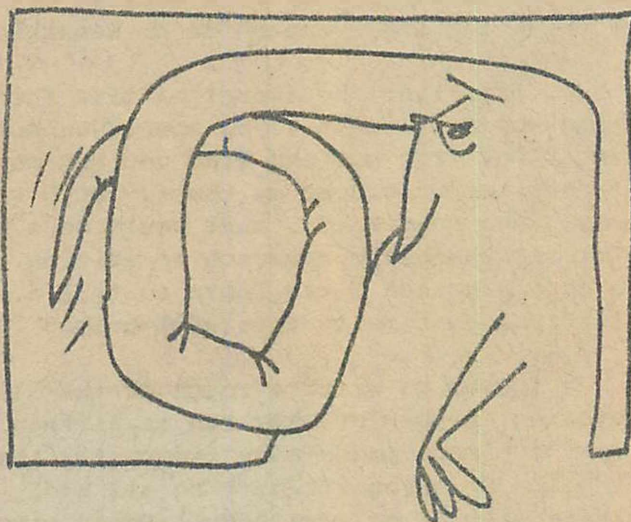


THE ROGUE RAVEN #27 is brought to you on a very cold and snowy night by Frank Denton, 14654 - 8th Ave. S.W., Seattle, WA 98166. Yes, I said snowy. Very unusual for this part of the country, but last night they were predicting that we would receive between one and two inches of snow. When we went to bed it was snowing and sticking. When we got up this fine Sunday morning, there were eight inches on the ground. Yes, very unusual for this part of the country, and it will be fun to see the mess tomorrow morning. Since we have so little snow, we don't cope with it very well. Tonight's weather forecast is for no more snow, but freezing every night and thawing every day. We don't cope with that any better. In fact, it may be worse. I'm not looking forward to my 18-mile drive tomorrow morning, that's for sure.



Well, I said that I wasn't going to do any more of these, didn't I. That only goes to show that you can't trust me, I guess. In truth, I haven't done one for a long time, and it is so much more simple to rattle one of these off than to do an issue of Ash-Wing. Or at least it used to be. I'm so out of practice, that only time will tell whether I can still do one or not.

But there are several reasons for doing one. There may be a time of change coming in my life, and it may necessitate some changes in the fanac in my life. I can't tell at the moment whether that will be good or bad, but I'll try to stay in touch with you. Things haven't been going too well for the past few months. My job has suddenly turned sour, and I'd just as soon not go to work at all. This depresses me greatly. It's a new and totally unexpected feeling, and, as one might guess, I'm having a difficult time coping with it. Part of it revolves around staff relations which I don't seem to be able to do anything about. Additionally, I see other things coming down the road which will not make the job any better. One is an extremely poor budget biennium facing us. The governor has promised us a 10% cut in budget for the next two years. That means a cut of \$181,000 for the college and a cut of \$40,000 for the library. I don't see how we'll make it. On top of this there have been increasing demands for all sorts of reporting from the state office and the legislature, all in the name of accountability. These sorts of things demand time and energy which I feel might be more fruitfully spent in other pursuits.

The upshot of all of this is that I am quietly looking for another position; one which is non-administrative and which will perhaps allow me to go back to being a bookman, instead of a paper pusher. Working with students and faculty in exploring the resources of the library, or any library, would be just fine by me. However, I do not have tenure, so there is no promise of a position where I am. Indeed, it is highly unlikely that I will have one with the college. The job market in other areas is not particularly good at the moment, but I have already begun to send out feelers. I am not totally opposed to going into an elementary or secondary school, if anyone is in need of a librarian. What I am most concerned about is finding something which will allow me to stay in the same retirement system. I have only 3½ years to go before I can retire, so that is something which I do not wish to give up. Meantime I am seriously considering a leave of absence. I can probably afford to take nine months off, hoping that during that time I can concentrate on looking for another position, and perhaps also finding some time to do some writing. At any



rate, I've had enough of sleepless nights and strange feelings in my stomach. And I think I'm smart enough to do something about it.

