

Among the Trees

by Pete Gaughan

Back in 1990, when we had first moved to California and I had first moved the zine onto a computer (yes, folks, this thing was typed—I still have two typewriters), I got late. I got very late. I was sending issues out anywhere from two to six weeks after the deadline.

I am scared that might to happen again, but back then it was simply inattention—too much time spent exploring our new habitat and lifestyle: concerts, weekends away, day hikes. The past six months, any holdups I've had have been from forces I can't control, and if they hit me more frequently than I think is fair at least I'm learning not to beat myself up over it.

This time (once again) it's my father's health. He struggled with angina all through last month, and as I picked up the business slack he left I had to shelve work on *Zine Register*. (Also, there was that weekend in the middle of the month when twenty screaming gamers invaded our apartment and made it impossible to sit at the computer—literally impossible, since Clark Millikan's card table was just as wide as the space between the desk and the computer table!)

Dad then had a heart attack on the 23rd of March. This was probably his fourth (6/83, 10/93, 10/94) and for the third time he drove himself to the hospital (damnit). The past eighteen months his cardiologists have been trying to keep his vessels open with angioplasty (a balloon pushes the arterial walls apart), because a *second* open-heart bypass surgery (he had four vessels grafted in '83) is very risky—survival of just the surgery itself is about 55%.

This time, finally, as Dad has been telling them for a year, they decided they would have to open him up. They did so, on the 27th (deadline day—no zine work!), and he came through the operation just fine. Five more days in the hospital (it was ten the first time!) and now he's home, though still in bed for all but a couple of hours a day.

He is weak, disoriented at times, and depressed most of the time—Mom and I spent a few days hanging around the house to make sure he ate meals and talked to someone occasionally. My sister was up here during the operation (and has just gotten a new job so she'll be living two hours from here, instead of five); my brother Mike and his wife were up the weekend after.

Cathy and I spent Easter in L.A. with Mike, then

he came back north with us and we put most of a brick deck in my parents' backyard. So that's what I've been doing since the last time you saw the zine; I hope some kind of normal production can be restored now, but of course the June deadline falls near the baby's due date so that's not a promise!

Cathy's big barbershop event went well. Her quartet scored a C-, typical for a group that's only been together nine months and good considering the crop of competition was quite skilled this year. Her chorus sang well enough to get a real rise out of the small audience (choruses which sing early in the program suffer from the disadvantage that most of the barbershop fans are backstage, waiting their turn to sing!). Her chorus' director sings in the chorus which won, and also sings in a quartet which finished in the top five.

I admit to making a fool of myself at these things, whooping and hollering whenever a group that C is in makes an entrance or exit. In fact, at the Oakland Convention Center they have no curtain (they use half-dimmed lights) so we watch the choruses enter and leave; and as Cathy stepped out to exit I yelled "That's my baby!" on the theory that it's never too early to be the obnoxiously proud parent.

PERELANDORA N.128

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The Roar of the Greasepaint

(the lettercolumn)

Jim Bailey

I thank you and Cathy for having us over. I had a great time. I'll have to see if I can make more house-cons; except for the lack of sleep, they're very relaxing.

I also enjoyed our little talk about writing and other stuff. I don't get many chances to *let loose* on the subject, since it's too easy to bore others as I enthusiastically go on about POV or blah, blah, blah.

I got back "The Seer" from MZB. Her paragraph said my story may have had a point, but she couldn't see it. I'll have to look at it, I may have left the point too fuzzy, so I'll try to tighten it up (as soon as I figure out what it is myself!)

I may have crossed over to the dark side with MtG. I bought a few packs at my store (\$2.02 per revised booster after my discount and after tax. I also managed to convert a text form of the master list to Excel so I can keep track of my cards. I entered a modified form of the Scrye price list into it and came up with a *value* of just short of \$400 in 800 cards.

To keep from inflating the value too much (I know how unlikely it is that I could cash out at that price), I entered \$.10 for any common, median for RV U's and R's and the *lower* price for FE U's, since I know the market has somewhat collapsed for that set. I haven't gotten too many killer Rares, but I've shored up my stock of U's and C's to the point where I think I can put together decks that would at least give me an outside chance against killer decks. I'll probably settle into buying 3 or 4 packs a week and see what I end up with.

Oh well, time to get this off, so you can do the zine. Sorry about the tardiness.

[[Well, it wasn't you that kept the zine from getting out on time! In the midst of the final assembly for this I now discover I'm expected to help my sister move from Bakersfield to Sacramento this week.

[[Hey, don't get so deep in Magic that you stop writing. Some things are more important than games!]]

Walter Buchanan

Nice to hear from you. And thanks for the copy of your zine and the ZR. The hobby has obviously come a long way since I left it almost 17 years ago.

[[stuff about Hoosier Archives deleted—but it was quite a surprise and honor to have Walt interested in what I'm up to hobbywise. I can officially announce that anyone who wishes to donate to the moving expenses of the Hoosier Archives can send me the check. It will probably be some months or a year before a current hobby member can take those materials off Walt's hands, but it's going to run over \$1000 to ship them so we'll need the time to raise the money.]]

Jim Burgess

I expect you at least to understand that people like me are "cocking their heads askew" over the explosion in babytalk in zines. Living in the inner city, the only babies I see are the ones with teenage and welfare mothers, so it is at least reassuring to see other babies being born. Then the "but", my interest level for this stuff is pretty low. Beginning with Gregg Dick, my first real zine editor before Bernie *[[Oaklyn]]* snatched me into the mainstream, the history has always been: have

babies, start delays, and finally fold. I hope this new trend does keep people like you and Stephen Agar around. Best of luck with what's really important.

I really enjoyed your "Among the Trees" in #127. As you know, I count myself as one of the last of the liberals and secondarily wish I could be a Republican. Your editorial explained my frustration exactly. This is simply a conservative cycle addressing everyone's fear. Health care, ethics of being born—living—dying, cycles of poverty and crime, and an information society spiralling out of the grasp of any of us. are just a few of the fear generators. I am one of those who sees the media as a symptom rather than a cause in any sense here.

[[Typo of the month: I entered "of any sense here."]]

Jim Buchanan, as usual, gets to the central issue in any discussion. Since my profession is so frequently accused of poor communication I liked seeing such a lucid quote in your popular forum. I've screamed the same thing at Phil Gramm (who, of course, is one of my profession's least lucid debaters), ever since he proposed Gramm-Rudman. The other thing I say about a *constitutional* amendment is that you have to be careful to consider the judicial review that it invites. Under Gramm-Rudman, Congress threatened each year to close down the gov't; under a constitutional amendment, I believe the judiciary would be called in as referee and create additional constitutional quandries. When you propose rule changes, debate them on the basis of process, not effect. I too was very disappointed at the shallowness of the debate.

[[Babies: we are well ahead of schedule with the 'delays' portion of the program! Hey, the evening I typed in
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Genteel Debauchment #3

Genteel Debauchment is an occasional column by the dread Iain Bowen who has been known to be resident at 5 Wigginton-Terrace, in the City of York within the County of North Yorkshire within her majesty's realm of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and (pro tem) Northern Ireland. Access via the beastly telephonic communicator is +44-1904-640095 and via the global InfoBahn at alaric@harlech.demon.co.uk.

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int debauchment()
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{
    issue_count++;
    printf{'
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Huh, wassat. O Lord, sleep coding again—I swear I dream in C now—well, nightmare in C would be more appropriate. However, y'all don't wan't to know about the ongoing crawling horror that is Freightmaster Planning' or the finer points of how to wrestle a DEC Alpha to my will.
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So, I suppose I'd better terminate the modem link to work, load up something suitable onto the CD player, pour myself a drink and type something interesting.
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One large bourbon and one copy of R.E.M.'s document later. Well, the interesting could be a bit difficult. You see, nothing interesting has happened to me since Christmas—I haven't read anything that interesting, I haven't played anything that interesting, TV has remained the intellectual vacuum that it has been for the last few years and I just haven't had time for interesting opinions and judging by the state of the newspapers neither have the politicians. There has the last few years and I just haven't had time for interesting opinions and judging by the state of the newspapers neither have the politicians. There has been some hoo-ha about them indulging themselves in extra holiday as they haven't got anything to do (that they dare try), but frankly in my opinion, the more time that they spend away from their favourite drug—legislation—the better it is for the rest of us.
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The Ungovernment of the disunited kingdom has suffered another casualty in the shape of the death of one of its leading PolitKlowns—Sir Nicholas Fairbairn. Nicholas was a rather antediluvian backbencher who was mainly known for his complete lack of dress sense (he used to wear his own design of tartan trows), the fact that he was usually drunk, his adulation of Maggie Thatcher and the fact that we would always produce a good quote for a journalist. Given that the Ungovernment are still 40 points behind the polls, the Scottish Nationalist Party (who were his main rivals) are already planning the celebrations after the Perth and Kinross by-election.
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So I thought I'd tell y'all about MasterCon which I managed to attend in between bouts of code frenzy back at the end of February. Britain has two main conventions—ManorCon and MidCon, then there are half a dozen smaller cons scattered throughout the year. The only one that gives any real prominence to Diplomacy is Mastercon, which proudly proclaims itself the UK Masters Diplomacy Tournament (most of the better players stay away) and this year was held in the beautiful Cotswold town of Cirencester.
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Not being a car owner, I only had one sensible choice of how to travel there which was to get
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Note from Tim Stabosz:

I deal in out-of-print (and in print) wargames, boardgames, magazines, etc. (for 10 years now!) I have just put out a new list of items for sale (well over 1000 items). SASE appreciated. E-mail welcome. Incidentally, I am offering brand new copies of Colonial Diplomacy for \$39, and even have a brand new copy of the regular edition of Diplomacy offered in my list for just \$15. Whatever the case may be, if you want me to drop a copy of my list in the mail to you (no obligation of course), just say so.

the train. A quick survey of the revealed that the journey was quite easy apart from one aspect—if I wanted to play Diplomacy, I would have to catch a train at 7.10am. I'm not that keen on Diplomacy. Instead, I boarded the 9.43 from York, destination Cheltenham Spa fully armed with lunch, two newspapers and a couple of books—it was a nice day in York, T-shirt weather the 9.43 from York, destination Cheltenham Spa fully armed with lunch, two newspapers and a couple of books—it was a nice day in York, T-shirt weather even tough it was the lag-end of February. By the time I arrived at Cheltenham, it was raining and the temperature had dropped eight degrees or so and dorkbrain here hadn't got a jumper to hand.

For those who haven't heard, our state railway system is being privatised (hurray), sadly, it is being done in a really stupid manner with the system being split up into far too many little chunks. These all believe that they have a bounden duty to compete^H^H^H^H^H screw each other over, even tho' they haven't been privatised yet and it is nearly impossible for them to compete with each other. The result of this is InterCity Cross-Country and Thames Trains feel an obligation to have rotten connections with each other, hence an hours wait at Cheltenham station. Now hanging around railway stations appeals to a certain breed, but I decided to take to licensed premises for the duration.

