

OF CABBAGES AND KINGS (AND BABY TURTLES) Nov. 1977.

This agust (that is more properly august - but somehow under the rather rushed circumstances of my actually sitting down to type this the wind blown image pleases me too much to corflu it out.) fanzine is intended for FAPA mailing 161, Nov. 1977. The date tonight is October 29, 1977.

Bob won whatever contest there is for speed in recognizing the sound of a fanzine being produced. He appeared from upstairs asking if he was really hearing the fanzine he thought he was hearing as I was digging out the dictionary to be sure that I really had spelled august improperly up there. So I just asked him. If it's wrong, Jack Speer can fuss at Bob.

Many moons ago, but just a flash ago by FAPA Time, Jack Speer asked me why, if I had several lives to live, I would spend much of one of those lives working with and around religion. (I had said last February that I would spend one like I currently am spending this life, one as a reporter or some other aspect of the news media and a few other ways.)

Your question, Jack, made me stop and think. And thinking, sort out some of my own priorities, and having sorted, act on them.

You asked why religion. First, it depends on your definition of religion. I'm quite at home at the Unitarian Church that I go to. The draw of the particular Church was that I knew a number of the members of the Church and really liked the ways they were leading their own lives. The caring that they exhibited by the very ways they chose to spend their lives. The honesty I felt; the willingness to take responsibility for their own actions and lack of their own actions; the looking both inward at themselves and acceptance of what they found - and a willingness to continue to grow - and outward at their world and their place in the world; not a need to remake the world, but a willingness and a commitment to take a part of the responsibility for what their world is and to do their part to make their part of the world just a bit better as they saw better. Whether this meant being a small part of a large change or a large part of a small change.

this to me, is much of what the framework of a religious institution is all about. Within this framework, I 'go home' when I am a part of the community of this particular Church - my guess is that for different people, religion fills that particular need for their own particular brand of acceptance and 'going home'.

About July of 1976 I went to Church for the first time in a while, I had been going off and on, but knew which Church I was at home with - and it was there for me when I needed it, As I was coming - everyone else was drifting out after enjoying coffee. So I had a cup with the people remaining...a little surprised that the service wasn't beginning on time and that the first service people had stayed so late. I discovered after a while that I had missed

the service because during the summer there was only one service at 10:00 a.m. instead of two at 9:15 and 11:15 a.m.

During the next weeks I pondered. I realized that I had not been to Church but that once for over a year. And that I needed - or if you prefer wanted very much - that Church to be there for me when I did need it. When services began that fall I made a commitment to myself that I would be a part of that Church not only for the support that it had for me when I needed it, but so that it would be there for me and for the others. It seemed clear to me that if I wanted it to be there for me, that I had some responsibility to make sure that it was there when I needed it.

And so I began attending Church unless there was some specific reason why I couldn't. And so it went until you asked your question. Then I had to look again. And again, my commitment has deepened to that group of people who support each other and call themselves a Church. I am not doing any great disproportionate amount of the Church's work. I do the newsletter twice a month (and - somewhat to my surprise - enjoy doing it). There are a lot of advantages to that particular piece of Church business which make it particularly fun (i.e. as Editor I have control of what pieces of information are published and quite often slip in pieces about resources for seniors, appeals for help from run-away homes in the County, mental health conferences, or whatever I happen to run into that I found interesting and I think deserves wider distribution. It's probably about half a day's work per month. So to that small extent I have now chosen to live that small part of some other life (which I guess I'll never know whether or not I'll ever live it) which I spoke about. And I'm glad. Thank you.

I never know if I bore two-thirds of you to death when I talk about the things I am into (mostly mental health issues these days as well as other areas which are all related to my goal - we'll know a year and a few weeks from now...if not sooner... whether it will be realized - of being elected to the County Council of Prince George's County (pop. 700,000); except that I am again working with - for the fifth year - one of the teachers at an elementary school with the children in her class. I do that for me. I didn't do it last year. I was 'too busy'. I really missed my kids. So I decided that if I was 'too busy' this year, something else would have to go. It was a good decision.

Luckily I do not teach them punctuation.

It feels strange to have two children who are not little one. Our big girl, Missy, is eleven now, and Eric, our 'little one' is eight. Missy makes dinner on Monday and Thursday nights (and I clean her room once a week) and is doing a good job at it. Her special delight right now is gymnastics. She has made the Olympic Training team of our local YMCA and spends several nights a week practicing as well as Saturday.

Eric is really into Superheroes and Monsters. And has a very hard time figuring out why the rest of us aren't fascinated by long tales of these characters. Sigh. For a sense of wonder....

My friend, and small son, just wandered down here. I'm being serenaded by his piano playing...I think he wanted to have me listen for longer than I did before I began typing again. Sigh.