Curtailing the amount of time spent on A-W may also mean that I can spend more time where it ought to be spent, on doing some writing. Yes, I know. This is writing. But it's not the kind you get paid for. A couple of good evenings at the typewriter convinced me that I could turn out the words. Now if I could just make them into good words, that would be a great stride forward. I am a firm believer in the craftsmanship approach to writing. I may never write art, but please Ghu, with enough practice I may learn to tell a story. So a little more time at that and a little less time at this will help.

I used to write a rough of the old Rogue Raven in longhand, a little bit each evening, maybe for only ten or fifteen minutes. In reality, this would probably turn out more pages more frequently than Ash-Wing has been for the last couple of years. So maybe it won't be all bad. The last thing I want to do is tell you that there will be no more A-Ws. Every time I make a decision one way or the other, I change my mind before the next issue comes out. Let's just say that I'll play it loose and whatever you get in the mail is what I have done at the moment. No big decisions.

#### A REVIEW OR TWO

Wyst: Alastor 1716 by Jack Vance. DAW Books, #312, November 1978. \$1.95

Jack Vance is one of my favorite authors and I look forward eagerly to each new offering from him. I was disappointed through most of the first half of this book, but in thinking it over, it was because I disliked the setting. Jantiff Ravensroke, a young artist, has gone to the city of Arrubus on the planet Wyst. Millions of people live jammed together, professing a philosophy of egalism. They work only 13 hours a week, and turn most major projects over to contractors from outside their culture. They seem a singularly unlikeable people, and I guess that's what bothered me. Indeed, Vance has done an excellent job of portraying them in their petty squabbles, in their forays into the wilds where they steal food which they cannot obtain in their cities, and in selfishly putting together 'bonterfests' where, having saved money, they have the gypsies put on gluttonous feasts for them. Jantiff is falsely accused of a murder, and escapes, but knows that it is because he is on to a strategem which will replace the four leaders of the city.

He escapes to an outlying town, where he must earn his living by using his head and dealing shrewdly with the native population. Here some of Vance's own philosophy comes through, but I must admit that it is the most interesting part of the novel. Help arrives at last, and in time to return to Arrubus and break up the takeover, as well as to begin some reconstruction to a different sort of society.

Both The Star King and The Killing Machine have recently been reprinted by DAW. The Palace of Love should be along shortly, and the word is that Vance will be completing the other two novels in this particular series. My hope is that he writes for many more years. I love him.

The Clock of Dreams by Brian Lumley. A Jove/JBJ Book, April 1978. \$1.75

This is not exactly my cup of tea, but I had had it recommended to me and I thought I'd give it a try. It's in the tradition of H.P. Lovecraft, and revolves around the Cthulhu Mythos. By use of a time-clock, Henri De Marigny goes to dreamland to find his friend, Titus Crow. But Crow and his lady, Tiana, have been captured by demons. This sets De Marigny off on a series of adventures in dreamland. There is some awfully good excitement, but an awful lot of slow going as well. Many of the images are very nice. People into Cthulhu already know about this, I'm sure.



Others may wish to give it a try. It's not exactly my favorite sort of story, and about one book of this type per year is usually enough. I'm glad I read it, but don't want another of its sort for quite a while.

*FROM THE FROZEN NORTH:* Last summer Sal DiMaria visited here while taking in the King Tut Exhibit. At the time he told me that he had been turned down by the Peace Corps but had an application pending with VISTA. He was accepted by the latter and has since been posted to Kodiak, Alaska where he is involved in helping some villages develop. Herewith are some excerpts from a recent letter.

"Winter has hit here with a bang. Several inches of snow has fallen on Kodiak and the weather is rapidly turning colder. There is slush in the streets, though, which shows that the temperature isn't that low yet. I've moved into a house that I'm renting with my project supervisor. The house has 2 bedrooms with lots of dresser and closet space and a pretty large living room with a fireplace (which I have a feeling will definitely be used this winter), and a kitchen with an electric stove. The house is warm and clean and about a mile from work. It's in a residential section of town, near the water and near lots of trees.