After that peculiar form of torture that we call a "pub lunch", I then travelled onto Kemble, which is as near as you can get to Cirencester by train. Now I had been assured that there would be a bus and taxis waiting here to convey people to Cirencester. As I left the station and faster than you can say "integrated transport policy" the bus drove off, there were no taxis.

Now this is not a disaster, this may be the boonies of England, this may be the part of the country where people are related to each other a little too closely for their own good, this may be Cold Comfort Farm territory—but there is still transport. Hell, I could walk, it was only four miles—I took a raincheck on that and it was, so I didn't. So it was just a question of doing the old Vladimir/Estragon thing and sure enough, after 40 minutes or so Godot turned up in his taxi. Vladimir/Estragon thing and sure enough, after 40 minutes or so Godot turned up in his taxi.

The hotel where the convention was held was what y'all call quaint and what we all call "should have been demolish twenty years ago". It had lots of passages and staircases and rooms all higgeldy piggeldy and, shudder, internal stone-cladding. After finding my room I found first the convention bar, then the games playing area.

There were about fifty people there by then, most of them avidly playing Dip and the rest were just hyena packing around looking for a victim for another game. I chose an 18xx, a four player

Northern board 1829. Just long enough to play until serious drinking time later in the evening. Unfortunately, I forgot who the other players were (some of our slower games players)—so we didn't finish until 3am.

The next morning I wandered around a bit—it is a very pretty town—although I must admit that my main motivations were a newspaper and a pack of fags, played Outposts—which looks like a nasty little card counting game suitable for accounts, internal auditors and sad COBOL programmers—but is actually a rather more complicated affair than that. It could do with a little more player interaction than it has, but so be it. Later on, I was dragged into a game of Dip—faced with Russia and with John College as England, I had a eerie foreboding of what was going to happen. It did, and I swiftly managed to join the Cabal at the bar.

We had an interesting discussion based on the proposed French holiday that Chris Tringham is organising for the Cabal, but because Agar was hungry we adjourned to a rather post-modern coffee-shop where we ate deli sandwiches and drank cappuccino. This was followed by making arrangements for the Cabal dinner that evening and then we returned to the con. The loonies were assembling for a third round of Diplomacy, so I adjourned for a bath and to watch Sky News² :-)

Dinner that evening was at a top-class restaurant—I can't remember precisely what we all had, but it was very jolly and very good and three bottles of wine between four drinkers made it very convivial. I took some notes, but they don't seem to be very readable.

The next day was very quiet, I didn't really get going until lunchtime when I spent half an hour looking fruitlessly for a food outlet. Cirencester is a fast-food free zone. I then managed to play another game of Outposts and a game of 1830.

By this time the convention was winding down and only the hard core reprobates were left. I decided to join them and a merry evening was spent playing a number of trivial games. As the convention bar had shut, we were allowed to go to the public bar to get drinks—it was then that I discovered that the bartender was a particularly beautiful example of Twink Classic—sigh, I'd spent all this time up in the convention bar when I could have been down in this more civilised area drooling.

The next day, I had to go back home, I woke up with a heavy cold. Ain't life grand. I'll try to be more interesting next time...

¹ Truly sick puppies can mail me for details

² A satellite channel with the reputation of "All the news that is within 20 miles of London and what we can steal from NBC"

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[[letters continue on page 3]]

your letter, Jim, I'm sitting at my parents' house 'baby'-sitting my father! (Thank goodness they have a Mac... they must have inherited my good sense.) If I stop publishing, it won't be because I have children. It'll be because after thirteen years of this and in the midst of my father's illness and my mid-thirties and an upcoming major change of career, I determine I'm tired of it. Children will just give me one more thing to blather about in print, I'm sure.]]

John Galt

Easy come, easy go. I'm out of a job again. I expected it but not so soon.

Baseball: As I write, it sounds like the strike is about to be replaced by a lockout. If this happens, I for one will take it as admission by the owners that the whole dispute was their fault in the first place.

Perhaps the players should start their own league, and forget about the present ones; that may be the only way to keep this from repeating every few years. (The Canadian Post Office should try it too.)

Balanced Budget Amendment: I agree with the Buchanan letter you printed, but there's more to it than that. The Amendment is needed (and needs to be court enforceable, and needs to close obvious loopholes by defining terms like "budget" and "revenue" itself) because:

1. The American people have shown that they have no discipline when it comes to asking for more and more tax-funded goodies. As David Friedman points out in *The Machinery of Freedom*, this is a classic "tragedy of the commons" problem: it requires a lot more effort, for less return (to you as a person, business, or group) to get a bunch of the existing special-interest subsidies repealed than it does to pass one more for yourself and your friends.

2. The Congress has shown that it will not restrain itself if the people won't. If Congress had obeyed Gramm-Rudman, the budget would have been balanced by 1992. (I would like to believe a Republican Congress will be better on this score, but I have yet to hear Newt or anyone else say that they will send only balanced budgets to the White House. Perhaps they're too afraid of being voted out, or maybe they really didn't mean it; I can't tell. As it is, I'll have to wait for a Libertarian Congress.)

3. The government now owes more than 70% of our annual GDP, and at present deficit levels (which are still increasing!), will reach 100% in under five years. Nations which reach 100% invariably start defaulting on their debt, resulting in financial chaos. This will produce at least the kind of long-term financial disruption you see today in most of Latin America. It may also have been responsible for Hitler's rise to power. Next time—Perot?

I've thought of a way to make Congress more honest and less corrupt, but I doubt it will happen. Instead of electing Congressmen, how about once a year we just pick some random registered voter from each district and make him or her its Congressman for a year? Pay

him whatever he's already earning—no special fringe benefits—and forbid him to accept any gift from any member of the public, even a drink. When the term is over, that person would be barred from any further public office for life, so no "career politicians" could exist.

[[Sorry to hear about your job, John—hang in there, things have got to turn upward soon. Thanks for being here last month, and for the stuff on upcoming cons.

[[Heinlein thought the way you do—anybody who wants to be a politician ipso facto doesn't deserve the job—and it's tempting, but I'd rather batter the voters with the idea that they have to boot any incumbent for whom public office isn't a sacrifice.]]

Matt Heppie

Hugh Magen hit it right on the nose with his letter last month. If you want to improve the quality of your life throw out your television. It is an addictive and evil device. I have lived without one for over two years and it is wonderful. You wouldn't believe the amount of time you have when it is gone. I spend my evenings with my guitar, hobbies, books, sports, loved ones, and actually get to bed at a decent hour. It is wonderful to wake up refreshed and not have to drag yourself out of bed.

People think I'm insane for not having a TV. "What about the news?" they say. Well, Philadelphia news goes like this, *every night*: Murder, murder, murder, rape, fire, fire, all the Philly teams lost, the weather will be... Who needs it? I suppose the OJ Simpson trial is on, but I wouldn't know. I don't have a TV! I also skip those articles in the paper and can therefore avoid something that is wasting a couple of million human hours each day. I can live without all of that trash. How many evenings are blown watching sitcom reruns? Instead of watching sports how about participating?

I realize that most of you won't consider what Hugh and I are suggesting, but it really is worth it. Personally I would recommend quitting cold turkey and dropping your television from a great height. They disintegrate nicely upon impact. For most of you the addiction is probably too great to consider that option. In this case I suggest placing the television in a box in your attic, basement, garage, or deep closet. Make sure it is buried and difficult to get to. As Hugh said, simply making a conscious decision to watch less TV will not work. Programming is designed to be addictive and most people have been trained from youth to turn the television on when "nothing" is happening or there is "nothing" to do.

One last point. I do believe there is some artistic and entertainment value to movies. Videos have a beginning and end, they don't just run on into the next mindless sitcom, you choose when to watch them, you don't schedule your life around them, and you pay as you go. If you want to keep the movie option without having a TV you could always get rid of your cable and take down your antenna.

Unfortunately, like smoking, most people won't quit even if it's good for them.

[[Well, in 1983 I moved to Texas for grad school and

didn't even own a TV; and in 1988, I bought a cheapie with my employee discount at Montgomery Ward. After five years without I fell right back into my habits: news, sports, and the Tonight Show (later, the Late Show), every night without fail. Up until this week...

[[We cancelled the cable. That doesn't mean I'll give it up. I sat and watched an NCAA basketball game, and the Oscars, at my folks' house; and I'm sure I'll catch some Star Trek over there. But I'm learning that I get enough news from the paper and occasional radio twists (my drive time used to be 100% newsradio, now it's 25%) to stay well-informed.

[[I expected more opposition from Cathy; in fact, I think I wanted her to kill the idea, but when she said 'yes' I was stuck.]]

David Hood

I thought it might be good for the readership to hear a contrary view on the "baby issue," as Tom Howell puts it. A very telling point of Tom's world view can be seen in the paragraph where he says, "in order for human cultures to continue, there must be replacements in harness and functioning... so, replacements are necessary." (emphasis mine)

Children are "replacements" now?

The fact of the matter is that the earth is in no danger of running out resources any time soon. Yes, I know that is contrary to the current ecodisaster conventional wisdom, but it is true nonetheless. One only has to travel the United States to see all the room—and there are less populated places in the world.

Will use of resources have to change? Almost assuredly. But technology changes too, as do people. Hong Kong, with all its population density, is one of the most successful places on earth.

Am I just putting my head in the sand here? I don't think so. You can either look at offspring/humans as "replacements" in some sort of vast, controlled machine, or one can revel in the infinite diversity in infinite combinations that is the human race, and welcome additions to it. The most important resource in the world is the *human being*. And human capital is what makes successful countries successful.

Countries that are considered "overpopulated", such as India, do not have resource/economic problems because of too many people. Ethiopia did not have a famine because of overpopulation, as is often assumed by the uninformed. The problem in these countries is that the government places huge shackles on the feet of its citizens. If India was freer, and its people freer to make their own lives better, much of the problem would begin to recede. When people are free to be productive and free to create wealth, you'd be surprised what "resource issues" turn out to have been distribution issues or issues of poor property rights protection.

Wow, I've gone on way too long with this. I'm not saying that everyone should have ten children like they do in some Third World countries—birth control can make people more productive also. All I am saying is that people should not be seen as a drain on society, but as an asset to society. People become a drain on society when government action induces sloth and unproductivity. Of course that is an issue for another day.

So, Pete, go ahead and have those kids. Science fiction scenarios aside, there is no reason to fear for their future in my opinion.

[[Government doesn't induce sloth. People are slothful—and greedy, and deceitful and jealous. They happen also to be honest and loyal and altruistic, all at once. Sure, government causes some problems, but in almost every country the world it prevents more trouble than it creates.

[[We've had this discussion before, so I won't argue whether our technology will develop fast enough to keep us

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ON THE FASTTRACK/by Bill Holbrook



[[letters continue on page 4]]

from killing ourselves. And to be fair to Tom, he was writing in a high, formal style—his use of “replacements” was probably more of a technical term than an emotive one.

