

VANDY

#22



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And I would like to serve notice now that I miss the nice easy reference at the top (or bottom, or somewhere) on the front page of the FA announcing: "Deadline for next mlg - Julvember 45th". I have enuf trouble keeping track of things, anyway, and I need lots of help.

"I" in this case is Juanita. I am starting this of a rainy April 2nd, with a promise of "severe thunderstorms" in the air and the prospect of chauffering lil kiddiegarden pupils home through a hail-storm or whatever. Starting FAPA typing seemed as good a way as any to prevent too much brooding.

Actually, I'm not sure why I feel so gung ho on fanac at the moment: we killed last night collating, addressing, stamping (and for Buck - stapling) YAN 134...and it was a monster size issue. Thanks mostly to Terry Carr and his verdamnte column in F&SF — he may get a punch in the nose at the next con we all attend.

But natheless, I felt like stencil cutting this morning. The material for the next YAN isn't laid out yet, but the FAPA mailing is always available, and principally my department anyway.

Part of the fannish enthusiasm is due to the season. The midwest in the winter is particularly inhospitable for travelling to fan parties -- the closest real fan center to us is Chicago, usually through snow drifts or ice storms during the winter. The combination of car repairs and childhood ailments for Bruce have pretty effectively curtailed fan activity for us over the last few months. But as the whiff of spring approaches, I get itchy in the fannitis.

Because we put out a genzme more or less monthly, I tend to find the three-month gap in FAPA zines dismaying and confusing, and I tend to assume that Fapans are as informed on our month-to-month activities as are YAN readers.

Let's see. Nothing much of vital fannish importance has occurred in the midwest since the convention. There have been fan parties, but we've missed alot of them because of ill timing or illness. In November (the weekend of the assassination, as it ironically happened) we jaunted to Milwaukee to visit bev and Gene DeWeese and the Grennells; All of us went to something called a folk festival -- and discovered it might be entertaining if you planned to spend a whole day, but certainly could not be seen in an hour or two. The most interesting aspect of this festival was an auditorium-sized room of numerous booths featuring and selling the specialty foods of various countries. Great way to experiment with different manners of cooking, pick up recipe ideas, and generally indulge an overindulged appetite. Unfortunately time and the immense crowds severely limited the opportunities. I wouldn't mind trying it again, but at the crack of dawn or something, before the masses get there.

Bruce Pelz stopped by overnight shortly before Christmas, and we spent the usual fannish evening in talk and gawking at slides and books and listening to redords. I'm always surprised when anyone wends his way to Wabash. It's so hard to find, compared to the metropolitan areas, and transportation into this burg sans private auto is to say the least screwy.

Since then, not much. Oh lots of stencil cutting, but with the exception of best friends the DeWeeses and another evening at Grennells our fan contacts have been through pubbing and correspondence.

Pretty dull for the peripatetic fannish types.

During the winter Buck acquired another Derringer (or Sharps, or something of the sort), Bruce got the chicken pox and measles, and I have a new guitar, a Hauser -- gift from the DeWeeses and my mother.

On the current fracas, I want to state that I am against the blackball. I have my own quite personal reasons, and I have some abstract ones. For one thing, I've felt the heavy hand of official blackmarking because of personal activities, and this tends to make me lean over backward when I encounter the same sort of thing in any other case. I will not participate in a blackball.

And since I think that covers most of the generalized discussion, I'll now turn to the ever-maligned mailing comments.

EGGS AND MARROWBONE

Descant (Clarkes) This is as good a time as any to reaffirm my intention to comment on post, pre- and otherwise ungekosher mags if I feel like commenting. I understand there are those who refuse to review anything not in the regular mailing, but such an attitude eludes my simple reasoning.

Bruce, too, is quite delighted with Humpty Dumpty. Last year I had a sub to Jack & Jill for him (nostalgia from my childhood), but the stories were a bit old for him. Humpty Dumpty is just his speed. I missed the "Officer Fuzz" reference, but several other wordings have made me wonder about the writer's cynicism; Bruce wasn't puzzled--he's used to the same thing from his parents.

Ah yes, we remember the Dexter movie -- "Fire Maidens of Outer Space" or something of the sort. Occasionally in daymares I still get this vision of these chorines capering about to the tune of Polivetzian Dances played on a trombone. But there have been others as bad or worse. In my book, the funniest of these that took itself seriously was "King Dinosaur", a monstrosity with a cast of four (the two producers and their girl friends, I believe), a budget of fifty dollars, a set of someone's backyard and several reels of footage from other monster movies. It also contained a lovely scene where the heroes(?) are attacked by a giant cardboard spider -- they shoot, and a lovely hole appears in the critter, and the film; someone obviously poked a pencil through the model and the scenery behind appeared in lovely ungory black and white.

The funniest intentional sf movie we've seen is "Creature from the Haunted Sea". The budget was equally small, but no one was taking the bit seriously. The result, particularly the dialogue, was delightful. It's making the late late show rounds on tv now, and much recommended.

Your comments on food echo my own. My tastes are pretty plebian, but I dig some types of far-out food. I resent being put down because I can't afford and wouldn't eat if I could filet mignon. Bev DeWeese used to waitress and occasionally had to serve the things (like us, she wants her meat well done all the way through) -- described the chore as stomach turningly distasteful. But then, there are those who look sick at my favorite dish of cooked frozen baby limas swimming in butter and milk. Chacun a son....

On perfect pitch -- it indeed can be a curse. But I suspect part of it is training your ear to tune out certain things. I admire intricate madrigals because I have great difficulty tuning out the counter melody when I try to sing harmony (ask Marion to relate her frustrating experiences trying to teach me to sing where I belonged). Even a fraction off on the revolution of a turntable and the variation in pitch on a record becomes violently ear-grating to me.

The Fort Coulange account was hilarious.