It's a hard life.

Rescued. Bob just called Eric to give him a bedtime snack and off to bed. Rah!

Calkins, et al, do the women involved in the exploits you tell about know about FAPA? Do they know you discuss your sex life in print? I am both interested because I think it would be a ball (opps!) to put down some of my feelings and reactions - questions even maybe - in print. And knowing I'd have a fit if Bob did and therefore I'd better not because if I do, why not him too....

And, knowing Bob, I'm not sure he'd be realll thrilled either... So I can't help but wonder what the ladies involved know and react to that knowledge. I also don't know if I'd care if I didn't know the people in the group. My guess is that I would if I were identified by name or through implication (like being the guy's wife or steady girl friend.)

And how would you feel if your lady began publishing in FAPA her reactions to your sex life? That'd be fun too. I must say, it does make interesting reading. And I'm glad you - all of you who have talked about this subject in some detail as far as I can remember - are enjoying yourselves. (Just for the record, so am I, even though I won't go into details.)

I seem to want to go to sleep more than I want to talk to you all right now. I must be getting to be an old fan and tired.

The next day. I just reread the first two pages and they seem even more like a flow of consciousness style of writing that I had thought. I never did like flow of consciousness writing. And I'm not real sure that I entirely answered Speer's question.

To answer it more succinctly, I'd like to spend one of my lives devoted to religion in the widest sense, as I feel it is interpreted in and by the people I know at that particular Church, wich is an extremely broad interpretation. I know several ministers (Methodist and Episcopal) who are personifications of the kind of life I'm talking about.

BILL WRIGHT - I'm glad you liked the FAPA Poll last year. Bob and I talked about it for quite some time before he put it on paper, then we dickered about how many points for what. I'm hoping that Father Evans will use the same format. Perhaps we can start a Tradition. I find that anything that's done twice in a row, a year apart is often considered a traditional thing to do. And the poll did seem to attract more voters than other recent polls. If there were any complaints, no one shared them with us...on the other hand, I'm still reading the August mailing.

Bill, you also asked the female members of FAPA if below the heart of every fan lurks a demon called a Collector. As far as I can see, Linda Emery was right when she suggested to you that only the male sex is cursed with this aberration. I save some things that I am fond of; I keep some things that I haven't gotten around to throwing out, but I can't imagine spending money (or time) to acquire something just because I had other things which would go with it, unless I intended to read the story in that particular issue or use the item in some other manner. Even a few things which I have picked up from time to time thinking that it would be fun to have, and having enjoyed, I just never think to look for others in the set. My daughter is somewhat the same; a bit more of an accumulator since she throws things out only when I fuss, but none the less, showing no signs of acquiring the collector's bug. My son on the other hand...has seed collections (six of each kind); leaf collections, sea shell collections rock collections, bottle cap collections, monster collections and a host of other collections. Bob is also so possessed. Some how I have had the good sense to understand that collecting is not a matter of choosing to do so, it just is...and space is not an issue in our house. So at least Bob can collect in peace. Luckily he does not collect like an Ed Wood.

Bobolings - Bob Pavlat - I just read your August contribution. You commented on Frank Denton's Scrambled Eggs Benedict 1 in almost exactly the same way that I responded to Bill Wright's question based upon Frank Denton's comments. Sigh, I wonder why I didn't read your comments earlier...

Bob Silverberg - Out here in the relatively wet East, we heard all sorts of stories about the demands to ration water and then when people actually complied - that they were charged more ... because it cost the same to produce less water ... and ... that they asked people to actually use more water and not conserve quite as much as they had been doing. All this sounded like rumors to me, and rather unlikely. But given the quirks of local (not to exempt other levels) governments and utility companies, who am I to question such stories. Can you confirm or put to rest these stories?

Bruce Arthurs - No particular comments, but I enjoyed reading this. By now your fears of What If... should have either faded or be firmly engrained. I hope they have faded. Which reminds me of when Bob and I got married (13 years 4 months and 10 days ago) and were figuring how we had been married a long time - about 8 or 9 weeks later. We were kidding about 'After all, we've been married 100 days.' Only to discover that we hadn't been.

Terry Hughes - You cracked me up with the story of buying the mimeograph from some sort of religious order in College Park. Their regulation of no shoes worn in-doors meant that you and your brother carried the mimeo outside in bare feet. You added "We were very careful not to drop it." Bong.

Bong (A light tap on the head accompanied by saying Bong) is the response my son invented last year for 'a very bad joke.'

And that story of yours definitely deserves a bong!

See you all in February. (I trust I'll do Of Members and Zines (and Egoboo Polls again this year). -- Peggy Rae Pavlat