[[I don't view humans as a scar on the Earth. We're just the best of the mammals, even if our husbandry seems more to resemble the acts of locusts most of the time.

[[But let's say I grant your thesis. Many of the world's problems are simply poor planning, or too much planning, or inability for now to use the planet (rock, water, air) in the most efficient and rewarding way. If we go would only let more people dig and mix and build, they would find ways to do so and yet preserve sufficient natural space to keep mankind alive.

[[Okay, granted. Now: WHAT IF YOU'RE WRONG?

[[See? A conservationist viewpoint doesn't mean you think mankind is a disease. It means you care so deeply about preserving life and society that you will move cautiously, slowly, being certain that you do nothing that would cause your descendents to be wiped out, cursing you as they go.]]

Martin Johnson

Thanks for the great Novacon; I know when I play games with a quality group... new game, shitty luck, good time! (Silverton). I know Mark had fun as well. We family men find a good game without distractions to be a very valuable and rare commodity. I think Mark is determined to have a housecon sometime, but he has to wait for an opportunity when wife & kids are out of the way.

Matthew Lahtinen

What is life like up here? [[Lake Tahoe region]] Well, it's pretty stereotypical. The only things to are outdoor sports or gambling. Most people that come up here, do so to be a ski bum or such. There is not a lot of motivation for people up here, although for some people, this is what they want. It is quiet and relaxed, if you do not mind making very little.

The landscape is amazing, and it is nice to be able to go hiking whenever you want. But I have reached the point where it is time to move on. I'm going to school at the University of Nevada, Reno, which is a one-hour drive for me. I'm only going part time, so it is not that bad as of yet.

And something to make you think—I work as a stage tech for Harrah's. The current show is *Playboy's High Voltage*. And before you think this is fun, watch the same movie twice a night for twelve days straight, then five nights a week. It is boring in a way you cannot believe.

[[Oh, I believe it. Even in amateur theater, working props or lights, by the fourth weekend/eighth show I'm yawning constantly. Good luck with school and wherever it takes you.]]

Brent McKee

Okay, I promised not to offer baby advice, but here's something you've probably already thought of, being the literary type guy you are: when your kid gets older (say about four or five) graduate to more mature books. Kids like stuff like *Swiss Family Robinson* and other good adventure stories. Jack London works too, and even some of the classic. One of the defects of the North American educational system is that it tends to underestimate the abilities of kids. They can learn to read a lot sooner than most of them get the opportunity to.

One other thing: Naming a kid is a major thing that can affect them for the rest of their life. My full name is Stanley Brent McKee. I got the name Stanley because I was born on the same day as my mother's uncle, and needless to say I hate it, which is why I never

use it. Every Stan or Stanley that I have ever met (who uses the name) has been a real jerk. I don't use it, in fact there are very few people who know what my real first name is... until now that is.

[[If you hadn't included that last sentence, I wouldn't have printed that paragraph.

[[I hope we already understood the importance, both of reading, and of an appropriate name. I really look forward to reading to my kids, and suspect that Cathy will eavesdrop she's never finished the Lord of the Rings :-)... I know lots of people with names I like who don't like theirs; you're the first Stan I've ever heard complain.]]

Steve McKinnon

(in his own words, “Janeway's Future Husband”)

There was no press, and no letter, last month because I was having a period of silence in honour of the ill fortune in the fate of ‘My So-Called Life’, the best Network show in years.

Not that my voice alone makes that much difference, but I emailed ABC and told them that I would not watch ABC for one calendar year or until MSCL was renewed, whichever comes first. I picked a good time to boycott the Super Bowl, at least.

I therefore sent out no new material to any 'zine, except reviews of *ST: Voyager* to *Metamorphosis*. After all, some things are more important than even MSCL.

[[Have no fear, I understand. As much deadwood as I welcome in Pere, I don't worry about an active participant taking a break. And I support people acting on their consumer preferences—David would no doubt join me in applauding your exercise of your free-market rights. I myself had the experience today of driving five miles out of my way to find a grocery store that isn't being picketed.]]

You ever read comic books [[no]] and say, “Gee, what a stupid power that guy has.” We used to make up ‘Guys who almost made the X-Men’ powers. Like Fingernail Guy, who grows his fingernails as fast as he wants. Or Deposit Man, who finds the nearest empty Coke can.

My power was Analogy Man, able to construct or tear apart any analogy. So I have to deconstruct Paul Gardner's Foreigner analogy. OK, so Foreigner have the amps, and can make more noise than the 10,000 fans. But what happens when the 10,000 fans storm the soundboard and kick the crap out fo the guys there and then pull the plug? Lou Gramm could scream his Rochester-born head off, and no one'll hear him.

Tom Howell seems to be missing the point. Surely those who are able to provide for any number of children should be ‘allowed’ to without censure from such arguments.

I don't like phrases like “...the global biosystem itself is trying to...” Don't make the Earth out to be so ‘human’. You're sounding a bit like the long-lost Schenck. We are more important than the Earth. If it was a choice between mankind dying out and Earth continuing; or pissing off into space and leaving a cinder behind us I'm sure there'd be a lot more people waving goodbye to terra-charcoal than volunteering to die.

[[You know, you sound just like Dr. Ransom in C.S. Lewis' Out of the Silent Planet (the same series which gives this zine its name). Our choice is not to be the ones who leave or the ones who die in the muck—our choice is whether to be the ones who force such a decision on our descendents.]]

Re: Ipswich. They now suck. They lost to Man. Utd. 8-0 last week. Can you say ‘relegation’?

Rugby Union is 15 man a side, and continued play. Rugby League has 13, stops after each tackle, so the players can have a rest. You'd need to see both to really see. Also, I'm biased, since I played RU, not RL.

[[I knew there were two kinds but had no idea that any form of rugby stopped every play. Yecch! For the same

reason I preferred playing soccer to (Am.) football in school...]]

Ward Narhi

After reading York's well worded WAYwords and Hugh Magen's response I must heartily agree. In this age, friendships, relationships, dreams can oh so easily be put on temp to perm hold due to the television's soporific influence. I noticed I felt better about myself the less I watched TV. I would get rid of the whole thing altogether but I like to rent movies from time to time. I refuse to ever get cable because when I had it the one time in my life, I spent those 6 months as a zombie. Never again! But it is interesting to see the niche TV has carved for itself in the last few decades. My mother deals with making budgets for very poor people and is amazed by how these people will list cable TV as one of their necessities alongside electric and phone bills. When did TV become a necessity instead of a luxury? And since when is cable TV truly needed if you already receive the major stations?

[[Just a quick note for those of you from other areas: the coast of California is so hilly that it's typically impossible to pick up more than three or four stations over the air, or any station more than twenty miles off. The only channels we can get (3 from Sacramento and 1 from San Jose) have severe snow. The only shows either of us has seen in the past two weeks has been Days of Our Lives, which Cathy can barely get clearly enough to tolerate; and a Sacramento news followed by Letterman, which was a bit clearer because it's after sunset but was still so bad I haven't tuned it in again.]]

I also agree with Tim Stabosz's feelings about people today. Perhaps I am a bit of a misanthrope but I have little faith in my fellow man. We do live for ourselves now. The whole idea of charity, trust, faithfulness, commitment, kindness, politeness etc... seems to have disappeared when my back was turned. I am at a loss as to how this happened. I used to be a very trusting and care-free individual and was very optimistic about other people. Since then, I have learned that humans are not basically altruistic. But we can go about our lives and still value the things that have been put aside. I refuse to run with those attitudes. I feel better about myself sticking to my ideals of how humans should behave towards each other. And if someone else doesn't like my philosophy they can shove it! :)

Steve Nicewarner

I have, after much soul searching, decided to resign from Trafalmore. Studying for the CPA exam has eaten almost all of my free time over the last few months, and I expect that to continue for at least the next six weeks. It would be better for all players to have a France which actively negotiates.

I will, however, have a letter for you soonish. As you can guess, I disagree with a lot of what you said last issue, but not all of it. I do deplore the recent trend towards taking decisions out of the hands to people who know damn well that they need to make tough choices [see the BBA and Term-Limits for examples]. That, I suspect, is bad for the whole concept of democracy. [soapbox mode off]

Eric Ozog

I got your baby entry [[Eric is also running a pool, on the birth of his next kid.]]. Got Perelandra Friday—nice reading—and I will probably be sending some written comments Re: Tom Howell's letter, which I found intriguing. So Mr. Environmentalist wants to have FIVE children? Cathy says you might feel differently about FIVE after the first one arrives, ho ho. Hey, it looks like our baby will be born about the same time period as

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your baby. Wanna race? And are you going to be one of those yuppie couples who wants to know beforehand whether boy or girl? Yuk, who would want to have their life planned out like that to the nth detail—takes away all the spontaneity.

It hasn't sunk in yet with Shannon that she's going to have a baby brother or sister soon. We talk to her about it, but I'm not sure if she understands yet. Once the baby is born though I bet she'll get it!

I heard that the Forest Service is going to link up with the Internet soon—that they're getting the software to do it and there will be regulations on how to use it. I'll let you know when I know more.

Kay Shapero

Meanwhile, *Perelandra* did get here. Congratulations—don't you just love really *early* baby pictures? At least yours look a bit more coherent than Vicky's did at that stage—I had to take the doctor's word for what I was seeing. :->

As for how many kids you want—you'll have a better idea after you've taken care of *this* one for awhile. I remember before we had Vicky, Nicolai wanted two kids and I wanted one. About 6 months after she arrived, I kinda wanted two kids and Nicolai wanted to stick to the one we had. :-> Something about never getting any sleep (mind you, I had to get up every few hours to nurse the kid, but OTOH I didn't have to go to work the next day and be coherent.)

[[So we have an edge—Cathy with no job and me working in the photo business, neither one of us has to be coherent at work!]]

Alex Simmons

In case you've tried to send me email in the past couple of weeks and it hasn't worked, make sure that you are specifying my email address as "afs@qad.com" instead of the longer version specified in my email address (for reasons that amaze me), which contains a slash ("/") of some sort that seems to confuse some internet routers.

It is extremely unlikely that I will make it up your way this weekend. I couldn't get into work last weekend, (La Conchita is between my house and office), and our deadline looms (much like the muddy hillside above La Conchita, giving me much the same feeling as the local residents :-|).

Alex Simmons (second letter)

I think that your comments in the last issue of *Perelandra* illustrated the point I made in my letter as well as some of the problems with the politics of budgeting. The Republicans start talking about reducing the budget and everyone immediately starts dragging out pictures of babies and starving children* and talking about how "mean" the Republicans are.

