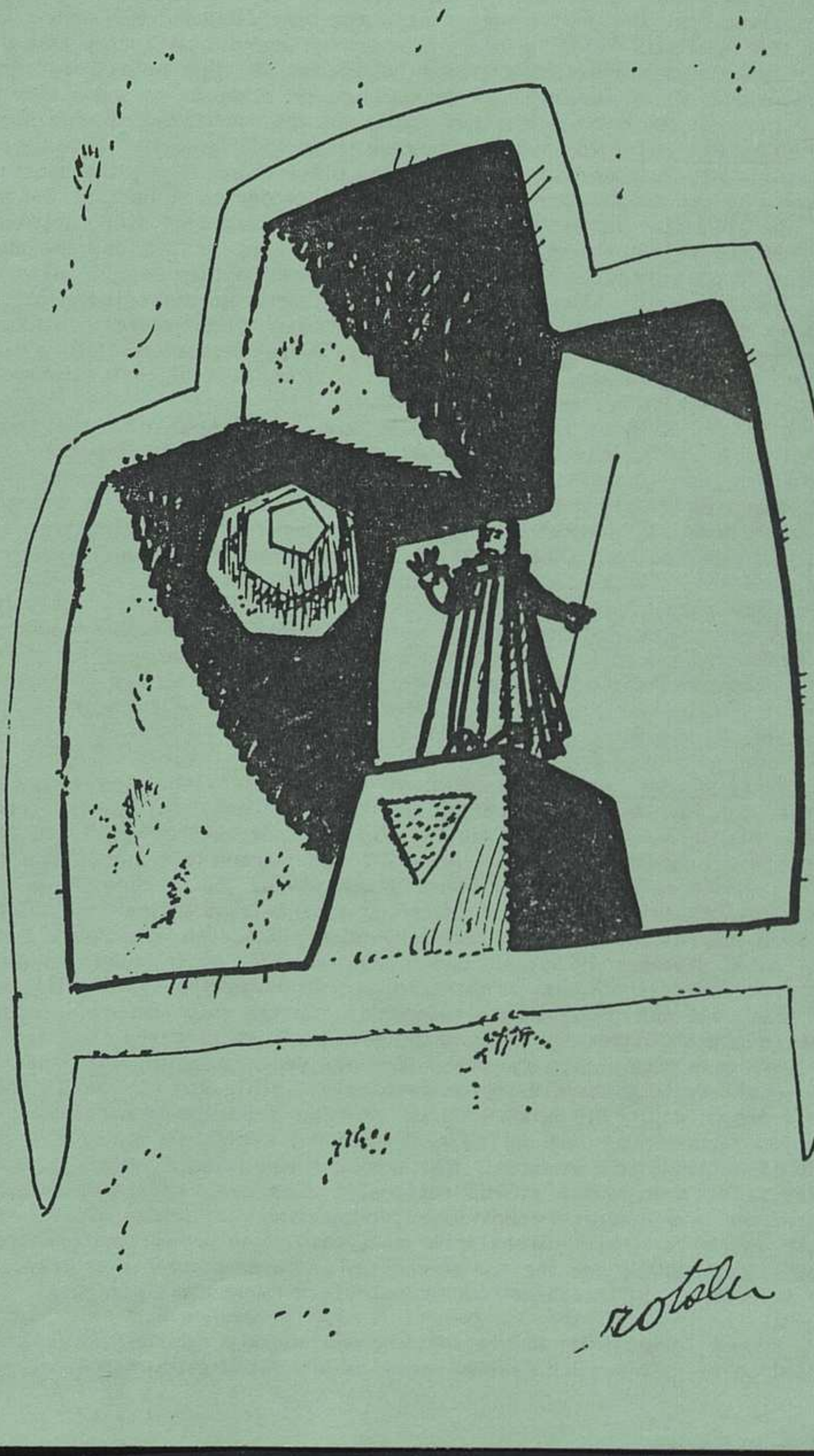
DOOR KNOB

Vol. 2 - No. 17
January 1988



DOOR KNOB Volume 2, Number 17. Published by Robert Lichtman, P.O. Box 30, 30, Glen Ellen, CA 95442, for the 162nd mailing of the Spectator Amateur Press Society, January 1988. Forever a Founding Member: fwa. Once more our cover is courtesy of William Rotsler.

I'VE BEEN MORE OR LESS ENJOYING "Star Trek: the Next Generation." Unfortunately for my attention span, they've already gone into reruns. As of this writing the series pilot has just been repeated as a two-part item and the second show is being rerun this weekend. (That's the one where an android male crew member gets it on with a human female crew member after he assures her that he's "programmed in multiple techniques.") I assume they used up the half dozen or so shows they put together to try the show out on the TV audience and now that it's "the big new hit in syndication" (TV Guide, Dec. 26, 1987) many more shows will be made. Indeed, I read in the newspaper recently that Marina Sertis (who plays Deanna Troi, the "Betazoid" empath) is having to cut her European vacation short in order to be back at the set.