Catch Trap (Marion) Indiana is pretty stringent in firecracker legislation (though they've relaxed a bit in the past few years). But compared to Milwaukee, they are wide open here. Last 4th of July we were taking a trip to Milwaukee and took along some caps and a cap pistol, planning to let Bruce go outside and pop off junior style on the holiday. But when we queried Dean, he sadly informed us anything of the sort was strictly forbidden within the Milwaukee city limits. I got the impression the cops might be called if you even snapped your fingers too loudly. Fortunately, we weren't far from a city park scheduling a big municipal display of skyrockets and whatnot, so we bundled the kids over to the park (let them stay up late for this unique occasion) and a good time was had by all. Bundled. Well, we did decide to go in a bit of a hurry, and we weren't dressed very fancy.

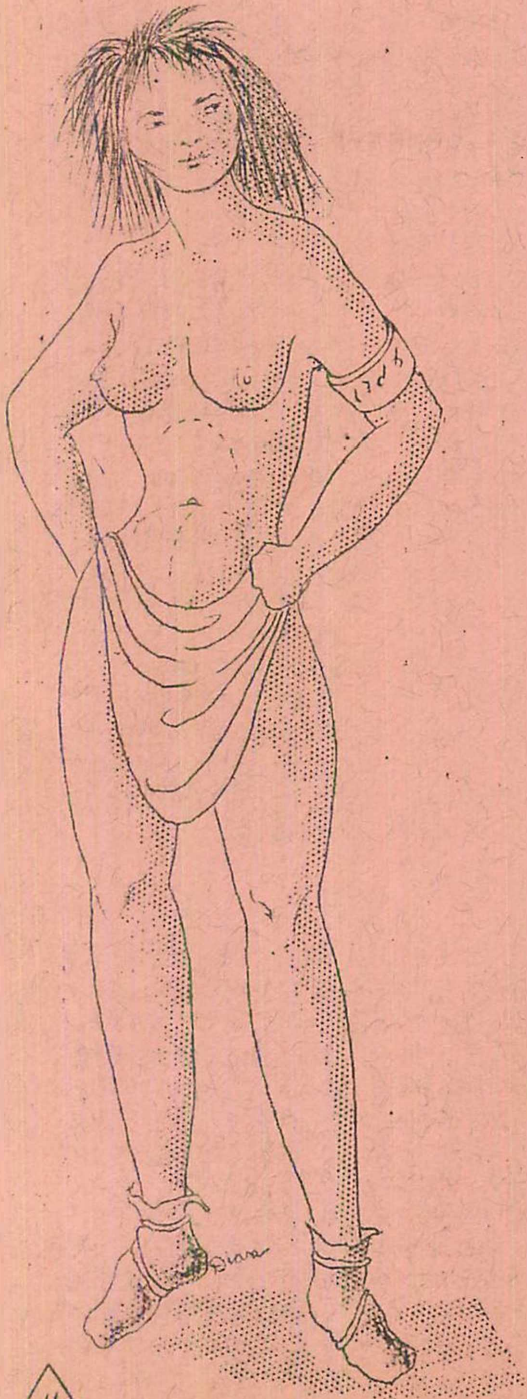
My own feelings about small cars are rather mixed. After driving the '56 Ford for a number of years (not a big car, really, just average for the era) it was a delight to handle a '59 Rambler American. For one thing I could actually see the road in front a lot better, a lot quicker. For another thing, the response was quicker -- I had the feeling I was actually steering the car, not just aiming it. And the seats, despite the rougher ride of the Rambler, were more comfortable than the Ford; this was due to a feature Marion once mentioned to me in a letter, the angle of the seats in the Rambler is closer to right angle, rather than the hammock effect of the other cars.

But...I have ridden in several VWs, never driven one, and I've ridden in a Peugeot (spelling?). I didn't care for it. I couldn't see the road as well from either one as I could from the Rambler, and it's a distinctly uncomfortable feeling. I don't think I'd like to drive one at all -- even with a cushion to prop me up higher (I always used one in the Ford) I don't believe my vision would be good enuf for safety. I want to see them coming a good long way off so I can dodge.

I liked snow as a child, although I was never in a skiing area, and my ankles are too weak for such things anyway. I like snow in a city, but winter in the country is pretty much a bore. (Buck just shakes his head sadly over statements like this and mutters about poor deprived little city mice.)

Marion, you flatter me when you say in reference to Yma Sumas "either of us could follow her easily enough as far as range alone was concerned...". I certainly couldn't and can't follow her on up into the stratosphere, not without something inside going "pop". In the lower registers, I have no trouble, and I can stick pretty close up to her second gear, or whatever, but there I give up and just listen.

On school environment I have rather mixed feelings. My training tells me some things and my personal reaction tells me others. I may scorn "adjustment", but unless we live on a desert island, some amount of getting along with all types of mentalities and personalities is necessary. We can't afford private school and none is available, and so far the level of instruction seems to be fairly good (kindergarten, and Bruce is getting a good foundation in phonics and phonetics, which I much approve)...but the teacher quite frankly admitted she is frequently non-plussed by Bruce's "sophistication". I suspect heavily travelling, a good supply of books and parents who try to answer questions helps, but I certainly didn't think of Bruce as "sophisticated". His lively curiosity also aroused personal com-



ment, though it seems nothing out of the ordinary. But, he doesn't accept criticism well, he has a healthy glop of short temper from both parents, and he's struggling to learn to get along with other people. A certain degree of "adjustment" is necessary, and as long as his learning is being abundantly supplemented at home, I'm not worried he'll turn into a junior grade organization man. I hope to raise him to be creative and non-conformist and logical enuf to get things done without running into a solid wall of conformist opposition. If you hold your mouth right, it sometimes works.

It sounds screwy coming from a teacher who kicked and screamed against "adjustment" learning, but that seems to be the major thing Bruce needs to learn from school. He's already applying his rudimentary phonics and sounding out words in books for 8 - 12 year olds (that I read as bedtime stories) and I suspect he'll be close to reading first grade primers at sight next fall.