"The job is slow, but will probably be picking up. I've visited 3 villages on the island already, though I haven't spent much time in any of them. The villages themselves aren't too pretty (what with roads being built and lots of mud all around) but their locations are spectacular. This place is going to be beautiful in the summer. Too bad I have to get through the winter first.

"As for what I'm reading: Phil Farmer's The Fabulous Riverboat is the only sf book I'm on now. I'm also plowing through James Clavell's Shogun. I shouldn't say plowing because I'm enjoying it immensely. It just takes forever to read. Also picked up the November issue of Omni - a great issue. I'll be looking forward to more. Thanks for the offer of books, but there is an excellent bookstore in Kodiak, the Shire. It has a fairly good amount of sf and all that. Mike Kring and Vardeman wanted to send me an sf "care" package, but I declined. I've got lots to read."

So much for misconceptions about Alaska. I was so certain that sf would be hard to come by in Kodiak that I offered to send books to Sal. Obviously Mike Kring and Bob Vardeman offered to do so also. We all got fooled. A good bookshop in Kodiak. Hmmm. I wonder if they have anything I'm looking for. // Sal has been living in Albuquerque for some years now, although he was originally from New York. It will be interesting to hear how he copes with the Alaskan winter. I hereby designate him as our far north correspondent. Hell, Sal, I've got eight inches of snow in my front yard right now, which may be more than you have up there at the moment. Keep us posted.

11-26-78: Well, Thanksgiving has come and gone and I thought I'd punch out a few more words before the holiday weekend is over. And I need to preserve a little time before bed for Ngaio Marsh's new mystery, Grave Mistake. I read about half of it last night and she is writing as well as ever about Superintendent Roderick Alleyn. Thanksgiving was a time of gathering, although there isn't as much to gather as there used to be. Shannon is still in San Diego, although she did visit here for a week earlier in the month. Tim is home from wandering and has gone to work in a machine shop. Sean, of course, has never left the area, being content to rock and roll locally with his band, and to have a t-shirt business which does them pretty well. Anna Jo's sister, who has three kids of her own, all of college age, invited us to share the holiday with her. So we did the pies and sweet potatoes, Sean did the salad, and we drove down to Lacey to see what the groaning table would hold. More than enough. Like many others around the country, I gained three pounds. Terrible. We had a very enjoyable afternoon with the meal and the conversation catching everyone up on what



various members of the family had been doing. One fellow, a friend of my niece, was into punk rock and it was interesting to hear some of the talk about groups which I don't know anything about. So much music being made these days that it is impossible to keep up with it all. A new import record store has been opened by the fellow who owns the record store which I frequent. An incredible amount of stuff from England and various places on the continent. It was bad enough trying to keep up when he had just a nice selection of imports in the main store, plus all of the domestic records. Now there are two separate stores to check out and not nearly enough money to buy everything I want. But I have digressed.

Yes, Thanksgiving was a nice day. The snow had melted enough that there was no problem in traveling. I must say that there was a lot of traffic on the road, but no problems. My sister-in-law lives very near where I went to high school at a boarding school. My friends and I used to walk all over the area on a Saturday or Sunday. It was amazing to see the changes, although I certainly ought to expect that there would be a lot of growth in the thirty years since I graduated from that school. There are a few buildings left which I recognized, but not very many, and, of course, areas which were wild now have housing developments. Yes, time passes.

I can't say that we did anything else exciting over the holiday. Just sort of stayed home and caught up on sleep. I had a wayward idea of going to Portland for a day and seeing friends, but it came to naught. We do have to get down that way soon. We also need to get up to Vancouver and over to Chilliwack to see fannish friends. Meantime, the Spales, Bob and Carol will be through here by the end of the week. We haven't seen them for a couple of years, so are awaiting that pleasure. Bob gave me my first batch of F&SF, and I blame him for starting me on collecting. He just laughs evilly when I say that.

