

XENOLITH 39

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My Publication #194
...for FLAP Mailing 103 [March, 1997]
-- and A Few Others.

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10/13/96: ...two months since the last issue was "finished"; where has the time flown? Off on wings that beat stronger than anticipated; as usual.

More than anything, the advent of the "new" TV season has brought both reading *and* movie viewing to, if not a screeching halt -- at least down to a crawl. I've steadfastly attempted to avoid becoming addicted to new shows -- "Pearl" is the only one that's really caught my eye -- but there are far too many returning "favorites", as it is. Ah, well.

Well, to be honest, there is another "factor" impeding the assimilation of prose and visual stories, as well as impairing the creation of deathless fannish prose:

For the first time in over twenty years -- for the first time since I milked the G.I. Bill in the early 70s for endless graphic "goodies" ... I am going to Night School. True, it's only one course, one night a week, but it's long enough -- four and a half hours!

The subject de jour is AutoCAD 13. With some reluctance, but you have to understand that I've been told for more than twenty-five years that I was going to be "replaced" by a computer. But even someone as reticent as me -- I come from the days when drafting was a skill, a craft; not just a "job" -- even I finally realized that old pencil pushers have to learn New Tricks. And when, this Summer, my boss "suggested" that it would be advantageous to my continuing employability if I were to get some CAD "experience", I finally decided that, indeed, It Was Time. So the end of August I coughed up the money (approximately what it would have cost me to attend Ditto; there are always trade-offs) and, the Monday following Labor Day ... started.

It's been interesting. I agonized over the first Quiz, but ended up getting a 106, despite *missing* one question! (There were two "extra-credit" questions that I *did* get.) This past Monday was the mid-term, and I *think* I did well, but won't know for another week: this week we're "off" because of Columbus Day. In the meantime, instead of reading before work and at lunch, I'm busy studying. And realizing that, indeed, I'm too old for this shit!

Still. At the moment, I'm intending to "take" a second term, which follows directly on the heels of this one in early November, but.... Anyway, by the time this issue wraps, we'll know one way or the other.

I'd really intended to get further today, but at least I've broken the ice on a new disk -- and That's Progress.

Next weekend is Octocon, but when the editorial "we" return, we'll start off with some comments on the 101st Mailing of the Fannish Little Amateur Press.

...back in a flash.

[*system restart: 01/04/97*]

"And -- no promises -- I hope there will be another one [XENOLITH] in December."

Obviously not.

As usual, I had Good Intentions.

Also, per norm: No excuses; just "reasons".

I'll "blame" school:

I made it through the first term, ending up with an A/4.0 Grade. Pardon me while I feel semi-pleased with myself.

Flush with success, I paid-up for a 2nd term. Because it's a Wednesday night class, we just had a two-week "break" because of Christmas & New Year's. Two more classes to go, starting next Wednesday, then the "final". I'm not doing nearly as well this time around. Partially, I'm "burnt"; partially it's that the subject matter this time around (solid modeling) is less likely to be directly applicable to my immediate job prospects.

Besides, they still haven't given me a computer, yet, to do anything on! Real Soon Now, is what I hear.

The job? Two and a half years plus, and I'm still there. And I feel about as "secure" as I ever did, but what is one to do? It sure beats the alternative.

Octocon was fun, and I made two out of the three Annual New Year's Parties. That, plus the bi-weekly Treks to Causgrove/Locke Central ...and you have my Social Calendar.

Obviously I didn't make it to Ditto, but, somehow "we" [Roger, Pat, Bill Cavin, me...] ended up with the 1997 Edition for Cincinnati. I more than suspect the hand of Dick & Leah in this. Details aren't firm yet, but it'll be in mid- to late October, and "combined" with Octocon again. That "worked" the last time, so why not? Roger &/or I will frank through a flyer when appropriate -- but keep your calendar open....

Yesterday, I received a Corflu flyer. I have hopes.... We'll see.

A note:

In the past three months we've "lost" Lynn Hickman and Joni Stopa.

I've known both since 1961, although I didn't meet them until 1962.

Both were friends, both were a part of a lot of good memories, and both are already missed.

I know not what else to say.

Mailing Comments on FLAP 101

Arthur D. Hlavaty *Savage and Tartarly // Derogatory Reference #52*

I suppose that I, too, am/was a "credit card abuser". In the mid to late '80s, I had more than I can recall now, with a rather phenomenal total "credit limit". And I used them. But I managed to "maintain" -- until that point in time when I wasn't the only one using them. I am embarrassed to admit the total amount of debt "we" filed bankruptcy on. I said it wasn't *my* "fault", but in all honesty it was: I knew the inevitable was coming, but lacked the willpower/fortitude to crack-down on her spending. Not my proudest moment.

I survived bankruptcy with one gasoline company credit card; it has been a lifesaver more than once.

But, in today's cash-aversion society, it is almost impossible to accomplish some things without a "major" credit card. Such as rent a car in an emergency. Or reserve an airline ticket. Or book a hotel room:

When I went to last year's Nashville Corflu, I had to have Roger & Pat reserve my room on *their* card -- although I paid in cash when checking out.

A couple of months ago, after countless solicitations for "approved" credit cards [the few I applied for were, strangely, *not* approved in the end], I finally succumbed, and acquired a "secured" Visa. I coughed up a hundred bucks for a five hundred dollar "limit".

I used it to pay for my second term of AutoCAD. And I paid the total off as soon as I received the statement.

I'll next use it for airfare and hotel room for Corflu (assuming I don't chicken out on *that*). And, I'm bound and determined that I won't use it again until *that* is paid off.

A higher "limit" would be nice, but I really don't want any additional cards. I know *my* limits. It's sort of like my "allowing" myself one drink each year at (each) MidWestCon and Octocon -- just to prove to myself (no one else) that indeed I "quit" of my own free will. This is all games-playing; but -- whatever works.

[Yes, Carolyn -- I know: the smoking. That, too, is an inevitable "game" to come. Someday. But I know myself well enough to know that I have to do it by myself ...for myself. I don't react well to "outside" edicts and pressure.]

As usual, DR is a fascinating read, Arthur. Thanks for running it through FLAP.

Eric Lindsay *Missed Mailings for FLAP*

It'd be neat if you can make Corflu; it'd certainly give me added incentive.

You're about to turn 50? Seems like only yesterday.... (I'll wager though that you still have less gray than I.)

Richard Brandt *Deadwood Dick #12*

It's really good to have you "back"! I sympathize with your overly-busy work-schedule but, believe me, it beats the alternative. (Been there. Done that.)

