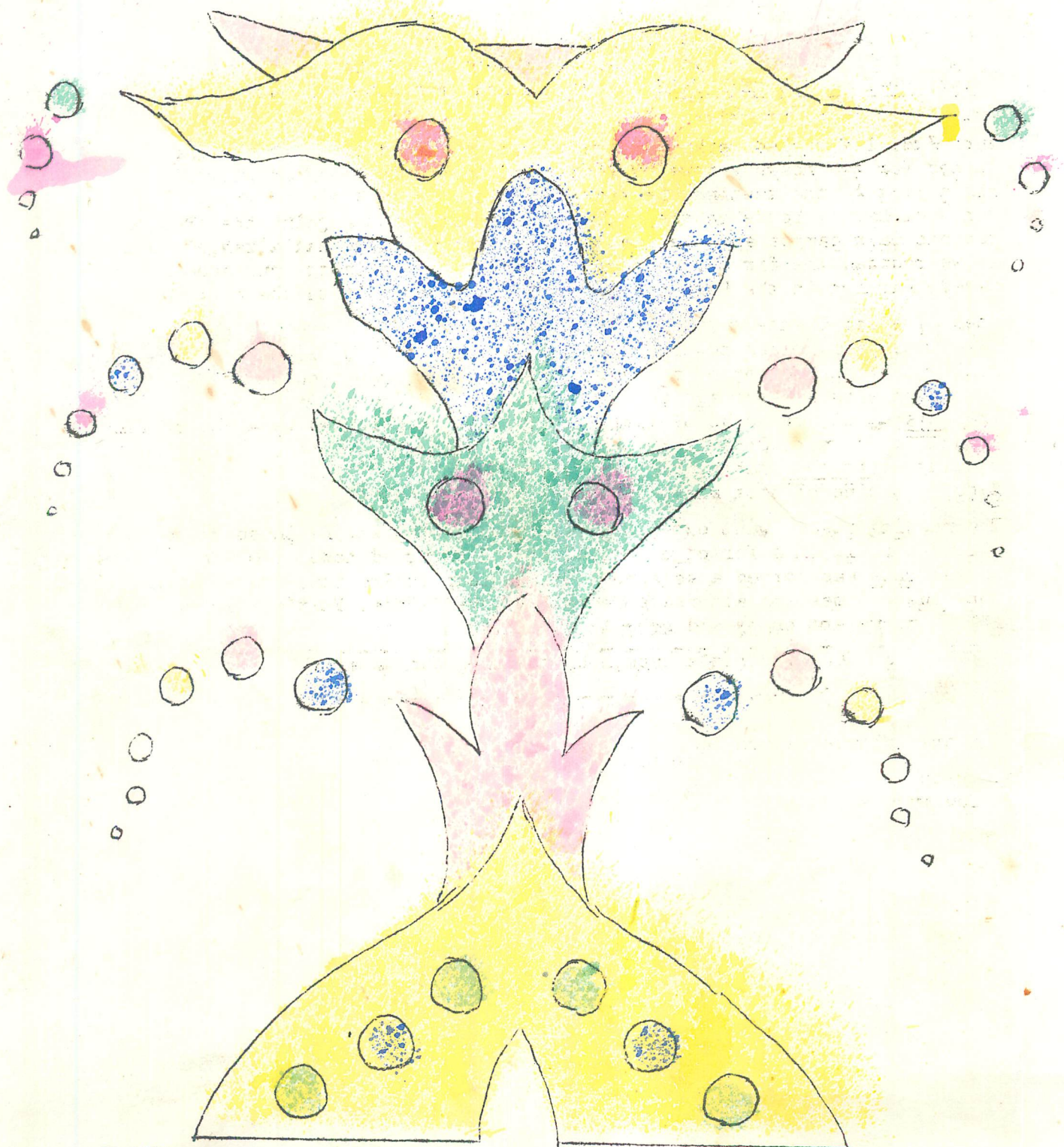


SPACEWARD 129



PLASMA FOUR

A. RAPP '83

CLUTCHED in your paws, tentacles, tractorbeams or mandibles, gentle entities, is that persistent publication, SPACEWARP 129, dated July 1983 and intended for the 144th quarterly mailing of the Spectator Amateur Press Society. Its vaguely humanoid publisher is Arthur H. Rapp, 282 Grovania Drive, Bloomsburg, PA 17815. A product of the HIAISM Mimeo, this line has been striving for quality since April 1947, and may yet attain it ere the stars grow cold.

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TIMBER

Stf is gradually taking over the world. You can find the evidence in your newspapers. For instance, Franco-American is marketing two new canned pasta products. The little round ones aren't called Spaghetti-O's anymore, tho, they're UFO's. And with meatballs added, they become UFO's With Meteors. (Be sure to wear your helicopter beanie while eating them).

An article, "Hooked on Reading" in the Philadelphia Inquirer Sunday magazine includes interviews with publishers, bookstore owners, etc., including Art Bourgeau, owner of a bookstore specializing in mystery stories. But: "Bourgeau displays a few racks of science fiction to attract college-age readers. But most of his customers are older, and Bourgeau thinks he knows why: (Science-fiction is the literature of change, and in college everyone is interested in changing things and making a new order. Once these people get jobs and mortgages, their fantasies about changing the social order usually graduate to fantasies that involve maintaining it. These people want mysteries and detective stories, in which the good guy wins."

On the religion page of the Sunday Bloomsburg Press-Enterprise I noticed this intriguing headline: SPACE ADVENTURE MOVIEWSSAID TO MIRROR BIBLICAL INSIGHTS. The AP dispatch by George W. Cornell refers to a new paperback titled The Gospel From Outer Space by Robert Short (Harper & Row). Short is identified as "an expert on theology in pictorial fiction" (these days we got experts in EVERYTHING).

Like Scripture, the article goes on, Star Wars anticipates the final triumph of the good over all evil, and then goes on to discuss E.E.: "He came from a mysterious beyond; the establishment disbelieved and rejected him, yet he was innocent of any wrong; he epitomized love, performed miracles, died, lived again and ascended. All these factors resembled the life, death and resurrection of Jesus."

He is critical of "2001", saying it, in contrast to the others, suggests a meaningless universe, coldly indifferent to man, with no hope beyond himself.

Well, this is all very interesting, but I can't help thinking that when you start interpreting any work of fiction as allegory, you can pull out of it almost any message you want to find. I could probably make out a convincing case for Foster's The Man Who Used the Universe as a roman a clef biography of Benjamin Franklin if I cared to take the time and trouble to do so, but it hardly seems worth the effort. Long-time readers of SW may recall that several years ago I explicated Sylvia Plath's poem, "Last Words" as a cry of protest against nuclear atomageddon, mostly as a put-on of my English instructor. (Tho of course, ever since then I can't read the poem without being conscious of that particular interpretation of its meaning -- neither, I suppose, can the English instructor, who may or may not be grateful to me as a result).

Which, for some reason not immediately apparent (except that poetry and math seem to occupy closely adjacent locations in my brain cells), reminds me of Goldbach's Conjecture. You do know about Goldbach's Conjecture, don't you? It states that every even number can be expressed as the sum of two primes. This has never been proved, but then again it has never been disproved, either. If you can devise either a proof or disproof your name will be immortalized in mathematical history, and you might even be interviewed by Real

(CONTINUED ON BACK COVER)

SYLLABUS For A FANZINE

by F. TOWNER LANEY

I've seen one putrid fanzine too many. Why is it, I wonder, that the critical person can take the fanzine output of twenty years and count the truly first-class titles on his fingers? I don't know how many fanzines there've been, but surely no fewer than 500 different items, some running for one issue and some for several dozen. I do know for a solid fact that my own fanzine accumulation crams a standard four drawer filing cabinet plus two apple boxes; yet I could easily span with one hand the little stack of genuinely high quality issues.

Of course, when one considers the people that have written and produced some of these fanzines it is easy to see why their product is so putrid. The juvenile who can produce anything of mature worth is obviously a phenomenon -- for one Willie Watson there are bound to be a score of Kentucky Dreamers. The majority of fanzine titles have been created by teenagers, most of whom will in all likelihood be the most perfervid detractors of this stuff when they themselves reach maturity. When we examine some of our oldsters, too, we have slight cause to wonder at the ineptness of their publications and writings. Since it has always been one of the cornerstones of the Laney fanzine persona never to indulge in personalities, I of course will not mention the names of Evans, Dunkelberger, Moskowitz, and others of the older characters whose productions have so often been unacceptable. It might hurt some of their feelings.

But I believe that there are many publishers and would-be publishers of fanzines who are falling short chiefly because they have no clear idea how to go about producing a fanzine to end all fanzines.

I do not hold myself up as a paragon. My own subscription fanzine, THE ACOLYTE, set something of a record for unrelieved stuffiness, tedium, and sheer boring stupidity. It took a fascinating subject, fantasy, and treated of it in as musty and insipid a fashion as could be imagined. Nor have my publishings apart from THE ACOLYTE indicated any great prowess on my part. There have been occasional flashes in the darkness and then I toss off a paragraph which seems to show faint promise. But for the most part, I'm either bumbling along wordily about nothing or blazing forth in frenetic attacks on something or someone not worth attacking.