#### JUST WHAT I ALWAYS NEEDED

Anna Jo was commenting the other day about the upcoming Christmas season and not being really ready to tackle the Christmas shopping. We may just slack off this year. At one point in the conversation she wondered aloud what the new electric gimmick might be for this year. It seems that each year at Christmas time we see something new to use electricity. Electric mustache curlers, ear wax removers and fingernail clippers. I allowed as how it looked like 'the year of the computer game.' Anything from \$4.95 up. It ought to drive parents crazy figuring out which one to give to their kids.

Anyway, as I was watching Tarzan (with Ron Ely) followed by Star Trek (I think this was the fourth episode I had ever seen in my entire life) I was treated to a whole line of ads from some outfit called Ronco. Marvelous stuff. A lot of "you can't buy this record in any store" sort of stuff. Disco Delight, Mellow Moods. All wonderful stuff. But the ultimate, which made me fall off of my chair, was an electric egg beater which beats the egg right in the shell. I kid you not. It looks as if there is a small motor in the base, a small cup shape to put the egg in, and seemingly a short pointed shaft set at a slight angle. You place the egg down in the cup, evidently breaking through the base of the shell, turn the machine on, and it whips the egg inside the shell. Then you break the egg into your frying pan or whatever. Absolutely essential to every kitchen. What will it be next? Do you have a favorite electrical device? Write me and tell about it. We'll share our delight in the ingenuity of mankind.

Second issue of OMNI is out and I still haven't made up my mind about it. They obviously are giving new writers a chance, as Lloyd Biggle is the only name fiction writer appearing of the four stories. I'm not convinced that it's worth \$2. I have found some of the articles interesting, but no more so than those I find in Natural History or The Smithsonian. What opinions do you folks hold at this point in the development of the magazine?



ULTIMATE EGOBOO

Nestling deep in the mail box the other day, cuddling up to the Christmas cards and the oil and telephone bills, was a new personalzine, TANTRUM, from none other than Bruce Pelz, one of the mainstays of LASFS and sometimes editor and publisher of his own genzine, PROFANITY. In his own inimitable style, Bruce wrote about LosCon and other happenings. At the very end, he hoped that he could make Tantrum like The Rogue Raven. \*blush\* Well, that's the best egoboo I've had in a long time. What I hope is that Bruce has fun doing Tantrum and that others enjoy it as much as I did, sitting nestled in my big chair late in the evening and devouring every word. Thank you, Bruce, and I hope you throw many more tantrums....our way.

RENO, NEVADA -- TINSELTOWN AND FANTASYLAND!!!

Probably a good share of the rest of this issue will be taken up with my observations on the human condition in the land of one-armed bandits. I had never visited Reno before, nor, for that matter, the state of Nevada. I have had an occasional thought about doing so, but Anna Jo was never particularly interested, so we haven't done so.

The occasion was finally brought about by the accreditation process which I have spoken of in some of my apazines and in Ash-Wing. To recap briefly, the college where I work was up for accreditation this year. Being accredited means that students can transfer credits and that persons in "terminal programs" in the occupational areas have some trust that employers know that the institutions programs have been monitored and have integrity, and that the learning experience has been worthwhile. Our accrediting association is the Northwest Association of Secondary and Higher Schools. It granted us our first accreditation in 1973 for a period of five years.. This year we were up for accreditation again.

A self-study, taking approximately a year in time, is the first step in the process. Since the person previously responsible for this was due to retire in June, the president of the college asked me to chair the accreditation process. I established a steering committee, twenty-six committees with faculty and staff involvement and a timetable for reports. In July and August I edited the reports into a self-study document of nearly 200 pages. September I saw it through the final typing and printing and got it distributed to the visiting team. October saw 12 visitors from institutions of higher learning all over the west. They had been appointed by the association to come and look at us and to see if we were telling the truth in our self-study.