I'm really sorry I wasn't able to make it to your Ditto (but appreciated the post-con postcard). This doesn't, however, "excuse" you and Michelle from coming to "our" Ditto, this year! *Yes*

Dave Locke *Scattershot #1*

The coldest cut... Reminding me that, on occasion rare, I referenced you in the context of "short" jokes. Just remember that, despite my downward mobility, I'm *still* taller than you....

At least I *think* I am.

I'm one who *does* remember him, and I'd *still* like to see you do a "BEST OF ED CAGLE". If you end up doing it on the Web ... that's fine, but I hope you realize that, in that case, you'll have to print me off a copy. I'm not likely to be going there myself anytime soon.

!!!BTW b4rse! by the time you get started to it!!!

Carolyn Doyle *Personal Slant #30*

Thanks, very much, for including Skel's Trip Report! He is always entertaining, and here, no less than usual.

Marty Helgesen *Intra-Abdominal Fires (99 FZ)*

yet Arthur about liking his "*New Hundredth*" title: In the 100th issue of "*New Worlds*". Brian Aldiss had a story titled "Old Hundredth" -- which I've always remembered as being a particularly neat title, given the issue in which it appeared.

[I note that I read the story on 12/26 of 1960, after receiving the issue on 12/2 -- and that that particular issue was the 156th entry in my SF "collection". This suggests that my predilection for "numbering" and "dating" events in my life was well-established even earlier than I might have suspected.]

Roger Sims *Fantasy-Scope Vol. IV #1*

"Now in its 46th Year"

... I wish I were!

I recall that when you handed me a copy of this in the hotel room, during Roy and Eleen's visit ... that I, er, "chided" you about the "layout". I'll leave it to Dave Locke to take you to task for your presentation of his "doodles" -- but I probably shouldn't have said some of the things that I did. Truly, your sense of layout is as Creative as your spelling -- but it's *your* fanzine and, as long as you are happy with it, that's all that matters in the end. Okay?

The "Joe" artist [pg. 13] is obviously Joe Pearson; but, no, I don't have a current address.

I suppose that I should venture some atypically snide response to Jeanne's comment and your reply -- but none comes to mind. I *must* be getting old!

Jackie Causgrove *New Leaf #1*

Not much in the way of direct comment, but it's *Good* to see you in here again.

I suspect that we shouldn't take this "what our (respective) weight is *down* to" much further back in chronological terms -- it may truly become a case of diminishing returns.

Take Care and hang in there. *Somebody's/ gotta' keep DaveL in line!!*

Loren MacGregor *The Churn Works #2*

I look forward to your second novel. ...and the third.

One of the side-effects of your entry into FLAP is that I took THE NET off the shelf (it's been on several; I bought it when it was first published) -- and read it. And enjoyed it very much.

So, how'd the wedding go?

[Looking ahead, I see that you're not represented in FLAP 102; hopefully in 103?]

02/09/97: I *do* seem to be having a bit of a problem in "getting going" this time around, don't I? As always, Good Intentions. But.... In many ways this has been a much "better" Winter compared to the last -- we didn't get our first significant snowfall until this weekend, and it wasn't all that bad. But the weekends in January were incredibly C*O*L*D and, since the "publishing set-up" is in an annex that at one time was the front porch, I tend to keep it closed-off when not in use -- in a futile effort to save on the heating bill. ...particularly this winter since (did I mention....?) the local natural gas monopoly felt it necessary to raise its rates by 26% the beginning of December. (Just one of those inevitable things, I know, though I must admit to a certain degree of irk in that they have the wherewithal for incessant advertising -- plus the ability to cough up X-Million Dollars to "rename" the local (slated for demolition) stadium....)

Life Goes On. And so -- eventually -- do I.

In a burst of enthusiasm following the receipt of the Corflu 14 flyer, I called and (taking advantage of "the" credit card) made hotel reservations. Then I called my travel agent, my sister -- and made airline reservations. The credit card bill on *that* has not only come, but been paid ... so I guess I'm going.

Such enthusiasm.

I *am* excited at the prospect of seeing friends too rarely encountered in the past decade: I haven't been to Northern California since Corflu 2. In 1985. And I *know* that once I'm Out There, I'll enjoy myself.

But I must admit that I dread travelling these days. Not only is there the "inconvenience" of packing -- I'm not supposed to lift/carry more than ten pounds at a time -- but the prospect (with the added "joy" of the asthma) of toting said luggage from airport to hotel at that end is something I'd rather not think about. But will. Then there's the question of *who* I'm going to coerce into

taking me to the airport, and then picking me up -- at inconvenient times, on *this* end....

So. The closer it gets to March 13, the more cranky and bitchy I'll be, and the more moaning I'll do. I know me.

But I'll do it!

Also, in early January:

Enthused by the new 90-channel set-ups that Dave & Jackie, and the Sims, have -- and enticed by a 1-cent installation "offer", I called the local cable company, and made enquires. I must admit to a down-sizing of the enthusiasm-level when I found out that the expanded service wouldn't be available here until, at least, the end of the year. Only the *old* 60-channel system was available. Nevertheless I priced things out, and talked to Art. We could get everything but the premium pay channels (but including AMC), with separate set-ups for him (upstairs) and me (downstairs) for about \$18 each, per month.

So we decided to Do It.

I called to make the arrangements. ...and they wanted an additional \$75 "deposit"-- because of my "credit history".

Now I *know* my credit history. I also know that I had cable service through the same company for like eight years -- and always paid the bill on time. *They* didn't lose anything in the bankruptcy.

So I said No Way.

We probably could have gotten the service with Art applying. But it's the principle, you see, and....

And so, later this afternoon, I'll once again be calling Jackie & Dave with yet another "Wish List" of movies to be taped....

School.

I survived the second term. I put less effort in, and got considerably less "out"-- and the two-week wait afterward for the grade was interminable.

I ended up with a "B". I'll take it.

My mother called me last Tuesday night, after returning from a two-week stay with my brother in Florida. I'd called her the night before she'd left, and she said that she'd mentioned it at the time ...but I don't recall it that way.

As some of you know, about 5 years ago, a year after Dad died and shortly (very) after she'd moved into an apartment on her own, she suffered a stroke, and lost vision in one eye, and most vision in the other. I thought it terribly "unjust" of God, but she managed and coped, surviving on her own.

Apparently the morning before she left for Florida, she woke up with even less vision -- "things are darker" -- in her remaining eye.

When she called me last week, she was more "down" than I can ever recall her being. She'd had to put up with my Father (and me...) all those years ...and then the loss of vision -- but, to me, she'd always been upbeat, despite all.

I called my sister the following night, after she'd taken Mom to the doctor. It was then I found out about the loss of appetite. That, to me, is the most frightening. Mom has always *loved* to eat.