But it's a frightening comment on our public school system that in this particular question, they aren't offering any academic training for the bright curious child that the child and his parents couldn't provide as well or better in less actual consumed time.

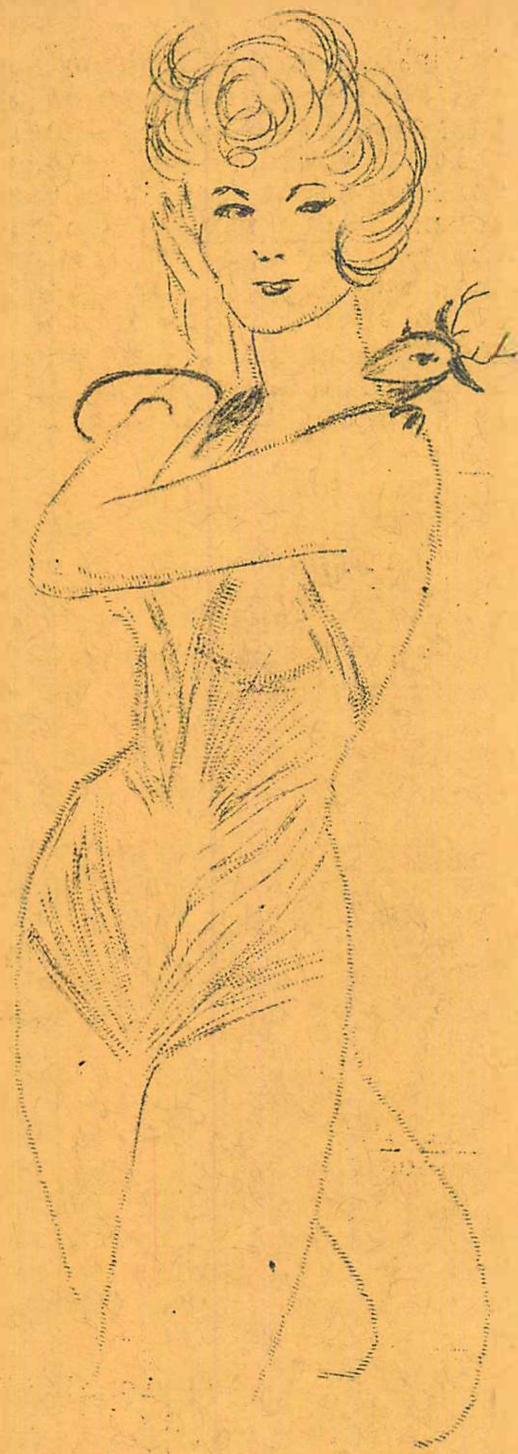
Perfume? We bump heads. I like musk and the spicy synthetics: "Tabu", "Primitif" "Sortilege" and a hard-to-obtain Lenthalic scent called "Dark Brilliance". I'm sure (I am not! I think of myself as vinegar or buttermilk)...sure this indicates something ridiculous about my personality.

Day*Star (Marion) Your account of choir was entertaining but calculated to make me happy I chose art and foreign language rather than art and music as my majors in high sch.

The ape analysis was interesting. What did Apex think of it?

Sercon's Bane (Buz) Where does a regional con end and a regional party begin? I've always been leery that our picnic might drift into the former category. For one thing, I don't relish the idea of trying to cook for several hundred people, to say the least, and for another, there are some local fans I don't cotton to at a party in my house (possibly the greatest contributors to Indiana's lousy fannish rep since Degler).

Some of what you say on drunk driving is valid, but I'd like to ask what suggestions you have to replace the arbitrary legal definition of "drunk driving". Maybe you handle it fine while smashed -- drop the alky test -- then guy with his eyeballs bubbling rams into an unloading school bus and kills a bunch of children. Drunk driving? No. There's no test. "The accelerator stuck"...or..."the bus' had warning lights that temporarily blinded him." Nominal fine and goombye. Very comforting.



When you come up with a replacement for the present legal definition of "drunk", something to protect the honest citizen minding his own driving P&S from the crooked type who can't handle his liquor, then I'll listen to your objections. Last fall I was within six feet of a wreck where three drunken kids ran a red light and smacked themselves all over the rearend of a truck; if the truck had been a foot further past the intersection, I would have gotten the impact -- and I would have wanted considerably more comfort than a nominal fine from those creeps.

Ankus (Bruce and Dian) I can only wish for other couples as much happiness as we have had over the years, and hope that they will be as kind in turn and do as much for others.

Kim Chi (Ellingtons) Interesting, you felt sorry for Mrs. Kennedy, but her husband is "just another politician". So he was. He was a father. So was Tippit. So was Oswald. The whole thing was senseless, and a look into the future of the children and the widows involved is shudder-making. I'm afraid I can't be so casual as to dismiss the entire thing as "Oh well, just another politician, a fuzz, a nuthouse fugitive." And after seeing the way the MacArthur death was dragged out (the death, after all of a man well on in years, a death not unexpected and not leaving young children in their formative years fatherless), your gripes about the Kennedy funeral seem so much ugh.

White Stencil, (Silverberg) Your reactions to the assassination were very close to my own (although I certainly was not writing any paying material at the time, but the dazed, trance-like state was identical). Interesting. My mother and I compared notes, and the acquaintances who seemed the most deeply affected were Republican; the Democrats seemed callous to us -- does this indicate Republicans tend to be more emotional?

Your book comments devoured with interest, but inspiring no comment, beyond please - more.

The Theory and Practice of "Blackball" (Trimble) Like you, John, I assumed the blackball was only for use against Wetzel. Like you I assumed we would keep it around only as protection against further attempts by a certified paranoiac to butt his way into an organization where nobody wanted him. I was wrong, like you.