I was also responsible for all arrangements for the visit; hotels, a formal luncheon with district chancellor and board of trustees, transportation, secretarial support and general assistance in seeing that appointments were made for the visitors to see whomever they wished. They stayed three days observing, talking to faculty, staff and students, as well as administrators. The visit seemed to ve a great success. We enjoyed it, and so did the team. They went away and wrote a 48-page report, which the president of the college and I were allowed to see. We could correct errors of fact, but could not comment other than that. This report was then sent to the Commission on Higher Education of the accrediting association.

Where the hell does Reno come into all of this? Ah, the annual meeting of the association was held in Reno on Dec. 3-6 and the college president and I had to appear before the commission for the final hearing. I lucked out. Ordinarily this meeting is held in Portland, Oregon. But once every so often, they meet in Reno. The executive secretary had made arrangements for the meeting to be held at the MGM Grand even before it was built. He even talked them into a \$29 room rate, which, I understood, the hotel had been trying to break ever since. But he stood firm.



Dr. Baxter, the college president, and I flew down on Sunday afternoon. I damn near didn't make it. Anna Jo dropped me off at the airport at about 12:25 for a 1:00 flight. It seemed like plenty of time for me, as I had my ticket and merely needed to check in my luggage. Ha! The line wasn't too long, and I wasn't very worried. But a party of four two spaces in front of me were booked through Chicago. Evidently something serious was happening in Chicago and nothing was flying either in or out of that toddling town. So the agent began to punch the keyboard of his terminal trying to find a way to re-route these people. Meantime I stood on one foot and then the other as the clock kept moving on. At 12:55 I could see the television screen flashing "final" boarding for Reno. I yelled at a clerk who took my bag and told me to run.

At Seattle-Tacoma International you usually must take an escalator down one floor, go through the security check, and then take the underground train to another concourse. Even though the train runs at two-minute intervals, it seemed I had to wait for it much longer. Once off the train, it's back up another escalator. Then I made like O.J. Simpson and sprinted the length of the waiting room to my gate. The seat agent saw me coming and yelled at someone to get one more tray from the food caterer. I went through the door of the plane at exactly 1:00, huffing and puffing. I swear that the plane was rolling by the time I reached my seat and got buckled in.

The flight down was uneventful, or, at least, I think it was. I buried my head in the evaluation report of the visiting team, attempting to outguess what questions might be asked of us. There was fog on the ground and many layers of clouds which we finally climbed above, so not much was to be seen. As we got close to Reno I did see Pyramid Lake, with strange formations sticking up from the bottom at the north end. Then within a few minutes, we were on the ground.

The Reno airport is in the process of expansion, very understandably. The city seems to be growing rapidly; air fares have come down, and the attraction of gambling is bringing many more people into the city by air. From the plane we walked into a long corridor inside the building which had a plywood floor and very much an "under construction" look to it. Arriving at the main lobby, the culture shock hit with a bevy of slots and the ching-ching-ching of payoffs. I laughed right out loud.

Having gathered our luggage together (I wasn't sure that mine would arrive on the same plane) we found a row of limousines lined up outside the airport. For \$2 apiece we could arrive in style. I must say it's been a long time since I have ridden in anything quite so luxurious, smooth and quiet. One of the women seated behind me remarked that Reno was growing and looking more like Las Vegas every time she came out. I presumed from her accent that she was from the east, possibly New York, and from her comments that she came here regularly.

We got checked into the hotel and I must say that the first view of the casino, which occupies much of the main floor, is spectacular. I'll go back to this later. We got to our rooms, but our bags did not for some time. Lucky for us we were dressed for the hearing already. If we had needed to change we would not have made it. Our hearing was scheduled for 4:30 p.m., but we arrived early. Seated across from us in the hallway were the president and dean of Linfield College in Oregon, also up for accreditation this year. We had a nice visit with them and were interrupted once to be told that the day's proceedings were running behind. At about 4:10 Linfield was called in and they didn't come out until 4:50, at which time we were ushered into the huge room. Dr. Baxter and I were introduced to the commission, which was seated at a long table stretching away from us. There were thirty people seated along it. Dr. Shafer, President of Lane Community College in Oregon, had been the chairman of the visitation team and he introduced us. The chairman of the commission gave us welcome and the hearing was on.