Apparently she'd had another stroke.

She'll be 87 in March. My sister and I keep telling each other that she's had a Good Life.

Nevertheless.

I'm going to call her more often. I'll try to get up there more than twice this year.

It's selfish. But I don't know what else to do.

When I started doing fanzines, I suppose it was to do a pseudo-prozine. To accomplish something. To be somebody in the Vast World of Fandom. I did all that.

But in recent memory, I've done what little I've done more as an instrument of *communication* than any particular Greater Entity. (Though I've always reserved the Right to be Fancy & Perverse.)

I'm pleased and encouraged by the response the last issue generated. True, I am "disappointed" that I didn't Hear Back from Certain Others. But, given the level and frequency of direct communication from this end, I'm certainly in no position to "expect" anything more from others...!

Herewith, the Vast LetterCol:

Wm Breiding

I was stoked to get a large manila envelope from you after two (count 'em!) rapid fire letters in a row. Watch it, pops! You're gonna give me a heart attack.

Typically Bowers. I loved the structure. It finally dawned on me (yeah, ok, so I'm a little dense!) why you were APA-50's "godfather" for awhile -- looky here, Mister, you know how to spill some guts!

The older I get (just "turned" 40 last week!) the less inclined I seem to rip wide with it, though recently someone told me my stuff read like a teenager's. She meant it as a compliment, but I'm not sure I took it as one.

There's little to be said by way of loc on XENOLITH 38. A commiseration and a notation of how keen you are in mailing comments -- the first extensive example I've seen from you, never having shared apa-space with you. (Though I suppose OW has at time seemed apa-like in its texture, if not structure; the weave and mingle.)

Meanwhile, you should be reading Lawrence Block. The enclosed is an excellent example of his Matt Scudder series. EIGHT MILLION WAYS TO DIE is about mid-series. If you decide you like Block (I love him!) I strongly suggest that you try to begin at the beginning of the series. His characters definitely change and move and transform, as you will see by the end of the enclosed book. I pretty much consider Block to be hard-boiled, a direct descendent of the noir of Chandler and Hammett, but of course, in his own Blockian way. If you decide to rent the film they made of EIGHT MILLION WAYS TO DIE be prepared for a movie that has zero to do with the book, but it is none the less a powerfully good movie -- Jeff Bridges (one of my favorite actors) is, as usual, brilliant.

Anyway, at the rate you read, you need a new series of mysteries -- hope Block fits the bill for you. Stay healthy, stay employed, and say a little prayer to 'Sponse. [8/24/96]

> Actually, I've never been as "good" -- certainly not as consistent -- with Mailing Comments as I might have wished. Previous incarnations in FLAP have always rapidly degenerated into self-serving, self-effacing "woe"-sheets. The only time I can recall doing extensive MCs was in Mishap -- and that was a long, long time back. This time around, I swore I'd do better by FLAP -- but unless I really get cracking, I'll still be a Mailing behind....

As I responded to Wm, when I received his letter & the book -- Block is on my List. Primarily because of a couple of short stories I've read and because Mr. Locke keeps mentioning him.

I do have this perverse desire to "collect" a least a majority of a "series" or an author's output ... before starting in.... Sometimes this is relatively "easy"; other times it's nearly impossible: I'm still six "short" in the Pronzini "Nameless" series -- and have been so for a couple of years. But one never knows: Although I'm trying to Be Good, I still haunt the used book stores, and have discovered an excellent mail-order source, right here in Cincinnati -- [Grave Matters, POBox 32192, Cincinnati OH 45232-0192]. (Through them I not only finally located Tucker's THE CHINESE DOLL -- but, just this past week, finally got a copy of Willeford's THE MACHINE IN WARD ELEVEN -- which I previously thought impossible to get for less than \$50.)

In any event, I do have all the Scudder novels -- except for the '96 EVEN THE WICKED (I can wait for the paperback...) -- and Block IS on The List, as I said before. The "list" also includes Estleman, Healy, Julie Smith, McBain, etc. etc. etc.

If you Look Ahead to the List that ends this issue, you'll see that with the exception of the non-fiction books and Andrew Vachss (talk about your "hard-boiled"; thanks, Art, for the introduction to him!), most of the books I read were by authors "already in progress", so to speak. That -- keeping up -- is a full-time effort in itself. I'm not that fast a reader.

Next on the "new authors" list is Ross Macdonald's Archer series. He's been in that position for nearly a year now. But Real Soon Now.

(Currently I'm a third of the way through John Dunning's THE BOOKMAN'S WAKE. BOOKED TO DIE was good -- but this is delightful! Already I know it's going to be one of those rare books I'm going to hate to put down at the end.)

Wm.... re: your comment on the "faithfulness" of the movie version vs. the novel in case of the Block book -- it reminds me that, until recently I said that the only mystery movie I've seen that was "faithful" to the source novel was MIAMI BLUES. But then, on re-watching DARK PASSAGE after finally reading the Goodis novel -- I have to revise that particular List to a Grand Total of Two....

Finally, I should probably mention that Young Mr. Breiding has "re-located". His new address is: 103 North 6th Street, Fairfield, LA 52556.

Sd. Wm. / What do you think of Mithrasstern / Winters...!!!!

Patty Peters

OK, OK get yourself off the floor and dust yourself off. Yes, I am writing a LoC. I got X:38 in this afternoon's mail, started reading, and immediately was tripping over comment hooks. Besides, this officially makes it your turn to write.

Your "bottom" period (late 1993) was the beginning of a downward emotional drop for me. Every time I think I'm coming out of it something else goes wrong. While Gary was wrapping up his assignment in Germany we got word that my sister's brain cancer came back. This time it was in her speech center. She had them operate because her daughter was only 13 and Nancy wanted to try everything to survive. It gave us a few more months, but she had trouble talking. Since the miles made phone conversation the only way to stay in touch we developed a pattern of Nancy calling me late at night (her time) and saying, "You talk." I'd tell her my week, ask yes/no questions about her and Laura, and generally lull her to sleep again. She died in January, 1994. My mother, who had aged tremendously watching Nancy's battle was not very strong after that. She and Dad made one more winter-trip to Arizona in 94/95. A few weeks after they returned to Michigan Mom had a seizure and died the next day. Flying back to Michigan on Mother's Day for the funeral was pretty depressing. I used all my vacation in 1995 for several trips back to Michigan to visit with my dad. He wasn't leaving the house much and we were all worried.

Over Thanksgiving our oldest dog, Bob, got really sick and we almost lost him. Gary and I canceled plans to visit his sister and stayed at home with Bob. The vet let us bring home all the I.V. apparatus and we did home-health-care for the dog. He survived, but it was a tough week.