The first problem is how to cut programs that might ultimately do some good if every man, woman and child who might possibly suffer is on the news telling how this change would ruin their lives. I think this is one of the reasons that most "news" is inherently biased towards things like government spending: a poor, deprived person makes for a really good news story, but a huge bureaucracy that absorbs huge percentages of the allotted money hardly ever get a mention. Mind you I'm not saying that government spending *can't* do any good; I just think that it's almost impossible for *any* organization that big to do things efficiently. (I'd be happy to debate the Libertarian question of whether the government should even *try* to do these things, but that's a different letter.)

The second problem is that these numbers are not really being put in perspective. The whole list of

Republican cuts amount to less than 0.02 percent of the total budget. The Republicans aren't even talking about cutting funding for school lunches; they're talking about *limiting* the increase for next year (from roughly 5.1% to 4.5%).

If you want to talk about slimy politics in the Balanced Budget debate, how about your own Diane Feinstein, who voted for the same amendment a year ago, promised in her campaign that she would vote for it again, but then when it appeared that it might pass... oh no! Can't vote for that! The wrong people would get credit... I mean, it's bad policy.

I think one of the best things about the Republican contract is that at least a lot of these issues are coming up for vote, so we can really see where the politicians stand on the issues (as opposed to their campaign promises). (I believe that this was the actual wording of the Contract With America, though the press seems to have turned it into a major win-lose for the Republican party in general and a referendum on Bob Dole's presidential aspirations specifically.) A lot of these issues wouldn't even have made it to the floor in previous congressional sessions, at least without being twisted past recognition, with riders and alterations and a few "experimental" highways in key districts.

Not that I think everything the Republicans are doing is right. Caving to the farm lobbies (more particularly, the grain farmers' lobby) and the western ranchers/water wasters is pathetic. And the wavering on term limits is pretty pathetic.

Speaking of term limits, I think you and I are in agreement that it isn't a good idea to go monkeying around with the Constitution. The problem is that it is almost impossible to have fair elections when one of the candidates holds office. I think that it is hard to under-emphasize the value of name-recognition, of delivering pork back to you district, of the use of government money to tell people what a good job you've done delivering the Federal loot back home (here's me in front of the shiny new \$366 million Fruit Fly Breeding Center). Even in this past election of supposed turnover, an astounding 91% of Congressmen and Senators running for re-election won. The old joke about being caught in bed with a live boy or a dead girl being about the only things that can prevent you from being re-elected still seems to hold true. The problem is people just don't know how else to get these people out of office.

I think the American people have shown that they are tired of this, given that *every single time* they have had a chance to vote for term limits they have done so *overwhelmingly*. The gyrations that politicians have gone to to overthrow these results (or block these elections in the first place) is really sickening.

(Locally they passed a term limit law that affected the current mayor, but he ran for re-election anyway saying *in his campaign* that his first act would be to sue the county to have the law overturned. Doesn't that give you a warm fuzzy feeling about what sort of respect this man has for the law (in general) and the voters who passed this bill?)

And finally, to turn tie this letter back to diplomacy (in case that's important :-), can someone (anyone) explain to me the diplomatic reasons behind Bill Clinton's desire to spend V-E day (the 50th anniversary of the end of the war in Europe) in Moscow?

* I realized on re-reading this that it could have two meanings, but when I mentioned "pictures of babies and starving children", I was referring to the metaphorical images in your writing, and not to the sonogram pictures (which I assume were non-political, at least until the kidlet reaches the age of 10 or so :-)

P.S. A scary choice: Wilson vs. Clinton. =:-(

[[Contract with America: yes, the Contract only promised to bring these issues for a vote. But that's not

semantically different from being in favor of them—the only place it mattered was on term limits, where the Reps wanted to be in favor of them ("we forced the issue to the floor, didn't we?") but kill the bill anyway.

[[Nothing could be better for progressives in this country than a Wilson presidency. The bogging-down of a pragmatist moderate President with an activist right-wing Congress would make Clinton and Carter look like gods. But it won't happen; Wilson is an unknown compared to Dole and Gramm, and the country isn't ready for another CA governor after the devastation left behind by the last two.]]

Alex Simmons (third letter)

It's probably too late to correct it, but in my letter to you on politics and the Republican budget cuts, I realized there was an error. The Republicans are proposing budget cuts of 17 billion dollars, which, on a 1.5 trillion dollar budget, amounts to a cut of 1.1% (not .011 percent, which I think I said in my letter).

In order to prove (one way or the other :) that I can do math, here's another interesting little statistic based on 1992 tax returns. If the IRS took 100% of every dollar earned after the first 100,000 dollars, (and nothing else changed), the government would get another 135 billion dollars. The federal budget in 1992 was 1.3 trillion dollars, and the deficit was 290 billion. In short, even if we wanted to just "tax the rich", there isn't enough money there to make it work.

[[I completely agree that taxing alone won't solve our federal problems. That's why it's inexplicable to me that Congress began there, and cut taxes instead of reforming them, rather than with spending cuts.]]

Tim Stabosz

I agreed with Cathy's comments about the importance of having a mother at home. "Old fashioned" or not, I think there is something even more negative that "happens" to a woman/mother (compared to a man/father) when she has to shut off the world of family and turn on the work-world mindset for 8 or 10 hours a day. God knows we men have become sick enough because of this, many times effectively wholesale abandoning our sons, daughters, and wives for the sake of a new "master". I think it can only be *worse* for women, since I consider woman to be more the *bedrock* of the family... *more* important than we lowly men (ultimately, at least). I guess I put women on a pedestal, or at least women's "traditional" role. To me, that "traditional" role is not something that we can "decide" to wholesale obsolete overnight... after all, it is *genetic*. This is where so-called "feminism" is so messed up. Even so, I say that women and men's energies *both* need to be able to be more *directly* focused on the home, children, friends, community, etc. I still say the *first* thing we need to do in this country to address this is to legislate a 4 day work week. This is a *must!* (Would that Newt was talking about *this* rather than the fatuous notion of PC's for paupers.)

I guess I've found that "lifestyle" isn't as important to me as to other people. Mind you, I'm not a slob either. I try to keep my expenses down where it counts. I own a 10 year old car (Chevy Sprint) with 138,000 miles on it. It gets me around. I moved (just) outside the Chicago Metro area 3 years ago to reduce my housing costs. My house payment is \$300 a month... \$400 a year in property taxes. It's an old home, but the area is actually nice. It's amazing what one can do if they just get *out* of the major metro areas. (LaPorte is about 65 miles ESE of Chicago.) If I needed to go back to working for someone, a train to downtown Chicago is readily available, just 15 minutes away. More likely, I would simply find work locally. It's amazing how much one

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can cut their living expenses, if they really want to. Of course, I suspect it might be different in California. Too, I'm single, so that certainly makes it easier for me.

I enjoyed seeing my responses to *WAYwords* #22, and your responses to me. Maybe I'll have more to say on this in the future. Obviously, it's all very important stuff. Guess I just don't feel "engaged" right now, though, to say anything more.

I will say, relating to some of the comments you made, that I don't think it's unnatural for one to "anguish" over paying his way out of the credit trap... I just curse a world in which any of us has to be in said situation. There's just something degrading about it. The notion of any human being being in a situation of "what happens if", and not feeling totally comfortable in thinking about the possibilities, can't be a healthy thing. Maybe that's part of our problem today... we have too many "what happens ifs", if you know what I mean. "What happens if I can't pay the bills," and "what happens if I lose my job" being the main ones. I guess this has a lot to do with why I don't really believe in "corporate employment" (i.e. servitude) generally. That is, if I can't be *totally sure* that the entity I'm giving my "all" to, is *just* as totally committed to me, then fuck that. I think this is what makes many of the personal service businesses meaningful... small shopkeepers, for example. Hopefully they treat their clientele with respect, and hence earn from the clientele a sense of commitment that engenders a sense of security to the store-keeper... until Wal-Mart moves to town <sigh>.

When you talk about "daily experiences of reliving old embarrassments", I would suspect that what you might need to do (frankly) is try become more self-accepting and otherwise gentle and understanding with yourself. You know, it really *works*, Pete. Not only does one give themselves perhaps the greatest gift one can give (liking oneself a lot better), but it is also perhaps the greatest gift one can give to spouse and loved ones. The "problem" with being *highly* self-accepting is that it tends to bring out any buried or denied anger, resentments, regrets, hostilities, etc. So, one has to be willing to deal with all of those emotions. Personally, though, I not only recommend it... I find that there really is NO other way. In any case, I'd simply recommend you just try to give yourself more of an even break, so to speak. It will probably allow you to become less uptight, if that happens to be an issue for you.

I think having a luxury of time is not only good, but *critical*. I'm glad for you that this is something you have. I think it shows in the quality of *Perelandra*. You kind of just "let it flow", which gives a sense of editorial "richness" and depth, if I might say. It's clear enough that you're doing this for its own sake. While this sense of "mission" is of course not uncommon in the Dip publishing hobby, that's only a tribute to all you selfless pubbers. Too, it's quite clear that you have more of a sense of (healthy) pride over *Pere*... and it of course shows in the quality of the finished product.

[[*Whew. Thanks.*]]

[[*We've had the conversation before about men and women—I don't buy it as a generalization, but for women who have been socialized to think their best role should be that of fulltime mother, having to work can be life-wrecking.*]]

[[*As for my self-image... well, I wobble wildly between being quite proud of myself and convinced of my own worthlessness! I get a lot of guilt from my Catholic upbringing, and I'm a high-strung person by nature. On the other hand, I'm smart and unique and like to think that only my laziness keeps me from being world famous. Friendly encouragement such as yours, whether personal or zine-related, is very helpful when I wobble over toward focussing on the negative. Thanks.]]*]]

Marcelo Triunfo

Around this time last month, I was in the hospital for surgery to remove a ruptured appendix. During my recovery, I got word that my brother Falcony and his wife Lourdes are expecting another child—due in mid-July. In a previous letter, I mentioned the process of anticipation when they were expecting their first child; it's hard for me to believe I'll be going through all that again so soon!

[[*I'm sorry to hear you've had to spend any time sick. Hospitals are great places to walk away from.*]]

Andy York

Hi there, glad to hear that all is well on the baby front. Thanks for printing my column, I'll be compiling another in the near future for you (well, at least I expect to). Maybe something on the counter-culture I noted on Venice Beach. Or, a follow-up on the "dreams" article (it was great to read the responses to that one) discussing the lack of a frontier and being trapped (much as Europe was prior to the opening up of colonization in the New World).

I'm afraid I must echo Tom Howell's comments on the population. I've seen a number of reports that the population level isn't too high for the biosphere to support; and I've heard the exact opposite. However, the bottom line is that at some point a saturation point will be reached - whether we've already surpassed it, are at it or will reach it in the future. Thus, steps need to be taken to stabilize the numbers at some point -> why not now?

The solution I find most attractive (at this point) is the "replacement level" of childrearing. Basically each couple has two children to "replace" them. Of course, in the long term this will bring down the population level slowly as single folk won't (necessarily) reproduce. I don't feel this is a bad idea either—IMHO we've a few too many people about.