Regardless of how far short my own stuff may fall, I've got many very definite ideas as to what a fanzine should or should not be.

The format and other physical aspects of a fanzine are unimportant. As long as the text is clearly reproduced with a minimum of typographical and other errors, the magazine is OK with me. It is nice to break up solid expanses of text, I suppose, but I never heard of anyone objecting to a book because it consisted of page after page of solid type. If the text is any good we'll read it anyway. The format can by no stretch of the imagination be made to compensate for unsatisfactory written material. You can fill an ornate candy box with little

pellets of goat dung, and it is still goat dung. It does not ever become candy.

Justification is the most profound waste of time I have ever heard of. A printed magazine will of course be even-edged, but no matter what you do, the mimeograph will still turn out mimeography and the ditto dittography. Neither of these gadgets can turn out a product that even remotely resembles printing, so why try to make it look other than the typing which it is? An occasional genius comes along who can justify as he goes, but the average fanzine editor has to type a dummy to work from. This is simply one extra typing of all the contents of a fanzine, sheer useless drudgery. It is all very well to retype something if you are revising and improving it as you go along, but why just copy it? And if there is anything worse looking than an attempt at even-edging which didn't quite jell, I don't know what it is.

Most other format improvements do not repay the effort they take. Redd Boggs explained to me once that he was restencilling and rerunning an article of mine which had been slated for the ill-fated second issue of CHRONOSCOPE, because the running heads did not match. Y'know, until he told me that, I didn't even know his mags had running heads. I got down the Boggs file and looked, and surd enough -- running heads on every page.

Multicolor work is nice, I suppose. All it indicates to me is another press run for some poor mimeographer -- chewing up as much time and energy as it would have taken to run off an additional page of text.

Some people worry about "balance", whatever that is. What earthly difference does it make? If the material is good enough, you can carry six consecutive articles about the same subject one right after the other, and the reader will be annoyed only when he comes to the end and finds out there is no more. If the material isn't that good, you are just filling up space to no avail anyway.

The matter of artwork is something else. Now and then, a piece of artwork comes along which is worth publishing. The vast majority of fan artwork, however, is amateur imitation of pulp magazine illustrative work. As bad as the professional product usually is, there can be no justification for half-baked imitations of it. Fandom has an occasional artist who knows how to draw -- Stibbard, Rotsler, Watson, perhaps Hunt, maybe a couple of others. All the rest are doodlers. If you like doodlings, fine and dandy, but I don't. I don't even like them when they are signed "Finley". A big exception to all this about artwork is cartoons. Several otherwise unartistic fans are quite competent cartoonists -- notably Wilner and Kennedy. And for that matter a good enough punchline can carry a pretty sad-sack picture. A lot of seriously intended fan illustrative work would be quite worthwhile if it carried snappy captions. I can think of a couple of lithographed ACOLYTE covers I'd give anything if I'd put snappers on them.

Getting constructive for a moment, here is the hap-hazard fuggheaded F. Towner Laney fanzine-throwing-together technique which has worked for 14 issues of ACOLYTE, 25 issues of FAN-DANGO, and about a dozen miscellaneous items.

If the magazine is pretty formal, with a set number of pages and a table of contents, I make a dummy. It consists of a sheet of typing paper folded once lengthwise with a number for each page in a vertical row down one edge. I assign the first 2 or 3 pages to editorials, ToC, etc., skip them for a bit, and start on page 3 or 4 with what I consider to be the best item I have. I stencil it as it comes, revising as I go if needbe. As each page is stencilled, I note on my dummy what is on it. According to fancy, I fill up the balance of any unfilled page as I go. If I have most of a page left, I may start another article right then and there. More often, I'll try to pick a filler item that will just fit. In the case of ACOLYTE, I used poetry, most of which was rancid but it filled up the page. A good magazine would have a sheaf of specially written filler items of various lengths in the backlog. If I have a continuation of not more than 10 or 15 lines, I sometimes save it with the hope that some subsequent page will have a left-over space adequate for it. This system usually ends up with an unused blank space, so when I write the editorial, which is left to last, I just

jam with myself that many lines further. The dummy is used in making the table of contents page, which of course is the last page of all to do. The system sounds (and is) haphazard, but I've never had to do a page over, and a magazine tossed together just as I've described was the number one fanzine for two years running. So I guess it works.

FAN-DANGO is totally informal. Preconceptions of each issue are invariably wrong. I've had 30-page projected issues that ended up with six, and one 8-page issue ran to 22 before I finally got it choked off. Most of FAN-DANGO is composed on the masterset, but the better items have usually been written and rewritten as many as three or four times. The FAN-DANGO technique consists of putting articles on stencil or masterset as long as four months before the issue is due. When I wind an issue up, I put the pages in order, number them, and fill in the chinks if any. Pagination serves no purpose except to keep the issue from being fouled up in the runoff.

In connection with FAN-DANGO, perhaps I should mention my mailing comment technique. As I read the mailing, I mark anything that I think I may wish to comment on, and make a check on the cover of that magazine. I then go through the checked magazines, and make a list of references by subjects. Since I lost one of these lists, I've taken to making them on the envelope the mailing came in. When I make my actual comments, I skip a lot of the stuff I marked, but the stuff I do comment on I try to keep segregated by subject, so as to say all on the subject in one place. Of course I have the stuff before me as I write -- no commenting from memory. For some reason, if I wait longer than a month after I've read the mailing, the odds are I'll skip it altogether.

Well, I've talked about format and given my own techniques -- I guess I can't duck talking about the sort of stuff that should go in a fanzine.

It is a tough subject to verbalize about. Since we all have different tastes, a lot of stuff that Metchette will love I will hate, and vice versa. Naturally, what I say about it will be colored by my own opinions. And there is the further difficulty that this is not a subject easily raised to the verbal level. Assaying the worth of a piece of prose is not dissimilar to criticizing music. If it is "right", you know it, but you cannot always say why it is "right".

Perhaps a good place to start would be to discuss the editorial persona. By this I mean the extensionalization of the editor himself -- i.e., what kind of a guy do we think he is judging only by reading his fanzine. Up to a point, I think that the best editorial persona is built up when the editor permits free reign in his fanzine to all facets of his personality. If you are a fugghead, you'll have a better magazine if you suppress your fuggheadedness, but this is pretty hard to do. In other words, the more pleasing, or colorful, or striking your personality, the more of it you should show in your fanzine. And vice versa.

Almost without exception, the best fanzines show this tendency to a marked degree. Burbee shows in his publishings as a light-hearted, joking, witty character who reveres nothing and takes little seriously. He's even more so in the flesh. Widner's publishings betray an idealist with a sense of humor, a guy who takes seriously the task of making a better world and who at the same time can bust down the rafters with a jovian belly laugh. I read Widner's various fanzines for three years before I met him, and they turned out to be a thoroughly unblemished portrait of their producer. I don't think it coincidental that they rated so invariably high in the polls. Jack Speer's publishings indicate a deep interest in nearly everything, a preoccupation with accuracy which often leads to hairsplitting, a puckish sense of humor, an impatience with mediocrity, a rather strong sense of his own destiny, and a few other things. These are also notable traits in Speer as I've met him. I've not had the pleasure of meeting Harry Warner, but he was one of the best fanzine personas of anyone. His stuff reflects a deep and informed interest in music, sound critical judgment, a reflective interest in the foibles of humanity, and a marvelous, almost Pepsysian, ability to tell of the minutiae of his own life with elan and readability. His fanzines are so good that he must be remarkably like them.

It is also possible to put the finger on fanzines which fall short because they do not reflect the personality

of their editor. Take my own ACOLYTE. Due to some ridiculous notion that fans were interested only in fantasy, coupled with a weird idea that humor was out of place in a magazine devoted to the literary side of fantasy and the weird, I produced a despicably stodgy and uninteresting fanzine. It is significant that the LASFS, who had known me only through ACOLYTE, were deeply disappointed when I moved to Los Angeles and they found that I cussed, played records, drank, liked football, and even went out with women. I guess that most of them had thought that I was a fairy because I was so interested in weird fiction. Another fanzine failure through a suppression of the editor's personality is that of Forrest J Ackerman. Here is a man who Believed very deeply in the importance of both fandom and science-fiction, a generally dignified character with strong convictions. So he filled his fanzines with froth, fake spelling, weird typing, and outre mannerisms generally, rarely getting serious and straightforward about anything unless he was mad at someone. If he'd let his personality loose in his magazines, he'd have published a blend of FANTASITE and FANTASY COMMENTATOR. Instead he contented himself with "mirroring" fandom in 50 issues of VOM (which old-timers will fondly remember as a poor man's FAPA), and publishing a great spate of ephemeral rubbish which was by no means worthy of print. VOM was pretty good, in spots extremely fine, but it depended solely on the whims that led top contributors to send in occasional letters or let themselves be drawn into some discussion. It seems strange indeed that the man who has probably devoted more time and thought to fandom than any other ten people has never published a subscription-type fanzine.

