

# CAPTAIN FLASHBACK

A fanzine composed for the 398th distribution of the Turbo-Charged Party-Animal Amateur Press Association, from the joint membership of Andy Hooper and Carrie Root, residing at 11032 30<sup>th</sup> Ave. NE Seattle, WA 98125. E-mail Andy at fanmailaph@aol.com, and you may reach Carrie at carrieroot49@yahoo.com. This is a Drag Bunt Press Production, completed on 8/20/2019.

**CAPTAIN FLASHBACK** is devoted to old fanzines, monster movies, garage bands and other fascinating phenomena of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Issue #9 begins with “Thots While Nub Scrubbing,” an editorial that wanders from blissful drudgery and solar-powered mole repellent to the transition of Editors as Turbo approaches mailing #400. And “Travels With Frieda,” describes the fun we had during a visit from our niece Frieda Hooper Lofton.

Comments on the 297th mailing begin on page 2. And, the **I REMEMBER ENTROPY** Department presents a true-life adventure from issue #33 of **KTEIC** Magazine, April, 1957, titled “William Rotsler: Manhunter.” Broderick Crawford, beware!



Girl & aged Uncle among the submarine fins. Story on Page 9.

[Continued on Page 7]

## Thots While Nub Scrubbing An Editorial by Andy Hooper

The project started as a simple attempt to remove moss from the concrete patio on the ground level, outside our basement door. Partly sheltered by the wooden deck that extends the first floor, this is where we tend to gather during parties, hold campfires and cookouts, and other outdoor activities. I tend to really clean it well about once every two years, usually in the year when we don't stain the deck. I'm not sure why the moss had grown into such a luxuriant carpet of blackish-green fuzz this year – we had a colder, snowier winter, yet the moss grew without pause.

We were scheduled to host the monthly Vanguard fan party the first Saturday in August, and the combination of our spacious digs and fine summer weather usually brings an enthusiastic crowd to our door. So, with summer entering its final lap, this was our last chance to make the place look good before it was soaked and soggy with the change of seasons. Our campaign against the moles in **CAPTAIN FLASHBACK** #8 was part of this effort, but what I really put my time into was the concrete on the patio.

I started with our traditional weapon against the moss, an ancient nylon-bristled push-broom sold under the trademark “Grandi-Groom.” After ripping up the moss on about two squares of the patio cement, I realized that I had worn the stiff bristles completely away and was scrubbing the slabs with a plastic spatula.

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## The Day Begins With The Parade of Corgis!

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### Comments on Turbo-Apa #397:

**Cover (Steven Vincent Johnson):** The front cover artwork, enhanced by the bold red stripe around the border, is an absolute knockout. I laid it down on the coffee table and it looks better than the professional magazines lying next to it. Your contribution to the canon of Roswell lore on the back cover was amusing, even if the humor seemed a trifle labored at times.

I would never have predicted that your chosen cover stock would prove so completely impervious to staples. It was a pretty thick mailing, but one thing that helped when I reassembled our copy was that I took the staples out of Jeanne/Scott, Marilyn and Jim/Ruth's contributions. How long have y'all been doing this again? Inserting 3 additional metal obstacles probably didn't help anything. Anyway, my 40-year-old Swingline 400 desk stapler was able to punch through without buckling, even in the spot where no staple had been in place before. I may find one for Jim and send it to him next month.

**LETTER FROM THE FARM, Marilyn Holt:** It has certainly felt like we have gone from one memorial service to another over the past few years in Seattle fandom. Losing Andi Shechter was by no means an unexpected occurrence, but it still felt like a cruel turn of events and inspired another round of speculation as to the reasons why so many of our peers succumb to brain cancers. I had been acquainted with Andi for 30 years, yet she had already had an amazing set of experiences, a lot of it involved with fandom, before I ever knew what fandom was. And now that's all lost.

We took Elinor Busby out for lunch this afternoon, the first time we've gotten together since she was at our house for Vanguard three weeks ago. She had no recollection of ever having been there, but she shared some delightful memories of her year in Albuquerque in the early 1950s. We talked about the best way to generate copy for the October mailing of SAPS, and she was skeptical that she was able to operate a typewriter or computer on her own. I

answered that I'd be happy to retype whatever she generated, however she wrote it; but this led to a reverie on the magnificent correcting IBM Selectrics that she and Buz had owned in the early 1980s, and I had to agree, I loved them, too. My first professional writing was all generated on a Selectric, bumping away on a repurposed kitchen table late into the night.

I think maybe her favorite part of the trip was simply admiring all the trees that we pass through on our way to her apartment and back. She'll be 95 later this month; if I have to live so long, I hope that I can be maybe ¼ as happy as Elinor generally appears to be.

**AN WISCONZINE, Greg Rihn:** As usual, your array of local arts events is pretty inspiring. You've been putting some very beautiful artwork into those little color supplements that follow your text. This time, the March Chagall paintings inspired me to look up larger reproductions online. I just got a new computer monitor with a gently curved screen, and the colors seemed to wrap around my head. And the shots from Sculpture Milwaukee 2019 were also great and gave a good sense of the scale and variety of installation. Nice!

You shared a quote from Steven Brust that suggested that battles are won by Generals who fail to make the fatal mistakes available to them. As we were talking about the Antietam Campaign of 1862, I think it is the order in which mistakes are made that can define the differences between victory and defeat. I think it was a major mistake for Lee to invade Maryland in 1862, and it was a huge blunder to drop a copy of the General's orders where a Federal soldier could find them. But McClellan made the crowning error of the sequence by resting the entire army on the day after battle and allowing Lee to return to Virginia unhindered. And so, who actually won that battle? Anyone not killed or maimed seems like the only rational answer.

**OCCAM'S WHISKERS, Georgie Schnobrich:** Interesting excursion into the life of the young Goethe, and his many parallels with gaming nerds of the 1970s. I found the image of the

party with the actors that trashed his rooms a particularly vivid, as I can remember invading various people's apartments after bar time, people one would hardly talk to while sober, but we'd gladly bum rush into their homes like a barking pack of beer-soaked seals. Poor Werther, I hope he got a little affection in exchange for his hospitality.

I think it was also fun that you summarized some of the opening sequences in Faust, because Faust is like The Velvet Underground, in that no one ever genuinely saw them, they just read about them in CRAWDADDY! I had to read it for a drama class that met at 8:35 am, and so it rather blurs together with all the other early works we read. Yet, its cultural relevance seems durable; there is an episode of *Family Guy* in which Stewie Griffin insists that Brian read Mephistopheles in a properly Devilish voice.