This last winter Dad did go to Arizona (we'd all wondered...) so I met him in Las Vegas and drove down with him. We spent the week together. He made some excursions on his own to give me time to clean out my mother's things and get them to Goodwill. I don't remember much except gritting my teeth. Over Christmas the whole family was going to be at my house. Dad came up from Arizona early because he was sick. Two days later I rushed him to the hospital with a temperature of 103F. He spent the next two weeks there while they tried to figure out what was wrong. All the out-of-towners came, but we had to spend the day in the hospital room with Dad. He was discharged just before New Year's Eve (rush for a hospital). He's doing better now; even traveling quite a bit.

Then a few weeks ago Bob had a stroke while Gary was in Tokyo on business. I nursed him through that night and we tried some prednisone to see if he'd get better. Not this time. We had to put him to sleep. I've had that dog a long time and he's the first pet I've ever had. When we moved into the rental house in S.F. it was with the intent of getting a dog. Rich & Stacy gave us a gift certificate for a puppy from the SPCA as a house warming. I agree, The Gift of a Lifetime. It's still too recent for me to say much about it without weeping.

I too have been reading a lot of mysteries lately. Like junk-food, it's a wonderfully escapist genre. I'm always on the look-out for another Chesboro. His "Mongo" series is a hoot. Hard-boiled and tongue-in-cheek, the protagonist is a "dwarf with an

attitude". Patricia Cornwall's series with Kay Scarpetta as the main character are good too. Usually I wouldn't read stuff that graphically violent/bloody, but Cornwall's worth it. I also like Elizabeth George, though I understand the critic's complaint about someone from Southern California writing British Mysteries. Hiaasen is another fun author. You mention Muller (who I also like) and Paretsky and Grafton (who I don't like). Never tried Barnes. Have you read any Julie Smith? The only skiffy of late has been Octavia Butler.

As you know, I share your ideas about large conventions. I went to Iggy, with your help, and a few years later to Chicago. They're just too big. When the San Francisco WorldCon was only an hour away I drove in after work on Friday, saw a few people in the fan lounge and at the APA-50 party. I was home late that night and never got up enough interest to head back. Instead I hung out with a non-fan friend. He's German and I introduced him to eating BBQ with your fingers. I, too, only make it to Corflu's and Ditto's any more, though time is my most limiting factor. Early in the year I got the information on my high school's 20-year reunion. I figure Corflu serves that purpose for me better than Kimball H.S. The Vegas Corflu had an awful lot of people I've known for a long time. Did you hear Gary Hubbard was GoH at that one? That convention will always hold warm memories for me. Mom and Dad met up with us there (annual car-transfer to get their west coast wheels up to California). The last time I saw Mom we were playing the slots together.

Jees, Bill, I sure remember that Mustang fondly. I still tell the story about you letting me drive it to Chicago. There's always a laugh when I explain getting safely to the side of the road with the tire blowout only to find out I had to change the tire because the two men couldn't get the lug nuts started. I still suspect neither of you wanted to change the damn thing and were pulling my leg, but I've always been gullible.

NeepNeep-ing: I, for one, think your solution is creative! I agree with your choice in type-font, though I didn't have any trouble with the reduced opening stuff. It might be even easier if it weren't italic.

If you do make it out here in my lifetime you'll have fun with our TV set up. We got the little Sony satellite dish and subscribe to full service. Yep, hundreds of stations. Everything from Home & Garden to The Animal Channel. Add in all the premium stations and since it's satellite, that means five HBO's, three SHO's, two DIS's, etc. We get both the east- and west-coast feeds on those stations.

So, Bill, this ends my LoC. I figure it really is your turn now. You can use any sized readable font (not dingbats!).
[8/24/96]

** I debated including the "personal stuff". [I do think about these things.] In the end I decided to run the majority of your letter intact. For several reasons. The circulation of this is not large; a lot of those copies go to mutual friends of both of us. ...and your honesty and eloquence really "spoke" to me. And not only as yet another reminder that, no matter the Woes & Tribulations of My Life, I am not alone in having a life that doesn't always go As It Should.*

I truly hope (though with a certain amount of skepticism) that the Years Ahead will prove Better -- for all of us.

While I "expected" to Hear From Mr. Breiding, and a few others, I was "surprised" to receive your letter. But pleasantly so. Thanks.

You forgot to mention, re the Mustang Incident, that (as I recall it) the blowout occurred while you were driving (fastly) in the fast lane of an Interstate. The fact that you managed to get the car across traffic and bring it (safely) to a stop on the birm remains one of the more awesome memories of my life!

(...but those lug nuts had been put on with an air hammer; they were tight!)

Along with her letter, Patty sent a Care Package. A video tape. And four Julie Smith novels.

I'd already seen the movie. And the four Smith books were already on my shelves -- waiting.

Thanking Patty ... I Pointed All This Out.

So. What did she do?

A short while later I received a package: A 24-can Diet Coke package, surrounded by an unbelievable amount of tape. Once I managed to work my way in, I found a total of twenty-nine mystery novels.

I only "had" slightly more than half of these.

I really don't know what to say.

I have Patty's and Wm's "permission" to "trade-in" the duplicates at the local Book Rack. (Though I've put off actually doing so, until I manage to get this acknowledgement into print.)

Though it's been going on for a Very Long Time, somehow I am continually Astounded by the generosity and support of My Friends. I am appreciative, but I really don't know what to say...

(Perversely, I am Tempted -- if you people are going to persist in doing things like this -- to include, with this issue, a copy of My Want List of books./ But that would probably be Pushing It...)

Thanks, Patty. For everything. I'm looking forward to seeing you again in a couple of weeks; it's been far too long.

Harry Warner, Jr.

It was very good to receive again from you a fanzine. The only disturbing factor in the otherwise blissful event was your mention in it that your last OUTWORLDS appeared in 1993. Just the other day it occurred to me that I was several months late in responding to that issue. Obviously, time dilation is running out of control in my psyche, unless by some chance I did loc that issue and somehow enveloped the event in a guilt-inspired forgetfulness. I probably didn't and I'm sorry.

You not only brought me up to date in this XENOLITH about what has been happening to you, and I must say that just about everything has, but you also gave me welcome glimpses into FLAP. I'd been wondering where some of the very good fanzine fans of the past had gone and obviously, it was into FLAP. Between that apa and SAPS, just about everyone who was anyone in the fanzine world shortly after the middle of this century seems to be accounted for.