This matter of personality reflecting is of course a two-edged sword. if you have a personality that makes people shun you, it is doubtful that its display in a fanzine will go over either. You don't need to be a wishy-washy Polyanna, but you must be likeable to some people, no matter how virulently others may hate you. If I wanted to moralise, I could point out that improving your personality to the extent that its full demonstration in a fanzine was successful would very likely redound to your success as a person.

I don't know why exactly it should be so important for a fanzine to reflect the editor accurately and comprehensively, but I imagine verisimilitude and sincerity (with the consequent sock possessed by writings so qualified) is best obtained thereby. No matter how hard you try to conceal it, if you think your readers are a bunch of goons, it will creep out between the lines. If you are a dumbbell, you can be intellectual to a fare-ye-well and impress your readers only as a dope who knows not what he says. If you possess unwarranted self-esteem, your attempts at self-deprecation or even simple modesty will be as false as Daugherty'sssmile.

What a tangent this is growing into! Why don't I just say that you've probably got to be improving yourself all the time in all sorts of different ways if you hope to publish an acceptable and improving fanzine, and let it go at that.

One reason I keep yapping about the editorial persona is that it has been my bitter experience that the only sure way for any fanzine editor to get an adequate flow of really top-flight material is to write most of it himself. Since we are all of us imperfect and faltering, this is no easy chore. The will to write top-flight stuff is the least of the desiderata for so doing. Usually it just won't jell.

But you yourself, as editor, are the one guy in the world who knows just what you want in the way of material, and who can write it better than you? Burbee very likely can write a far funnier satire than you can, but he won't use your pet punch-line. Searles or SDRussell can back you off the map as a solid reviewer and critic, but the odds are slight that they'll tee off on the book you want reviewed, and it's dollars to doughnuts that they'll react to it far differently than you did. Rotsler can draw better in a minute than you can in a year, but try to get Willie to draw your cartoon idea. And so it goes.

And what if your stuff isn't as good as theirs? Maybe if you look at enough of their stuff analytically and critically and apply what you learn to your own writing, you'll improve. If you plug hard enough at your own writing, many an individual style of your own will develop. And if you get to

wondering what's the use, when you compare your stuff with theirs, you can comfort yourself with the thought that they too have models and ideals they look up to and compare themselves with disparagingly.

My, what a preachment!

Even though you want a lot of stuff self-written -- and a really good fanzine will depend largely on its own editor's writings -- you will need plenty of items created by others. The gaining of such stuff requires plenty of finesse.

In the first place, lay off the pro authors. If your butcher happens to be a pal of yours you don't expect him to keep you in free T-bones, any more than you expect your carpenter crony to build you a free house or your radio store buddy to give you a free Ampex Tape Recorder (list price \$3800). The pro authors make their living writing, or try to. It is a gross impertinence to ask them to give you some of their work. If you know a pro, and he insists on writing for you, it is a little different, provided he writes something which is obviously for his own recreation. R.P. Graham, for instance, had the time of his life at the second Wild Hair session. And there have been other similar cases, such as the articles E. Hoffman Price did for Willie Watson on high class liquor and how to recognize it. But don't importune them. And NEVER accept a pro's rejected story, no matter how good it seems to you in your blue haze of awe and excitement when he gives it to you. If it really is worth anything, he'll eventually sell it, and your publishing of it may foul up his copyright. If he can't sell it, there is no earthly reason for you to waste time and money publishing it. The only thing it can possibly do is to tear down the reputation of both author and fanzine. (I say these things with full knowledge of the vast amount of pro stuff I solicited and used in ACOLYTE. I'm heartily ashamed of myself).

In the second place, lay off the established fan writers. They have outlets for far more stuff than they'll ever write, and your bombarding them with requests for material is waste effort. This is particularly true if you are a beginning editor. The old-timer has been nipped too often by aspiring new editors who fall by the wayside before they publish the material they've begged so hard for, or who do publish it so poorly that he wishes he'd never written it. After you have your fanzine well and solidly established, with an earned reputation for accurate neatness in reproduction and reliable promptness in distribution, you'll find the established fans sending you high quality stuff out of a clear blue sky.

In the third place, lay off the NFFF manuscript bureau and other similar groups. With all due respect to several guys who have performed a whole lot of selfless work, no mss bureau is likely to have any material that is worth a whoop. Most of the stuff you'll get from such a source will turn out to be rejects from SPACEWARP (see Rapp's monthly masthead if you don't believe me) and other quality fanzines. If it isn't good enough for a quality fanzine, it isn't good enough for you, either.

You can examine almost any major fanzine, past or present, and you will find that two or three regular contributors whose stuff rarely appears elsewhere create the material which really constitutes the backbone. FANTASY COMMENTATOR has Thyril Ladd and Matt Onderdonk. ACOLYTE had Baldwin, Rimel, Wakefield, and Hoffman. SPACEWARP has Watkins, Conner, Sneary, Metchette, and others. And so it goes. Build up your own stable of writers, write a lot yourself, and your worries about material will be negligible.

A gimmick that works with notable success is to spot people who can write well and feed them stencils. Pick people who are capable of writing stuff that need not be edited, and who at the same time are not very active. Burbee used this technique a lot. So do I. Couple this stunt with frequent publication, and watch the material pour in. There is something about a couple free blank stencils coupled with the knowledge that anything written on them will appear in but a few weeks that practically forces a guy to the typewriter. Of course you have to have a certain amount of judgement in knowing who can be trusted to write interesting stuff at all times, but if you haven't this much acumen the odds are you can't publish a passable fanzine anyway.

Another gimmick is to have a small (or maybe not so small) local group from which to draw material. With luck, you may even get them to finance your magazine. Don't expect any help on mechanical details. The gang very likely will gather while you are working and help make the time go faster for you, but anything beyond this is like droppings from a cloud.

You can also use the "one-shot session" technique, but this is not advised unless you really know what you are doing. Burbee and I have sponsored around eight such bashes since January 1945, and we learned the hard way that a passable result will occur only if certain strict rules are observed. The artistry of the one-shot fanzine is an article in itself -- in fact I wrote such an article in 1946 and Burbee published it. I'd plagiarize myself and give out with it once again, except that the LASFS reprinted an emasculated version about a year ago in SHANGRI LA. So take down your copy of the SHANGRI LA all-star reprint issue, and in the early portion of the article add to Burbee's sales talk for the one shot session, "WHY IT WILL BE JUST LIKE A DAUGHERTY PROJECT EXCEPT THAT IT WILL ACTUALLY HAPPEN." You will then hold in your hands the complete article and will be all set to have a one-shot fanzine session, maybe.

Another excellent source for fanzine material (and strangely enough it has been little exploited) is the public library. If your library has any number of foreign periodicals, a certain amount of browsing will uncover very lovely stuff which scarcely any fanzine reader will see unless you publish it. Unless you are a stickler for formality, you need not even get permission to reprint, since what the furriners don't know won't hurt 'em. (ACOLYTE reprinted several items from foreign periodicals, including a French article on the influence of Poe on Baudelaire which Harry Warner translated for fanzine purposes). I would not suggest any great dependence on such sources, but if you are in a bind for a good, solid article dealing with some phase of fantasy in its literary aspects the library may be your solution.

I might remark in passing that your goal should be a back-log containing enough usable material to make no less than a full issue at all times. Most successful fanzines reach this point after the first year or so. It is something of a drawback to your contributors, since a fat backlog means slower publication, but what a godsend it is to the harried editor.

After all this gum-beating, I see I've still not given any indication of what kind of material you should strive for. Of course, all these remarks about the editorial persona imply that the magazine should reflect yourself, which of course will affect its scope.

Personally, I am unable to stand fanzine fiction. I never read any fiction in a fanzine unless it was written by E. Everett Evans. (I read that only for the laughs). With full and abashed knowledge of the many pages of fiction I myself published, I will state flatly that any serious story that is worth a faint damn will be published somewhere professionally. This is all the more true now that the fantasy/stf field is glutted with prozines. And as utterly unreadable as the typical pulp magazine is at its best, life is just too short to read its rejects, to say nothing of sweating out the stencilling and mimeographing of them.

Please note that I said serious story. Satire is quite another dish. I still remember with great relish some of the innumerable take-offs on "World of Null-A", particularly Paul Spencer's. There was Burton Crane, with "Free Seeds from Congress" and other gems. A lot of Burbee's best work is satirical fiction, including the item he considers his best, even if Rotsler did butcher it up on publication. ("Big Name Fan", if you must know.) Nor should I forget "Shadow Over North Weymouth, 91" by Art Widner, a snappy double take-off on Lovecraft and George O. Smith. Stuff like this is wonderful. Any fanzine editor who can publish its equivalent is doing his readers a favor.

What I do object to is material written for professional publication and rejected, or else merely written in slavish imitation of hack fiction. For that matter, it need not be hack the guy is imitating. Who wants to read an inept, watered-down imitation of M. R. James when he can get the real thing? It's fully as sensible as chewing up and swallowing the pictures out of a cookbook instead of eating a seven-course dinner.

Plenty of other fanzine readers object to fiction. I don't know their reasons. But to me, in addition to being unreadable, fiction in a fanzine indicates that the editor was out of material and too lazy or too dull or both to write anything to fill up his pages.