**COMING TO GRIPS #27, Walter Freitag:** The spread of rhizomatic bamboo varieties known as "Japanese Knotweed" seems like a pretty significant indication of climate change. It's rather horrifying to read that it has spread to Massachusetts – I thought that frigid weather could kill it, but that's probably naïve. We know very well just how impossible to kill the stuff is – we were truly **afflicted** with it for a long time, because when we moved into our house in 2004, the entire back yard just to the south of our own back lot was completely choked with knotweed, horsetails and blackberry vines, and we had to fight the spread of all three every spring, summer and fall.

Only the sheer darkness of our winter seems to slow the knotweed down. The stalks shed their leaves and die back every fall, but they pop back just as soon as the dandelions begin blooming in the spring, and in our environment, a year's growth can exceed 8 feet high. The stuff has some benign properties – it thrives along watercourses, and will shade creeks and streams, encouraging a more diverse variety of fauna. But it takes such brutal intervention to kill it that I always favor temporary mechanical remedies – we pull it up wherever it appears it in our yard

before it gets more than a foot or two tall. And larger stands cut magnificently with a machete. If you really want to be rid of it permanently, it's simple – you hire a digger to excavate the soil to a depth of six feet and bring in a load of completely new dirt to replace it. Any chemical that will kill the stuff has a similar potential to kill everything else around it. If it really establishes on your property, it might be easiest to just move.

**SONOVA QUARK, Steven Vincent Johnson:**

Yes, there certainly must be a story that begins, "Excuse me, do you have Mohair Goat Balls?"

Ah, who needs the fancy Internet for entertainment...

Bill Rotsler was a unique character; I'm glad that you've enjoyed the larger exposure to his art that we've recently given to Turbo-Apa members. I know that I had at least one extremely memorable dinner with Rotsler, as well as getting to see him in action at several Las Vegas conventions. Over time, I've come to understand something remarkable about him: All of his stories were true. And I have included one of them in the reprint section of this issue, so I hope you find it entertaining.

And you noted the modern reputation of the Shaver Mystery. Like Scientology or the Book of Mormon, once one learns the details of its generation and adaptation by *Amazing Stories* editor Raymond A. Palmer, I think it becomes more difficult to accept it as objective fact. It basically comes down to one's faith in invisible beings in general; if one accepts them as a general phenomenon, Shaver's tormentors and secret allies are just different varieties of disembodied or magical creature. I can't say that the Mantong Alphabet, which seems to imply that sound and meaning are eternal, does much to increase my confidence. On the whole I see as much reason to believe in the Shaver Mystery as Mephistopheles or the Colorado Jackalope, which is to say no reason at all. But I generally lack all super powers, not just the capacity for Belief. [Comments continue next page.]

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We're the fools standing close enough to touch those burning memories.

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Seymour doesn't use semi colons. He says they make him queasy.

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**Comments on Turbo-Apa #397, continued:**

**THINGS THAT BEGIN WITH M, Jim Hudson & Diane Martin:** Every time I read about the struggles of older relatives and friends like Diane's sister Julie and Nancy, I have the urge to get a shopping bag and start filling it with things to put in the trash. And I'm following that impulse more frequently these days – I really did recycle some apazines and convention ephemera that had been lying around my office for several years. And I've filled some envelopes with old fanzines, theater programs, issues of *Science News* – and sent them to other collectors like Gary Farber and Nigel Rowe. A lot of these bundles include examples of the recipients' own fanzines – so many fans seem to lack copies of their own fanzines, and I can't sell *everything*, after all. Anyway, I'm working hard to reduce the burden on my future caregivers.

**MADISON FOURSQUARE #33, Scott Custis & Jeanne Gomoll:** Jeanne, you asked about Bill Rotsler's work as "Victor Applegate." I believe the "Tom Swift" books that Bill Rotsler wrote in collaboration with Sharman Divono in 1981 and

1982 were part of a latter-day revival and not considered strictly canonical. However, you can find a full reference to all of William Rotsler's work at the Internet Science Fiction Database.

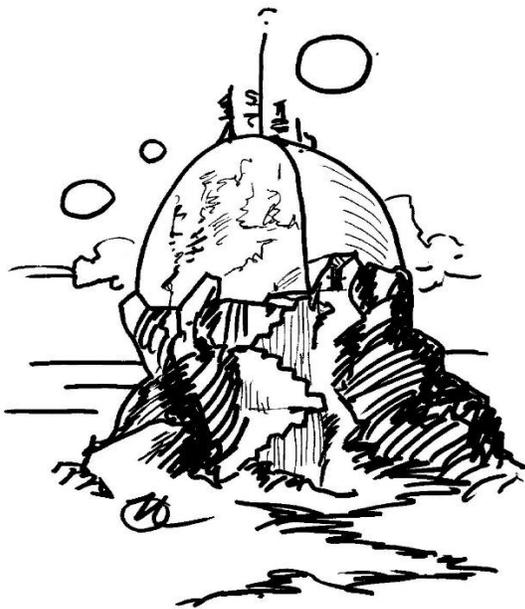
I really enjoyed sharing the article that Cheryl Cline wrote about saving or discarding fanzines, and it was even more fun to discover that she is still very much alive, and happy to receive fanzines at the address I printed in CF #8. The next time I run across one of your articles from the 1970s, I'll scan it and see if you have a copy of it anywhere. Perhaps we can agree on something appropriate for the "I Remember Entropy" Department.

I skipped my 40<sup>th</sup> high school reunion this past weekend. One reason was the opportunity to host our niece Frieda Hooper Lofton on a visit that ended the same weekend, but even if I had been in Madison, I think I might have gone with the expectation of leaving after an hour. My 25<sup>th</sup> reunion was pleasant, but very, very few people I knew were there. Truthfully, more of my high school friends are on my mailing list than I would have seen at the reunion. If I wanted to see Lynne Anne Morse, perhaps my most enduring West High acquaintance, I'd have had to go to Dublin. We went to Carrie's 50<sup>th</sup> reunion, however, and enjoyed it, so I'll likely change my tune in ten years, assuming we are all, etc.

Scott, much sympathy of the bicycle accident that produced your broken wing. I'm certainly willing to stipulate the overall inferiority of recreational swimming, but I've yet to see anyone break their arm doing laps, so I still see some virtue in it.

**A ZINE OF ONE'S OWN, Catie Pfeiffer:**

Congratulations on the new job working with the captioning department for Wisconsin Public Television. I hope it is still going well now that you are a month in. We are frequent consumers of the captions for various PBS mystery series, or as I like to call them, "The Naughty Vicar Shows." Having recently begun using hearing aids, Carrie finds it easier to hear the dialogue



now than she has for the past several years, but this does nothing to make certain English accents intelligible to her. Anyone who has ever spoken to Jane Tennison, for example. We probably don't really need it for *Fear the Walking Dead* – there are a lot of captions reading [walkers growling] and [ominous music].