Dr. Shafer gave a short statement about the visitation and the report the team had written. Dr. Baxter responded with a statement of how he felt the self-study was successful. Two commission members had been appointed to ask questions, to act as devil's advocates, so to speak. They asked a total of five questions, which I felt Dr. Baxter fielded admirably. The commission chairman asked for questions from the rest of the commission, and there were none. He thanked us for our attendance, and stated that we would hear the results of our accreditation by letter, probably the following week. At 5:10 we were dismissed from the room; the entire proceedings had lasted twenty minutes, rather than the forty minutes for which we were scheduled. This made us feel that what we had been through was merely a formality. I was pleased that I had not been called upon to do any more than lend moral support to the president. Retrospectively, I can report that the letter did arrive and granted us accreditation for another ten years. So, from my own standpoint, the entire exercise was successful.

Essentially, I was finished with any official business at the conference, although there was one day of meetings for liaison officers, which is the term for people who do the kind of work I had done on accreditation. I checked back to my room to see if the luggage had arrived, relaxed for a few moments, then went down to eat dinner. This was my first opportunity to see the Keno runners, who will pick up your numbers from the restaurant and return the official cards to you. They make it very easy to bet.

After dinner there was only one thing which interested me and that was jai alai. I had seen movies of this fabulous Basque sport, but had never had the opportunity to see it in person. It is only played in Florida, two New England states (this may not be quite correct, but two eastern states) and now in Nevada. Admission to the games was \$3. Before the evening's games commence, one of the officials gives a brief lesson for any newcomers to the sport. Although I knew how it was played, I sat in to see if I could learn anything new. Interesting. He told us all about how the game was scored and how to place bets with heavy emphasis on the latter. He wanted to make sure that we understood how to wager. It's really quite simple, especially if you have ever bet on horse races. It's done exactly the same, betting on a specific team for win-place-show. The betting is paramutuel, which simply means that you are betting against everyone else who is betting.

The sport is very exciting. It is the grand-daddy of all handball games, played on an extremely long three-wall court. The ball is slightly larger than a gold ball and just as hard. It is caught and thrown in a reed elongated basket attached to the players wrist. It is returned against the wall with incredible speed; they say the ball reaches speeds of 175 mph. Lots of skill and agility are required and it is very exciting to watch, especially if one has a small wager placed on one of the teams. Eight teams play each game, usually doubles (two against two) until one team wins 7 points. Twice a night singles matches are played, again with eight teams and here a quite different strategy comes into play. There is no partner to back you up.

I had a very enjoyable evening, wagering on every game. I bet a total of \$34 for the evening and won \$29 of it back. So for a very enjoyable evening I was out \$3 for admission and \$5 in wagering. I think it's fortunate that I don't live any closer to Reno as I could become completely hooked on jai alai. I was doubly fortunate to have made up my mind that I would attend on that Sunday night. It turned out that it was the last night before the players took a break. They wouldn't return to play until the 28th of December. I suspect that most of the players would want to go home for Christmas. All but 4 of the players are Basques from northern Spain where jai alai is the major sport. Four of the players were young Americans who seemed to be able to hold their own against the natives. In fact, when trophies were presented for the end of the first season at the MGM, three of the Americans placed in the top ten. Obviously, I enjoyed it a lot, and I hope that A-na Jo and I can go back to Reno sometime in the near future and see some more of it.



Monday was sort of a day off for me. I had no meetings to attend and thought that I would just goof off, but with a plan. One of my very good friends is Bill "Swampy" Marsh who lives in Carson City, not too many miles away. My original intention was to rent a car and drive down for the evening. But just on an off chance I also called to Dale Goble, who lives in Sacramento. I know that he has driven over to visit Swampy and that it is only a two-hour drive. So I called Gobe and told him what I intended to do. He said that he would take the day off and drive over in the morning to meet me.