I'm sorry that you've been continuing the time of troubles that has been going on so long for you. But I don't find in your prose any marked change from the way you've written for fanzines over the years, so I gather that you have held up quite well under all the strains and problems. It's certainly time for events to swing around in the other direction and begin to make things good and easy for you.

It's easy for me to sense how you suffered through the inevitable fate of your pet, because it happened to me several times when I was a boy and young man and lost cats. I've stopped the habit of having any kind of pet because I am now too old to suffer the consequences when I outlive them. At least, you have the consolation of knowing you did everything you could for your cat and ended her suffering humanely.

Curiously, I've deviated from the straight and narrow way of the science fiction fan by reading a lot of mystery fiction, too, these past few years. But we differ in the type of it we prefer; I'm happiest with murders in upper class circles, erudite and highly civilized detectives, and at least an occasional purple passage in the prose.

I've even been thinking wild thoughts about trying to write a mystery novel my very own self. This incredible concept results from the fact that I've been involved this spring and summer in the most expensive single item in my life, repairs on my home and demolition of a crumbling three-car garage. The bill will be enormous when I finish paying it. I didn't need to borrow the money

for this purpose but it did make a perceptible hole in my investments and thus a reduction of the amount in interest that could be needed some day to pay for my last years in a rest home or other facility for broken down seniles. If I could sell a novel, I could recoup most of this expense and then I could stop fretting over my changed financial situation. But it's thirty years since I last sold science fiction stories to the prozines. I may be too far out of practice with the creation of fiction, my age might make me incapable of writing mystery fiction well, and I might go into deep despondency if I write such a novel and it doesn't sell.

Since I don't know one blessed thing about computers except the fact that I hate them, I can't imagine what caused the inconsistent spacing in some of your fonts in this XENOLITH. Maybe you've already noticed that it seems to occur most often after the longer words, as if the beast were manufacturing space materials at a steady pace and gushing forth with what's on hand every time you pressed the space bar.

I appreciate your kind words about the superiority of Beta videotaping over the VHS system. I acquired a VHS VCR some years ago at very little cost: a local bank gave it to me in return for my investing in a CD, and all I had to pay was income tax on its value. I use it for anything that gobbles up great amounts of tape, like the "Matinee at the Bijou" series which PBS is rerunning and I'm collecting. But my Sony Beta machine is unsurpassed for picture quality and audio. I'm even thinking about buying another Sony VCR as a backup in case this one breaks down and I can't find any way to have it repaired and Sony discontinues production.

One other thing hasn't changed a bit: my amazement and admiration for the number of books and movies you gobble up in the course of a year, as demonstrated by the lists on the last pages of this issue. I don't do nearly as well even though I'm retired and should have enough time to match you, film for film, novel for novel.

Keep well and cheerful. [8/27/96]

> ...it's all a reversion/retreat to the escapist tendencies of my insecure youth. The over-abundance of books & films on the Annual Lists, that is. During all those years when, in addition to frenetic fanzine production schedules, I was "socially active" (primarily in fandom ~~where I should have stayed!~~) -- I probably read no more than four or five books a year.

Watching films on video is easy, requiring little expenditure of effort; Going Out to see a movie, even one I want to, is something else again. Yesterday, the 15th, I drug myself out to see the reissued "Star Wars". Last year I paid matinee prices to see "Independence Day" and the latest Star Trek movie. Prior to those, even though I saw The Director's Cut of "Blade Runner" and some horrible "Birds" -rip-off (what was the name of that turkey, Dave?) courtesy of "free" passes -- the last movie I recall going to a theater to see was not the previous Star Trek movie ... but the one ["The Undiscovered Country"] before that -- back whenever.

I'm not that fast a reader. Just persistent. I generally have a novel "going" at home -- and a book (generally an anthology or collection) at work.

I have two Beta machines. Both play, but neither records any more. Like you, I'd like to get a new back-up unit. Despite all the tapes I "lost", I still have quite a few things on Beta -- primarily concerts -- that are irreplaceable.

...your "explanation" of the vagaries in spacing that is the result of the interfacing of these computers with this printer -- is probably just as likely as any more technical reason!

And I'd love to read a mystery novel by you.

Even though it'd likely be a lot more erudite than most of my current reading!

Buck Coulson

Ribs are tricky things. I broke a couple once and never knew it; the fractures showed up on an X-Ray I had some years (I think) later, and my doctor called me in to point out the knobby joints where they'd re-healed. I suppose it hurt, at the time, but not enough for me to remember any specific pain different from the usual bruises and bumps. (And -- maybe -- not "only you". I could have done it while coughing, but since I have no memory of it, I have no certainty of how it happened.)

Okay, I can certify that Jean Weber exists; I met her at Wiscon. (Though of course if you want to be stubborn, you could say I met someone wearing a "Jean Weber" nametag....) I got a photo, too.

Be thankful you're thin, Bill. I dropped from a high of 230 to about 180 after the first heart attack and 170 after the second, and everyone told me how much healthier I looked, and how much better, and so on. Of course, due to allergy-related problems I wasn't eating much this spring and got down to 150, but some new medicine seems to have solved most of the problems and I trust I'm going back up now. Fat people tend towards heart trouble.

I understand about having the vet put down your kitten. I had to shoot the first dog I had when we moved here; in fact, she got moved with the rest of the family. She was a stray hound who drifted in to our place with no identification. Some years after we moved, she was acting lethargic, and the vet diagnosed cancer. He said to do nothing until she quit eating, and then "put her down". He didn't know how well Kari liked to eat; she could barely move at the end, but was still eating, so I gave her a dogbone and shot her while she was enjoying herself. I didn't get another dog for several years, but eventually acquired Severian at the animal shelter because the doctor said I needed exercise. I got more than I needed, but Sev was a fine companion until he ran practically under the wheels of a pickup truck and was killed. I let him run loose for awhile before I attached the leash and walked him, and it turned out to be a mistake. (But getting hauled along behind an eager dog that's stronger than you are is also a mistake....) Now we have a (mostly) Golden Retriever, also from the animal shelter, which had started to put the dog down twice and each time decided to postpone it. I recommend animal shelters; if the animals in them aren't adopted, they will be killed, because shelters have limited finances and can't handle all the strays. It's taken Elli almost a year to recover from the abuse she had from her former owners, but she's beginning to act like a normal dog again. Our "cat plague" -- we had 22 here at one time -- was wiped out by disease and we're down to two elderly neutered tomcats, who sit around and complain a lot. I try to sympathize; growing old is no fun. (But better than the alternative, of course.)

By the way, where were you at Rivercon? I said hello or waved or something when I was talking to Dave, Roy, and several other people, and then I never saw you again. I was beginning to think I'd imagined it. [8/23/96]

> ...other than that one excursion into the huckster room, we spent most of the time in the "patio area" (with all the tables). But then, we weren't there all that long.