However, as you and Tom have noted, this is a difficult topic to discuss and can easily hit peoples' emotional response buttons. So I won't dwell on it.

As for writing, as they say, practice makes perfect. I think Tom's comment that he write one review at a time and post it to you. Then there's no pressure to write them all; and he can choose his favourites to start which should be easier.

As a person listed in *ZR*, I'm not offended by what anyone has to say. I take it as constructive criticism; if that's what it is. Learning how another may approach a problem; or that a feature does is boring, is just as important as getting a pat on the back. Of course, a scathing review with comments like "wouldn't wrap fish in it" would bring me to inquire why the person was receiving my zine in the first place; secondly why they waited for a public forum to tell me that; and, thirdly, what specific changes would they make (not that I would do all of them).

[[*Any of the column ideas you mention would be great. Bruce McIntyre has mentioned several topics he might cover (maybe I can get him to do a Spyro Gyra review?)—you guys know what you're most interested in, and that usually produces the best writing. The dreams idea sounds very intriguing.*]]

[[*I don't think we have a moral obligation to have few children. I think the country's trend toward smaller families will keep the population small enough for the few who want more. But we can't support the current levels of immigration, and the Third World can't support its current birth rate. (If they want our help they'll ask, but for now it's probably best to solve our own problems first.)*]]

[[*Thanks to one and all who participated here. I hope the delay in getting this printed, and the abbreviated comments I made, don't keep you from enjoying this column as much as I do!*]]

LITERARY QUIZ

From Last Time

CCE368: A little-remarked play called *Dear Brutus* (1918) marked the first leading role on stage of what star? (free issue for correct answer)

Helen Hayes (born Helen Hayes Brown in Washington DC, 1900). Stan Johnson guessed Lawrence Olivier. Doug Brown tried Marlena Dietrich (!); Nathan Trent tried Charlie Chaplin.

Jim Burgess wrote: "Great play, loads of fun, written 14 years after his most famous play about Never-Never Land—Sir James Matthew Barrie. Now—producing the play? Um, my first thought of course was Maude Adams, but she was famous for being the first to play that *other* part which J.R.'s mom became famous for later. So, it probably was Helen Hayes, who began, I'm pretty sure, playing Barrie roles—though I'm not sure if *Dear Brutus* was the first."

CCE563: One of the most complicated personalities of the Renaissance, he was both a Catholic and a humanist, a scholar and a cleric, a statesman and an opposition rabble-rouser. In the end, he was called both a martyr and a heretic. For two free issues, who was he and what work of his is he best known for today?

Sir (or Saint) Thomas More wrote *Utopia* (in Latin) in 1516, depicting an ideal state founded on reason. His refusal to subscribe to the Act of Supremacy led Henry VIII to execute him, for which the Catholic hierarchy named him a martyr; but many in the church believed his humanism, and association with the likes of Erasmus and Lyly made his religion suspect.

Jim Burgess and Vince Springer had the correct answer. Stan Johnson guessed Thomas Aquinas. Hugh Magen tried Dante Alighieri! *The Divine Comedy*, "though as far as I know, the cleric part doesn't fit."

Andy York wrote, "For the Lit Quiz, I know who wrote DEAR BRUTUS (James Barrie); but not who played in it. As for the other, I guess Descartes and *Principles of Philosophy*—though I really don't know." Doug Brown and Nathan Trent suggested Martin Luther.

For Next Issue

For one half issue each:

JCQ5) Rank these cities from farthest north to farthest south: Paris, Seattle, Montreal, Vladivostok.

JCQ18) What is the origin of the word "maudlin"?

And for two free issues for each part:

RCO20) A man enters an antiquarian bookshop, flashes his badge and inquires of the woman at the desk, "Would you have a *Ben Hur*, 1860, Third Edition, the one with the duplicated line on page 116?"

First, who is the man?

And second—*would* she have such a book? (Show your work, I won't accept just a 'yes' or a 'no'.)

PBEM Dune Announcement

From: Rich Irving <rr1@pge.com>

I'm trying to get an E-mail game of Dune set up over the Internet, and I was wondering if any of you (or someone you know) would be interested. If you are, I can E-mail the PBEM rules I have. (I recently made some minor clarifications and modifications to the set I gave to Pete last year.)

The game will most likely 1 week per "cycle". (A regular game turn has (always) a movement cycle, (probably) a battle cycle, and (sometimes) nexus cycle.) Depending on length of game it should take 3-6 months, I guess.

If you're interested, let me know. If you're not at this time, but still want the rules, let me know.

THE INTERIM #8

by BRUCE MCINTYRE

(16 December, 1:10 AM.) Less than eighteen hours now, but the nervousness hasn't hit yet. I expect it will, but right now I'm filled with excitement and anticipation. I hope the inevitable nervousness doesn't screw things up. My first solo "gig" (I really hate that word, but having gotten one I don't know what else to call it) since I played in college is tomorrow night at the Vancouver Bridge Centre's Christmas Bash, and I'll be bringing a band consisting of myself and (wait for it...) my computer.

September 1980; I've just arrived for my first class at Vancouver Community College, a hour in the New Music Ensemble, and the instructor begins by making clear what the New Music Ensemble is all about by playing some avant-garde music and asking for written comments. We're not talking far out jazz fusion, or techno-bebop, or even atonal stuff; we're talking white noise and electronic garbage and extreme minimalism; far beyond the concept of music as tones and rhythms and instruments that we're all familiar with. The ability to listen with an open mind appears to be the main requirement. The following Monday, our numbers are trimmed 50% and we begin working on several "pieces". It turns out "new music" is like volleyball: interesting to get into but difficult to really appreciate as a spectator. Eventually I make a good decision when it comes time to pick a modern avant-garde technique and write something for the group. I hit upon a joke made by the instructor about the number of guitarists we have and create an operetta called "Spanish Wedding," which uses a small portion of things I've absorbed (such as: chords do not have to be euphonic; indeed it would be better if they weren't...), plus a large dollop of humour and satire. The instructor and the musicians, despite that the music has obviously been put together in a hurried evening, are all quite pleased with the piece. "Polish the rough spots," says the instructor to me later, "and we could perform this; it has interesting ideas, and the underlying humour is a wonderful element."

Fourteen years ago I was too serious to realize that he was not putting me on.

Later in the first week I have my first hour in Composition class, and the instructor asks what our motives are for enrolling. I'm first to respond, and I say that I enjoyed arranging and composing short pieces for small groups in high school, and would like to learn more about the craft of composing. I add that I'd think about composing or arranging some pieces for myself to play on my clarinet, and this gets a response. "The Western music tradition," says the instructor, "is the composer and the performer being separate entities; not always true, but most often so. The composer creates the music; the performers interpret it. It's probably best not to start out with the premise that you'll compose things for yourself to play."

Fourteen years ago I didn't agree and I still don't. Yes, in 1980 I knew so little about modern music that it was probably best to shoot that notion down. But the concepts of creator-composer, and performer-interpreter is just not accurate. In almost every form of music, a composer has a major influence over the interpretation of his music (until he dies, by which time his views are hopefully well-known, or his music dies with him). There are very few cases of orchestra conductors suddenly deciding to take the second movement forty beats a minute faster, or to throw in a sudden pause right here because it feels right. But I've heard dozens of stories about composers being consulted about their music by performers and conductors. Outside the classical scene, of course, this century has seen a huge increase in the number of composers who perform their own music, in jazz, and pop, and folk, and other styles. Even within modern classical music we have composers such as Philip Glass who perform their own works.

So what I've always wanted from my limited musical training is a chance at both worlds: the composing/arranging creativity, and the performance excitement. But you can't just walk up to a band and say here's an arrangement I think would sound good, let me be the soloist. The music world slots composers and arrangers into one slot, and performers into another. To escape this and embrace both, you need to be incredibly talented, or you need to find something that will amplify the talent you have. For the past dozen or so years, I've known that computers could do this, but not within my financial range. Now I have some stuff that's made tomorrow night possible, which for me is a real opportunity. My equipment is poor, my talent is average, but my computer might be able to disguise this.

In 1984 I bought a Commodore 64. For music purposes, the 64 was far ahead of other machines in terms of what you get for what you pay. PC's were more expensive, and limited in sound possibilities unless you forked out huge quantities for special sound peripherals. The newly introduced Macintosh was similar, although I think the basic 1984 Mac had similar sound capabilities to the 64. The 64 was able to produce three simultaneous notes, and I found a program that allowed me to avoid the endless numbers involved in the programming. With only three-note chords as a maximum, I condensed scores like Readers Digest condenses books. Eventually I produced barely presentable accompaniment to some simple classical pieces, but not much else. The time involved was huge, and the brain power involved in figuring out which notes to include and which to discard was probably good mental exercise, but tedious and exhausting.

In the mid-to-late eighties, I read articles about the things possible with MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface). MIDI began in 1983 when synthesizer makers met to standardize the codes sent by their instruments. (Up until that time, synths of different brands could not communicate without a middleman to translate the codes.) By the mid-eighties, computers were being used to drive bands of synthesizers, and someone on a PC could get a basic MIDI system installed for about \$1500. Commodore and Atari introduced new computers designed to be MIDI compatible, but the market share was small and they flopped. In the early 90's, sound cards (add-on modules that allowed compatible software to send MIDI notes to speakers instead of basic beeps to the simple computer speaker) became a popular addition to PCs. Today, with multimedia the latest buzz word in computing, the difference between the high-end sound cards and the synth-driver modules is smaller than ever.

The signals originally intended to be passed back and forth between synthesizers can also be collected and stored on computers. Modern computers are fast enough to be able to read the lists of MIDI directions and translate them into notes in real time, even if the music goes at blinding speeds. The controlling program is called a sequencer: it allows the user to enter notes from a synth, and collects them in a file. Like a word processor, it allows you to move passages around, transpose from one key to another, and it gives you a mixer so that you can separate parts into tracks, and specify instrument, volume, reverb, stereo positioning, and other options for each track separately. Modern sequencers allow you to print your music in standard notation, and quantize the incoming notes to fit into the beats. (MIDI divides a beat into 96 or, more often, 120 "ticks;" quantizing changes notes so that a quarter note will last 30 ticks and not 31 or 29.) And if you are really concerned with the fine details, you can edit the list of MIDI events directly.

My sound card is two years old, a senior citizen in the PC world, my speakers are battery-powered minis, and my computer is a mere 386. But given a lot of time, I found I could produce some decent arrangements with it. The problem of limited simultaneous notes is diminished: my card can handle about eight notes at a time before it begins to pick and choose (it depends upon the selected instruments; some take more memory than others) between them. The problem of note entry is diminished because I can "play" them into the machine. I don't own a synthesizer, but I do have a cheap-but-useful MIDI-compatible saxophone which works. This is advantageous because I don't play piano very well, but my saxophone technique (it helps when the wind required is more like that of a whistle than a real sax) is pretty good: I'd say about halfway between Kenny G and Bill Clinton...