The Loyal Opposition (Bjo, et. al.) Some of the writers tend to wave their arms too much to help the case. But others manage to maintain a detached and rational sound. Of the latter, I found the most to approve in the statements by Bjo and Al Lewis. A little sanity certainly won't hurt this mess any.

The Great Raeburn Dogdiddle (Clarke) Neither will a little humor. It is to laugh, retchingly.

Final Comment. Earlier I mentioned I was against the blackball. I may also mention I am against such a vague statement of purpose. We received nothing that came right out and said "Blackball Walter". We did receive several extremely veiled and vague hints as to how we should vote...I mean, how our vote would be counted once we had used it. It was so vague it was not till several days later it dawned on me what was being suggested. Why? Because I fail to see the basis for it -- this is a press association, isn't it? Print...long distance..? Mutter..JWC

first fandom is not dead

part twelve

B I

his pages

only tottering, granddaughter

The Poor Man's Quotebook:

"I regard him as a crashing bore, but I could be wrong -- I'm not but I could be." -Buck Coulson, in Yandro 132.

"She's a lovely girl with a beautiful body that has to be seen in naked motion to really appreciate it ... but she's a kook." -Wild William Rotsler, in Kteic 116.

* THE JOLLY STAGEHAND *

(The following was written and submitted to Boyd Raeburn, for A Bas, about four years ago. He never published it. Fie on him.)

I lurk behind the scenes.

Some people (namely, Jean Rose, Larry Stark, and just possibly Phyllis Economou) like to cut their capers behind the footlights but in front of the scenery, but I'm different because I'm bashful and awkward -- or something. I prefer to hide in the wings and watch them and get paid for it. And drop sandbags on their heads.

I've been a stagehand for over thirty years, off and on -- mostly off, because very little stage work comes to this neck of the woods. I wasn't yet sixteen when I snagged my first backstage job through the good graces of my father -- who just happened to be the stage manager, and who just happened to be short-handed that day because the property man got drunk and failed to show up. I worked most of the afternoon and evening for the magnificent sum of three dollars, and then the man sobered up just enough to return to work because he was missing the golden lure. In 1930, three dollars was a Pile. That was my initial taste of the fantastic sums to be found in the theatrical world and I promptly abandoned all dreams of becoming a streetcar motorman, or a zeppelin pilot. (A zeppelin was a thing they had around in those days but may now be considered as one with the dodo and the dinosaur. And I guess the streetcar is rapidly joining them in nostalgic limbo.)

That first theater was a roach and rat infested old monstrosity which had seen better days about a century before when it was called, of course, the Grand Opera House. My father and the old old timers--- tall talesmen all--- liked to sit around and talk about the good old days when Ethel Barrymore, Harry Lauder, and Bert Williams played the house; wild tales of sudden blizzards which marooned them in the old theater all night, of drunken orgies and never-ending poker games, of high didoes cut in dressing rooms by immoral actors and actresses. The theater, like countless others of its kind, had two balconies stacked above the main floor and that second, uppermost balcony was the fabled

"peanut gallery" of song and story. It also had another popular name, but that name isn't used today for fear of the NAACP. The peanut gallery was the place where the town's riffraff, and the kids, could see the show for ten or twenty cents while the genteel folk in the first balcony paid a dollar, and the elite on the main floor was charged whatever the traffic would bear. That balcony was also the place where you dressed as you pleased and could keep your hat on if you wished--- provided the kids behind you didn't knock it off, sending it sailing down toward the main floor. This gallery usually employed a burly man to keep order; a deputy sheriff, an off-duty policeman, or whatever: and he was needed.

The Grand Opera House also possessed a tiny projection booth, behind the peanut gallery. The old-timers said it was used in ancient days when motion picture "road shows" were actually road shows: silent picture greats like "Ben Hur," "The Big Parade," and "Birth of A Nation" would come to town, play to capacity audiences for a few weeks, and then move on. I don't know when I first discovered that the booth was still serviced by electricity, but I recall many a happy day there playing with the spotlight and the projectors; I would borrow my dad's stage door key, sneak up to the booth and start the generator, and put on an imaginary show for the rats and roaches. (By this time the depression of 1929 had overtaken the business, and the theater had seen its last professional performance.) There was no film to run, which was just as well, for in my ignorance I would have probably burned the place down; and I didn't know until many years later that the machines hadn't been oiled since 1924, so I probably did ruin them. It was in this wonderful, ratty old theater that I found my first copy of Weird Tales and began my descent into the wicked world of science fiction.

And fandom.

Eventually the Opera House was padlocked and condemned, and our town's stage world --such as it was-- moved uptown to another hoary relic known as the Majestic. It wasn't, of course. The Majestic, in its brief day after my entrance, offered a few second-rate road shows, the inevitable home talent exhibitions, the last sputtering gasps of vaudeville, and some political rallies before turning to grade B weekend movies. This last is the classical last stage of decay before a theater gives up the ghost forever and becomes merely a home for wandering pigeons. Today, those traveling attractions which get lost and suddenly find themselves in the vicinity of Bloomington, usually perform at a local Masonic Temple, or in one of the auditoriums on the campus of a nearby state university.

And thereby hangs my tale.

Twice in a recent month, a gala musical attraction came to town-- or rather, two musical attractions came to town and each represented the extreme ends of the musical scale. If you can guess what I mean.

The first roadshow was Fred Waring and His Pennsylvanians in a noisy, frothy something they were pleased to call a "Hi-Fi Holiday." The show had an advance man, which is common, who never bothered to inspect the auditorium, which is also common of advance men. If this fellow had inspected the auditorium he would have quickly cancelled the performance and sent Mr. Waring in some other direction. The house was ideal for the uses to which it had been put in the past, the uses

for which it had been designed: student performances, kid shows by the Childrens' Theater, wandering pianists and lecturers who had somehow lost their way between Chicago and St. Louis, and other typical campus uses. On Friday and Saturday nights a cut-rate movie is offered the students, and on Sunday afternoons an "Art Picture" is presented --- by Art Picture, the faculty means any picture filmed by foreigners. To book an orchestra of thirty or forty people into that place was madness itself, but the Dean In Charge of Student Entertainment blithely booked the orchestra, and handed our group the job of staging it.