Maybe this year.... I like Rivercon, but I really can't justify taking a room (it's not as if it were a Catful/ after party -- and I'm getting far too old to crash in the CFG room any more. We'll see.

Robert Lichtman

It wasn't entirely a surprise to come home from Toner and the Worldcon and find, among the pile of mail, a copy of your *Xenolith* No. 38. Its appearance had been reported to me by various hands along the vacation route, and I was looking forward to it. Took me a while to get around to reading it -- besides what was waiting for me, I was hand-delivered at least a dozen fanzines while on the road, plus I bought various golden oldies -- and I enjoyed it in that old, familiar way I always get off on your publications. Even when all the news in them about your life isn't that good, your presentation is always impeccably clear.

Life has mostly been pretty good for me, aside from the deaths of Redd Boggs and Charles Burbee, two longtime friends, this spring, as you'll have read about in *Trap Door* No. 16 if you got it. I've had the same job (clerical for City of Santa Rosa) and

girlfriend (Carol Carr) since June 1987; an odd synchronicity, but a good one. My health has been mostly all right, with the exception of chronic sensitive skin problems leading to various rounds of antibiotics and the vigilant application of a heavy-duty cortisone-type cream when necessary. And of course the usual odd aches and twinges that come with age (I'm 54 now).

I've had the same car ('88 Chevy Nova 4-door hatchback) for 3-1/2 years now with no troubles and put nearly 75,000 miles on it. (All those trips to Las Vegas and Southern California on top of "basic travel" -- going to work and going to Carol's every weekend equals 320 miles a week -- have racked up.) My computer will be nine years old in a few weeks and shows no signs of breaking down. In fact, if you were closer and I could hand it off to someone, I would offer it to you and finally break down and get a new one. (Mine's nothing worth shipping to you: an IBM XT clone with one 5-1/4" floppy drive [the old 360K floppies only] and a 20 meg hard drive. You could probably get one locally for \$50 plus another \$50 for a second-hand monitor.) My laser printer, same age as the computer, has in recent months developed a tear on the fuser assembly main roller that causes some pages to have broken spots about a third of the way from the left side. It will eventually cost \$165 to fix, but that will include its first preventive maintenance in all those years. I could replace it for about twice and a little that amount, but then I'd be unable to get a printer definition for the printer (my software is WordPerfect 5.0) and I'd have to replace my computer. The damn' circularity of computer expense!

All this is pure reportage, FYI, not meant to be annoying contrast to the series of not so great stuff that's happened to you. Sorry about losing your cat. A bummer about your car being crunched. Did you get it fixed eventually, or are you driving it that way? (All but one of the auto accidents I've been in happened with one car, a '61 Chevy Biscayne, that I owned in 1968. It kept getting disfiguring bumps but nothing that prevented it from being operated, and it was mechanically all right. I kept collecting insurance payouts for repairs and putting the money away. After the third incident that year, I had enough to get another car and did so.)

And osteoporosis! Shit, major bummer, why you?

After that, I really was glad to encounter your comments mid-page on the final page before The Lists -- the section you sum up with "...and, yes, I still have my Dreams." That, and your "no promises" of another issue in December leave me feeling up after your fifteen pages of your "blow-by-blow." [9/26/96]

... I Also Heard From:

Sheryl Birkhead

Aha -- so it starts ...today XENOLITH 38 -- tomorrow the (out)world!

Yeah -- I understand a bit about how you feel about your Dad. When mine was "institutionalized" a while (during extensive diagnostics after bizarre behavior -- it turned out he had "Beaswangers disease" -- complicated and was NOT a manic depressive) I went to see him and the nurse greeted me with "oh, you must be the daughter who's in veterinary school -- he's so proud of you!" If only he had told me. Yeah -- approval. [8/23/96]

Jeanne Bowman

(...) Know I can't make Ditto -- the next weekend is Loren MacGregor and Lauryn Cones marriage & yours truly signed up for being "Best Man". Matron of Honor is Lauryn's costume design partner. At 6'3" he will wear the skirts for the occasion. Lauryn is designing a bunch of bustled style gowns. Me, I have already got my tux tails, a lovely charcoal grey. No ribbons, bows & flounces for me, thank you. But I will have to host the bachelor party & figger out some sort of toast (and keep a good attitude about the venerable institution in the process...)

So today I get a notice from Mr. B that he is moving to Iowa. Well, shit.

Splendid to get your XEN. You know it just occurs to me what that title means, in re hermitage. You are kinda weird, you know ...enjoyably so.

Hope you find a better way with your new machine -- watch out, I bought a copy of HOW TO SPEC TYPE & might come up with some informed criticism... [8/21/96]

* ...so, *HOW was The Wedding?*

Geri Sullivan

* ...who sent along a copy of one of the very few photographs of myself [from Corflu 13] that I actually like.

Michael Waite

* ...who sent Yet Another packet of his Gift of Stamps; it definitely helped make this issue possible!

Alan Hunter

I was delighted to receive XENOLITH 38 -- it shows that you are getting back on track and demonstrates conclusively that life must be improving for you, at last. I hope the return continues.

Life has been moving on for me also, with the usual mixture of triumphs and tragedies. Enclosed is a copy of an item about myself that appeared in CRITICAL WAVE. It is two years old now but nothing has changed for me in that time so there is nothing to add. I still miss Joyce. [10/15/96]

* In the mentioned article, Alan reveals: "For most of my working life, I have been an engineering draughtsman, culminating in a position as computer graphics operator ...". The first part of that job description also applies to me; as for the second portion: Well, they keep "promising" to equip me with a computer at work, but so far...

Sadly, the article also reports that Alan's wife, Joyce, died in May, 1994 -- after more than two years of fighting cancer. Such news makes all my own "troubles" seem insignificant in comparison.

Linda Michaels

Did want to say I don't think 100% personal fanzines are a waste of time -- just those that publish all the trivial + trite + non-informative works of others, or, even worse, the really bad fiction. Expecting intelligent or useful response to a personal zine -- that's probably a waste of time. But I'm sure the cathartic effect balances it out. And practicing more formal writing forms, like essays, seems a fun hobby. So there. [rec'd 11/15/96]

...and that covers The Response, this time around. Thanks to all who wrote -- and to all those who *thought* about it, but never got around to it. I understand.