You brought up the “Confederate Truce Flag.” There were many different Confederate flags, besides the “Stars and Bars” reproduced on a million mud flaps. All the states of the Confederacy created their own battle ensign, and the first “unofficial” battle flag of 1861 was a solid blue field with a single white star, the “Bonnie Blue Flag” mentioned in the song. The Confederate Navy and the Army of Northern Virginia flew a flag that rather resembled a revolutionary war banner, with a blue quarter-field in the upper left corner featuring a circle of stars, and two red and one white horizontal stripes replacing the stripes of the US flag. Variations of the Cross of St. Andrew and the Cross of St. George were used in both state and national standards, emphasizing the degree to which Confederate rhetoric asserted Christian doctrine as the basis for secession and the continuation of slavery. Earl Van Dorn’s battle flag, flown during his campaign in Arkansas, was a blood-red field with a jumble of 13 stars and a crescent moon. General Sibley flew a bright red version of the “Bonnie Blue Flag” during his campaign in New Mexico, which forms the background to the movie “The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly.”

There is a Confederate truce flag preserved in the Smithsonian’s collection at the National Museum of American History; it is a white towel with the three narrow horizontal stripes in brownish red near each end. It was displayed by Confederate troops during the surrender of Robert E. Lee’s army at Appomattox Court House, and collected by that noted pacifist, General George Armstrong Custer.

**A TURBULENT APA-RITION, F. J. Bergman:**  
Your SFPA is something different from the

Southern Fandom Press Alliance, or at least I think so. Such an interesting cabinet of comments; an imaginary weapon is an unusual souvenir to take away from a Delany novel. Have you encountered the History Channel’s guiltiest pleasure, “Forged in Fire?” Large hairy men pound slabs of hot steel into sharp objects, then go home to their rough-hewn work-pits to make a replica of a falchion or a tulwar or a pandat. It’s like porno for the Nibelungen.

“A Backdrop of Black Velvet and Rhinestones” is quizzical and difficult to resist. I was borne along as if still in hypersleep, as it unfolded like a choose-your-own adventure story composed of Ellen Ripley’s cryo-coma nightmares. I was also briefly curious why starships seem to have so many amnesiacs aboard, but then got sucked into your narrative of revenants and doomed ships with impossibly hopeful names and concluded that all of this probably took place thousands of years ago. And that the reader is descended from common insects that were accidentally let aboard the ship, and later evolved into a sentient race capable of reading poetry. And that, surely, would be the ideal reader, with eyes like multi-faceted rhinestones in the black velvet flesh of their faces. Their sensitive fannish black velvet faces.

**FLUFF AND ONE-SHOT, Jim & Ruth Nichols:**

Another very cool fanzine with great contributions from both of you, and profoundly enhanced by the great color photos you included. Jim, the photo of the two burning transformers in central Madison was chilling – that was a LOT of smoke pouring out of the MG&E building. Carrie has only a few former colleagues still working there, but they apparently had a very long series of days during and after the accident.

Ruth, the remarkable summer home that you visited with your friend also looked incredible in the photos that you shared. It seemed like a package tour to the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, an impression reinforced by the fact that you visited

[Comments conclude next page.]

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I can assure you, there are some grumps in Major League Baseball.

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He knows 62 words, no two alike.

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**Comments on Turbo-Apa #397, concluded:**

**FLUFF AND ONE-SHOT, Jim & Ruth Nichols, continued:**

the home of Sinclair Lewis. One imagines people sitting on all that wicker furniture, listening to ragtime piano and hoping they didn't get TB.

The visit with Lisa Freitag was also a pleasant vignette, and of course she took you to the preview of a musical. Where would we take you if you came to Seattle? Certainly you could have your choice of fine Chowders, and Whidbey Island has a generous selection of gloomy wooden porches overlooking the waters of the Sound. And all those huge, mysterious trees. I'm sure we could take good care of you.

**FANDOMAIN TC #31, Patrick Ijima-**

**Washburn:** That was a pretty remarkable single sheet fanzine, Patrick – a very serviceable autobiography, leaving enough room for an appreciation of the late Rutger Hauer and your top ten films featuring him. (I also thought he was very good in one of Paul Verhoeven's first moves, *Soldier of Orange*, 1977.) I don't think I understood how relatively recent your move to

Japan still was when you began contributing to the Turbo-Apa. You made quite a leap of faith in your 40s, one that seems to have been rewarded handsomely, with a very precious family and what appears to be a completely fascinating career, at least from our perspective. I really like the creative people you have shared with us in your fanzines, and I'm sure that some amount of "crap toys" will always decorate your environment, as indeed they have and always will mine.

And so a belated happy birthday to you, and thanks again for contributing to Turbo, despite what must be truly prodigious delays in getting to read the mailings. Having Jim Hudson take over as OE may not do anything to improve that for you, but I hope you'll continue to be part of the conversation.

**Hope Kiefer and Karl Hailman:** I just want to thank you for your very long service as the Official Editors of Turbo. We were lucky to have you in the job for so long, and I hope you will continue to contribute.



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**A Key to Linos published in July in CAPTAIN FLASHBACK #8:**

**Page 2: "I'm the mole from the Ministry."**

**& Page 3: "And you'll all bow down to me."**

Lyrics, "The Mole from the Ministry" by Dukes of Stratosphear, written by Sir John Johns (Andy Patridge), 1985.

**Page 4: "We asked for Mojo Nixon/They said, 'He don't work here.'"**

**& Page 5: "We said if you don't got Mojo Nixon then your store could use some fixin'."**

Lyrics, "Punk Rock Girl" by The Dead Milkmen, released on their 3<sup>rd</sup> album "Beelzebubba" in 1988.

**Page 7: "Before long in the story line, Pompadoodle is imprisoned within a bass drum and replaced with the unassuming Pogo."** Excerpt, "Berge's Cartoon Blog", with Paul Berge's take on Walt Kelly's "Jack Acid Society."

**Page 8: "They hope to intimidate us by starving themselves to death. The cowards."**

Prince Pompadoodle, from the "Jack Acid Society" series in Walt Kelly's comic strip *Pogo*, early 1960s.

**Page 9: "For Mexicans, Turkey is Becoming More Than 'The Mole Bird.'"**

Title of a November 2016 Webstory by Rodrigo Cervantes, KJZZ.org.

**Page 10: "I'd rather work all night and sleep all day - perhaps I was a mole in my last incarnation."**

Attributed to actress Ida Lupino (1918-1995),

**Page 10: "I am particularly fond of that most Lovecraftian of mammals, the star-nosed mole and tend to choose it for online icons and avatars."** Online post by author Sarah Monette, best known as "Katherine Addison." (*The Goblin Emperor*, 2014)

**Page 13: "In today's world, everything seems like some sort of long audition."**

**& Page 14: "The energy doesn't end with the hands. I want such intensity that it feels like light is streaming from every finger."** Two quotes attributed to Dancer/Choreographer/Director Bob Fosse (1927-1987)

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## Thots While Nub Scrubbing

[Continued from Page One:]

I went directly to eBay and found a replacement that arrived the day before the party, but also discovered that the device was originally designed to be used as a rake on shag carpeting and artificial turf, not for scrubbing moss off asphalt and concrete. The bristles we had worn down to nothing were nearly an inch in length when the Groomer was new! It is still an effective tool for breaking up moss, but I think we'll use the new one more gently.