The characterization seems to be done with long-time syndication in mind. In the first episodes, the past relationships of many of the primary characters are revealed (Deanna and Cmdr. Riker, Dr. Crusher and Captain Picard) and current alignments are indicated, then filled out and enlarged as one episode follows another. There is much more open sexuality than in the original series. Fortunately these characters are not carbon copies of those of the previous crew, relieving the possibility of early boredom setting in. They also seem slightly more complex (less stiff) than Kirk, Spock et al, thank ghod.

With the Klingon empire conquered and assimilated into the Federation, the Ferengi make serviceable replacements as resident baddies. However, although they can furnish their share of mayhem, they're perhaps TV's first humorous aliens not set on a sitcom (where originally Mork and now Alf have the territory sewed up). "Q" on the other hand, who appears in the series opener and its most recent episode (to date), is a boring composite rehash of all the omniscient shape-shifter aliens of the earlier series. Let's hope we don't see him much more.

I don't have a clue as to what hardcore Trekkies make of this new show, but this reviewer finds it entertaining and even something to look forward to, slightly, each weekend. And if I should miss one of the episodes--well, I fully expect to have dozens of chances to see it later on for years to come.

AND NOW FOR SOME MAILING COMMENTS...

Harry Warner, Jr.: Speaking of untold and frightening mathematical consequences (as you were to Burnett), you are certainly not above reproach in this regard, either. In surveying the extensive run of HORIZONS in Terry Carr's fanzine collection, I observed that the May 1977 and August 1977 issues are both numbered "150." What's more, the 154th issue (August 1978) was numbered "144." (At least I have to assume this is the case, since it's sandwiched between the 153rd issue dated May 1978 and the 155th issue dated November 1978, and also there's another 144th issue dated November 1975.) I don't have any idea at this writing what the consequences of this sloppiness in maintaining your numbering system will be, but surely they will come out in due time. Meanwhile, we can only speculate on how fanhistory might have been different if you hadn't made these errors during the '70s. Would FAPA have gone into such a slump the last few years? Would D. West have won the 1984 TAFF race? Would Richard Bergeron have retained his sanity? Would MZB have become such a famous pro? The mind reels... ∞ The shortness of breath and mental confusion you report occurring during prolonged hot spells is one of the many reasons I don't miss living in Tennessee. The only air conditioning at the Farm community was at the print shop, where it was rationalized as being necessary to maintain proper temperature and humidity conditions for operation of the presses. Fortunately I worked there for close to half my stay, which helped mitigate matters somewhat. However, leaving work at the end of the day was a considerable shocker...stepping out into the hot, humid late afternoon from perfect temperature control.

Lyndon Baugh: It was heartening and vaguely romantic to read that the entrances to Britain's toad tunnels serve as a meeting place for single toads. And I

certainly hope that the U.S. becomes enlightened along these lines especially as regards turtles and tortoises. In Tennessee, especially after a rain, one often encountered turtles attempting to cross the highways. Despite their proceeding at a fairly rapid clip (for a turtle), they were no match for cars and trucks. There's few sights less appealing than a squashed turtle on the road.

Nicki Lynch: Your description of your minimum-wage job serves as further proof of how the lower paid a job is, the more that is demanded of the employee. It's incredible that you have to "dress up" to earn such a piddly sum and, worse, have to suffer exacerbated allergy symptoms. Here in California, the state has just raised the minimum wage to $4.25 an hour. You should hear the outcries from fast food franchise owners, none of whom would (I imagine) want to work for the sums they feel they should get away with paying their help. I think it's criminal that whole industries should be based on institutionalized exploitation of workers. It's yet another drawback of raw capitalism. It further creates welfare dependency because there's no incentive for welfare recipients (at least in California) to go off the dole when the alternative pays less than welfare ("workfare" in California pays $5.01 an hour) and they'd lose their fringe benefits (medical care, primarily). (G.M., Megret and other "conservatives" may line up here to stomp on me for this annoyingly radical view.) ∞∞ Having been to Chattanooga a few times, I can readily believe your report of bumper stickers saying "Ignorant as shit and proud of it" and their owners meaning it. Chattanooga seemed to me to be the most mindless of Tennessee's larger cities. ∞∞ Although I wrote you a letter of comment, I also want to publicly thank you for including MIMOSA in the SAPS mailings. A good fanzine.

Dian Crayne: Yes, it is strange moving around from one word processor to another. Now, however, I have my own situation under control. Both at home and at work I have the "enhanced" IBM style keyboard with the function keys across the top. Now I only have to adjust when I encounter an older style keyboard with the function keys on the left. ∞∞ Ed Meskys is still in fandom and still producing NIEKAS. He lives in Maine. I saw him for the first time in many years at the 1984 worldcon in Anaheim. ∞∞ Typewriters have not disappeared from my workplace, but they are mainly used these days for preprinted multi-copy forms that one can't run through the laser printers. Also for envelopes--I found out that although you can run an envelope through a laser printer, the heat involved in the process seals the envelope unless you immediately unstick it once it comes out of the printer. Have you any experience with this? If you've been able to figure out how to run envelopes through your laser printer without them sticking together, I'd like to hear about it.

