

NUMBER 44

This is THE ROGUE RAVEN 44, the fanzine that you may have thought had died. It comes from the domicile of one Frank Denton, 14654 - 8th Ave. S.W., Seattle, WA 98166 and is dedicated to the proposition that you can't beat summer sunsets outlining the Olympic mountains and providing splendid views across Puget Sound. There is a park along the beach only a few minutes drive from our home, and I don't take advantage of it often enough. It's just large enough to provide a 30-40 minute walk. It's much more scenic than a walk around beautiful downtown Burien. I should remember to go there more often. Oh, yeah, you can also have this for the usual, you know the occasional postcard, loc, music tape, whatever.

"If you can't send me good sense, at least send me rain."

I've thought about doing shorter issues in the hopes that they might become more frequent. I've been impressed by Andy Hooper and Carrie Root's SPENT BRASS and I've also enjoyed the JOE WESSON MAGAZINE, including his lively letter column. Maybe now that I've quit teaching, I'll find time to include some of the fine letters that I receive once again. Time will tell.

1-4-92 WE'RE NUMBER ONE

The University of Washington football team was recently voted No. 1 by the coaches while Miami University in Florida was voted No. 1 by the sports writers of the AP, so it seems that the Huskies will kiss their sister and share the honors. Seattle is primarily a football town; the Sonics do OK in basketball, and while the Mariners have improved this past season, the manager has been fired (once again) and the team is up for sale (once again).

Over the college football season I have watched a fair number of games. I'm always amused that near the end of each game the team that appears to be winning is filled with players on the sidelines indicating with forefinger that they are #1.

It's been a long time coming, but the Dawgs (as we affectionately call them) can truly hold up that finger and boast that they are #1. It has never happened before and it may not happen again, so I thought I'd better make note of it here while I have the opportunity. [I'm just looking this over and I should note that we've gone past the NCAA basketball tournament, the Stanley Cup playoffs, and are starting NFL workouts. The Canadian Football League starts this week. Time sure flies when you're having fun. But I just couldn't pass up the opportunity to stick this in, no matter how old. I may never have this chance again.]

1-4-92 THOUGHTS ON RUSSIA AND THE CIS

I recently received Arthur Hlavaty's Derogatory Reference #71 in which, among other things, he comments on the demise of the Soviet Union. His thoughts took a different direction from my own recent thoughts on the upheaval of the Communist government, the attempted coup, and now the falling apart of the bloc into separate components.

The pictures coming to us on television concerning the ordinary citizen shopping after the New Year's decontrol of prices as they attempt to move into a market economy show us the same long lines and the same empty shelves. The expectation that the higher prices would immediately bring a greater supply

was not borne out and the Russian citizen must be not only frustrated but terribly disillusioned that it did not happen. I've read that some economists say that it will take a couple of generations for those countries to work themselves into a true market economy.

I've known some Russian people and they were terrific folks, loving, sharing, filled with love for their country, Mother Russia. And I feel sad that they've had to live under a system for so many decades that has robbed them of their initiative, has rewarded members of the party, and left the rest of them out in the cold. I think these people, who have known no other system, are going to have a very difficult time for many years. They are not prepared for what is happening to them. I hope that they can learn quickly and survive. They survived a great deal during World War II; if they could survive the war, maybe they can survive the peace.

While it's natural for us to rejoice that the threat of war is no longer there, that the Cold War is over, I don't take much pleasure in thinking about the problems of food, housing, utilities, etc. that they now face.