Another dislike of mine is poetry. I used to use it for fillers. I even wrote three or four poems (serious, weird ones, too!) which were published in various fanzines. The word you are groping for, son, is fugghead. I'm not even groping for it.

The objections to fiction do not apply to poetry at all. Nearly all verse is semi-amateur, so far as making a living out of it is concerned, and most of it by far is published in semi-professional magazines. The fanzine editor who wants to waste space with it can fill his magazine with an array of "name" poets and can compete on fairly even terms with the semi-pro poetry magazines, particularly the "vanity" ones. I could tell you how to go about it, but I won't do it. It weighs too heavily on my conscience when I think of the amount of this sort of crud I published myself for me to do anything to encourage someone else to try it. If you want to publish poetry, go into that field, and let fanzine publishing remain the medium for "literate self-expression" that some of us try to kid ourselves it sometimes is.

"I can see some of you beginning to ask yourselves if this Terrible Towner likes anything. Yes, I do. Any time anyone has something to say, and can do a passable job of saying it, he is my boy. I'll read what he says, very likely reread it. I'll show it to my friends and brag on it. I'll try to get him to write something for FAN-DANGO, and very likely I'll become a contributor to his fanzine, if he has one.

Any time someone really has something to say, I'll read it with pleasure even if he doesn't do a very good job of saying it. After all, who am I to gripe if someone can't write any better than I can?

By "something to say" I don't mean that the guy need be serious. He may be ribbing the socks off someone or something. Maybe not. Perhaps he is wrought up over some book he's discovered and wants others to read (or not read). Maybe he is wound up about one of my own pet interests, or maybe he's going to town about something I neither knew nor cared much about.

The subject matter is immaterial. He can even be talking about science-fiction if he does a good enough job, has something original to say. His stuff may be original only in that it deals with something I never happened to know much about. Maybe he's been thinking overtime and has some original or quasi-original notions or synthesis of other peoples' notions. Maybe he's walking on someone for being such a fugghead and has some glorious new concept for satirization.

ORIGINALITY. Let's put that in caps.

It certainly is a prime requisite of any fanzine material.

The subject matter of a fanzine article should be a matter of complete indifference. Having myself largely lost interest in stf and fantasy, I don't care so much for a lot of the stuff in fanzines. If my own FAN-DANGO has anything on the subject as often as once a year I feel I'm slipping badly. This is just me. Hell with it. But it does strike me as a hell of a commentary on some people that they insist that a fanzine contain stuff relating only to stf, fantasy, or fandom. Such narrowness seems incredible. (Those of you who read any issues of my own ACOLYTE are no doubt rolling on the floor by now). Here is this great teeming world of ours, loaded with fascinating stuff to think about and talk about and do something about maybe, and yet there are articulate persons who want to swaddle themselves in a stagnant puddle in a backwater of escapist writing and think of nothing else.

No matter what subject is dealt with, some fanzine readers somewhere will probably be interested in it. Even if they aren't, if you keep plugging at it well enough, you may probably create some converts. Naturally you will have more stuff dealing with stf and fantasy than with other subjects. This is to be expected. But there is certainly no need to stick with this same old rut. Babies who want to keep playing with their rattles after they are chronological adults usually end up in institutions.

From bitter experience in reading page after page of blather from fuggheads, I'd suggest that it is often better to make a clean break from stf, rather than to try to do much with the subjects "growing out of scientifiction". There is something about scientifiction, particularly in its more sociological facets, which seems to act as a lodestone to crackpots. If there is anything duller than serious constructive articles of crackpot theorizings, I can't imagine what it may be.

Articles of extrapolation can be wonderful, entertaining, stimulating, thought-productive reading; IF their writers indicate at least a nodding acquaintance with known facts. Good articles of this nature are among the best material any fanzine can feature. All too many fannish attempts along these lines betray incredible ignorance of "reality", probability, or anything else save the daydreaming of psychopaths. Of clinical interest only, they have no place other than in case histories.

Now of course no amateur writer can be expected to have the savant's grasp of any subject. Certainly, though, he should have an inkling of what he is talking about, the knowledge of an informed layman. And his knowledge should be the authentic kind -- not the tripe dredged from the Rosierucians, Theosophists, Forteanes, Korzybskiphiles, Dianoticians, Shaverites, and their ilk. If a guy doesn't have this knowledge, the least he can do is to keep his mouth shut in company, and the least you, as editor of a fanzine, can do is to refuse him a sounding board.

AUTHENTICITY. There is another prime requisite for a fanzine article. A safe rule for any editor is to reject any article whose authenticity he doubts, unless it is plainly a satire or other humorous piece.

Not all original and authentic articles are acceptable either. We are all of us rank amateurs at this art of stringing words together, and one of us is as likely to toss out a truly first-class piece of writing as a sandlot baseball player is to break into the New York Yankees' batting order. It's been done, in both cases, but not very often.

Amateurs or no, somewhere we must draw a line. How poorly written an article can a good fanzine stand? This leads into the question of revision. Should an editor revise material submitted to him? I'm not thinking so much of misspellings and obvious errors of grammar. You usually do your contributor a favor when you correct these for him, and I believe this practise is pretty much taken for granted.

Should the editor abridge prolix articles? Should he rewrite where he thinks it proper? In a probably unjustified assumption of bland omnipotence, I've always juggled stuff around to suit my fancy. If I revise very much, however, the end-result reads more and more like a Laney article. A time or so, long-winded characters have become furious at my condensing their submissions. One time, Sam Moskowitz actually made me apologise for cutting a 12-14 page article on Weinbaum down to 6 pages. The fact that the revised version was readable and the original was not is beside the point.

This revision question is one that each editor must decide for himself. If I had my publishing to do over, I believe I'd revise far less than I did, and reject far more. It is doubtful if any article that requires a major rewrite is worth fooling with. It might also be noted that the editor who attempts to revise the work of someone who is a markedly better writer than himself is not likely to get a second chance.

In no case, however, should any fanzine editor publish anything which is not eminently READABLE. Another prime requisite.

So if your material is original, authentic, and readable -- you've got a wonderful fanzine.

Another fanzine publishing problem that seems worth discussing is the question of subscription fanzines versus give-aways. There are advantages and drawbacks to both cases.

Of all the publishers of subscription fanzines since the very beginning, you can just about count on your fingers the ones who performed in a reasonably ethical fashion. If you are going to sell your fanzine, your very offering it for a price implies a contract. If you take money for your fanzine you owe your subscribers regularity of publica-

tion, full refund of any unused subscription moneys, and of course a magazine of the general size and quality you have led them to expect.

The editor of a subscription fanzine enjoys the advantage of making somebody else pay for his fun. If properly administered, a subscription fanzine can be made to break even or perhaps show a slight profit. The amount of work it will take will be staggering, but it can be done. If you get good at it, you can net as much as $\frac{1}{2}$ ¢ per hour in clear profit from your publishing labors.

(I can cite my own ACOLYTE. It was published quarterly in an edition of 200 copies of 30 to 34 pages each, mimeographed, and almost invariably carried a lithographed cover costing an average of \$5.50 to \$6.00. For its last two years it not only paid for itself 100% including cover and postage, but defrayed most of the expense of the quarterly FAN-DANGO, a mimeographed 10 to 12 pager of 75 copies. It paid off simply because I got plugs for it everywhere I could; prolines, other fanzines, poetry magazines, even in the SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE; and because I adamantly refused to carry deadheads except in a few instances where they were contributing material or might reasonably be expected to do so.)

To my mind, the advantage of a fanzine paying its own way is far counterbalanced by the way it ties its editor down. A subscription fanzine, if published with any degree of regularity, quickly becomes an almost unsupportable burden. You find yourself pounding away on it whether you want to or not. An enjoyable hobby turns into an incubus.

If you publish a giveaway, you have to finance it yourself. Even a simple issue can quickly eat up six or eight dollars. But you can publish as often or as seldom as you like, you can say anything you wish without wondering if some thin-skinned fool will cancel his subscription, you can pick and choose your mailing list, and you can hold your circulation as low as you want. If something else comes up you want to do, you can forget your fanzine for months on end, and resume where you left off without painstakingly building up from scratch again. If you publish through FAPA you needn't even bother with a mailing list or distributing individual copies, and you moreover get in exchange once every quarter a fat envelope containing 200 or 300 pages of fanzines from other members.

All in all, I think the giveaway beats the subscription fanzine all hollow. This may be because I got my fill and more of the latter. But if fanzining is truly a hobby for you and not a full-time unprofitable chore, the give-away is your meat.

Make no mistake about it, either. The publishing of a fanzine is one of the very best hobbies I have ever encountered, and I who say this have followed literally dozens of hobbies at one time or another. It is participative rather than passive, and it moreover depends far more on ability than money. You can be mighty broke, and still maintain an enviable position in the fanzine world. Your own little stack of stuff is something you'll read with great interest, and show to your friends with pride. And look at all the fun it is. Try it, lad.

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COMMENTARY BY RAPP: The foregoing is one of the all-time fanzine classics, and I have often wished that every new fan had a chance to read it before tackling his first attempt at writing or publishing fanzines. I began restencilling it as a part of the section of reprints from early SAPS mailings which you will find later in this issue. Oddly enough, I just realized that this was NOT originally part of a SAPSine. SPACEWARP in 1950 was a subscription fanzine, and this piece, part of an issue guest-edited by Laney and Burbee, was sent to subscribers and also distributed in FAPA, but not in SAPS.