Mike Gunderloy: The price you quote for a single cord of cut and split firewood--$100--is simply amazing. Out here a cord runs well in excess of that, the variables being how much it is cut up and what kind of wood it is. Light, fast burning wood such as eucalyptus and pine tends to be on the cheaper side, whereas the quality woods like oak and madrone are more expensive. What kind of wood was yours?

Leigh Edmonds: Although I didn't have a sufficiently detailed map of Australia on hand to follow your trip report, still it made for fascinating reading. I hope that by the time you read this, your life will have settled down somewhat. It really makes me feel more than slightly nuts when things go on being so indefinite for such an extended period of time. ∞∞ Add me to the list of those who don't run, but enjoy going for extended walks. Here on my end of Glen Ellen, I can walk for a couple of blocks and be entirely out in the country on a quiet little lane that meanders up a hillside for several miles, finally ending at a Presbyterian-run campground. Along the way there are only maybe a dozen houses, mostly far off the road, and since the campground is only in operation during the warmer part of the year, it makes for a quiet road on which to walk most of the year. As you go up the road, too, at various points there are breaks in the trees so that you get a progressively more expansive view of the country below. When you get up high enough, that view includes the northern portions of San Francisco Bay and even Mt. Diablo, over 40 miles away in eastern Contra Costa County.

Elinor Busby: I've only met Marty Cantor a few times, mostly in passing at conventions. I found him pleasant but not compelling. Over Thanksgiving weekend in 1985, I took two of my boys to Los Angeles to have Thanksgiving with my parents. Their mother took the other two and went to her parents for Thanksgiving. It's odd that we didn't all do it together, but somehow that wasn't apparently even considered by anyone. One of the things the boys all wanted to do in Los Angeles was go to Hollywood Blvd. and check it out. My ex and I both mounted separate expeditions there and ran into each other, quite unplanned, at the Chinese Theatre. (The one with all the stars' hand and foot prints in concrete.) Later, as we neared the Wax Museum, it occurred to me that unless it was his day off, Marty would likely be working at the tobacco store next to the museum. Sure enough, he was, and we had a moderately lengthy conversation, mostly about his crest of unpopularity at that time. (He'd just recently published Eric Mayer's "Café Society Fandom" column and was providing Bergeron with a platform for his weirdness.) As I'd let him know from time to time in correspondence, I told him his reputation was not entirely undeserved without getting into specifics. Yes, his hair is unusual. I've heard that he spends quite a lot of time getting it to look like that. ɷɷ Yes, I concur with you and Harry: "I like peace and tranquility in fandom." ɷɷ Our state Lotto 6/49 drawing now takes place twice a week. I buy the same set of numbers for each drawing and have won $5 on four occasions, never more. It would be nice to win more sometime. I had a $25 scratch-off ticket a couple of months ago. I limit myself to $5 a week for such stuff and don't always spend that much. Like you, I consider it a volunteer tax for the schools. ɷɷ I envy you your fruit garden. There's just no room for something like that where I'm living. My vegetable garden this year was kind of sporadic in bearing because the weather was cool a lot of the time (for summer). Still, it lasted into early November in a slow but steady way (with occasional bursts during hot spells) and even into early December put out a few last-gasp hot peppers and cucumbers. I just pulled it out the other day and put the tomato baskets in a stack until next year. Each year I think about putting in a winter garden in the fall, but haven't done it yet. Late last winter my neighbor gave me a bunch of thinnings from her garden and I had collards, chard and a little broccoli until it warmed up too much. ɷɷ I've never gone to any of my high school reunions. My memory of high school parallels yours--"a time of loneliness and imagine that everyone else was having fun"--except that I was having a great time being a young fan during that period of my life.

F.M. Busby: I never heard that rumor you cite about how Ted Johnstone died. My information was that he suffered a stroke. Was I being sheltered or just misinformed? ɷɷ Yes, at 1,800 the Oakland Westercon was a manageable size and it was pretty easy to find the people one wanted to see with a fan room that was of good size and had windows overlooking the huckster room so one could look for people down there. Unfortunately, the next Westercon is in Phoenix...

Art Rapp: The "nymph crouching on a rock admiring her reflection in a woodland pond" is not for Virginia Dare wine, but rather for White Rock soft drinks and mixers. The Virginia Dare label, as I remember it, had ol' Virginia dressed in colonial style garb like a more colorful Dutch Girl Cleanser lady (or maybe the early Morton Salt girl).

Redd Boggs: I don't carry six pens nor any pencils. I do carry one tiny pen called a "NJ Stylist" on its barrel. It's like a miniature Pilot Razor Point, all of four inches long, and it fits in my front pants pocket without discomfort. NJ Stylists are available at the Papyrus Card Shop ón Fourth Street in downtown Santa Rosa--I've never seen them elsewhere though presumably they are--and come in a variety of ink colors. I discovered these just as the last of my "Little Lindys" (stick pens about the same length I'd been purchasing for years, which suddenly became unavailable) was in its final throes.

Art Widner: WELCOME TO SAPS!!!

Hope to see many of you at Corflu in Seattle this spring (hoping I'm there to see you). Meanwhile, best wishes.

--Robert