Along about 10:30 there was a call for me to answer the house phone. It was Gobe to say that he had had to take his daughter to the dentist's office and that he would be along around 12 noon. I had not eaten breakfast, so went to the cafeteria to find some vittles. I found not only a substantial breakfast for about \$1.75, but also found my president and his wife. We had a very enjoyable conversation during breakfast and I got to know both of them better because of it. I should mention here that the MGM Grand's cafeteria is a real bargain. It is possible to spend a lot of time in the hotel without breaking yourself eating. Gaming, yes. And there are some very expensive restaurants in the same row as the cafeteria, if that's what you are looking for.

Around noon Gobe arrived, and went first to the cashier's window to set up check cashing privileges. There was no problem at all, and he cashed a check for \$50 so he would have some spending money for the day. I think he was hoping for a check cashing card, but evidently they do not issue such. They just keep your application on file and refer to it. Too bad; what a status symbol that would be. A check cashing card at the biggest casino in the world.

I had to stop by the main doors and show him a huge gingerbread house that was set up there. Snow on the roofs and on all the window sills, trees and snowmen in the front yard. A witch-like figure on the roof, a chalet-type porch on the second story front. It was a real work of art.

We got into his car and headed into Reno, stopping first at Ben's Discount Liquors. I don't know about where you live, but in Washington we have state stores. Only beer and wine are available in grocery stores or taverns. There were some excellent prices at Ben's, although the expensive brands still tend to be expensive. I was particularly hoping that Glenfiddich Scotch would be considerably cheaper. It was not. I came away with some Haig & Haig Scotch, a Midori melon liqueur, a Liqueur di Noche, black walnut, and a Bacardi rum for the Christmas punch. After gassing up, we headed south. Gobe took the route up through the hills to Virginia City.

It is not a long drive from Reno. The ghost town is not much of a ghost town anymore, I fear. At this time of year it is probably more ghostly than at any other time. Many of the stores were closed, but it is quite plain that the place really jumps during the tourist season. We walked the length of the town, down one boardwalk and up the other. We stopped at a tavern for a couple of beers and to talk about books. Gobe gave me a list of things that he is looking for. As we sat and drank we could look out the windows and see the tailings from the silver mines which were so lucrative at one time. It's astonishing to think that one vein of silver made Virginia City a boom town. And to wonder why there wasn't another vein just over that first range of hills. At the top end of town we found a gallery open with some marvelous western paintings. Marvelous prices, too. In the \$4500 - \$6000 range. The artist was a young Oriental by the name of D.K. Young. I think he was Korean, and it was discovered quite early in his life that he had talent. He was sent to Japan to study and because of his interest in the old west at that time, he continued to do western art. He does it very well. But we didn't buy, thank you. Gobe also showed me the old Catholic church, which unfortunately was closed. I would like to have had a look inside. He tells me that there is a beautiful stained glass window there.



Two other items of interest along the way were a big pot-bellied stove which had been shown at the St. Louis Exposition. It was plated in silver and gold. Wouldn't you love to have that in your slant shack? The other item which intrigued me was a rifle purported to be Annie Oakley's which was from the collection of Ken Maynard, old B-western star. I understand that Harold's Casino in Reno has an incredible gun collection on the second floor. Since I never did see downtown Reno nor the strip of casinos, I'll have to save that for a return trip.

On we drove to Carson City, with the sky getting black to the south and west. As we came into town, I spotted a bookstore which neither of us could pass up. It was not large and didn't have anything of interest to us. But, down the mall about four stores was a western art gallery and frame shop. We wandered down to see what was to be seen, and were treated to a lesson in western art. Both of us are slightly interested in such, and are familiar with the art of Frank McCarthy. This shop had five prints of McCarthy's for sale. The cheapest print was \$450 and the most expensive was \$900. These prints were numbered and were from runs of 1000 copies. I had been aware that western art was climbing in value and that the big auctions in the southwest bring good money. I have also heard that the Japanese are buying quite a bit of it as investment. It seems that it is, indeed, a good investment. We had quite a talk with the woman, who had at one time owned a gallery in Puyallup, not very far from here.