30 years later, Laney's advice is still as sound as the day it was written, and his article serves, in itself, as a model of what fine fanzine writing should be. The only thing I would add is that publishing a subscription fanzine has an advantage over a freebie zine in that, if your readers send you money you know you're succeeding in your self-appointed editorial task.

THE GRIPESES OF RAPP

Thru darkest Mlg. One-Four-Three with cries of awe & sympathy...

SPECTATOR 143 (Lynch): The decline of our membership list to 14 sent me digging in the archives for Spectator #1 to see how many SAPS we started out with. There were, I found, 16 of them (tho one is enigmatically listed as "Tullis -- first name and address unknown" and was never heard from again in SAPS, so effectively the number is 15.) (I conjecture that the mysterious Tullis was an OE goof, duplicating the name of another member, Tellis Streif.). Unfortunately, the OO did not list the contents of the mailing (1) and I don't have the pagecount figures handy, but as I recall it was 39 pages. If you're interested, however, the 15 charter members and their locations in 1947 are: Lloyd Alpaugh, Somerville, NJ; Fred Ross Burgess, South Mills, NC; Ron Christensen, Brooklyn NY; John Cockroft, San Anselmo, CA; Walter Coslet, Helena, MT; George Fox, Rahway, NJ; Joe Kennedy, Dover, NJ; Ron Maddox, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; Rick Sneary, South Gate, CA; Telis Streiff, Wichita, KS; Redd Boggs, Minneapolis MN; Van Splawn, Dallas, TX; Harold Cheney, Jr., Little Falls, NY; Tom Jewett, Clyde, OH; Andy Lyons, Address Unknown. Incidentally, my SAPS file doesn't go back that far; this info is due to Howard DeVore who reprinted Spectator #1 for the 100th Mailing a service that has provee fantastically valuable to me many times since then.

WELCOME TO THE RANKS OF XOE, NICKI!

SPACE WANDERER #2 (Joynor): Your objection to withholding of income tax from dividends and interest doesn't go far enough, Mary. The same arguments you use apply to withholding from wages, as well. In particular, if that money were not withheld it would earn interest for you an average of $7\frac{1}{2}$ months before the tax is due. Furthermore, as long as inflation continues, the dollars are more valuable at the time you earn them than when you have to pay the tax. At the very least, the IRS should credit the taxpayer with 6% interest for the time they hold his funds prior to the tax due date. After all, if you are late paying your income tax, they charge YOU interest for the delay! Hmmm, they couldn't say it would be impractical, either: in most localities, if you pay your property taxes in advance of the due date, you get a discount...

Among the delusions that have been imposed upon the nation... is a motley, amphibious-charactered thing called the balance of trade. This balance of trade, as it is called, is taken from the custom-house books, in which entries are made of all cargoes exported, and also of all cargoes imported; in each year -- and when the value of the exports, according to the price set upon them by the exporter or by the custom-house, is greater than the value of the imports, estimated in the same manner, they say, the balance of trade is much in their favor.

"The custom-house books prove regularly enough that so many cargoes have been exported, and so many imported -- but this is all that they prove, or were intended to prove. They have nothing to do with the balance of profit or loss; and it is ignorance to appeal to them upon that account; for the case is, that the greater the loss in any one year, the higher will this thing called the balance of trade appear to be according to the custom-house books. For example, nearly the whole of the Mediterranean convoy has been taken by the French this year -- consequently those cargoes will not appear as imports on the custom-house books, and therefore the balance of trade, by which they mean the profits or it, will appear to be so much the greater, as the loss amounts to -- and on the other hand, had the loss not happened, the profits would have appeared to have been so much the less. All the losses at sea happening to returning cargoes, by accidents, by the elements, or by capture, makes the balance appear the higher on the side of the exports -- and were they all lost at sea, it would appear to be all profit on the custom-house books. Also every cargo of exports that is lost and occasions another to be sent, adds in like manner to the side of the exports, and appears as profit. This year the balance of trade will appear

high, because the losses have been great by capture and by storms. The ignorance of the British Parliament in listening to this hackneyed imposition of ministers about the balance of trade is astonishing. It shows how little they know of national affairs. ... They understand only fox-hunting and the game laws." (Thomas Paine, Decline of the English System of Finance) (1796) ## yet Edmonds inspires me to yet one more quotation: "For forms of government let fools contest, / Whate'er is best administered is best." (Alexander Pope, An Essay on Man). ## I liked your story; the personality of the character is well-brought-out, and the ending avoided being a letdown after the long buildup.

BARSOOM #2 (Thiel): John, your fannine fills me with nostalgia or something, it is almost typical of what SAPSazines used to be like far, far back in earlier fannish days. Except for one thing. You don't have hundreds of strikeouts and typographical errors and misspelled words. (NO, NO! I DON'T MEAN YOU SHOULD PLAN TO INCLUDE THAT STUFF NEXT ISSUE!) Matter of fact, your typing is probably less error-prone than mine. *Sigh* what will fandom think of next? ## Cover art is beautifully done (be sure to tell Nadolsky -- when you're lucky enough to run across that skilled a practitioner of the difficult craft of doing artwork on stencil, believe me it pays to stroke his ego at every opportunity). I notice you don't use shading plates anywhere in your zine. Are you familiar with them? The ones you can buy at fearful expense are sheets of plastic with raised patterns of dots or lines but if finances are a problem you can substitute such things as medium-coarse sandpaper or fine screen (like the kind in tea-strainers, for instance). What you do is place the shading plate underneath the stencil and then use the rounded handle-end of a stylus or something of the sort to rub the stencil where you want the shading to come thru. (There are also the little cogwheel stylus gizmos, which are nice for shading lettering). ## yet Nicki about Emergency Officers: I don't recall when the title was first used (I'll check it out next time I'm going thru the old mailings in the attic) but the function is practically as old as SAPS itself -- see Wrai Ballard's article somewhere in this issue. ## I believe it was the American Amateur Press Association that Lovecraft was a member of. ## "The Million Year War": the other day the local paper mentioned that Spring is the season when you notice the contrast between the bare spots in your lawn and the lush grass pushing up thru the cracks in your sidewalk. That reminds me, now that Spring is here I gotta rub some linseed oil into the snath of my scythe. Honest. (It's easier to do than say, come to think of it). ## What's this about '67 Chevys in Knacki's column? Mine is a '66 Bel Air with (at the moment) 132,000 miles on it. Runs like a charm. First winter in six years I didn't once need a jump start or a battery charger on cold mornings. Only problem is that rain leaks in at the top of the windshield. No, not in the winter, silly, when the temperature gets above freezing. The only thing I miss about the '73 Fords I had before the Chevy is the little switch on the rearview mirror that let you eliminate reflected headlight glare at night. But having vent windows more than makes up for that. Auto designers should have stopped "improving" cars while they were ahead of the game.

ZAP (Briggs): Bob, you're going to be the ruination of my poor old eyeballs yet, but your comments are interesting and individualistic enough to be worth it. I agree with many of the conservative viewpoints you quote, or at least feel they raise issues which should be discussed by anyone opposing them. I wish, tho, that there were more advocates of conservative economic policy who weren't also rabid racists. I've worked with and gone to school with and drunk beer with enough individuals who were members of minority groups to learn that you can't generalize about them any more than you can about us WASPs. There are good and bad people in any racial group -- unfortunately the bad ones are the most conspicuous, usually -- and by and large they are coping with things as best they can, just like you and me. A person's ethnic background is like a physical handicap: it can serve as an excuse for expecting special privileges, or it can be a challenge that he overcomes in order to achieve his goals. ## Gosh, Spring got to Florida before it got here all right. Today is May 9, and we've got a fire going in the stove. The weather forecaster says it'll go down into the low 30's tonight, with frost possible. Had to go out and put flowerpots and boxes and stuff over the dozen tomato plants I rashly set out in the garden last week. Owell, at least we had enough warm days so the fruit trees got their blossoms pollinated this year. I HOPE it's not going to get cold enough to injure the developing fruit... ## Haven't seen ASIMOV'S SF MAG, but did get ANALOG for

the first time in several years, and agree that there have been many changes in pulp mags. ANALOG even has a classified ad column now. JWC must be whirling in his tomb. The impression I got was that Schmidt was ordered by the publisher to use up the backlog he inherited from Bova before spending money on new material. Either that, or his editorial judgment is lousy. At any rate, the Science Fact article in the April issue (Goodavage pushing his space-age astrology) was obviously written several years ago. Sez "by the time you read this you can check whether my prediction is correct" and the prediction concerned weather in early 1981. By now it's too late to do much checking unless you have access to the back file of a newspaper or some such record. (Incidentally, does anyone else in SAPS ever check the predictions in the Old Farmer's Almanac? Most of them are vague enough so it's hard to tell whether or not they are correct, but now and then it surprises me by forecasting a spell of unusual weather with pinpoint accuracy.) Which just inspired me to look up the predictions for California this April to see if any mention was made of the Coalinga earthquake. No, but it says, "Early April will bring heavy rains to the north while the rest of the region will be drier than usual." Rick Sneary tells me Los Angeles had 30 inches of rain in April, an all-time record. So much for long-range weather forecasting. ## Something else about WW II: that was when someone decided it would be a great idea if all the magazines pictured the U.S. flag on their July issue covers. A lot of them kept up the custom for years after WW II ended. ## yet Leigh about socialized education is closer to reality than you might think. In several college courses I took, the class was divided into groups of five or so, assigned to prepare a joint report on some topic for presentation to the remainder of the class. Each member of a group got a grade based on the report, not on how much or how little he personally contributed to it. Even worse, in one of Nancy's classes the instructor announced that he didn't believe in competitive grading, so everyone who completed the course would get a "B". Most of the class were pleased, but not Nancy. It spoiled her all-A average. Come to think of it, a few mailings back we were kicking around the problem of high school honor rolls. The best students sometimes fail to make the honor roll because they're carrying a heavy schedule of tough courses, while others carrying a light load of mickeymouse courses easily get all-A averages. Don't believe any of the teachers in SAPS had a solution for that problem...