While the Grandi-Groom was in transit, I bought a nasty little long-handled scrubber that Loewe's sold as an "asphalt brush," and was able to raise significant clouds of dust with it. Part of the problem is that the concrete changes character as one moves away from the portion almost completely sheltered by the house, where it is as smooth as a gymnasium floor, and the areas which have been rained on for the past 56 years. I actually got out a bucket and some Pinesol and scrubbed down the area closest to the house, and left it looking rather shockingly white. But on the rest of the concrete, all the soil from the potted plants on the deck above and tracked in from the rest of the yard has gradually formed a thick layer of dirt packed into the porous surface. On a whim, I grabbed one of Carrie's garden kneeling-pads and the steel brush I used for cleaning the barbecue grill and bent over to scrub at the cement by hand.

This had the most gratifying effect – not only did it break up all remaining traces of the moss, it raised choking clouds of dust from what appeared to be clean, albeit rather dark concrete. The contrast between the areas where I had scrubbed with the steel and the untreated cement was unmistakable.

Over the years, we've tried a variety of strategies to clean this area – we've rented pressure washers that left scars on wood and concrete alike, spent hours with regular old garden variety garden hoses, swept and swept

until our sides were sore. When our dear friend Julie McGuff uncovered the Grandi-Groom from behind a slab of random plywood in our garage, that ushered in a new era. On the Friday before the party she used a classic steel manure-scraper blade to scour the moss off the concrete around the kitchen door, which was also a big improvement. I promised to go over that part with the steel brush, but then found myself clutching a nearly nude plastic handle with a tiny fragment of the original bristles still present. Back to the store for a pair of new steel brushes, one twice as wide as the other, intended for scraping paint off walls. If anything, they tear up the dirt even more effectively than the old grill brush. I followed behind the broom, gathering remarkable mounds of fine dirt and whisking brown clouds out over the lawn. Now weeks later, I'm still inordinately pleased by sitting at the little wrought-iron table outside the basement door, admiring the pale gray concrete, and furrowing my brow at the small sections that never got the brush. Their day is coming.

This experience has made me think of my Dad, and the regimen of family cleaning activities that was adopted when my Mother went back to Graduate School in the 1970s. We lived in a large turn-of-the-century house with old-fashioned push-button light switches, with handsome brass switch-plates. When we moved in, those plates were tarnished a dark, tobacco-juice brown color, and they stayed that way until my Dad got after them with the Brasso. And after the switch-plates were restored to a bright yellow shine, the search was on for other metallic surfaces that could be freed from their age-old patina. Copper tiles behind the stove were also given a bright new polish, and the heat-tarnished tea kettle looked sad below those bright metal tiles, so it too had to be buffed to an almost unnatural shine. We all made fun of Dad's obsessive pursuit of polish, but we secretly loved those brass switch-plates, and pointed them out to many visitors.

[“Thots While Nub Scrubbing continues next page.]

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That's The Dirtiest Password I've heard since World War II.

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## Thots While Nub Scrubbing

By Andy

So I easily recognize my Dad in the hours I spent scrubbing the concrete and wearing various cleaning tools down to the nub. And I recognize a certain stubborn, uncooperative impulse in it all, responding to the real need to get the house clean before a party and visit from a house guest by taking a full week working on the patio, leaving just a few days at the end to address all the other obstacles cluttering our path. And while no one was sorry to see the remarkably clean hardstand when we gathered around the fireplace on Saturday night, neither did anyone really notice that the moss and dirt were all gone. Well, maybe Julie.

It also made me think about what it really means when you ask someone to help you do something. You might have to accept their time-consuming, obsessive approach to something you planned to do a half-assed job on in an afternoon. In most cases, accepting help means giving up control, and accepting that the final result might not match exactly what you would have accomplished left entirely to your own devices. There are cases where this is clearly the right thing to do, and there are times when it seems understandable when someone can't give up that control, even if it means failing to reach a goal. As Shel Silverstein wrote, "Some kind of help is the kind of help that we all can do without."

### Update Found in a Mole Hole

After I published our Tale of Moles in **CAPTAIN FLASHBACK** #8, we received assistance from faithful readers Jerry Kaufman and Suzle Tompkins. Our nearest fannish neighbors allowed us the use of an extra "Sonic Mole and Gopher Repellent System" which they had purchased to discourage a similar invasion of their yard. This is a small plastic box of solar-powered circuitry mounted on a large plastic spike. One is supposed to sink this into the turf until the unit is flush with the surface: when switched on, it emits a quietly piercing electronic tone that travels down the spike and

into the lawn, where it will irritate vertebrate creatures with ears to hear it.

We saw some immediate results, in that the moles' spoil piles moved to the edges of the lawn, far away from the location of the noisemaker. They continued to poke up around the base of the apple tree and then all the way across the yard, under the lilacs. But on the afternoon before the guests arrived for our party, I happened to peek over the fence at the back of our yard and saw about a dozen dark brown heaps spread all over the neighbors' lawn. They didn't appear to have noticed or intervened yet.

Ironically, Jerry and Suzle suffered their own mole invasion immediately after loaning us the "surplus" system, so we will see if they want it back when they return from Ireland. Carrie did not report seeing any big mole mounds when she watered their lawn during their trip, so perhaps those moles moved on as well. In any event, my future "Thots" are more likely to revolve the villainous Parson Mole of Walt Kelly's *Pogo* than subterranean pranksters in my lawn.

### Note for Readers Outside the Membership

The Turbo-Charged Party-Animal Amateur Press Association will celebrate its 400<sup>th</sup> mailing in October, 2019, and will do so under the 7<sup>th</sup> Official Editor in its history. Hope Kiefer and Karl Hailman have held the position jointly for the great majority of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, after taking over from Jae Leslie Adams, and they will give way to incoming OE Jim Hudson in September. (Previous Editors include Tracy Benton, Scott Custis, Kim Nash, and this writer, who was the originator of the series.) It would be particularly cool to celebrate Jim's arrival and the quadricentennial with the addition of some new members, or maybe the return of previous contributors, even on a temporary footing. Minimum activity is still just 1 page every 2 months, and you know you'll get at least 1 comment every mailing! I'll even pick up the cost of printing your first contribution and get it delivered to the OE along with my own. Come on board and give the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century's hottest new form of correspondence a try!

# Travels with Frieda

## A Vacation Narration with text and photos by Andy Hooper and Carrie Root

**Introduction:** We've had a very pleasant summer in 2019. There was a lot of dry and sunny weather in the late spring, but recurring rain showers, and few of the dangerous lightning strikes that set off so many fires last summer. In fact, the fires have been minimal, a blessed relief after the terrible Western conflagrations of the past two years.