The better-organized stage shows carry a skeleton crew with them, and send word ahead how many additional men will be needed to work the show; they also send ahead a list of instructions telling us what will be needed in the way of stage space, lines on which to hang their scenery, properties, dressing rooms and so forth. I read the list furnished by Mr. Waring's crew and quietly laughed up my ragged sleeve. They wanted a clean, clear working space of at least 30 x 40 feet, whereas this stage could provide him with 18 x 25 feet if we stretched it a bit. They wanted a double set of lines in one on which to hang a battery of small spotlights ("In one" means the first set of lines behind the front curtain), but they couldn't have that, either, because the picture screen and the loudspeakers were already occupying the first three sets of lines and we weren't mad enough to dismantle all that for an orchestra playing a one-night stand. They wanted a grand piano, which was procured, and four adjacent dressing rooms --- which was a feeble joke. Mr. Waring's motley crew were assigned four classrooms in the basement, making it necessary for them to climb two spiral steel staircases to reach the stage. Meanwhile, we were told to meet the truck at the stagedoor, with nine men ready for work.

We had the nine men ready, and two more to boot, for we had seen this sort of thing happen before. The theater was located on the second floor of a classroom building. The only way to reach the stage door was to climb a fire escape. The truck couldn't get within a hundred feet of that fire escape because no one had ever supposed that a stage door needed a driveway or even a sidewalk for access. And then the weather hit us: rain at first, and then freezing rain, turning to snow mixed with some sleet. The fire escape and the sloshy hundred feet of university lawn was a mess.

Mr. Waring's big highway semi pulled into a nearby coalyard and stopped; Mr. Waring's truck driver cursed us and the university because he could get no closer; Mr. Waring's traveling stage crew took one long look at the distant truck, the muddy lawn, the icy fire escape, the second-floor stage door, and refused to work. (But because we'd seen all this happen before, we bided our time and kept straight faces; meanwhile our two extra men put on their coats and prepared to work.) There followed the usual hassle between company manager, the truck driver, the stage crew, and the Dean in Charge -- each having their say, each making use of their own quaint vocabularies. It went on for perhaps ten or twenty minutes, with all of us drawing our time, and in the end it ended just as we'd known it would. The truck driver agreed to unload, the stage crew agreed to work, and the Dean agreed to hire the extra men needed to tote Mr. Waring's paraphernalia thru the mud and up the fire escape. Happily, we fell to. All sorts and bits and pieces of stage material came up that damned fire escape one icy step at a time -- except an organ. Mr. Waring carried an organ,

and he wanted that organ on stage so his organist would have something to do. But none of us, not even the craziest amongst us, would put a hand on an organ going up a fire escape. It had been murder to tote two switchboards, half a dozen Mitchell tables, and several pieces of an outsized hi-fi rig up that shaky structure -- we balked at the last.

Eventually some genius discovered an "easy" way: the organ was wheeled into a basement corridor, taken around to the front of the theater, and gently flipped over onto its backside; eight men then carried it up two flights of stairs, into the auditorium, down the aisle, and lifted it onto the stage. And after the show that night it went out the same way. (Meanwhile, we discovered that we could drop some of the sturdier pieces over the fire escape and let them fall in the snow, but the finicky stage manager wouldn't let us handle the organ that way.)

Eventually the show was in readiness, and despite the weather enjoyed good business. The musicians on stage were as packed as the people out in the audience. Those musicians in the foreground were so near the curtain they were forced to clutch their music racks eachtime the curtain opened and closed, else the racks would be knocked over; the battery of overhead spotlights were hung on "trees" and set up in front of the curtain; all their special scenery was abandoned and the show played against the house backdrop -- which was a ragged, dirty "sky" hanging flat against the brick wall at the rear. The hi-fi equipment was likewise placed in front of the curtain, and some of it was setting down on the auditorium floor in what would normally be the orchestra pit; the sound mixed and his console was seated in the front row of spectators. During the performance, stage hands were forced to crawl under the Mitchell tables (musicians sat atop them in staircase fashion) to hand up chairs when needed. And, at the grand opening, when the frayed curtains swished and the panicky musicians grabbed for their racks, and the chorus cut loose in the smaltzy manner beloved by Mr. Waring, the electrician hit his master switches and blew the whole works. That poor old theater switchboard just couldn't take the load forced on it. So, while the admirable Mr. Waring continued to wave his hands and the chorus continued to sound off, we scurried around like fiends splitting circuits, distributing the load to several buss-bars, and getting the lights on again. The only illumination during this hectic period was one sputtering spotlight up in the balcony --- the spot operator had thoughtfully plugged into an aisle light circuit, knowing from experience that aisle lights usually remained on when catastrophe struck elsewhere.

And so went the show. Twice again that night we were blacked out but these interruptions were caused by the storm raging outside, and no one gave it a second thought. After everything else, what the hell? And when it was over we lugged everything but the organ down the fire escape, across a sea of mud-snow-ice, and packed it into the truck. Hurling into the night a farewell curse, the driver and his load were off into the darkness. We picked up our pay and went home.

* * *

Two weeks later another musical extravaganza was booked into yet another auditorium on campus, and from the beginning it promised to be very different. It was a rock 'n roll show and its stars, two bright, eager young men with pimply faces, were said to have appeared on Dick

Clark's Bandstand, whatever that is. The top banana was a teen-ager named Ronny Something; his assistant was a year or two older and owned a slightly better voice, but I've already forgotten his name. Let's call him Ned. We received no advance information whatsoever on this show, and knew it was traveling without benefit of crew, scenery, or anything else. Its appearance here was sponsored by a recording company in a nearby city, but discreet inquiry revealed that no one had ever heard of the company before -- so as a matter of standard operating procedure, the stage hands asked for cash in advance and got it.

