd be pleased to have you call and arrange for a visit.

GOOD-BYE, CLIFF When typing the labels last week, it came to me that I ought to make an Example of one of the (few) readers who has not been particularly attentive to increase the motivation of the rest of the slackers. So I looked over my two sheets of labels, trying to find someone to expunge from the rolls. I picked Cliff Stenberg. He's gone. There's no use aggitating for his return, either. I am firm on this point. He got five issues, didn't send so much as a post card, and now he's had it.

I promised to say nasty things about anyone I cut off, but I find I can't redeem this pledge in the case of Mr. Stenberg. I hardly know the fellow, and he seems like quite a good sort. That's why I put him on the mailing list, an experiment. Next time I may eliminate Greg Benford. I know lots of nasty things about Greg.

NOTHIN' DOIN' Have you ever noticed the way some people charge around packed to the bursting point with unquenchable energy, accomplishing momentous things every few minutes? Joyce and I aren't two of those people. In fact, we would probably admit, if pressed, that we are two very lazy specimens.

Our record of achievement on weekends, for example, is positively scandalous. We do our weekly grocery shopping Saturday morning, and if we manage to stay awake until the delivery boys arrive with the goodies, we are proud. If we summon the energy to sit up in bed and read instead of taking a long afternoon nap, we figure we've done enough exercise for the day. As I said, two lazy specimens.

For all you other slothful souls out there, I have words of comfort; no matter how indolent you are, there is always someone somewhere even less active ready to revere you as a human dynamo.

Just last week, I was chatting with Ross Chamberlain about producing WOODEN NICKEL. "It was a snap," I said expansively. "I got a box of carbon set labels, so when I typed them up, I was actually doing four issues' worth at once. Then I put my return address on the envelopes with my rubber stamp and slapped on 8-cents postage. All I had to do after that was run off about 60 copies, fold them in quarters, stuff the envelopes, and I was ready to mail. Didn't even take the whole evening," I added.

"You did all that in one evening?" Ross asked. "I sure wish I had your energy." A look of awe gripped his sensitive fannish face. He stared at me with new respect.

I figure Ross doesn't really have too much to worry about, though, and I wouldn't want you WOODEN NICKEL readers to lavish too much sympathy on someone just because he thinks slug-a-bed Arnie Katz is a Great Doer of Thins. After all, somewhere there's someone who, if he heard about the life tempo of Ross Chamberlain, would say, "Phew, that boy's a regular ball of lightning!" That is if that someone somewhere isn't dead already.

GET A HORSE Anxious to keep in step with Neal Goldfarb's elephant and John Berry's Nairobi, Roy Tackett has purchased a horse. It's a morgan, he informed me, the same brand as Calvin Demmon's old car. Plus ca change, plus c'est la meme chose, as Papa Hugo used to say. Roy's talking about riding the beast across the great Canadian wasteland to the Torcon II. Just what fandom needs, another horse's ass at the convention.