It was so pleasant that Carrie and I were wishing that some of the family visits we had in 2017 and 2018 might have been delayed until now. It's so much more pleasant to go to ballgames and other summer events when you can breathe. Why is this year's TAFF delegate swanning about in Ireland, when Seattle is at last not choked with wildfire smoke? We could prove to Nina Horvath and Anna Raftery that we don't live full time in a burning forest.

So, when my sister Margaret mentioned that our niece Frieda's trip to California had fallen apart, I suggested that she might be able to come visit us instead. (I hastened to inform Carrie of this unilateral invitation, and she was happily just as enthusiastic as I.) Frieda is 14, going on 15, and she plays softball for most of the summer, so the plan to go to San Francisco with her Grandmother Cheryl was a pretty big deal. When Cheryl's host suffered a health crisis, the trip had to be cancelled. But a visit to us in Seattle was the ideal consolation prize. A trip from Friday to Friday meant Carrie would have to take one full week off from work, unusual when we are not traveling ourselves. My sister Margaret and her boyfriend Eric agreed rather heroically to drive Frieda to and from O'Hare Airport in Chicago on consecutive Fridays. And so we made plans to take Frieda to a wide selection of our local sights, from the Mountains to the Sound, as the local saying goes.

Carrie helpfully compiled a list of our destinations, meals, major activities and step counts, and these seem to be the ideal

Dickensian introduction to the daily log of our adventure. I will endeavor to be less than characteristically exhaustive, and hopefully Carrie will correct any errors.

### Day One, August 9<sup>th</sup>:

AM Arrival – Lunch at Ivar's Salmon House – Groceries! – Meadowbrook Pond and Hill Walk – Hamburgers on the grill – Daily Total: 7,590 steps and 11 floors.

I was up at eight, and we reached Sea-Tac airport in plenty of time to meet Frieda's 10:30 am flight. As she was a minor traveling without a parent or guardian, someone had to go to the gate to meet her, and that does involve acquiring something analogous to a boarding pass and going through security lines and scans. In the end, I got through those lines and walked to the correct gate just seconds before Frieda came up the ramp. She was glad to be off the airplane, where she had been very near the back, and the flight had been quite bumpy. She's tall and has long legs, and when we went back to the airport the following Friday, I was surprised at how heavy her backpack luggage was.

We had checked the night before and were told that Frieda ate fish and eggs, but generally not meat. We went directly Ivar's Salmon house and ate lunch outside overlooking Lake Union. Frieda loves salmon, and this was the first of several occasions on which she devoured a healthy piece of it. I think we then caught Frieda's jet-lag, and zombie-walked through the supermarket with full stomachs, procuring hummus and yogurt and other delights. After a bit of a nap, we took a walk around the creeks and ponds in our immediate neighborhood and held forth on Madrona trees and other local flora. A heron posed perfectly to photo-bomb Frieda. The evening meal was hamburgers for us and Boca Burgers for Frieda, after which all of the party fell into a deep, dreamless slumber.

### Day Two, August 10<sup>th</sup>:

Falafel lunch at Men'oushe Express --  
Magnusson Park Walk – Mariners Game --  
Daily Total: 7,488 steps and 17 floors.

[continues next page.]

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Gregg Calkins brought a cheery robust charm and 200 pounds of fanzines.

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The front design of the '56 Ford looks like a man playing a harmonica with both hands over his eyes.

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### Travels with Frieda, continued:

Baseball was the main order of the day, but we had to kill off the hours until it was time to leave for the park, and we felt that Margaret would be disappointed if all three of us sat around reading our phones all day. We stopped at a Lebanese lunch counter first, then set off for the restored wetlands and forests at Magnusson park. This was formerly Sandpoint Naval Air Station on Lake Washington, used mainly for seaplanes through the 1960s. But restoration of the base started not long after we moved to Seattle, and it is now a remarkable example of how successful such efforts can be. We climbed the hills at the south end of the park, then hiked north along the waterfront to the garden of fins and dive planes salvaged from decommissioned nuclear submarines and transformed into a sculptural installation. Along the way, we passed many families gathered for picnics, grilling delicious-smelling stuff, and chasing dogs and frisbees around the little beaches. It was a postcard day.



Frieda shadowed by a great blue heron at Meadowbrook pond

The Mariner game was preceded by a lengthy celebration of newly inducted Hall-of-Famer Edgar Martinez, who was on hand to be congratulated by a group of former teammates and other Seattle Sports legends. We bought third level boxes just above the visiting team's dugout on the left side of the infield, and were surrounded by a wildly diverse crowd of whistling and cheering Puertorriqueños, millennial kids in a wedding party, an African American family with a wild variety of Ken Griffey Jr. commemorative shirts and hats and two of the happiest kids we've ever seen at a ballpark, and several Japanese couples who couldn't stop taking selfies. I thought it was a perfect example of a Seattle event, and proud that we have one of the friendliest ballparks I've ever been in. We all sang and danced to "Louie, Louie" in the 7<sup>th</sup> inning, and got to explain how it was with a vote or two of being the Washington State Song, and could not, of course, explain why.

The game was competitive – the Mariners' pitchers dug them into a hole, but they almost hit their way out of it. The final score was Tampa Bay 5, Seattle 4.

#### Day Three, August 11<sup>th</sup>:

Zoo picnic – not Pub with Fans! – Emergency Alfredo -- Daily Total: 9,268 steps and 12 floors.

This was not Frieda's first trip to Seattle – she visited us for a few days five years ago with her Mom, sister Astrid and brother Gannon. One of her favorite places on that trip was the Woodland Park Zoo, so we were glad to take her for a return visit. We observed the annual ritual of receiving new membership cards and set off to cover pretty much every inch of the zoo. We didn't go through the indoor Tropical Rain Forest and rather dashed by the African Savannah at the end of the day. But otherwise, I think we took in just about all the big exhibits in the zoo, even adding an extra loop at the end to visit the Asian rhinos that have moved into the

old elephant enclosures. Oh, but we did miss both the siamangs and the orangutans, as well as the rain forest creatures – I suppose Frieda will just have to come back.

Once again, we had good luck with some creatures – timber wolves and brown bears virtually posed for us, and a new family of otters swam around their pools, with a handsome, huge mountain goat posing for pictures in the back. Some other creatures were elusive as usual, like the snow leopards. But as always, half the experience is the variety of plants and trees that fill up the zoo, particularly for someone who doesn't have bamboo taking over their yard.