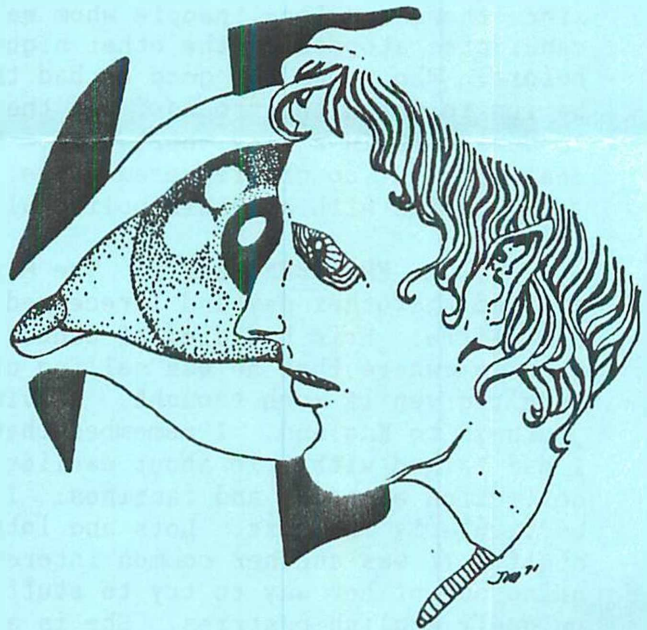
I've wondered for a long time about the system that, having possibly the greatest natural resources in the world, cannot feed its people nor supply them with decent housing, much less such ordinary commodities as refrigerators, cars, etc. that we in the west take for granted. They don't even have a decent highway system to get food and other products to the market. What have they been doing for these last 70 years?

Well, I've wandered on a bit. These are just some of my idle thoughts as I see those pictures and wonder about how Ivan and Katerina are going to make out, at the meat counter, at the grocery shelves, and at the pay window.

2-4-92

Grumble! Grumble! It's election day and they've moved my precinct. And there's only one issue on the ballot. Ah, well. The previous polling place was at our county library branch, just a mere two blocks down the hill. Now it is at Seahurst Elementary School.

Well, it's necessary to vote, since it's a school levy issue. It's necessary to walk since the doctor says so. It's necessary to mail some payments at the post office, since it's the beginning of the month. So I combined all three and was out for about 40 minutes. The school where we now vote is the school for which I moved to the Seattle area. I had been



offered a junior high school librarian's position and accepted it. The school changed from a junior high school to an elementary some years ago now. I entered the main hallway of the school to take a look at my old library, although arrows pointed clearly to the voting area down another corridor. Unfortunately, a group of teachers was meeting after school, or I would have gone in to look around. Essentially it was the same as I left it almost thirty years ago. Two listening rooms had been taken out to provide more table space and wall space for shelving. Other than that it looked quite well, having apparently been treated well by the hordes of kids who must have used it during those many years.

At the polling place, not much was happening. There were more voting officials than there were voters. But it was late afternoon, and a swarm would come in early evening after their work day was finished. With only one issue on the ballot, it's very difficult to make the 60% of 40% required. 40% of the numbers who voted in the last general election must vote to validate, and the yes votes must be 60% of those who vote. Tough to make with nothing else on the ballot. In another month we'll vote on cityhood for the fifth time since we moved to the Burien area in 1962. That ought to bring out a lot more folks. And I think (I hope) that the issue has a lot better chance to pass this time. A lot of folks are pretty fed up with the plans the county government has for our area. If it passes, Burien will be a city of 27,000.

The fellow who handled my ballot (we use a punch out system which is then tallied in some mechanical fashion) was reading a book between times. Always curious about what other people are reading, I took a look at the title. Sleepwalking Through History; The Reagan Years. "An apt title," I remarked. He smiled.

[Sometime later: The later election concerning cityhood for Burien has taken place and passed. This fall will see the election of a seven-person city council. Primary elections have been held, and in September there will be run-offs. At least a part of the electoral process will have meaning, since these are local people whom we know or know about. One of the candidates stopped by the other night, and we talked. This has never happened before. Who knows how good or bad this new city government will be? It will be fun to watch the process, and the new council will have a ton of problems to deal with in a very short time. But at least we no longer will have to deal with our county representative, who did, in our estimation, a very poor job. What's with all this political stuff, Denton. Get off it!]