Lucky us.

The night of the show was another adverse night: snow and ice had packed almost all of Illinois into mothballs, or whatever, and the auditorium underscored the bad weather: perhaps a hundred students had attended, scattered about over nine hundred seats. Ronny Something and his girl were there, and Ned and his girl were there, but nobody had the foggiest idea where the remainder of the show was -- the other members of the sparkling cast, all rock 'n roll musicians par excellence, were supposed to be driving in from Iowa but it was surmised the icy roads had delayed them somewhat. Meanwhile, Ronny and Ned and the promoter went into a huddle in a dressing room (classroom), while the two girlfriends huddled with us backstage and wondered what was going to happen next. We seized the opportunity to pump the girls and discovered this was strictly a freebooter's show: everything had been put together in the imaginative mind of the promoter (he was the mysterious record company), but nobody had gotten around to collecting all the cast in one place at one time to hold something laughingly called a rehearsal. It was to be amateur night at the Bijou, and the devil would take the hindermost.

The audience, composed almost entirely of young and impressionable students, had brought along their books and were soon studying lessons. The curtains remained closed, the stars jittered and brooded, the promoter kept himself out of sight, and we lolled around not earning our money, talking about the Waring show and comparing it to this one. Ronny Something seemed hurt. Eventually, an hour and some minutes after the advertised curtain time, the rest of the cast came in from the frozen northland by dogteam. The "rest of the cast" consisted of four very young men and their instruments; so we set them up and opened the curtains, and they blasted the eardrums from everyone in the building. They played three numbers and stopped, unsure of what to do next. There was no master of ceremonies, no leader, no nothing to guide the sheep or the show from one step to the next --- when they arrived more or less together at the end of a piece, they simply stopped playing and consulted amongst themselves in whispers, trying to decide what to do next. In a matter of time, the four of them would agree on something they all knew, and played it.

Ronny Something proved to be the Harlan Ellison of the rock 'n roll world. His mannerisms, his nervous dancing and skittering about the stage, his speech and feeble jokes -- yea, even unto his magnificent self-assurance -- was Harlan right down to the unforgettable personality. Ronny Something knew five songs -- his entire repertoire. He opened with a moaning, shouting, crying rendition of an abortion he called "Lawdy, Miss Clawdy" and when he had sung (ahahaha) four other numbers after that one, he went back and began repeating himself because he could do no more. We had "Lawdy, Miss Clawdy" again.

Following his sterling performance (during which he dropped and broke one of the two microphones) he retired for a space. The musicians whispered together and eventually selected another number to beat up. After a while the other fellow, Ned, had his turn and it did appear that Ned was the more professional of the two; he was a quiet chap with a still smaller repertoire -- he managed three songs and quit while he was ahead of the game.

I thought the musicians did reasonably well, considering. They managed to play together most of the time, and they did their level best to drown out the lyrics being flung at the audience by the vocalists. Had it not been for the remaining microphone, with the volume carried at near-capacity, the singing would have been lost completely in the welter of sound coming from behind them. Perhaps next time, if there ever is a next time, someone will call a rehearsal and throttle those musicians, will teach them and the vocalists how to perform together minus the awkward pauses, and will nail Ronny Something's jittery feet to the floor, preventing him from leaping and running about on the stage. If he ever comes here again, or anyone like him, we plan to hang our microphones overhead just out of reach -- then, by damn, he won't pick 'em up and waltz around the stage with them.

Late that night we shipped them out, and shooed away a cluster of young ladies from the stage door who wanted to know the name of the hotel, and the room number! of Ronny Something. The following day we learned that everyone but ourselves had been paid off with rubber checks. The "recording company" suddenly didn't exist anymore; the university, the newspaper, the hotel, and the bandsmen had been left holding the bag. Which was why we had demanded cash before the curtain went up -- we had learned that lesson long, long ago.

* * *

The above, except for minor revisions, is the text shipped off to Raeburn several years ago. Upon re-reading it now, I begin to understand why he neglected to publish it. By no coincidence whatever, Mr. Fred Waring is returning to our town once again this next week. This time his show is called "The Wonderful World of Music" or some such, and this time --remembering his lesson-- he is performing in the university field house. I'm going to spit on his organ just for the hell of it; I still say we should have dropped it over the fire escape.

Road shows continue to trickle into town, sometimes three or four each winter. They play the Masonic Temple, or the campus auditoriums, or the field house, depending upon their size and space needs. Three movie houses here long ago lost their right to exhibit flesh shows --- their stages have been swallowed up by cinemascope screens and stereo sound equipment; their dressing rooms have been converted to storage rooms or filled with air-conditioning machinery, and their rotting scenery has been thrown away because of the fire hazard.

Fifty miles away, at the University of Illinois, in Urbana, the road show business is suddenly looking up. I've worked six or eight big ones in the last few months and if the fun continues, there will be another report here in the future. Keep up your membership.

- Bob Tucker (Feb. 29, 1964)

these pages printed & published by Juanita Coulson, bless her bones!

THE BOLL WEEVIL
written (not impersonated) by R. S. Coulson

I thought about circulating some comments ahead of the mailing, opposing the proposed Breen blackball. (On the grounds that, whatever his degree of guilt or innocence, he could hardly operate by mail order and that it is therefore safe for us to assume his innocence until -- or if -- he is proved guilty, just like we're supposed to do.) However, I didn't do it because I decided that anybody who was going to blackball Walter had already made up his mind, and my protests would be just as valuable now as earlier. If the blackball succeeded, consider that I have protested an unnecessarily hasty action. Also an unfair one -- whether he is guilty or not it's unfair to kick him out before we've seen more proof than has been evidenced so far. (I know FAFA doesn't have any procedures for removing a member once he's gained admittance. Don't you think we're capable of passing one, if it's needed?)