After the zoo, we planned to go to the monthly pub meeting at the Fiddler's Inn, to say goodbye to everyone going to Dublin, and introduce Frieda to some of our friends. Unfortunately, the Fiddler's Inn is a genuine pub, and minors are not allowed in under any conditions. So we had no option but to wave hello across the picket fence and presently went back home to improvise something to eat. I was able to come up with a passable fettucini alfredo, and Carrie treated us to some of her amazing apple crisp. We have had a wonderful crop of "transparent" apples from our hybrid tree this year, and Carrie has done some wonderful things with them. We were also awash in fresh blueberries throughout the visit, so I imagine Frieda ate more of them than she usually would in a year. After supper, we played a round of the city-building card game "Machi Koro" and I won for the first time since Obama was President.

#### **Day Four, August 12<sup>th</sup>:**

Road Trip! – Thai lunch overlooking the Skagit River in Mt. Vernon – Deception Pass Beach Hike – Fort Casey casement climb – Mukilteo Ferry –Vegetarian pizza -- Daily Total: 10,515 steps and 38 floors

We felt like we needed to get Frieda next to some salt water, even if the "genuine" ocean is much farther than we wanted to travel in one day. Deception Pass between Fidalgo and Whidbey Islands is a spectacular location that

also allows one to walk along the beach on Puget Sound, and one of Carrie's favorite drives. Because I was trying to post some eBay auctions and no one felt like getting up early, we didn't leave until quite late in the morning, and made our first stop at a Thai takeout specialist in Mt. Vernon. Three stars proved to be more than reasonably hot, and I sweated generously as we ate at a picnic table overlooking the Skagit River.

The hike at Deception Pass was just as wonderful as we remembered, made even better by the fine summer weather. As we approached the pass through the forests outside Anacortes, Frieda made the classic observation that those trees were HUGE. We parked in the lot on the Whidbey side of the bridge and explored the network of walking trails on the west side of the road. We went up and down to the beach several times and made our way out to the point above the west beach, about 8/10<sup>th</sup> of a mile from the parking lot. The climb back up wasn't too exhausting, and we made another stop at the south end of the island to walk around the former coastal artillery batteries at Fort Casey. We were repeatedly buzzed by jet fighters from the nearby Naval air station and wondered how the locals can endure the noise.

A quick trip back across the sound to Mukilteo on the ferry ended the trip, and we got back to our neighborhood in time to secure a veggie pizza from Papa Murphy's. The combination of sun and exertion exhausted everyone, and we all fell asleep quite early.

#### **Day Five, August 13<sup>th</sup>:**

Girl's Shopping Trip and Dead Mall Walk – Mediterranean Lunch – The Lion King – Egg Foo Yung and British Rails -- Daily Total: 5,474 steps and 5 floors

I took most of Tuesday to work on my article about William Stephen Sykora and his role in organizing the first World Science Fiction Convention. Carrie was nice enough to take Frieda shopping and out for a movie, so I could spend the day in 1939 without feeling guilty.

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We're making payments on a half-gallon of gin.

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He is out in the foundry, casting aspersions.

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### **Travels with Frieda, continued:**

They hit a pair of thrift stores on University Way and Frieda's main score was a pair of vivid neon yellow-green shoes.

They stopped for lunch at the food court of Northgate mall, and got to see how empty it is becoming in anticipation of a major demolition and rebuilding project. Northgate was one of the first covered malls to open in North America, and a lot of people are kind of dismayed at the plan to demolish much of it. The north end, with its timbered roof and signature totem pole, will apparently be preserved.

They both enjoyed the new version of *The Lion King*, although Carrie complained that she missed some of the scenes with the elephants from the original version. That evening, she prepared a huge batch of her always delicious egg foo yung with a bunch of tiny shrimp lodged inside them, and Frieda commented that it was the best she had ever had. Carrie makes small patties about the size of a slice of bread and flips them like pancakes. The recipe comes from "The Chinese Village Cookbook," but we now substitute chopped cabbage for bean sprouts.

After dinner we played the first half of a game of British Rails, then I returned to 1939, while everyone else retired to shrimp-flavored dreams.

#### **Day Six, August 14<sup>th</sup>:**

Jalisco Mexican lunch – Boeing Museum of flight and Apollo 11 exhibit – The Zouave Restaurant – British Rails concluded. Daily Total: 4,710 steps (and museum walking counts double!) and 8 floors

My 57<sup>th</sup> birthday! I snuck down and spent the morning researching more about 1939, but then we made a stop at our local Mexican restaurant for some lunch before a trip to the Boeing Museum of Flight. The Museum had a large exhibit celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Apollo 11, and Frieda was interested in seeing that as well as all the regular exhibits. The Apollo 11 exhibit took us easily 45 minutes to explore it all. In addition to the command module, the exhibit featured large chunks of the Saturn V boosters, recovered by a team led by

Jeff Bezos in 2013. There were amazing little details all over the place -- Michael Collin's chronograph, which was a regular analog wristwatch, and the "Astronaut Survival Kit," which was distinctly "home made," and held together with adhesive tape. One point which staggered me was that engineers had to work months to keep the Saturn V motors from destroying themselves with their own thunderous soundwaves – special baffles and hundreds of tiny holes were used to safely distribute both fuel and sound.

We gave the rest of the museum a more cursory tour, but hit some highlights like the SR-71 Blackbird on the main floor, and the 707 that served as Air Force One and took Nixon to China. The fighter planes in the "Personal Courage Wing" are still immense and handsomely restored, but I held back on the stories in favor of visiting the museum store before they closed - I got a lovely new Hawaiian shirt with airplanes all over it as a birthday gift.

Dinner was at a restaurant on 65<sup>th</sup> Street that we have just discovered in the past month. The Zouave advertises itself as Italian, but the Chef is from the Atlas Mountains of Morocco, and his menu draws from all over the Mediterranean. Frieda had another chance to enjoy salmon in a creamy pasta sauce, and I took a second try at the "Risotto Primavera." Although this was not prepared with arborio rice as a classic risotto is, it was still absolutely delicious, and I rather smirked at getting such a massive degree of enjoyment from a vegetarian meal. Carrie ogled babies at a nearby family table, and the whole meal was a wonderful birthday treat.

When we got home, we enjoyed the conclusion of our game of British Rails, and Carrie crushed us like crawling insects. The ideal end to a perfect birthday. We tried to get to sleep early, as we were going on a long hike the next day.

#### **Day Seven, August 15<sup>th</sup>:**

Highway 2 Road Trip – Iron Goat Trail Climb – picnic lunch at Windy Point – Zeek's for Ice Cream and Onion Rings – Tamales and Black Bean Soup at home -- Daily Total: 17,622 steps and 54 floors.

Frieda's main request had been for "Hikes in the Mountains," so we finally went right up into them on Thursday. We followed the now familiar road that leads up through Monroe, Goldbar, Startup, Index and Skykomish on the way to Stevens Pass. This was the site of the first railroad line to cross the Cascade mountains into Seattle from the East. That first precarious line was replaced by a much longer and safer tunnel that runs under the mountains today, emerging halfway down the pass. Many of the former rail beds have been turned into hiking trails, and the complex is named "The Iron Goat Trail," for the mountain goat symbol of James J. Hill's Great Northern Railway.