I *suppose* that I technically could include one CHRIS SHERMAN in The List. But sending Dave Locke email saying that you're going to write to *me* doesn't really count...! **Bill** --- 2/23/97

FILMS VIEWED [138]

[**] = AMC

LISTmania :
-RELEASE.96-

BOOKS READ [51]

TOOL OF THE TRADE ['87]: Joe Haldeman
 STORMY WEATHER: Carl Hiaasen
 WORLDS ['81]: Joe Haldeman (2)
 WORLDS APART ['83]: Joe Haldeman
 WORLDS ENOUGH AND TIME ['92]: Joe Haldeman
 THE JERICHO ITERATION: Allen Steele
 MENACED ASSASSIN: Joe Gores
 DARK PASSAGE ['46]: David Goodis
 FLOOD: Andrew H. Vachss
 STREGA: Andrew Vachss
 BLUE BELLE: Andrew Vachss
 HARD CANDY: Andrew Vachss
 BLOSSOM: Andrew Vachss
 SACRIFICE: Andrew Vachss
 SHELLA: Andrew Vachss
 BORN BAD (c): Andrew Vachss
 DOWN IN THE ZERO: Andrew Vachss
 BATMAN: THE ULTIMATE EVIL: Andrew Vachss
 FOOTSTEPS OF THE HAWK: Andrew Vachss
 MURDER IN THE GUNROOM ['53]: H. Beam Piper
 SEX CRIMES (nf): Alice Vachss
 THE McCONE FILES (c): Marcia Muller
 I STILL MISS MY MAN
 But My Aim Is Getting Better:
 Sarah Shankman
 AN EYE FOR AN EYE: Leigh Brackett
 SAVAGE STREETS: William P. McGivern
 WINDY CITY BLUES (c): Sara Paretsky
 WILLARD AND HIS BOWLING TROPHIES:
 A Perverse Mystery ['75]: Richard Brautigan
 THE BROKEN PROMISE LAND ['96]: Marcia Muller
 TROUT FISHING IN AMERICA ['67]: Richard Brautigan
 PICKUP ON NOON STREET (c): Raymond Chandler
 NIGHTMARE TOWN (c) ['50]: Dashiell Hammett
 IN WATERMELON SUGAR ['68]: Richard Brautigan
 THE CREEPING SIAMESE (c) ['50]: Dashiell Hammett
 CHANCE ['96]: Robert B. Parker
 RUSH LIMBAUGH IS A BIG FAT IDIOT and other
 observations (nf) ['96]: Al Franken
 FLOATERS ['96]: Joseph Wambaugh
 MARTIANS AND MISPLACED CLUES:
 The Life & Work of Fredric Brown
 (nf) ['93]: Jack Seabrook
 THE FIVE-DAY NIGHTMARE ['62]: Fredric Brown
 TO KEEP OR KILL ['47]: Wilson Tucker
 INHERITOR ['96]: C. J. Cherryh
 THE CHINESE DOLL ['46]: Wilson Tucker
 SOMEBODY'S DONE FOR ['67]: David Goodis
 THE NET ['87]: Loren J. MacGregor
 HIGH PRIEST OF CALIFORNIA ['53]: Charles Willeford
 {plus 3-act Play of same...}
 UNUSUAL SUSPECTS (a) ['96]: ed. by James Grady
 FALSE ALLEGATIONS ['96]: Andrew Vachss
 WILD WIVES [Until I Am Dead] ['56]:
 Charles Willeford
 THE BLACK MASS OF BROTHER SPRINGER
 [Honey Gal] ['58]: Charles Willeford
 COCKFIGHTER ['72]: Charles Willeford
 REVENGE OF THE LAWN (c) ['71]: Richard Brautigan
 THE SHARK-INFESTED CUSTARD ['93]: Charles Willeford

THE FILE ON THELMA JORDAN [1:40] ['49]**
 BULLETS OVER BROADWAY [1:35] ['94]
 THE RIGHT TO REMAIN SILENT [1:37] ['95]
 OUT THERE [1:38] ['95]
 THE COWBOY WAY [1:46] ['94]
 THE NARROW MARGIN [1:12] ['52]**
 TRUE LIES [2:20] ['94]
 ADVENTURES OF PRISCILLA.
 QUEEN OF THE DESERT [1:32] ['94]
 CRISS CROSS [1:27] ['49]**
 JENNIFER EIGHT [2:05] ['92]
 MOLLY & GINA [1:33] ['93]
 FLESH & BONE [2:06] ['93]
 SHADOW OF A DOUBT [1:47] ['43]**
 THE PUPPET MASTERS [1:48] ['94]
 BABE [1:32] ['95]
 THE LAST SEDUCTION [1:50] ['93]
 THE GLASS WEB [1:22] ['53]**
 OBLIVION [1:29] ['94]
 BLOWN AWAY [2:00] ['94]
 QUIZ SHOW [2:12] ['94]
 THE REMAINS OF THE DAY
 NAKED ALIBI [1:26] ['54]**
 LOOKING FOR MR. GOODBAR [2:16] ['77] (2)
 PHANTOM LADY (Wm Irish) [1:26] ['44]**
 DISCLOSURE [2:08] ['94]
 THE SHAWSHANK REDEMPTION [2:22] ['94]
 THE FORCE [1:30] ['94]
 BLOOD ON THE MOON [1:28] ['48]**
 FIST OF THE NORTH STAR [1:29] ['95]
 TIMECOP [1:38] ['94]
 WHILE YOU WERE SLEEPING [1:43] ['95]
 MIAMI RHAPSODY [1:35] ['95]
 LADY IN CEMENT [1:33] ['68]
 THE NET [1:54] ['95]
 SHORT CUTS [3:07] ['93]
 THE SPANISH MAIN [1:40] ['45]**
 DOUBLE INDEMNITY [1:47] ['44]**
 CHAIN LIGHTNING [1:34] ['50]
 WOMAN IN HIDING [1:32] ['50]**
 WAR AND PEACE [3:28] ['56]**
 SPECIES [1:48] ['95]
 MARY SHELLEY'S FRANKENSTEIN [2:03] ['94]
 THE PAINT JOB [1:30] ['92]
 MRS. PARKER AND
 THE VICIOUS CIRCLE [1:58] ['94]
 THE FLAME OF NEW ORLEANS [1:19] ['41]**
 PORTRAIT IN BLACK [1:52] ['60]**
 COSMIC SLOP [1:27] ['94]
 TOUCH OF EVIL [1:48] ['58]**
 GOLDENEYE ['95]
 CRIMSON TIDE [1:55] ['95]
 AN INNOCENT MAN [1:52] ['89]
 TEMPTATION [1:28] ['94]
 SHATTERED [1:38] ['91]
 MACAO [1:21] ['52]**
 DECEPTIONS II: Edge of Deception [1:39] ['94]
 CONGO [1:48] ['95]
 THE 27TH DAY [1:15] ['57]
 BRAM STOKER'S DRACULA [2:07] ['92]
 A LOW DOWN DIRTY SHAME [1:40] ['94]
 THE WEB [1:27] ['47]**
 (Screenplay by William Bowers, et al)
 THE LADY GAMBLES [1:38] ['49]**
 THE SEVENTH VICTIM [1:11] ['43]**
 NIGHT HAS A THOUSAND EYES [1:21] ['48]**
 (Woolrich)
 THE FAT MAN [1:18] ['51]**
 THE USUAL SUSPECTS [1:46] ['95]
 THE MASTER RACE [1:36] ['44]**
 POWDER BURN [1:27] ['95]
 THE SLEEPING CITY [1:26] ['50]**
 AGAINST ALL FLAGS [1:23] ['52]**
 THE DRIVER [1:29] ['78]
 THE BIG SHOT [1:22] ['42]**
 JUDGE DREDD [1:36] ['95]