She told us quite a bit about McCarthy's art and the demands for it. The prints are done by The Greenwich Workshop in Greenwich, Connecticut and the quality is superb. They also do other artists works, but McCarthy may be their most famous at the moment. There are 1800 dealers on the waiting list for those prints with a 1000 run. That means that 800 dealers do not even get a print of a particular painting. A little calculation also tells me that the one for which \$900 was being asked means that the total would be \$900,000. Not bad. McCarthy has been a paperback and magazine illustrator, and some years back did the movie posters for the early James Bond movies. He has been accepted into the gallery at the Cowboy Hall of Fame (boy, do I want to visit that sometime) and is a member of the Cowboy Artists of America. He is also very insecure and thinks that the bottom is going to drop out of all of this at any moment.

A couple of other painters whose works are being printed and which the woman thought were comers were James Bama, another western artist, and Richard Bateman, whose wildlife paintings look as though the animals were going to walk out of the painting right at you. He does both North American animals and African animals. His leopards are just beautiful. These two painters don't have quite the reputation of McCarthy and their prints are going for a lowly \$160 apiece. Bama has recently been accepted into the Cowboy Hall of Fame, so look out. He'll surely rise in price. The entire conversation was a real lesson. I'm afraid I can't do anything about it as an investment, but it certainly increased my appreciation for this style of art.

We stopped in downtown Carson City for a bite to eat, then drove out to Swampy's house. We had a wonderful evening of watching Monday Night Football, talking about science fiction, old time radio, the Reno-Carson City area and many other topics. Swamp had a marvelous cold spread laid out for us, as well as more beer than we could possibly drink up. The evening passed all too quickly. Mary, Mrs. Swampy, came home from work about midnight and we caught up on what was going on with her. About 1:30 in the morning we thought it was probably time to leave. Swampy is a high administrator with the Nevada Highway Department and had a meeting in the morning with the Highway Board, which includes the Governor. I mean, I've been at legislative breakfasts with our local legislators, but never with the gov. Don't think I want to, come to think of it. It was tough to break away from the good conversation, but had to be done. We stood around the car, saying goodbye and looking at the bright stars in the sky.



We hadn't gone three miles before we ran into a blizzard. Wind blowing and the snow whipping every which way in the headlights. And the snow on the ground was blowing across the surface of the highway, making it very difficult to keep the road itself in perspective. I did not envy Gobe his task of driving, and he wasn't having any fun. The snow was not building up on the road very badly, so he was able to drive 40-45 mph most of the way home. Just as we got back to the Reno city limits, the snow stopped and we had only wet streets to contend with. We got back to the hotel about 1:30 in the morning and decided to have a snack. By the time we talked some more, it was three in the morning. I had a room with two double beds in it and had told Gobe to spend the night with me, as he didn't have to go to work until swing shift the following day. He could look around the hotel and casino in the morning, drop a few dollars at roulette and still drive home in plenty of time to work. Me, I had to get up early in the morning and begin meetings at 9:00. And so to bed.

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Well, I'm going to leave off my tales of my adventures in Sin City and close off this issue. I have plenty more to tell, never fear, but ten pages of TRR is enough at one time. I will try to get this out before the end of the year, and will also send a lot of issues, more than I usually do. For one thing, I want to keep in touch with other fanzines and their editors, and, secondly, I thought I'd take one last advantage of this year's bulk mailing permit. I can send 200 by bulk mailing cheaper than I can send 80 by 1st Class.

Ash-Wing has become so infrequent that it's best not to fold this as I was originally planning. So another issue may be along shortly after the first of the year. On which I'll close wishing you a Very Merry Christmas and the Happiest of New Years.

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