I didn't vote in the egohoo poll, either. Why should I? The only thing I was much interested in would have been to vote "No" on the proposal to reinstate Ed Martin, and I wasn't very interested in that. If the rest of you are fools enough to follow the advice of members who would rather boast of their own purity than circulate legal petitions, that's your hard luck. I don't particularly want Martin in, but I can put up with him as easily as I can some of the present membership.

I didn't vote in the Fan Poll because I think the whole affair is utterly ridiculous. (The "Open Question" on this ballot is even more ridiculous than the rest of the Poll, since no group in fandom does have "the power to expel a member from fandom" and no group is ever likely to have it. Fans are too individualistic to permit it, and it's a damned good thing they are.)

SERCON'S BANE #19 (F. Busby) Yaas, I might agree that the habitual drunk driver is less dangerous than a novice. Now tell me how one can become a habitual drunk driver without first being a novice drunk driver? I find that particular point rather irrelevant."

KIM CHI (Ellington) It seems the fannish thing to do to deprecate our TW3 and compare it unfavorably with the British version (even by fans who I'm sure have never heard the British version). I pretty much agree with you; it's not as good as it could be -- and a recent article in TV GUIDE does much to spotlight the reasons why -- but does have some excellent material at times.

One of the WOWO (Ft. Wayne) news announcers is named Sam Hall. I've been tempted to point out the ballad to one of their disc jockeys; they're nutty enough to play it.

SALUD (E. Busby) I sympathise with your forgetting a whole doctor. But don't be too downhearted -- like the worm in the apple, you could have forgotten half a doctor, which would have been worse. I'm also a bit confused by your comment that you knit while you read. Knitting and tv-watching I can see, but knitting and reading? Do you turn the pages with your teeth and hold the book with your toes, or do you really have four arms? What's your secret? Maybe I could adopt it for reading while building bookcases, or something. Also, I can enjoy playing poker, but not at a convention. The game interferes with the flow of conversation, which is the only reason for attending a convention in the first place.

CAS (Metcalf) I find that I usually enjoy things like this, even when they have no relation to the God Science Fiction.

SPINNAKER REACH (Chauvenet) I was mildly startled to see you list The American Heritage Book of Natural Wonders, since that's one of their books that I decided I didn't want badly enough to pay the price. (I wanted it, but there were too many other things I wanted more.) "Akavit", as various fans will doubtless tell you, is also one spelling of a particular liquor. (I think it's Polish, but I wouldn't guarantee it.) I too have only read one James Bond book. Goldfinger contains lousy writing and at least one error in the treatment of guns -- a spy novel should get that right, anyway. The Gestetner Corp. makes a special part which allows the adaptation of 4-hole stencils. We have it, and can use either 4-hole or 9-hole stencils. But a "Gestetner stencil" has 9 holes.

SYNAPSE (Speer) Every stencil of Fancyclopedia is important to who? Apparently to you, possibly to Eney, but certainly not to me. I couldn't care less if there are errors in it; I've only read about a third of it, and I don't remember any of that. I keep it out where I can use it for reference, but I never have used it for reference. Important? Bosh. (Maybe you meant "important to anyone who takes fandom seriously", which would let me out.) I didn't notice SAFARI, but if Earl said "cotton boll", then he meant "cotton boll". Look it up in the dictionary.

Perhaps God is necessary to religion. Now define God. An all-wise, all-powerful authority which rules our lives and is not to be questioned? That covers the Communist Party in Russia, the Scientific Method for some scientists, and possibly The Organization to an "organization man". Of course you can define the term closer than that, but can you define it close enough to include all recognized gods and exclude everything else?

ESDACYOS (Cox) We watch "Outer Limits" sometimes. It's a weekly series of "B" horror movies, with average plots, better special effects than Hollywood has been using recently, and the most Godawful dialogue I have ever encountered. I can't tell about the acting; nobody could look very good with the lines they have to read. On the average, the shows are better than "Fire Maidens Of Outer Space", but the difference isn't great.

I'll go along with you on war books until you get into the stfnal ones; Fail-Safe, Seven Days In May, etc. I don't think they're very good.

I read all the stf mags, including the British ones. (I do draw the line at Spanish, Italian, German, etc.; I don't know the language.) I don't read every story; I have a weak stomach. But I manage most of them.

Why should I enjoy Return Of The Shadow? I didn't think much of the original.

THE GREAT RAEBURN DOGDIDDLE (Clarke) Funny. How many readers have informed you that you shouldn't make fun of anything as serious as this terrible situation?

CELEPHAIS (~~Danner~~ Danner? Now where did that idea come from? I mean Evans) Maybe because I'm watching "My Favorite Martian". Enjoyed, but no particular comments.

KTEIC (Rotsler) You used a nude in a film for Mattel Toys? A nude what? You know, I think this is the first time I ever read anything by you that I didn't enjoy it. Must be a bad night for me.

PROXYBOO (Breen) Top Value Stamps are yaller ones; they were introduced, in this area at least, by Kroger's. I've seen Plaid Stamps, but I'm not very well acquainted with them, since the local A&P doesn't give stamps. (And I have quit going to the local A&P anyway, since (a) it changed managers and degenerated and (b) a local independent opened a big market that gives better quality at the same or lower price. (Also no stamps.) I still go in to the A&P for dogfood, unless someone else is having a sale, since their dog food is cheaper and I don't care about the quality and neither do the dogs. Incidentally, I note that Gold Bond Stamps have also inaugurated a 10-denomination stamp; I haven't seen one but there are places for it in the latest stamp book I got from Vari-Color.

I can't say that "all" kids are naturally competitive; I don't know all kids, or even a representative sample (and I don't want to). But Bruce certainly is; his parents spend their time trying -- vainly -- to convince him that it isn't necessary to win every time, and that one can't do everything perfectly the first time one tries it. If he can't outdo everyone else right away, he gets mad.