The problem is the time required. You need to have a mind like Mozart (who simultaneously wrote symphonies, ate dinner, and conversed with guests) to be able to enter a piece one part at a time. Either that or you need to write out all the accompanying parts on manuscript paper and then play them into the machine one by one, which not only takes time but reduces the computer's role to that of recorder. Until two weeks ago, I'd spend the occasional odd hour playing jazz solos over some simple blues or fusion-style accompaniments I'd laboriously created, and I had a few long term musical projects laying around on my hard drive. But it seemed clear that it had reached its limit.

Based upon a review I read, I bought a program just following my birthday in early December. Took it home, read a bit of the manual, set it up, and with about 30 minutes of consideration filled the main screen with this:

```
[ 1]G      G/B      [ 2]Gdim/C#  Gdim/Bb [ 3]Am7/C   Am7      [ 4]D7
[ 5]G6     [ 6]Dm6     [ 7]Am      [ 8]
[ 9]Am/E   [10]D7     [11]G      G/F#     [12]Em     Em/D
[13]A7sus/C# [14]A6     [15]C6/G   Am7/E    [16]D7/Eb  D7
[17]G     G/B      [18]Gdim/C# Gdim/Bb [19]Am7/C   Am7      [20]D7
[21]G6     [22]Dm6/A   Dm6/G#    [23]Am     [24]
[25]Am9    Am7/E     [26]Adim/D# [27]G/D   G/B      [28]E7/G#  E7
[29]Am/C   Am/B     [30]CMaj7/A Ebdim/G# [31]G      [32]CMaj7  D9
[33]G69
```

I told the computer that the main chorus was from bar 1 to bar 32, with a two bar ending to follow three choruses. Then I selected "Pop Ballad" style, and pressed play. I waited fifteen seconds watching a progress bar fill a rectangle, then a piano/bass/guitar/drums accompaniment to "I'll Be Home For Christmas" came crooning out of my sound card. By the second chorus I had recovered from the shock enough to grab the sax and play along.

I've never, ever, seen a computer program that lives up to its title as much as this one does: it's called Band-In-A-Box. You enter chord progressions, tell the machine which bars to play how often, select a style, and press play—and it does! It comes with over 50 different styles, and 250 songs. Many of the songs included are examples of the various styles, but there are also great versions of tunes such as "As Time Goes By," "When I Fall In Love," even "Sweet Georgia Brown" and "Havenigala" (that's how the computer spells it: don't blame me!). The more advanced your equipment, the better the backup musician(s) sound(s).

How does it do all this? Band-In-A-Box creator Peter Gannon simply had a computer do what musicians do. In the short construction phase that precedes the actual playing of a song after the play button is pressed, each instrument reads each chord,

checks how long it lasts, and looks in its library of possible patterns for that duration and the selected style, and chooses one at random from those that are appropriate. Since there is an element of randomness involved, each accompaniment is slightly different. A typical 4-beat bass pattern in a disco style might have eight notes on the chord tonic in octaves; a funk style might have it slap together a syncopated lick. A piano or guitar pattern might arpeggiate or syncopate the chord, or even embellish or "push" (make a chord change an eighth or sixteenth early) the chord. A drum pattern will depend more on the bar number (deviating a bit from the norm every fourth bar) than the chord, but usually will remain mostly the same throughout. The end result is that the MIDI file for a song might be 150,000 bytes or so, but the actual song file might be only 2,000 bytes and the style file might be 12,000 bytes at the most. The 150,000 byte MIDI file is created by the program only when the play button is pressed, and discarded if not needed.

Options are nearly unlimited. You can add a melody to the accompaniment produced; you can even add lyrics. All parts can be printed out, or the entire file can be converted to a MIDI file you can edit with a sequencer program. You can change instruments within a style (have the piano part played by a vibraphone or a jazz organ, for example), and even create your own styles. The chord progression shown above is a little more jazzed up than a book version of "I'll be Home for Christmas," but the program can handle chords so complicated (example: C7sus#11b13) I'm not even sure what actual notes comprise some of them! You can take a solo using the MIDI thru function, where your instrument sends notes to the machine and they come out the speakers as whatever instrument you wish. You can even use your computer keyboard as a MIDI-thru instrument, and the program makes it hard to sound bad, by restricting the keys in the row above the space bar to chord tones, and the keys in the next row above as passing tones. You can harmonize the melody (or a MIDI thru-solo) in hundreds of different possible combinations: for example I can play the melody on the MIDI sax and have it come out, instantly, as five part close harmony, as trumpets or violins or whatever. I should mention that playing a wind-driven synth and having xylophone harmonies come out the speakers makes me begin to hallucinate...

Let you argue that there isn't very much creativity in all this, let me briefly describe what I've accumulated from scratch in ten days as possible showstoppers for tomorrow night:

- Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas, accompanied in Caribbean style with steel drums and bongos
- Santa Claus is Coming To Town (in Bossa Nova)
- A Jazz Waltz We Three Kings, or, one better, a 5/4 version in the Dave Brubeck/Paul Desmond style (I call this "We FIVE Kings")
- The Boney M Reggae Version of Hark The Herald Angels Sing
- A Eurodisco Rudolph, with overdriven guitars and arpeggiated synthesizer chords in the piano part
- A pretty standard version of Sleigh Ride; done by meticulous use of chord pushes and shots (full band plays the current chord and stops)
- Jingle Bells in seven beats to a bar, with chromatic key changes throughout in fusion style
- two dozen other carols, in less outlandish styles.
- a few favorite non-Christmas tunes, plus a few dozen that came with the software

And in the long term, there is the possibility for even greater creativity, as I create new styles, export several different versions of accompaniment to a MIDI-file and pick and choose among them for the best mixes, and upgrade my equipment. The age of the one-man band is returning!

You'll read this and come away with the impression that all I've gained is a boost of confidence. Well, I've reread it and have come away with the impression that this is precisely what I've been looking for.

(Band-In-A-Box, by PG Music Inc., is available for DOS, Windows 3.1, Macintosh, and Amiga. Most music stores that sell music software will carry it; few software stores carry much music software: the PC version, DOS and Windows versions included, costs about \$60 US.)

(18 December; 3:30 AM) AFTERWORD: So how'd it go? Quite well! The bridge club was a perfect place to try it all out; not many people know a lot about music: one could play horribly and get away with it. Actually, I do know of a good number of musical bridge players, but somehow none showed up that night, which is a blessing or a bit unfortunate depending on the point of view you take... Also, I set up in the very back of the side room, so that people who were interested could sit closer and people who weren't could get away and just hear it in the distant background. I wanted to lead off with a real knockout of a tune, but smartly realized that I probably wouldn't settle in until after three songs or so, so I led off with the slow stuff, a little nervously at first. Two songs in, during the middle chorus of The Christmas Song (you know it: chestnuts roasting on an open fire, and all that...) I abandoned the melody altogether and improvised a solo that wowed me: the solos I'd played at home just didn't compare. Fired with adrenalin-based confidence, I loaded up Sleigh Ride, and the difficult passages just oozed by; the whole thing seemed too slow! Rudolph, in Eurodisco style threw a few of the older folks in the crowd, until the opening chords died away and the melody became familiar, then they began singing along. After a slow Silver Bells, I mischievously tried out the Jingle Bells arrangement. If I'd been really evil

I'd have dared then to sing along, which would have been funny with chromatic key changes (some up, some down) every sixteen bars (and fake ones using modulating chords resolving back into the same key every eight bars...), plus a crazy seven-beat rhythm formed by dropping a beat from every even numbered bar and shifting everything in those bars back an eighth note. At this, a few people began to drift towards me, apparently aware that, musically, something odd was going on, but they couldn't place it. I finished with Good King Wenceslas, turning a few heads by blowing silent sax notes and getting vibraphone harmonies from the speakers, took a break and prepared to answer some questions.

"What IS that?" was the first question, and to my surprise I found myself answering all kinds of trivial questions about the \$30 MIDI-sax that I'd been playing. From my point of view, my playing of the melody was the easiest part of the whole show: the difficult part was in setting all the software up so that the melody would be adequately backed up. Eventually people got close enough to see the screen showing chords and a small piano keyboard (whose keys are covered with dots of different colours—piano blue, bass green, etc.—as a piece plays), and they assumed I was reading the notes off that! People who know little about computers think that a word processor can make any typist into a writer, a spreadsheet can turn a high-school dropout into a tycoon, and a draw program can turn a hopeless case into a graphic artist. I got the impression that all I had shown was that anyone who played in a band in high school can now buy music software and go out and play in a club.

If you've read what I wrote two nights ago, you'll know the true answer: computers do not create talent; they only magnify it. The magnification rate depends upon two things: a person's computer aptitude, and the amount of time and effort put into the musical end. In my case, middling-to-good musical talent, multiplied by a rate based on the sum of excellent computer aptitude and just enough time and effort to do up the basics, proved to be enough to put on a more than decent show. More time will make me sound better, better sound will motivate me to develop my own musical talent further, more talent will make me sound even better: you get the optimistic picture I'm painting here...

Next time I play in public, though, I'll do a few things differently. I'll try to have as many pieces memorized beforehand, and longer extensions on the cables leading to my sax so that I can be front and centre, instead of staring at a screen while playing as though it were a music stand. Much as I hate this thought, I'll try to make a few more gestures so that it is clear that I actually am playing and not just holding the instrument while the computer plays it. I'll have more songs prepared and try to go in with a basic game plan of what I want to do when, and how. I'll try to separate myself from the audience, but I'll also pre-program a few songs for the computer to play by itself so that I can answer the questions from the curious. I'll print up some information sheets on the technology involved for those interested. (I should mention, because I plan to send a copy of this to PG Music with a cover letter, that I did bring the program box and manuals to the club, and a few people had a quick look at them.) I'll have more arrangements prepared. And if at some point I can actually make some money by playing in public (at the current level I think I'm reaching for dreamland here), I can always upgrade my equipment: better sound card (would mean more notes, and better sound quality), faster computer (probably not really required), or even something from Yamaha called a WX11, which is a \$750 version of the MIDI-sax I play now. I hate to mention it, but I'd also have to learn a few of the basic sax gestures that live performers make that always seemed so dishonestly fake to me: this might prove to be the hardest thing of all to learn...

I hope y'all had as good a Christmas as I did!

[[Pete here: Here are some tidbits following up on previous columns. Thanks, Bruce!]]

NBA EXPANSION TO CANADA: As I write, rumours are that the Vancouver Grizzlies (thank goodness they lost the original Mounties name) are going to announce that, with the help of a local drug-store chain, they've met the goal of 12,500 season tickets set by the NBA. Toronto also expects to make it (early rumours had the Toronto team about to be called the Tarantulas, but they settled on the name Raptors, which in the long run will work if they make a sequel to Jurassic Park every year for the next decade...), but Vancouver's spiffy new arena is on schedule; Toronto's still looking for a site and will play in the Skydome (can you say: binoculars?) until hell freezes over.