Much of the trail is relatively level, but one has to climb up to meet it somehow, and we didn't have a good idea of how we wanted to do it. I thought we should start at the top end, at the former town of Wellington, and walk down a few miles, then trace our way back through the concrete snow sheds and other abandoned structures. Carrie was disturbed by the fact that the bathrooms at the Wellington trail head were closed, so we stopped at Scenic, a point just about halfway between the two starting points at Wellington and Martin Creek. She thought that the trail that climbs from there to Windy Point was "just a few switchbacks." But that "convenient" access trail turned out to be a mile long, and we must have climbed about 750 feet from the highway to the highest roadbed of the original railroad line.

The climb was pretty punishing, to both the body and the mood, but we sat down to lunch on nuts, crackers, fruit and summer sausage. I had an aluminum thermos that proved very effective, as the ice continued clanking behind me for most of the hike. After eating, we walked two miles around and down the side of the mountain toward Martin Creek, passing lost concrete walls and water impoundments. Frieda had almost no experience of mountains at all, so she was fascinated by the little seeps and streams that fell down the sides, just like me on my first trip to the Iron Goat, 25 years ago.

We didn't see a great deal of wildlife, although I heard a pika call once, and there were some talkative birds along the trail. Finally we reached another "cutoff" that took us down to the lower trail, but it was still two more miles of walking back to the car. We passed some openings to the original tunnels that dug the railbed through the mountainside and thrilled at the incredible dank and frigid breeze that poured from their mouths.

I was pretty darn stiff when we got to the car, but we made the traditional restorative stop at Zeek's drive-in about ten miles down the road. The ladies indulged in treats involving ice cream, while I ordered a bag of their brilliant onion rings, and we munched on them as we descended through all the Highway 2 towns on the way to Seattle. Despite this large snack, we were still plenty hungry when we returned to the house, and enjoyed a repast of black bean soup and frozen tamales, which are always much better than no tamale at all. It was amazing to think that only a few hours before, we had been thousands of feet up in the mountains, a distance that took early settlers over a week to traverse.

#### **Day Eight, August 16<sup>th</sup>:**

Return to SeaTac Airport – 1:45 pm Departure.

Frieda was an exemplary house guest – after we took her to the airport, there was virtually no evidence that she was ever here at all. She was very patient with all our eccentricities and old people stories, and extremely able to entertain herself when we were lounging at home. I think she was glad to take a break from softball before she and her teammates reconvene for the fall tournament season. She thinks it would be particularly wonderful if she was able to play for a Pac-12 conference school, so we have some vague fantasy that she might end up out here in town with us some day, but the way things go, she'll probably end up in Corvallis or Eugene instead. It was just a great treat to have her here, and once again, sincere thanks to Margaret, who delivers this fanzine to the editor every month, and has done a lot more stuff to help me since I left Madison in 1992. We owe her and Eric some sort of treat for driving to Chicago twice in a week; but maybe they can come and collect in person sometime soon.



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I hope we don't get into a wreck, I'm wearing an old bra.

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[Following on from the reprinted art by **Bill Rotsler** (1926-1997) that graced the covers of Turbo-Apa mailing #396, this issue's reprint section comes from Rotsler's **KTEIC Magazine** #33. **KTEIC** was by far Bill's most frequent fanzine, first appearing in 1952, and persisting through more than 150 issues across a span of at least 30 years. Issue #33 was composed in the late spring and early summer months of 1956, but publication was delayed by duplication issues until April of 1957. This was written during what appeared to be a particularly happy time in Rotsler's life, when he and his wife "Abney Stevenson" and their daughter Lisa lived on a walnut and lemon ranch in the hills of Camarillo, California. Just about the only thing he lacked was a working mimeograph, and for this reason, **KTEIC** was frequently typed onto stencil and then sent by mail to **Dean A Grennell** (1923-2004) of Fond du Lac Wisconsin for completion and duplication. DAG was known in fandom as the publisher of fanzines including **GRUE** and **BLEEN**, and employed professionally as the editor of several publications about guns and ammunition. Rotsler knew that this story of the hunt for a modern desperado would be particularly interesting to Grennell, and he included many details he knew that DAG would appreciate knowing. I found it impossible to put down once I'd started it, but ruefully note that a similar fugitive today would probably have much more firepower at his disposal. -- APH]

## I REMEMBER ENTROPY DEPARTMENT

### "William Rotsler, Manhunter" by William Rotsler

I was sitting there, reading the noon mail, when six sheriff's cars drove in. My first thought was: what did I put into the clutches of the Post Office now?

They're jumping out of cars shouting orders, checking guns, talking furiously, asking for phones as I walk up and ask whatinhell is going on. It seems they picked up a 23-year-old suspect on suspicion of armed robbery (Supermarket, among others) but he jumped out of a second-story window of a sub-station and got away. His name is William Robinson and is one of those "the coppers will never take me alive" boys. He is considered by the sheriff's men to be extremely dangerous, armed with two rifles, one with an 8X scope, and two pistols. He's holed up in the canyon just behind our ranch and they're going in after him.

I ask if he has food and water. They ask a young punk (looks as if he was ordered from Central Casting for the part) who is a cousin and who, two nights before, had brought the desperado up from LA and dumped him at the mouth of the canyon. Punk says food but no water but that Robinson had hunted the hills behind the ranch and knew them well. "Not so well as I do," I

said. If he had no water there were only two places to get it and that I'd show them where.

Since he was a Los Angeles County escapee there were three cars full of LA Sheriff's men as well as Ventura County deputies and more were arriving all the time. I dug out my .38 Spl Smith & Wesson Combat Masterpiece (which is long for ".38 Spl S&W CM."), loaded up my gun belt and threw a handful of bullets into my levis. I loaned a .30-06 to a deputy and the only seven slugs we had for it. He seemed to think it was fine that they were hollow point bullets.

Everyone piled into cars and we started off. Immediately one car stalled out, then I mentioned the foreman's house and the 8-room barracks that we have near the creek. "Better check it out," they said. I stood by fascinated as they checked out in the best Dragnet fashion of kicking open door while people flattened along the wall. They unlimbered machine guns for the job. I was impressed. They were taking no chances with this joker.

Nothing turned up so we roared to the gate of the canyon. I unlocked it and we went through, then stopped to plan out the campaign.