TO SIR WITH LOVE [1:45] ['67] (2)
 DEVIL IN A BLUE DRESS [1:42] ['95]
 KEY LARGO [1:40] ['48] (2+)
 THE GLITTER DOME [1:34] ['84] (2)
 CONFIDENTIAL AGENT [1:58] ['45]
 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA [1:33] ['43]**
 IT HAPPENS EVERY THURSDAY [1:20] ['53]**
 SO EVIL, MY LOVE [1:49] ['48]**
 ANOTHER MAN'S POISON [1:30] ['51]**
 FLAME OF BARBARY COAST [1:31] ['45]**
 DEAD CONNECTION [1:32] ['93]
 WATERWORLD [2:15] ['95]
 INDEPENDENCE DAY ['96] *theater*
 STAND-IN [1:30] ['37]**
 THE BLACK BIRD [1:38] ['75]
 PROBABLE CAUSE [1:34] ['94]
 DICK TRACY [1:45] ['90] (2)
 HUSH... HUSH, SWEET CHAROLETTE [2:13] ['64]**
 THE GRAPES OF WRATH [2:09] ['40]**
 DON'T LOOK BACK ['96?]
 THE HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL [1:15] ['58]**
 DEATH AND THE MADIEN [1:43] ['94]
 HEAVENLY CREATURES [1:39] ['94]
 NO ESCAPE [1:58] ['94]
 TWO YEARS BEFORE THE MAST [1:38] ['46]**
 NOTHING SACRED [1:14] ['37]**
 ALL ABOUT EVE [2:18] ['50]**
 JOHNNY MNEMONIC [1:36] ['95]
 IN OLD CALIFORNIA [1:27] ['42]**
 SLIGHTLY SCARLET [1:35] ['56]**
 (James Cain)
 LOVE IN THE AFTERNOON [2:10] ['57]**
 12 MONKEYS [2:09] ['95]
 THE LEFT HAND OF GOD [1:21] ['55]**
 CANADIAN BACON ['95]
 IN NAME ONLY [1:36] ['39]**
 THE KILLING BOX [1:21] ['94]
 STALKER [2:41] ['79] *Russian/sub-titled*
 THE SPY WITHIN [1:29] ['95]
 THE MEN [1:27] ['50]**

MIGHTY APHRODITE [1:35] ['95]
 BULLETPROOF HEART [1:37] ['94]
 THE OLD DARK HOUSE ['32]**
 MIDNIGHT LACE [1:48] ['60]**
 COPYCAT [1:57] ['95]
 THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE [2:10] ['68]
 BAGDAD CAFE [1:31] ['88]
 APOLLO 13 [2:20] ['95]
 SHE [1:34] ['35]**
 STAR TREK: First Contact ['96] *theater*
 FULL METAL JACKET [1:56] ['87] (2)
 BODILY HARM [1:28] ['95]
 STRIPTEASE [1:57] ['96]
 THE NAKED DAWN [1:22] ['56]**
 SUDDEN FEAR [1:50] ['52]**
 KISS THE BLOOD OFF MY HANDS [1:19] ['48]**
 GET SHORTY [1:45] ['95]
 BIRD [2:40] ['88]
 Kurt Vonnegut's HARRISON BERGERON [1:39] ['95]
 Tim Burton's
 THE NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS [1:16] ['93]
 SCARFACE ['32]
 SCARFACE ['83] (2)
 ASSASSINS [2:12] ['95]
 SPACE MARINES [1:34] ['96]
 2001: A Space Odyssey [2:28] ['68] ()
 2010: The Year We Make Contact [1:56] ['84] (2)
 TO DIE FOR [1:46] ['95]

CONVENTIONS ATTENDED [3]

#189 CORFLU 13 (9)
 #190 MIDWESTCON 47 (26)
 #191 OCTOCON 33 (19)

FANZINES PUBLISHED [2]

#192 flaf * NINE 1pg 05/11/96 FLAP 100
 #193 XENOLITH 38 20pp 08/11/96 FLAP 101

3/1/97: ...well, the FLAP "deadline" is the 5th, so I'd best get busy "wrapping" this. That's more easily said than.... In addition to the normal inertia, I've been "sick" since last weekend. I went to work Monday, lasted only 3 hours, took off Tuesday, went back Wednesday [No Go, No Pay!], and survived the rest of the week. I *should* have gone to the Doctor yesterday (Friday), but didn't, so now it's simply "hang on" 'til Monday....

Art's Mother was rushed to the hospital mid-week. Talked to my Mother this morning: she fell last Sunday and broke four ribs. Art has been sick the past few days ... he sounds worse than I do. Wonderful.

Eric was In Town from Sunday through Thursday -- but I never did get to see him.

My consolation-- for myself -- is that I keep telling myself that, with this happening *now* ... I'll be "recovered" enough by Corflu to be able to enjoy myself!

///. And see Eric!

That's the Theory, anyway.

All things considered, I was rather "pleased" with X:38. (Although the costs associated with even such a modest publication were a bit of a shock; it'd been a while and memory had done its trick.)

This issue ... I'm less satisfied with. Nothing specific; it just hasn't jelled. At least I've kept it under an ounce (albeit by utilizing vast amounts of micro-elite text), which ought to help with the reproduction/postage costs....

Hopefully Next Time -- and there will be a next time, somewhen -- I'll have it together, with Wit & Charm.

Yes.

...not to end on a downer: Life really is better than not ... and I do keep on going! Do the same!

 "... I lost my hope for humanity when my first ex-wife got custody of the entire Roy Orbison collection and I got Sonny and Cher."

--- Joseph Wambaugh; FLOATERS; p. 112