R.I.P. ERIC BENTCLIFFE: The May issue of Science Fiction Chronicle arrived the other day and I received a shock when I read the obituary of Eric Bentcliffe. Eric had died of cancer and I hadn't known about it. I had heard from somewhere that he was selling off his book and fanzine collection, but hadn't given it much thought. We visited Eric and Beryl on one of our early journeys to England. I remember that the Bentcliffes had been splendid hosts. I had talked with Eric about earlier English fandom, and had seen his collection of books and fanzines. I also marveled at his music collection, particularly the jazz. Lots and lots of it, especially on tape. Big band stuff. It was another common interest between us. I also remember Beryl going out of her way to try to stuff us with great food and particularly with uniquely English pastries. She is a terrific cook and baker.

Later Eric and Beryl came to western Canada on a visit and then took the

bus down from Vancouver to stay for four or five days with us. We tried our best to show them the sights of Seattle and environs. I remember a trip to Mount Rainier, a late summer night crossing of Puget Sound on the ferry to Bremerton and return on the last ferry, with the skyline of Seattle spectacular as we approached about 1 in the morning. We introduced the Bents to Winchell's doughnuts and one morning I made hotcakes for breakfast, a new taste treat. Their daughter, Lindsay, was a teen at the time and spent the time trying out her American slang on us to see if it was right. I remember telling her that I thought that she had learned it from watching too many Edward G. Robinson movies. We had a good time teasing her about that and about a boy friend whom she was missing. She took it all in great stride. The Bents were to fly home from Vancouver and we drove them back to Vancouver and the airport. It was on the same day that Mt. St. Helens did her most spectacular eruption. Coming back to Seattle I thought that something was on fire in the city, but as we came closer we suddenly realized that it was yet another eruption. I often wondered what kind of a view the Bents had from the airplane as it took off and gained altitude. But I always forgot to ask.

A couple of summers back Eric and Beryl came to western Canada again. They had a suite in a Vancouver hotel and invited us to come up and stay with them. Which we did for a couple of nights. We wandered the city, took the sea bus across to North Vancouver, wandered Robson Street and generally had a good visit. Eric had purchased a video camera perhaps two years earlier and was enthusiastic about editing his tape and finding music to accompany his travel footage. He was quite proud of the videos he had been able to assemble. When I heard that he was selling off his science fiction collection, I presumed that his interest had finally waned to the point where he no longer felt the need to hang on to it. Now I suspect that it was an attempt to leave a little extra money for Beryl and to relieve her of the burden of trying to find someone who would be interested in purchasing it. Eric was a Knight of St. Fanthony, but I suspect that most of his fannish life was from before he met Beryl. He continued, however, to publish fanzines. We didn't correspond very often, but I think it was one of those relationships where we didn't need to. I'll always be grateful that Eric and Beryl saw to it that we rose early one Sunday morning and hied ourselves off to Alderly Edge, one of England's magic places.

Probably a lot of Eric's contemporaries have dropped out of fandom and many of the younger crowd won't have known him. But he was a stalwart of British fandom in earlier days. I didn't know him half as well as I might have, but I'm glad that I got to know him as much as I did. I hope that he is missed by others as well.

[Later:] The May issue of Science Fiction Chronicle arrived today and had a fuller obituary of Eric by Vinc Clarke. It included one of Eric's wry comments about his impending death, saying that "I'm not planning on volunteering to do Fancyclopedia 3." Meantime we've had a letter from Beryl, telling us of Eric's death. At the end it was very painful, she said. I can relate that to seeing my brother die of the same cancer. I hope wherever Eric is there is plenty of that good old 50s science fiction, and some good jazz to listen to. I trust Beryl will be able to keep the house. She ran her own hairdressing business in their home in Holmes Chapel. As I recall she was quite successful at it. The house was comfortable. She has invited us to come and visit if we are ever in England again. We shall do, if and when that

comes about. Beryl is a magnificent cook and baker and I wouldn't pass up that invitation for anything.