COSMIC DEBRIS 20 (Lynch): What's a "menu driven program" for using a computer for accounting? Now if you were in the restaurant business that would be a silly question, I suppose... ## Supermarket profits: 3% doesn't sound like much, until you realize that a terrific amount of money flows thru a big supermarket in the course of a day's business. I've seen them checking register totals at the end of the day and \$8,000 per register isn't uncommon. With 10 checkout lanes, that would mean \$80,000 a day, and 3% of that means \$2,400 profit. The question is, what is profit? Obviously all operating expenses, salaries, rent, etc. are taken care of first, but what about dividends to stockholders? Do they come out of the profit, or are they considered overhead and deducted before profit is figured? Of course, it is large sales volume with small markup that enables supermarkets to compete with smaller groceries. They're certainly more efficient, but they are also a lot more profitable to the operators than they are usually willing to admit. ## Teacher preparation time: But Nicki, in almost every salaried occupation you're expected to put in off-duty time preparing yourself for your actual working hours. They's why they're salaried positions instead of hourly-wage jobs. ## Computer security: Well, one way the military used to handle real important security was to divide it up among two or three people: like putting three different locks on a safe, and no one person knew the combination to all three of them. (In one outfit with control over nuclear weapons, where I used to pull Duty NCO, the Duty Officer and I would be locked into the building with an armed guard outside. Both of us carried loaded .45's and half the authentication codes (for determining if incoming alert messages were genuine or not). One reason for the .45 was that if we suspected our colleague of taking any unauthorized action we were supposed to get the drop on him and call for help. Neither of us was as uptight about that, tho as we were about the possibility of using the wrong page of the codebook when a (practice) alert came thru -- the codes changed every few hours according to a complicated system, and you had only 30 seconds at most to decide whether the message was authentic or not. There was another headquarters where I used to pull Duty NCO where the room we stayed

in was separated from the message center by a long corridor. When a TWX came in at night that demanded immediate action, the Message Center operator would call us and one of us would go pick it up, but first we had to contact the security guards by phone so they could switch off the UV beams and sonic detectors in the corridor, or we'd have set off alarms all over the base by walking thru it. Security around that outfit was so tight it was funny at times. They started out with colored badges for different areas, and put up signs like THIS IS A GREEN BADGE AREA to warn off unauthorized intruders. But since, like all military operations, the headquarters kept expanding, eventually they ran out of colors and had to use combinations of colors instead. Eventually you'd see signs like THIS IS A BLUE BADGE WITH A PINK STRIPE AREA, which always tickled my sense of humor. At still another location, this time a storage area in Germany, our outfit used to provide the guard detail. I don't think there were any nuclear weapons stored there, but there was plenty of highly classified equipment, and the guards carried loaded weapons with instructions to use them first and ask questions later. Every once in awhile, as Sgt of the Guard, I'd get a bright young Lieutenant as Officer of the Day who would begin to wonder, about 0000, if the sentinels were goofing off or not, and tell me to go out and see how near I could get to them without being spotted. You know, somehow I always managed to cough or make some kind of sound before I got REAL CLOSE to any sentinel who happened to be looking the other way and wasn't obviously aware of my approach. Of course, sometimes the bright young Lieutenants would go out to try this sort of thing themselves. I never heard of one of them getting shot, and that seems a miracle...

COLLECTOR (DeVore): Schools: My first year in high school was in a building that was 100 years old; classes were also held in an elementary school building across the street, in an annex of the courthouse, which was next door, in the Manual Training School which was about 5 blocks away, and gym classes were at the YMCA, about six blocks away. Study hall was in the public library a couple blocks away. (We walked to classes at the various locations; I suppose nowadays they would have to run busses or everyone would scream). We didn't feel particularly deprived; in fact, the atmosphere was more like that of a college campus than any other highschool I'm familiar with. It's true that in the oldest buildings the classrooms were small and somewhat crowded, and our lockers were in the basement because the halls were too narrow to have them anywhere else. An expensive (5 million bucks) new school opened the following year, and we appreciated its greater convenience, but it didn't change the quality of our education. I'm not saying that today's students should be put in century-old buildings, but they could do without a lot of the frills that eat up the school budgets. Hell, after WW II when the GI Bill caused overcrowding at all the colleges, a lot of university courses were being taught in Quonset huts. One trouble is that school board members are either professional educators or parents of school-age children, and they're biased in favor of giving the school all it asks for. They need a few plain ole non-parent taxpayers on the board to uphold an opposing viewpoint.

THE NOTHING MAN #5 (Toskey): Well, you wanted an enthusiastic younger fan to take over as OE, Tosk. How am I doing? You're right about the correspondence bit, tho: I remarked to Nicki in a letter the other day that I sent off as many letters and pc's in my first month as OE as I did in the whole previous year. Works the other way, too, tho: it's been a long time since I looked forward to the postman's arrival each day wondering what fannish news he might be bringing. Dave Rike theorized that the specialized and short-interval apas are draining fannish attention away from the quarterlies like SAPS and FAPA; my own theory is that most of the newer, TV-generation fans just aren't print-oriented. That is one reason why I've concentrated on trying to lure ex-SAPS back into the group. (Of course, there's also the fact that I don't know many non-SAP youngfans, either). ## yet Stefl on Theoretical Physics reminds me of a scene in an ANALOG story about 15 years back, where someone is describing the difference between a Scientist, a Mathematician, and an Engineer. He proposes the theorem that every odd number is prime. Says the Scientist, "1 is a prime, 3 is a prime, 5 is a prime, 7 is a prime, 9 is an anomalous case, 11 is a prime, 13 is a prime...we'll accept it as a working hypothesis." The Mathematician says, "1 is a prime, 3 is a prime, 5 is a prime, 7 is a prime...the theory appears to be correct, now all I have to do is devise a proof." The Engineer says, "1 is a prime, 3 is a prime, 5 is a prime, 7 is a prime, 9 is a

prime..." ## Aside from this dog last time, we've lost very few chickens to predators: once I found a hen on the floor of the henhouse, dead but unmarked except from the base of the neck upward only a skeleton was left. I don't know if that was a weasel or a rat or what. ## Agree with your evaluations of Life, The Universe, and Everything, and Courtship Rite. One I'd recommend if you haven't already read it is Clan of the Cave Bear by Jean M. Auel. On that subject (prehistoric man), I read two nonfiction books that are even more fascinating than fiction: the first was Lucy by Donald Johanson & Maitland Edey, which was condensed in Readers Digest a few months back, and is an account of the discovery of pre-humanoid remains in Ethiopia dated at 3.5 million years Before Present. The other is The Monkey Puzzle by John Gribbin & Jeremy Cherfas which not only disputes the place in Man's ancestry assigned to Lucy by her finders, but challenges the entire conventional theory of how H.Sapiens evolved, based on molecular biology, specifically the variations in genetic material between species. It's a lovely joltoclastic attack on orthodox paleontology and anthropology, whether you are convinced by it or not.

DOMINO #16 (Raub): An impeccably-reproduced publication, Mike, with artwork of professional quality. Congratulations on the new job, or rather new duties, which I hope have turned out to be as much of an improvement on your former schedule as you anticipated. What do you do besides announce the names of the songs? Read news and weather reports, mayhap? Soliloquize to fill empty spots? Madly try to keep up with paperwork between changing cassettes? ## Your movie reviews were highly entertaining, and even tho I haven't seen ANY of the items you covered, gave me the feeling that if I had, I'd agree with your opinions. That either proves you are a perceptive reviewer or a persuasive writer, or both.