There is a hundred-foot plus cliff flanking the mouth of the canyon. Punk told us he was supposed to meet Robinson the previous night

and give him \$500 but he couldn't find him, although he spied his bedroll. He was supposed to wait on the left side of the canyon. "Which means he will sit over on the right and watch," I said. They agreed it was an idea. Ventura deputies radioed for a jeep to take them up the cliff, to check out the top. Since it was essentially LA deputies' case the Ventura deputies plugged up the holes, guarded the mouth of the canyon, acted as liaison with the Highway Patrol (sans Broderick Crawford or even Richard Travis) and, in general, left the main probe up to the Los Angeles sheriff's Office. I was sworn in in an unimpressive ceremony.

No one fired as we drove up to the movie set. I figured if he saw us coming he'd start shooting when his rifles had us at a range he could control. He was reported to be an excellent shot, a great deer hunter, and we had nothing that would outrage him. So we checked out the pump house set just like Dragnet again. From the first I had been in front, or at least on line with the rest. Partially from figuring it was better to be in front where I could better direct the deputies than from the rear where I would have to Psst and give directions and get attention with a lot of noise. So I was the one to open the door. Lest I'm building you up to a big letdown, let me say there was nothing there, except the aged outside and the new wood inside.

"Okay, around the bend," I said. We drove a short distance and spied a dead bobcat. We got out and looked at it. My beard, now in quite an advanced state of hirsute splendor, must have led them to think I was an Indian scout or grizzled trapper. "How long do you figure it's been dead?" they asked, after we saw the bullet hole in its head. I was asked this question by every cop at least once in the next hour. It was a very hot day and at first I made measured, wise-sounding comments, but later was just shrugging and saying, "Beats me."

So around the bend I show them where the fake cave is, high up the hill, and fix it so Charley Williams climbs that damned slope instead of

me. The other deputy and I go on into the narrowing canyon toward what little water there is. We see deer but a check of the wind tells us the outlaw could be further in and not alarm the deer. We go way back in and the deputy thinks no one is there and sits down. He's fifty and has done this many times before, and I'm 30 and it's my first manhunt, though I can hardly believe it, so I go on. The walls narrow to the size of the creek and I must hang from tree limbs to keep from falling in. I go as far as I can, stop, take a breather, then get scared. What looks like a man's knee, in levis, is to be seen farther around the end, just as if he is sitting there, squatting and waiting. I freeze, then carefully toss a rock to the other side of the creek. Nothing happens and I lean into the gloom – oak trees overhang everything – and let my eyes adjust. Knee turns into oak root.

Back at the cave I tell the arriving Sheriff's captain that the outlaw must be at our spring, or at least at the foot of the hill, where the spill makes a tinkly little stream down the rocks. No one shoots at us and we find several cans cooling in the water. Two men go up the hill and we sit down to rest, out of the sun for a change.

I talk to Punk Kid and find out the guy had, besides his guns and ammo and bedroll, jackets, a box of food and couple of packages. I think about hauling that load this far in – the gate had been locked, so he had to pack it in, a distance of about two miles.

Then I take the four L.A. deputies and Punk Kid around to another branch of the canyon, where he might have run if he saw us coming. Nothing. We come back and sit down and drink and wait for a report from the other patrols. I start to figure, climb back into the sun again and hunt around until I find his cache.

Food, boxes of ammo, jackets, a .38 pistol and most important his .270 rifle with the 8X scope. Looking through the scope I am very glad we are not out on the bare canyon floor. We pack it all down to the car and things start happening fast.

[Concludes on net page]

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I think in cosmic terms every chance I get.

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They'll never get Burbee in a box.

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First I hear gun fire, far off. I tell the cops still under the trees. Radio tells us the Highway Patrol has him cornered. We climb into the cars, a jeep arrives, tells us to hurry.

Near the mouth of the canyon an old man stops us. The gunman had taken his pickup at the point of a gun fifteen minutes earlier. The rancher had the lemon grove next to our walnuts. Then the report comes in that they've got him and he's shot.

Here's what had happened. All the time we were getting heart attacks crossing bare fields he had been lying on a rocky point that juts into one of our lemon groves, above where I was sworn in and behind where we started searching. He waited about three hours, then crossed our lemons, went down our creek, nearly to our house, doubled back, took the pickup from the guy a hundred yards away from where he started, raced out of the valley. A Highway Patrol man tried to stop him, lost him went through a closed gate and the cop went into a ditch. At gunpoint he forced a rancher to drive him in another car. The rancher managed to wink at his wife and silently mouth "Call Sheriff" before they drove off. Another Highway Patrolman drove up beside them, asked if they had seen a green pickup. Bandit said no, cop drove past. Perhaps suspicious because one man was in

front and another in back, the Patrolman suddenly blocked the road, came out with gun in hand. The man being kidnapped asked, "What'll we do now?"

"I'll take care of it," Robinson said, and shot himself in the stomach. The rancher said he looked rather calmly at the hole in his gut and said ".45s sure make big holes," and fell over onto the floor.

He lived, however. Perhaps he didn't really want to kill himself, perhaps because being a Wyatt Earp fan he had that long barrel and couldn't get it aimed straight in and it went through at an angle and he lived.

So it was a gay little adventure and I was in no danger, though I must say I honestly, really wasn't afraid. (Apprehensive, cautious -- yes.) Maybe I didn't feel this was for real, but like the hundreds of movies I'd seen, I dunno. Maybe I thought he'd shoot at the men with the machine guns, or even at Punk Kid first. I was out in front 90% of the time and now and again carried an MG but couldn't really believe anything would happen to me.

It didn't.

-- June 1956

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Original art by Ulrika O'Brien (page 4).

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**Fanmail from some Flounder Department:  
Letters to CAPTAIN FLASHBACK**

**Jerry Kaufman** (jakaufman@aol.com)

I liked your musings about titles you could use in your new SAPS zine, but was surprised when you mentioned "Thoughts While Composting" right away without referring to Ted White's sometimes title "Thots While Lawnmowing" - and there at the end you think of the title but not that Ted used it. Could that have been in **BLAT!** [*Yes - APH*], or in other zines? I don't recall but I'll bet Robert Lichtman will.

In your section on third order stories and the ways that technology changes everything in funny, rippling ways, I really loved your line, "But all mirrors have the potential to entrap an unwary Narcissus." Even more surprising to me than the popularity of Ancestry or 23 and Me is that investigators have used the data to track down suspects whose relatives have sent in their DNA.

In his letters, Robert talks about Carl Brandon and the Carl Brandon society. I was subscribed to an on-line fannish discussion list a few years ago, and when the subject of Brandon came up, I asked for people's thoughts on the Society. Robert will perhaps remember this. My recollection, without naming the respondents, or being able to quote exactly what was said (and keeping in mind it was a private mailing list), was that several folks disagreed with the Society's contention that "the existence of a lone, fictional black writer underscores the fact that a fictional voice had to be invented for people of color, because we had none in fandom." Folks asserted that there were too such fans, though they didn't specify who.

I would agree, though, that Carl Brandon wasn't intended to be a voice for people of color. Still, to me he's a good symbol for the Carl Brandon Society to present their hopes and intentions.