AND R.I.P. ISAAC ASIMOV: The good Dr. Asimov is gone as well. I never got to meet him, but respected him and his position in the science fiction world. He sent me greetings once, though we'd never met. A faculty member at the college where I was library director had come to teaching from the world of petroleum geology. He was in New York one time for a professional meeting and banquet at the Explorer's Club. At the banquet he sat at the same table with Isaac. In conversation my colleague said he was from Seattle. Isaac asked him to say hello to me when he returned home. When Dan came into the library to deliver the message I was flabbergasted. I had neither met nor corresponded with Isaac. The only connection I could recall was that I reviewed the first book of his autobiography for The Seattle Times. Dr. Asimov must have had a mind like a trap. [Note to self:] I really must read the Foundation trilogy. More than once I've been chided with, "What? You've never read the Foundation books? You're missing some good reading." Reading them would seem to be a just tribute to the memory of Dr. Isaac Asimov. It shall be done.

MICHAEL KAMEN

Sometimes things happen serendipitously. This year was the 50th anniversary of Casablanca, that wonderful movie with Humphrey Bogart, Paul Henreid and Ingrid Bergman. I decided that I wanted to see it again, and pulled my copy from the shelf. I was interrupted and it took two nights to view it, but I was happy to ensconce myself for a couple of evenings and have a cognac in Rick's Cafe Americaine. And especially pleased to see Major Stasser get his in the end.

While I was waiting for the tape to rewind, I happened to end up with Jane Pauley's Dateline: NBC just as they announced that, following the commercial they would be profiling Michael Kamen, the composer of film scores. I remember fondly the early days of Kamen's musical career, when he was still a student at Julliard and the leader of a very different rock group called the New York Rock and Roll Ensemble. The segment profiled his composing and recording of the score for Lethal Weapon 3, the film starring Mel Gibson and Danny Glover. I haven't seen the film yet, but was intrigued with watching Kamen as he had to work with the visuals, decide themes for the major players, and work with Eric Clapton and Sting on specific portions. He had only a month to provide the score and when he started the film was still being shot. The final scenes were of the recording with orchestra as the final cut was running. I had forgotten that he also had written the score for Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves. I guess I'll have to pull out my old LPs of The New York Rock and Roll Ensemble tomorrow and listen to them again, including the wonderful Reflections, a collaboration between the group and Manos Hadjidakis, the Greek composer who wrote the music and the lyrics by members of the group. Hadjidakis is best known for "Never On Sunday," and is probably more widely known around the rest of the world than in the United States.

I look forward to hearing all this music tomorrow, and am pleased that I just happened to be on the right channel at the right time to hear and see Michael Kamen again.

You betchum, Red Ryder!

MONTANA (ONCE MORE WITH FEELING)

We spent a few days in Missoula recently, having taken a short vacation, a sort of warmup for a much longer one. We took a week after Anna Jo retired. Drove to the Idaho border the first day and stayed in Post Falls, Idaho. There is a greyhound track there and we enjoyed an evening of racing a lot. I didn't bet much, but Anna Jo broke even. It's a very nice facility; you can sit outside or be protected from the elements inside, air-conditioned in summer, heated in winter. Food and beverage, the whole nine yards. And all the exotic betting you could want; more than this young lad understands, quinelas, trifectas, superfectas, Pick Six, you name it.

The next day we drove on to Missoula, checked in at our motel, and continued south a dozen miles to the Lolo Pass highway. A short way to the west is the site of Fort Fizzle, which I wanted a look at. It's the site of one of the few amusing incidents of the Nez Perce War in 1877. The Nez Perce had traditionally traveled the Lolo Trail across the mountains from Idaho when they went east to hunt the buffalo and to visit their friends, the Crow. The non-treaty Nez Perce, being pressured by General Howard, and given too little time to move to the reservation, had almost accidentally begun the war. They were the most friendly with the whites of all the tribes and really didn't want to fight. Until this war broke out no Nez Perce had ever killed a white person. Having lost all of their cattle crossing the Snake River in an attempt to meet Howard's demands, they were now moving eastward in an attempt to reach Montana and perhaps settle on the Crow reservation. With men, women, children, old people, and 2000 horses, they took their traditional route east. A Captain Rawn, with three other officers and 25 enlisted men, accompanied by 30+ civilians, came out from Fort Missoula to demand their surrender. The chiefs met with the army officers and said they wished no fighting, only to proceed to the Crow reservation. The civilians, many of whom had traded with these people, said "Fine," and went home. The army built barricades across the trail. The chiefs withdrew and simply took a detour along the ridge above, firing a few shots to make the soldiers keep their heads down. Thus the name, Fort Fizzle. A small state park is there now. We followed a path across the meadow and found a vestige of the Lolo Trail and walked along it for a half hour or more.