ORION SETS (Woodsley): You're too subtle for me, Jim, what is the meaning of writing Suzi's zine title as The Belligerant CTRL-G, O' Co'se? ## About the only explanations of nuclear particles which I could understand (or at least felt I was understanding them at the time) were articles in Scientific American. That journal does a marvelous job of presenting fields of science in a way that is intelligible to someone with an elementary knowledge of science in general, but presumably with expertise, if any, in some unrelated field. Unlike most other "popularizations", SA never gives you the feeling that they are oversimplifying, talking down to you. ## It seems intuitively evident to me that the Universe is finite but unbounded, a 3-D analog of the 2-D finite but unbounded surface of a sphere. (Tho as I recall, at last word the cosmologists weren't sure whether the mass of the Universe was great enough to curve space back upon itself or not: apparently the uncertainty factors in their assumptions are great enough to preclude a definite conclusion. ## yet Hank re Heinlein inspires me to remark that if you read sf or fantasy for purposes of literary criticism it is of course legitimate to praise or condemn a work on the basis of its style, levels of meaning, or whatever other standard literary-critical parameters apply to it. On the other hand, if you read for enjoyment, a "great" work is one you enjoy, and a "poor" one is one that bores you. I think a great deal of confusion ensues when fannish critics either ignore or forget which set of criteria they're applying. (Of course, if a reviewer has a thorough grounding in academic literary principles, it's quite likely that a work which fails to meet those standards might not be enjoyable to him and vice versa. I don't claim literary expertise, but it seems to me that sometimes a work is enjoyable despite its literary shortcomings. Of course the ideal reviewer would evaluate the work on both levels and perhaps render different judgments on each, but he'd be careful to let his readers know which measure of excellence he is applying at any one time. ## Degrees: At DCC when I was attending it, they were explained as B.S. (Self-explanatory); M.S. (More of the Same) and Ph.D. (Piled Higher and Deeper). ## Best wishes for a speedy recovery to your mother, Jim, and to you wishes for time and energy to publish Almost Reality and Orion Sets (or whatever it's going to be doing next issue) for our entertainment and edification.

SPECTATOR TO SAPS (Thiel): Am I being plonking if I point out that it would be more appropriate for Toskey than the Confederates to shout "54-40 or fight" as you can see by looking at a map? If I recall correctly, that battlecry arose when the Western end of the border between the US and

Canada was being squabbled over by the politicians. (I refuse to stop this stencil-cutting to go look at a map myself and find out whether the squabble ended up with the border at 54-40, or whether there was a fight, or neither.) ## SPECTATOR-type fanzine titles: I thought that Wrai Ballard had used SPECTRE in SAPS, but apparently not, according to my index. Coslet published one called SPECTATOR SPORT, tho, not to mention SPECKED 'TATER. None of the others you suggest have ever been used.

KITHARA 2 (Davis): You're lucky Nicki's finger didn't glitch a bit more on the key board or you might've been listed as Ham Davis and it would no doubt stick to you forever. Now that you point out the Star Wars connection, it seems proper to inquire whether you want to be known in SAPS as Han or Hank? ## I confess to a booboo in saying Phil^{ips} wrote that article about gravity drift "shortly before his death." Just proves the early years are beginning to run together in my memory, I guess... ## "Government, even in its best state, is but a necessary evil; in its worst state, an intolerable one." (Thomas Paine) ## Yot Barsroom: Ballard always said that what fascinated him while reading van Vogt's Null-A books was seeing the hero make a cortico-thalamic pause at every crisis, and expecting someone to come up and bash him with a club while he was in the midst of it. ## The M.O.U.S.E. saga was both fascinating and entertaining. Beware, tho, when Nancy gets back into SAPS. Her zine isn't named Ignatz for nothing.

THE COLONIAL COMMENTATOR FIVE (Edmonds): Sorry to report that newspapers in this area carried little or no info on the elections in Australia, no doubt because your country isn't considered a potential wartime opponent of ours. (They go into great detail on internal politics of countries like Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and Cambodia). I'm sure the elections were covered in the national news weekly magazines like TIME and NEWSWEEK, but I unfortunately haven't been reading them in recent months. What you people need to attract U.S. attention is something dramatic, like the Falkland Islanders managed. ## Yot Janis about energy credits: As a result of the energy crisis a few years ago, the government decided to encourage practices which would reduce energy (oil) consumption. One such is to allow the costs of home insulation, storm windows, more efficient heating systems, etc., to be partially deducted from taxable income. That is what an energy credit is. It has certainly encouraged a lot of homeowners to invest in such conservation measures, tho perhaps many would have had the work done regardless, simply because it makes for lower heating bills. ## Taxation: A bill presently before the U.S. Congress would do away with all exemptions, loopholes, etc. in the income tax laws, giving each individual simply a \$2,000 deduction from his income and taxing the remainder at 10%. (It will probably be buried in committee and never become law; our legislators don't like simplicity). ## It would seem from your descriptions that Australian labor unions are much more democratic than their U.S. counterparts. Here, if a reformer challenges the union "establishment" and seems to have a chance of being voted into office, he's apt to get shot or blown up by a car bomb shortly before the election. When the heads of large unions are convicted of serious crimes, and after years of stalling by means of court appeals are finally tossed into jail, they either handpick their successors, or else continue to manage the union from their prison cells. This is by far the most serious defect in U.S. labor unionism today, and no one seems to know how to cure it. There is just too much Big Money involved for even the government to have much success in reforming them. ## Submarine-launched missiles: I understand that satellite observation can detect even deeply-submerged submarines these days, which is one argument Reagan is using to push for landbased ICBM development. ## You're right, WW II began in August 1939. Of course, to the U.S. it was a faraway thing for the next couple of years, with the Republicans saying let 'em fight it out without us, and the Democrats saying we have to help our friends (since Roosevelt, a Democrat, was President, we did get gradually involved, furnishing supplies and equipment to Britain, while the isolationist members of Congress screamed for FDR's blood. ## My word, old Leigh, you write a fascinating and commentable fanzine every time!

SPACEWARP 128: Noted for the record.

All in all, Mlg 143 was of high quality, despite its minimum quantity.

Prehistoric Legacy

Introduction: This is a department of SW I launched several years ago under the title The History Corner. It will present reprints and original articles designed to give SAPS members who have come into the organization or into fandom itself in recent years some knowledge of our origins and past history. This is necessary because quarterly SAPS mailings have been appearing for 37 years, none of the original members are still in SAPS, and our cumulative page total has long since passed that of the Encyclopedia Britannica (the not our wordcount -- EB uses smaller type to cram more on a page than we do.)

Some very approximate calculations, however, indicate that, at 400 words per page and deducting 35% for artwork, titles and other non-text space, a complete set of SAPS mailings would contain on the order of ten million words! By Sturgeon's Law, 95% of that is crap, but that still leaves about 50,000 words of eminently reprintable material in the back mailings.

I do not believe that a complete set of SAPS mailings exists in any one location. My file contains about 65% of them, but is lacking many of the earliest ones. At least two sets complete from Mlgs 1-100 probably exist, one belonging to Bruce Pelz, a librarian at UCLA, and another formerly belonging to Walter A. Coslet but purchased by the U. of Maryland and kept at its Towson campus, on the outskirts of Baltimore. Anyone doing serious academic research which could utilize such data should certainly try to get access to one of those collections.

For Mailings 101 to the present there may be a dozen or more sets in existence: try querying your fan friends who are or have been SAPS members in recent years. If all else fails, try the huckster tables or auction sales at sfcons. Unfortunately, though several indexers have compiled lists of publication titles, there is no index at all of SAPS mailings by topic. The only way to locate a specific article, unless you know which bundle it appeared in, is to ask other fans for help or to plow through the files yourself.

What I reprint in this column will be a random sampling: I merely go thru old SAPSazines until I run across something worth reprinting. Can anyone suggest a better method?

WRAI BALLARD, in Outsiders 23 (Mlg 35, Feb 1956):

Uneasy lies the head that doesn't wear the crown.

Past events have proven one thing about SAPS...the only person who doesn't have to worry about unexpectedly becoming the OE, is the person who is acting as the OE. This tradition was started early, though just how it came about is hard to tell, since I've lost touch with Alpaugh, who would know the story. The first SAPS OE was Ron Maddox. He held the post for the first mailing and then Gafia'd all the way to Africa, sticking Alpaugh with the duties of OE. I don't know the story behind this, but anyway Alpaugh took over, without an election, naturally.

Alpaugh was one of the more sturdy-fibered SAPS OEs and kept the post for five mailings, perhaps because no one else would take it. Finally they had an election and Henry Spelman II ran for OE with little hope of beating the New Jersey block. But the New Jersey block voted for Spelman and he was surprised to find himself OE.

Spelman kept the post for three mailings and then after a hurried bit of arranging with Rapp, turned it over to Art. This was rather sissy of him for Art was all warned and ready it seems, but Art being more natural and more the fan, kept the job three mailings, suddenly decided to join the Army, and surprised Walter A. Coslet by presenting him with the diadem and duties of OE. Coslet was surprised, naturally for he was also the FAPA OE at the time, but he took over and announced an election.

The only person who offered himself for the job was Rich Eney, and he later admitted he did it not expecting to win, but merely to get himself noticed by a BNF. He was a very

a surprised boy to find himself SAPS OE while perhaps the newest fan in SAPS, but back then few realized how dangerous it is to appear interested in SAPS. Rich methodically published his four mailings and then turned the job over to Coslet who had, as I remember, offered himself as Emergency Officer...the fellow who took over in case the OE got a sudden urge to leave or was unable to function. Since no one else had offered even to do that much, Cos found himself EO without an OE and EO's without an OE are OE's.