NULL-F (White) I'm a little surprised at either Buz or Elinor publicly announcing your dismissal from the CRY mailing list. I dismiss people from the YANDRO mailing list all the time -- even columnists -- without feeling the need to tell the readership in general about it. As a matter of fact, I don't consider the subject any of the readership's business. (I still am on their side in the cutting of your material, tho -- an editor's job is to edit. It's more polite to consult the writer about changes, but it isn't always feasible, and it's not necessary.) But dropping a columnist, or commenting on material submitted, should be done by letter.

But what does empathizing with 60 individuals at once have to do with "free" writing of editorials? I'm pretty free in my fanzine writings and I don't empathize with anybody. (Well, not exactly true. I do empathize; I just don't sympathize.)

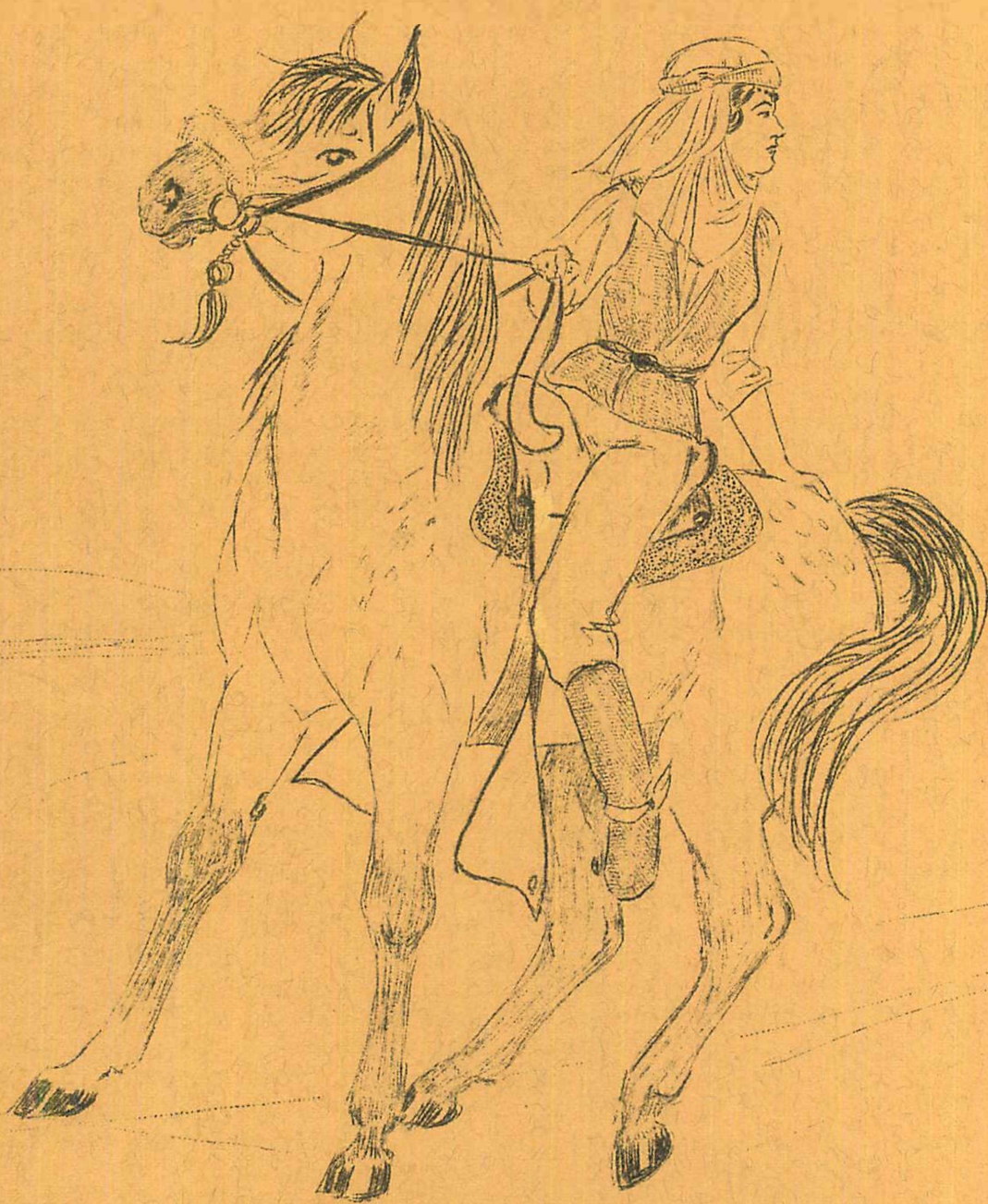
HORIZON (Warner) You have an odd interpretation of the constitution. Martin was ejected because of the ruling that his renewal credits were reprints and thus inadmissible. So, legally, he did not have renewal credits and either sort of petition would have been quite in order, and 33 signatures would be no more necessary than for anyone else dropped for lack of renewal credits. Don't be too sure you're not Johnny. (You will admit that it is the province of the officers to decide what is an admissible renewal credit?) And even if he did have genuine credits, then it was "an error of an officer". Even if you insist it was deliberate, haven't you ever heard the term "deliberate error"? It's a quite common term, and since the FAPA constitution doesn't specify the kind of error, it automatically covers all errors. Thinking that the officers would "rectify the error" (and watch yourself; you just admitted that it was an "error") is a very poor reason for not circulating a petition. It's reasonable; I might well do the same thing myself. But it's damned careless. I'd assume that anyone who was really interested would want to use every approach, just in case.

I enjoyed your nostalgia, but while I got the urge to emulate and put out four or five pages of nostalgia of my own, I conquered it.

THE LOYAL OPPOSITION (Trimbles) Al Lewis seemed to have by far the most sensible comments that I've heard on the subject.

HELEN'S FANTASIA (Wesson) Enjoyed, but no comments.

"He has acquired a slightly insurgent expression."Leonard Cottrell,
from The Bull of Minos



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