The next day we drove down to The Big Hole National Monument, the site of the biggest battle of the Nez Perce War until its end at the Bear Paws. It's a beautiful place. But it began to sprinkle shortly after we left Missoula, and the closer we got to the park, the harder it poured. I almost gave up and turned around. Anna Jo, however, urged me on. We sat in the car and ate a sandwich when we arrived, while the rain poured and the wind blew. We dashed into the visitor center and listened to the ranger's talk and watched a slide show about the battle. And guess what? The rain stopped, the sun came out, the gods smiled. We were able to walk over the entire battlefield. I won't bore you with more western history. Suffice it to say that 87 Nez Perce lost their lives here, men, women, and children. 35 U.S. soldiers were killed, 40 wounded. The attack by the army came around 2 in the morning, when the Indians were asleep. This was their biggest loss so far in the several battles leading up to The Big Hole. We walked all over the sites of both the army and the Indian encampment, and climbed up through the pine woods to where a howitzer had been hauled five miles through the woods to a position on the overlooking hill. Three shots were fired before the Indians killed the gunners. From up there we could look north along the entire Big

Hole Valley, an incredibly beautiful view.

On the way home that evening, we took a side trip to Stevensville, the first and oldest community in Montana, and to a wildlife refuge where the deer had come out to feed in the evening. That day we saw 31 deer total, along the highway, at Big Hole and at the refuge.

Our third day working out of Missoula we drove northeast to Seeley Lake, where we had read that loons nested. Indeed, they do nest there, but not in any place where we could see them. Generally they nest across the lake from the populated northern side of the lake. We did see plenty of cedar waxwings, and two new species, the solitary warbler and the American redstart. And on the way home, a golden eagle. Had a nice visit with the lady ranger of the national forest and took a small hike through the woods.

Since we had only a week, with responsibilities awaiting at home, we headed back west on July 4th. Having passed a sign which said "Historic Ranger Station" every time we've been to Missoula, and always promising that we would go see what it was about, this time we actually did it. It turned out to be the Nine Mile Remount Station. Yes, remount as in horses and mules, lots of mules. Well, not at the station when we got there, but they had been there. 250 mules and about 80 horses are worked out of this ranger station, most of them used in the Bob Marshall Wilderness Area for maintaining trail and for hauling out all of the forest fire fighting equipment when the fire has been put out. This equipment is dropped in by helicopter when time is of the essence, but it's much less expensive to bring it out by mule. We had a great chat with the volunteers who were taking care of the visitor center. We've thought about doing this kind of thing, but aren't sure if we ever will. The people whom we have talked with love it.

On to Idaho and going to the dogs again that evening. The next day we drove up north of Coeur d'Alene to Farragut State Park and did an 11K volksmarch, over open prairie, through pine woods, and down along Lake Pend d'Oreille. How you lak ze French names? Beautiful walk, and picnicking afterward I watched a family reunion and got an idea for a kid's story. Dogs once more with



feeling. Real feeling. I had this great idea for a system. Well, it almost worked. For Quinela betting; quinelas are bets on the first two dogs to come in and pay off a lot better than betting on a single dog. Came close a couple of times. Oh, well, needs more work.

Monday morning we stopped at Deaconess Hospital in Spokane and did another 11K walk. Over the river and through the woods and through Gonzaga Univ. and through the site of the World's Fair and round and about. A nice walk. Thence home.

So it's been busy. We want to take a jaunt down the Oregon coast and do a series of year round events sometime in August. We also are in touch with a roofer to see about a new roof on the cabin. And the last week of August we're leaving for an extended trip across Canada, hoping to make it clear to the east coast, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland, before turning back to attend Bouchercon in early October. So you're not likely to hear from me during September and October. Will I do a trip report? Hard to tell. I'd like to, but I have several other things to write along the way, trying to finish up a second western and get some kid's stories out of the way.