COMPUTER MUSIC: In the few weeks after Christmas, during which I suffered with the radioactive flu (half life: 3.5 days—two weeks after the worst point 6.25% of it is still present) that I pick up every time the Patriots make the playoffs, I played quite a lot with my computer, and celebrated being able to go out into the world again by picking up a new sound card for the machine, which allows 32 simultaneous voices, and creates those voices by using wave-table synthesis (better known as sampling) instead of FM synthesis. The difference is that FM synthesis is essentially a set of mathematical functions that assumes knowledge of basic sound waves and mixes them together to create different instrument approximations. Wave-table synthesis uses actual samples of actual instruments and records their sound waves into memory. Of course, a huge difference is that the new card (Gravis Ultrasound MAX) is 16-bit, allowing for 65,536 levels of fidelity in sound waves as opposed to 256 for the 8-bit card I had. I'm knocking myself out now, but haven't played in public since the Bridge Centre gig.

LUSITANIA/Gunboat Snowball Fighting ASF30

Turn Eight: Polywog All Tied Up!

WARRIOR	player	loc	segment 1	segment 2	vp	hp
Butt-Head (BH)	Mark Lew	L14	RR at SB (95,60)	RR at SB (95,24)	5	8
Droopy (DR)	Brent McKee	kit	-V8-W7-T6-S5	RR at VT* (95,88)	8	10
Duke of Xeimasia (DX)	Nathan Trent	T8	run for cover	zzzzzz zzz zz z...	11	0
Ice Root Beer (IRB)	Stephen Glasgow	G9	-19-K9-M9	RR at PW (95,23)	8	3
Kid Charlemagne (KC)	David Wang	U9	collect Di	Di at Z (70,65)	15	3
Polywog (PW)	Rich Irving	P10	Di at Z (75,86)	collect Di	13	1
Señor Beavis (SB)	Steven McKinnon	M13	Di at PW (60,66)	collect Di	9	2
Slushball (SL)	Lance Anderson	E3	RR at T (95,82)	-E3-G3-I3-K3-L2	7	6
Thing (T)	Mark Weseman	H6	nmr	nmr	5	3
Vapor Trail (V)	Phil Reynolds	R6	collect Di	Di at PW (65,32)	12	5
Zonk (Z)	Bill Wordelmann	S9	collect Di	Di at KC (70,49)	15	7

Weather roll = 54. * marks conditional orders.

Deadline for Endgame Statements is May 27.

Segment One: The Duke of Xeimasia is forced to run inside to dry off. Butt-Head takes a point off of Beavis; Kid Charlemagne, Vapor Trail and Zonk are all furiously packing Dirigibles, hoping beyond hope that Polywog is unable to connect with his last shot. Señor Beavis does his part, hurling (heh, I said 'hurl') his Di at 'Wog but without success. Droopy runs out but hides in the SnowFort; Ice Root Beer slide in close for a shot at Wog. All eyes turn to Polywog, then, as he winds up and delivers—*high and wide at Zonk!* He's missed, folks!

Segment Two: ...and now the payback comes. IRB (Rattler) and VT (Dirigible) both blast the 'Wog. Butt-Head takes another point off of Beavis, while Droopy nails Vapor Trail. Slushball is headed south and others are packing ammo, but their preparations are in vain: Zonk and KC heave their monster-truck weapons at each other, and both hit! They each reach 15 victory points, and *tie for the win!*

Beavis to Butt-Head: Are you threatening me?

Droopy to Duke of Xeimasia: Thank you very much for vacating your very desirable property.

Beavis to IRB: Dude, you can't, like, bust-a-rhyme. Heh, heh. Check this out...

Beavis rhymes: Pipe. hm. Pipe. heh, heh. Pipe.

Vapor Trail to All: If this game isn't over, and Polywog isn't in the kitchen, spend

Segment 1 next turn running away from him as fast as you can!

IRB to Polliwiggle: You da man!

Polywog to Rooty: Hey, I ain't a frog, yet! Heck, I'm not even a tadpole.

Droopy to Wog: I dood the hot chocolate thing.

Beavis to Fearless: Heh. You said, "Virg..." heh, heh, heh.

Wog to SM: Whew! That was a close one last time!

IRB to Beavis & Butthead: Can you boys get playin' with your weenies, play snowball meanies, and throw some beanies? Conk the Zonk!

Beavis to Reaper: Shut up! Heh. GWAH kicks ass. 'N' like, you suck in your own game... heh, heh, don't come over here and suck too.

Wogmeister to Snowmeister: How 'bout a water fight with water balloons and Super Soakers over the summer?

Droopy's Animated Babes of the 30's: Betty Boop and ...

Butt-Head: I'm hungry. Hey Beavis, go in the kitchen and get me some nachos.

Droopy to Butthead: Go eat yellow snow.

Droopy to Senor Beavis: And the same goes for you.

Beavis to Wog & SM: Hey! You guys have *Playboys*? Heh, heh, heh, heh! Lemme see 'em!!

Zonk to KC: I'm hoping we survive 'till the second segment... if so, may the best dirge win!

IRB to Duckie: That was a lucky potshot, dude! You shoulda come out da fort long time ago!

Vapor Trail to SM: I must have fallen asleep at some point. I thought we were playing to 20 points. Must be David Wang's fault. He jinxed me for sure.

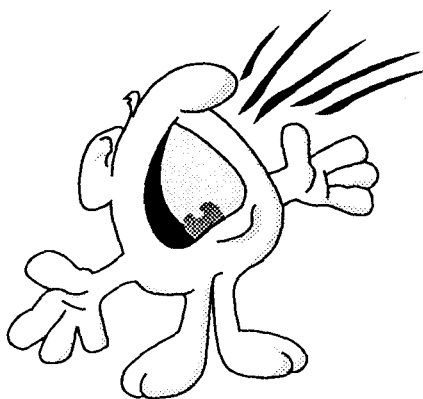
SM to VT: I checked the issue we started in—no such announcement.

Zonk to SnowManMaster: Can I do a "Dolton and dodge" in the first segment??

SM to Zonk: Yes, you could have...

Beavis to Reaper: Are you threatening me?

SM to Beavis: Sure. Why not?



A typical SnowWarrior

More Silverrun press

[[continuing from page <None>..]]

Atog to the Yard: Somebody toss a snowball my way so I can go to the Kitchen, please? Thanks!

Señor Beavis to Sickie: Heh, heh. You said 'balls.'

Fearless declaims: Life is a dream and your alarm is ringing.

HH to GM: Once again, my birthdate is 4 October, not 6 October. On 4 October 1957 (my 13th birthday), SPUTNIK ONE was launched.

SM to HH: Are you glad to see me or that a Sputnik you stuck down your pants on Segment Three?

Fearless declares: Whew, that dirigible went well. Decided to take a chance. Now where did my scythe go!?!?!

Atog to Guess Who?: AAARGH! Atog is HUNGRY! More food for Atog! AAARGH!

SM to Atog: Hey, you didn't eat the scythe, did you?...

ZP to DM: Nor will cold steel rot your teeth... but you will be visiting Señor Orthodontist soon, I theenk...

Food for Atog: Bucket o' Water—use of Bucket o' Water in sidewalk space renders it an ice patch. Movement onto ice patch causes loss of 2 segments and all weapons but one.

DOM to Glad He Are Her: Go tell the kitchen maid she wants you!

Gladiator to Dirty Ol' Man: When I get to the kitchen to dry off I won't want you showing me your chocolate boxer shorts again!

Sick 'Em to Glad Man: Proper footwear for snowball fighting is army boots, preferably with large, iron hobnails for stomping your opponents.

GG to Snowboy: If Dirty Ol' Man comes to your neighborhood, keep your belt on tight, call your Mama, and RUN!

C3PO: Oh, my, R2! Sir, if any of my parts or circuits will help repair him I'll gladly donate them.

Food for Atog: Trash Can Lid—reduce all incoming missiles' hit chances by 10%. Reduce outgoing by 5%, cannot pack Dirigibles.

Atog to SM: So when can I use my special ability?

SnowMaster to Atog: When it's your turn and your turn only.

Sick-o to Plata-puss: While doing a little historical research on the ancient Sumerians, I came across an interesting fact. While doing an anthropological dig at Ur of the Chaldees, researchers found that the citizens kept a herd of sacred white oxen for use in their religious rites. It seems that every year at the summer solstice they sacrificed a young bull and purified themselves by bathing in its blood. If so, this is the first recorded instance of the use of Ur-bull essence!

SM for the Yard: GROOOOOOOOOOOOOAAAAAANNNNNNN!

Luke Skywalker: Forget it, C3PO, he's a write-off. We're feedin' him to Atog.

Reaper to Sickie: Reaper, raper, it is all the same in the end... someone's getting off/ed. I fear my press pass is going to be revoked due to thoroughly disgusting innuendo.

SnowMaster to Reaper: You have *no* idea how low the standards are around here...

Atog to SM: Mr. SnowMaster, I yield the remainder of my press space to the gentleman from New York. Thank you.

FR sings: "Me no, no fear the reaper..." ...wait a sec... I am the reaper... oops. Just can't get that PWEI song out of my skull.

ZP to P&F: What do you mean, "nearly" as bad at this as you are? Señor, you are insulting my lack-of-pride! If I were not so busy running away from genuine threats, I'd challenge you to a mano-a-mano "vamos" contest!

Ice Man to 'Da Who: Well, no one can say you are using a sneak attack. We heard you coming three yards away!

SM to Ice: Yeah, I have to keep singing "The Lion Sleeps Tonight" over and over just to ward off the incessant sound of Guess Who blathering...

PLATEAU / 1994HJ

Fall 1904: Enough Failure To Go Around

Austria (Matthew Lahtinen): a bud-vie, a ser-tri (f al b s), a rum-bud.
 England (Tim Goodwin): f nrs s russian a gal-vie /imp/, f hel-kie (a den s),
 f stp/nc-nwy, a lvn-stp, f bal-ber.
 France (Don Williams): f mid-spa /no coast specified/, a bur-mun (a ruh s, a tyo s),
f tun-ion (f tyn s [f lyo s tyn]), f wes-run, a hol s english a den-kie /nsol/.
 Germany (James Battle): a mun ms a ber /a mun dislodged/.
 Italy (Phil Reynolds): a ven-tri, f nap & f apu s french f tyn-ion /nsol/.
 Russia (Jeff August): a gal-vie, a ukr-mos, a war-mos.
 Turkey (Dave Golias): a ag-gre (f ion s [f eas s ion]), a bul unordered, a ser s austrian a
 rum /nsul/, a sev-mos, f bla-sev.

Autumn Retreat: German a mun.

Deadline for Winter 1904/Spring 1905 is May 27.

Italy to Austria: Nothing personal, but you're the only place I can go to grow.
 Ladies and Gentlemen of Flight 1994HJ of AH Airlines, this is your Captain. I regret
 to inform you that we are headed for the Carpathian Mountains. Our chances of
 survival are slim. We hope that the resulting deaths from a crash do not spoil the rest
 of your lives. Thank you.