Coslet was the OE for three mailings, and then made a deal with Gordon Black, who took over without the formality of an election. He may have mentioned something about an election after finishing the Coslet term, but everyone looked the other way and pretended they didn't hear him. SAPS were beginning to get wily about this time. Gordon finished the Coslet term and three mailings of his own, and then got fouled up by school, work and a lack of time. His EO, Roy Drummond dropped out of SAPS about this time, and so after holding up the mailing for a month, Black sent it out and appointed Wraai Ballard as OE.

Calling this a shock would be rather mild for Black didn't put an Official Organ in my bundle, and didn't ask me to be, or inform me that I was OE. I got the mailing and figured he didn't have the time to do an OO. Then I got a letter from Nangee asking me if I'd known I was going to be OE and why hadn't I mentioned it. I thought this was a joke or that she'd heard some foolish rumor, but the next day I got a couple letters asking me about the status of some of the members. This got me just a bit panic stricken and I wrote practically everyone asking that it wasn't so, and Nancy Share, Irene Baron and Nangee all sent me their copies of the OO which convinced me. It was quite an experience, but all according to SAPS tradition.

So I served four mailings, and then Nangee was the only one interested in the job, so I turned it over to her without an election. She handled it two mailings and then was forced to give it up, and asked Coslet if he'd take over. He said he would, but evidently this asking was such a break with tradition the other members objected and broke with tradition even further by having an election and voting on a choice between several candidates. But new legend was started even by this, for to have the election, first Karen Anderson just up and took the OEship away from Coslet by main force and put out the one mailing, and arranged the election. She also won that election. Then having won the SAPS election and SAPS having broken with all traditions, she ended her career as OE by having another election with choice between two candidates. All nice and legal, but awfully dull.

This could be carried on further by telling of the SAPS EO and that office. Only thing noticeable, no EO has ever functioned and most dropped out, well several dropped out while EO. OE's stay on, but the position of the EO is shaky, perhaps because the EO always suffers so much from the awful strain of always waiting, waiting, waiting...

EDWIN SIGLER in Tellis Streif's The Black Pirate Vlnl (Mlg 7, Jan 49):

Space War

Here are a few of my ideas on space War, take em or leave em. The weapons we have today are certainly enough for a space vessel to carry for you know that no ship could carry armor thick enough to ward off a bazooka shell or a six inch rocket either. In fact even four inches of armor plate on a moderate sized vessel would weigh thousands of tons. Do you recall those fire control instruments they developed for the Flying Fortresses? As I recall it, they didn't use tracers but had the guns aimed automatically by electric calculating machines. I do not see why it would be impossible to modify these for space use. Then in case of actual use, it could work out something like this: When the two ships met in battle it would probably start at a range of at least ten miles. Using those fire control instruments the action might be started by a long blast of armor-piercing slugs from a fifty caliber Browning. The speed of the two ships would scatter the burst all over the ship that was struck, letting the air rush in and killing anyone who was not in a space suit. And since you cannot work very well in a suit this would place the ship at a disadvantage so the other craft could close in and hurl several small caliber rocket shells into

the other craft; this would inflict enough damage to impell the capitulation...if they were pirates, in which case the other craft could pull alongside and let go with a two-pound automatic cannon. When a stream of armor-piercing high explosive shells hit the fuel tanks of the stricken craft it would most probably be torn apart by the explosion.

All of the weapons I have mentioned in their improved form could be carried by one man. And could very easily be used in space because they have no recoil and would not cause trouble that way. On the other hand a .75 cannon or a six inch gun would require too much weight to be economically carried or used. Also the outer hull would have to be so thin that even a light deer hunting rifle would have no trouble in making a hole through it. Even the old 30-30 could probably do it, as even a one inch (rather one eighth inch) coat would weigh 129 odd tons.

Well it looks like man is going to eventually reach the moon the way those experiments are coming on in rocketry at those army fields. One hundred and four miles straight up. Hope they make a motor good enough that I could build one in my garage. I want to see if Mars has as many blasted idiots running around loose as we have.

However, I believe that the first actual rocket to reach the Moon will be built by some big corporation instead of the army. Some people may disagree with me but I have noticed that every time something was needed for the nation, it was some much abused corporation that produced it. I will go further than that and predict that no more than a century from the time the first man carrying rocket reaches the moon, that a great ship built by General Motors, equipped with Westinghouse controls, and powered by E. I. Dupont de Nemours will take off for Alpha Centauri.

((Note by Rapp: Sigler was one of the first fans I corresponded with when I discovered fandom in 1946. His only fanactivity, aside from the foregoing article, was writing letters to the prozines arguing that rayguns, blasters and force beams would not be needed in space. I think he gaffed long before this piece appeared in SAPS))

RICK SNEARY in Arcturus #3 (Mlg 7, Jan 49) :

I'm interested to see what the reaction to Paul Cox's latest article will be. Knowing fans fairly well I know there will be some, but some how I think the whole thing is getting sort of warm around the edges. Paul doesn't bring up anything acceptable to us, and, well we don't bring up anything that will sweep away his objections.

There is one thing, Paul. You say color has nothing to do with it (superiority vs. inferiority). If this is so, and I believe it is, then how can you condemn a race? You say that the negro is mentally inferior. But isn't it true that there are a great number of whites that are less intelligent than a negro?

Would it not be more intelligent (though no less bigoted) on our part to look down on all people of lower intelligence? Why not segregate all people with a IQ of 70 or lower, and force them to breed themselves out of existence as you have suggested be done with the negroes. Wouldn't this improve the whole race more surely than merely dividing it up by colors, and doing away with the ones with the lower average intelligence. Of course this might hurt fandom.

HAL SHAPIRO in AJ73-16 (Mlg 20, Jun 1952):

Most Fen can drink just as well sitting down as they can drink standing up. But few can stand up as well after drinking sitting down as they can sit down after drinking standing up.

WRAI BALLARD in Outsiders #20 (Mlg 32, Jun 55):

I've been trying to remember if they didn't used to have some kind of mayday celebration for the kids back when I was a sprout. Seem too old to remember being that young...or not old enough yet. Yah by Ghod we did, made may baskets filled them with candy and gave them to friends. Do kids do that now too, or are they too afraid of McCarthy?

((Sen. Joseph McCarthy, persecutor of Communist sympathisers.))

People, especially if you devise a mechanical analog computer to check the vast numbers of sums-of-primes necessary. (I calculated that numbers from 1-100,000 could be checked by coding the primes as 1/10-inch-wide bars around the circumference of two wheels 66 ft in diameter and then rotating one with reference to the other. At that point I decided an electronic computer program would be simpler.) Anyhow, I did not succeed in finding a proof either for or against the Conjecture, but convinced myself the probability of finding an N not the sum of two primes is vanishingly small. The argument runs something like this: as N increases arithmetically (in increments of 2) the possible sums of primes consist of each prime less than $1/2 N$ combined with each prime greater than $1/2 N$ but less than N, and thus the number of possibilities increases geometrically. For example, for $N = 1,000$, there are 1,682 possibilities, of which 22 do add to 1,000. In the range 964 to 1,000 I found an average of 23.1 combinations summing to each N, with a low of 11 for 992 and a high of 49 for 994.

This was tedious work, finding (I hope) all the combinations which added to N. It's much less work to find just one for each N, thus disproving Goldbach's Conjecture for THAT number. Heck, I presume this has been done already up to some quite high value of N, hasn't it?

Oh yeah, another time-consuming avenue of number theory I've explored is something I've never seen mentioned in any math text: Numbers can be grouped in three classes: primes, composite numbers whose greatest prime factor is less than their square root, and numbers whose greatest prime factor exceeds their square root. I have to confess that I've been unable to devise a way to predict which of the 3 classes a given number will fall into (without factoring it to find out), and I don't know what use it would be if I did, tho I once produced an elegant graph with a bar representing the greatest prime factor of each number and a line for the function $f(x) = \sqrt{x}$ which looks as if it ought to be useful for SOMETHING.

Incidentally, 3500 years or more ago, the Egyptians were using a clever method of division which might seem strangely familiar to you if you work with computer arithmetic. For example, to divide 777 by 26 they would write the equivalent of

*	1	26
	2	52
*	4	104
*	8	208
*	16	416
	29	

where the left column starts with 1 and doubles each time, and the right column starts with the divisor (26) and doubles each time, until the next doubling would make it greater than the dividend (777). Now, subtracting the right-column figures from 777, starting with the largest,

$$777 - 416 = 361$$

$$361 - 208 = 153$$

$$153 - 104 = 49$$

Since 52 is larger than 49, skip that one and use the top line:

$$49 - 26 = 23$$

To find the quotient, add the left-column figures opposite the numbers used in the subtractions, i.e., 1, 4, 8 and 16. Their sum, 29, is the quotient and 23 is the remainder. And you thought binary arithmetic was modern! (Using an abacus, they could probably work the problem quicker than you could using long division with pencil and paper. There seems to be more room for error, tho, in the repeated doublings of the divisor, at least for me, the that might be due to unfamiliarity with the process as compared to the method we learn in school.)

And that is the final word from the wilds of Pennsy for this issue of SPACEWARP and this mailing of SAPS.

June 27, 1983

ART RAPP