The long trip is inspired by Anna Jo's retirement. June 18th was her last day. Thirty-two years of teaching; eight of them in parochial schools and twenty-four in public schools, the last eleven as an elementary school librarian. There were rounds of parties for her, lots of presents from other staff and the children at her school. She hasn't learned to sleep in yet, although she's beginning to learn how to stay up late like I do. And she's found all sorts of little chores around the house. Oh, well, she'll settle down after a while; maybe by Christmas after we get home from Canada.

The car is in the shop getting tuned and ready for the long journey. I expect that we may put as much as 10,000 miles on it before the trip is over. A side trip to Michigan and Wisconsin is on the agenda to visit relatives after the convention. And who knows what else? There's no schedule unless we run out of money. Then we may have to stop and do day labor. It's been a long time since I've had to wash dishes. Or dig ditches for that matter.

We've been debating the purchase of a video camera for the Canada trip. I've been thinking about the hundreds, perhaps thousands of slides that I've taken on the trips to England, and about how few times we have watched them. Indeed, I think there are slides from one trip which never were properly sorted, and I know that none of them have ever been labeled. Reliance on one's failing memory as the years pass is not very successful. Besides, I haven't bored the Tankon group with any slide show for several years. Of course, there isn't a TV or a VCR at the cabin, so maybe they'll be safe. I had a chat the other day with a tourist overlooking the Straits of Juan de Fuca who had videocam in hand. He was pretty enthusiastic. If we buy one, it will not be bulky, I can assure you. The discussion goes on, and a decision should be made soon. I've been warned that we should practice a bit before the trip begins, so that we can view what we've done on the screen and make some adjustments.

On July 23 we leave for a week down the Oregon coast to do a series of volksmarches. Gads, don't you Dentons do anything but travel? Well, it's sort of a reward that comes along with retirement, don't you know? Beginning

at Fort Stevens State Park, just west of Astoria, there are nine walks along the coast at places like Seaside, Lincoln City, Waldport, Yachats, and Florence. I don't think that we'll get all of them walked, but having walked previously in a couple of these places, let me tell you that the scenery is beautiful. And if the weather cooperates, it will be a big bonus.

BUT DOES HE STILL READ SCIENCE FICTION?

Yep, occasionally. Along with a lot mysteries, westerns, and western history. Most recently read sf (fantasy, really) was Steven Brust's THE PHOENIX GUARDS. One of the people in my writing class recommended Brust, although not this particular book. It's written in homage to and in the style of Alexandre Dumas. And as such it can become a little tedious at times, particularly the conversations between characters. Still, it was entertaining, and very much a four musketeers sort of story, set in Brust's universe.

Before I run out of space, I've got to recommend Lindsey Davis's four mysteries set in Roman times. I've always wondered why Barbara Hambly didn't continue with her Roman mystery. SILVER PIGS, SHADOWS IN BRONZE, VENUS IN COPPER, THE IRON HAND OF MARS. Wonderful novels, as alien as you'd want, terrific protagonist in Falco. So, they're not sf.

I had never read any of A. Merritt's fantasies, and Collier is re-issuing them, so I picked up THE SHIP OF ISHTAR. Slow going, from another time and style. Howard Waldrop I can recommend highly. THE NIGHT OF THE COOTERS and STRANGE MONSTERS OF THE RECENT PAST. The latter, particularly, since it contains the story, "Ten Tough Jobs," which is brilliant. It's in paperback and I recommend it highly.

Well, I'm going to quit here, feeling pleased with myself for finally...FINALLY...banging out another issue of the old Rogue. Hope you enjoy. Don't expect anything now until the end of the year. We'll be gone the last week of August, all of September and October, at the very least. When we return home, I hope I can get my act together, and pub my ish a little more frequently. Hope you're having a great summer. We seem to be. Cheers.

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