Italy to France: You wave as you go by. I've done enough for you already!

Austria to the Diplominati: You forgot the killer, mutant, insane Tessies that live in the
 water. (Tessie is the local Loch Ness Monster name.)

GM to Plateauians: The balance of the press is guest press by Mr. McKinnon. You
 are, of course, warned.

AssMaster to the Mouth: Actually, if it were in Italian I couldn't, and therefore would-
 n't, read it. So go ahead. In fact, why don't you just randomly slam your fingers,
 knuckles, wrists, elbow, hell, even your forehead into the keyboard. Because a) it'll
 make just as much sense as your usual press, when in English, Italian or Swahili and
 b) perhaps your forehead slamming sill render you unconscious.

\$20,000 Diplomat: "I have no life beyond press." "I write press on toilet rolls when
 taking a dump." "I asked my boss to pay me in press." Answer: things Don "the
 Dragon" Williams would say.

GM to Diplomat: I think this month the answer would be things Steven "the Slime"
 McKinnon would say.

You Know You Agree That This Is Your Fantasy: Courtney Love, chained to a pole;
 only able to move by crawling around on all fours; eating raw, un-drained meat;
 face, neck, chest, arms splattered in blood; in a light drizzle.

Hindu wish: That the life force that Future Gaughan will gain on birth is currently
 ensconced in Big Bad Williams, giving him only a few months left to literarily ter-
 rorize us.

Diplomacy Feud: Richard Dawson, "One hundred people surveyed, top six answers are
 on the board. Name something you can do with the Mouth's Press." <<Buzz>>
 Contestant, "Nothing, it's abso-fucking-lutely useless." <<Bing>> :Number One
 Answer."

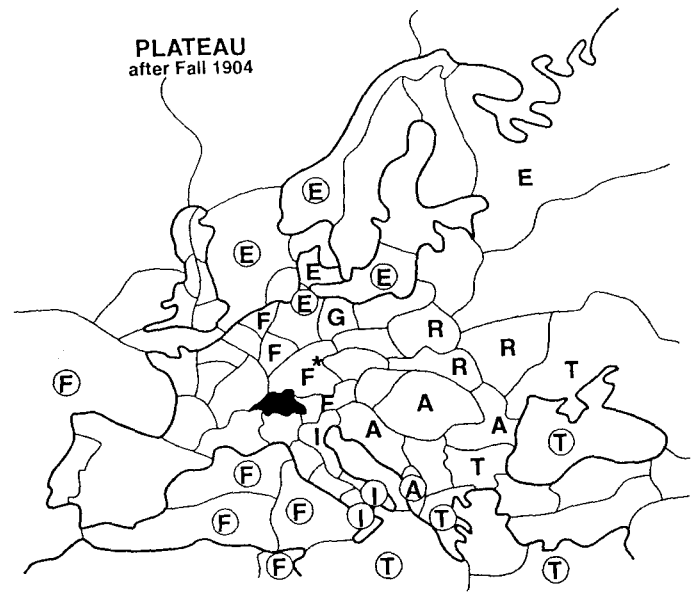
Rangers' and Astros' fan: Scab-ball!! YESS!!!

V-Turk to Russia & France: Excellent babe choices. I'd make you V.P.s in charge of
 BotM choices, except there's no such thing. I am master of all such juvenile ram-
 blings, and no one can take that away from me. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha.

Baseball Lovers: You know, I find I have opposite views from B-ball to Hockey. I only
 want to see top o'the line hockey. But I'll enjoy scabball more. And, if you really
 love baseball, wouldn't you? These will be guys who don't value the money over the
 game. If the game were the most important aspect, wouldn't these be \$ball, not
 scabball?

Wheel of Diplomacy: <<spin>> \$5,000!! "Um, I'll take a Z, Pat." Pat Sajak, "Well,
 normally you'd be shit out of luck choosing a Z. But since this category is Don "the
 verbal diarrhoeic" Williams press item, the answer is so long that there are 2,341
 Z's."

Let's Make a Dip Deal: Monty, "Well, you've won a new Lamborghini, \$17M and a
 lifetime's supply of shotgun shells. Or you could take what's behind door #1. Now,
 we wouldn't be offering you a door if there weren't something better you could have
 right? Who'd trade their stuff for the door otherwise. What do you say?" Don
 Williams, "I'll take the door, Monty, but first, I'd like to read this prepared state-



ment: Ahem. I, Don Williams, the Don Williams standing here reading from this
 piece of paper, not—" Monty, "Oh, ho, ho, Don. Wow! You win the door AS
 WELL! So (if you please shut up) congratulations!"

Albany to Valencia: Sure, Dana Delaney'll be knocking any time now, wearing a blind-
 fold in case she gets that turn-to-stone effect from any of the writing you've left lyin'
 around.

GM to All: Several much longer items are cut. Steve, that's all the one-man bashing I
 can type without being violently ill. (Same thing goes for the anti-Hurst stuff all
 over the zinc.)

VULCAN / Deviant Diplomacy

Endgame Statements

Rich Irving: I don't have to think of another rule this month??? I'm disappointed!
 Coming up with crazy, silly, surprising, or (insert adjective here) rules was the entire
 point of the game, and I have to admit I was getting close to the bottom of the barrel.
 Overall the game was a blast. Enjoyed it a lot. I congratulate Pete on his GMing and
 his victory. (GMing this game has got to be MUCH harder than winning it, even if
 you are God!) And I also thank whoever voted for the rule that allowed any Pere reader
 to submit proposals—that's what got me hooked into this game!

Greg Ellis: I was going for the exact same strategy, assuming either or both of the
 off-board centers or the Downfall map would go away and I'd hold most of the on-
 board centers. Then you eliminated the last of the on-board centers!

John Galt: Congratulations to both of you on the win. I should have seen it com-
 ing, but didn't.

Alex Simmons: Congrats (I think) on the Vulcan win. So apparently it's not true
 that god can design a game that's so complex he can't win it.

Andy York: So, Vulcan is over. I don't have an endgame statement for it.
 Congrats on the CO-WIN!!!!

Jim Burgess: Thanks, Pete, for a game that provided numeous deep belly laughs.
 As one of those who lost interest, but was proud to see memorial "white space" main-
 tained until the end; let me also say how happy I was to see the game end with both the
 appropriate winners and the appropriate attitude. Thanks to *both* of you for running
 this, thanks to Mark Lew and Steve Nicewarner especially and the players generally for
 proposing lots of fun rules, and apologies to those few who didn't take the same atti-
 tude as I did.

GM/Pete Gaughan and Cathy Gaughan (winners): Thank you, thank you, thank
 you. It was fun to have such nuttiness again, but it's also nice to be done with it and
 have some space to breathe around here.

PLATEAU / SUPPLY CENTERS held as of Winter 1904

Austria	vie	tri	bud	ser	rum	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	5/5	may build one
England	lvp	lon	edi	nwy	stp	swe	DEN	KIE	.	.	.	.	6/8	may build two
France	par	mar	bre	por	spa	bel	mun	hol	tun	.	.	.	9/9	even
Germany	ber	kie	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	2/1	remove one or even
Italy	nap	ven	rom	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	3/3	even
Russia	mos	swe	den	war	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	4/3	even
Turkey	con	ank	smy	bul	sev	gre	.	.	.	.	.	.	6/6	even

SILVERRUN/Snowball Fighting ASF31

Turn Three: Magnetic Door

WARRIOR	Player	loc	segment 1	segment 2	segment 3	new loc	vp	hp	sb-di
Atog	Wang	S1	T2-U3-V4	collect Di	Di at IS (65,08)	V4	5	1	0-0
Dirty ol' Man	Baker	R12	BB at GG (40,76) & ZP (65,81)	collect Di	run for cover	kit	6	0	0-0
Fearless Reaper	Narhi	J2	-13-H4-I5	collect Di	Di at HH (60,62)	I5	4	7	0-0
Glacial Gladiator	Brown	T12	-W9	RR at DM (95,73)	collect 2 Sb	W9	5	3	2-0
Guess Who?	McKinnon	S7	RR at IS (95,94)	collect 2 Sb	RR at IS (95,75)	S7	3	5	1-0
Haggis Hound	Andruschak	H6	RR at FR (95,15)	RR at FR (95,07)	collect Di	H6	4	8	0-1
Ice Sickle	Hurst	V6	Di at GW (55,52)	collect Di	Di at GW (65,78)	V6	9	2	2-0
Puff&Fresh Snowboy	Schultz	U1	RR at IS (90,17)	RR at IS (95,23)	collect 2 Sb	U1	6	10	2-0
Rude 'Dolf	Gardner	L10	-M11-O11-Q11	Di at DM (70,19)	-O11-M11-L10	L10	5	10	0-0
El Zorro de Plata	Kohman	U13	Di at DM (65,68)	RR at DM (95,54)	-R12, collect Sb	R12	4	3	1-0

Weather roll = 27. † = dodge. * marks conditional orders. DM is inside all next Turn.

Deadline for Turn Four is May 27.

Segment One: 'Dirty Ol' Man chortles, "Two can play at that game" as he tries to show 'em how a Bolero is done! He fires at Glacial Gladiator and El Zorro de Plata—and misses both! El Zorro does a 'two-handed chop' back at DOM, and he also misses. With Atog and Rude 'Dolf running further into the fray, the rest of the pack has more success: Guess Who? and Puff & Fresh Snowboy hit Ice Sickle, who is wiping out Guess. Fearless Reaper runs up to Haggis Hound and gets a Rattlesnake in the face for his trouble.

Segment Two: Many players pack snow—Atog a Di, 'DOM another big one,' Fearless and Ice Sickle likewise, while Guess packs regular 'balls. Puff & Fresh repeats his anti-Sickle attack; 'El Zorro follows up his earlier shot with a back-slash Rattler at Dirty,' this time hitting him. Haggis Hound and Glacial Gladiator both have easy shots (at Fearless and Dirty, respectively), and Rude finishes off Dirty ol' Man with a massive Dirigible.

Segment Three: DOM heads for the kitchen, while 'Zorro scoops up ammo left-handedly while skipping right-footedly behind the snowman.' Glacial and Puff collect Snowballs while Rude-y runs back into his empty Fort... the rest of the yard is firing away! Atog pounds Ice Sickle for a big score, Guess Who hits him for a little one; Sickle's shot at Guess is thrown off by the assault and he misses. Fearless Reaper winds up and throws at Haggis, but misses by a hair when HH bends over to collect his own big weapon.

Professor Irrelevancy to Yard: Nice marks, class... an excellent beginning! We got an extra quarter-page of press, most of it good stuff. I'm proud of you all, and I'm confident we can achieve our goal of two full quality pages of "Silverrun." (Take note, Señor Tearful Weeper: again I offer unsolicited advice. Shall you again respond with threats not backed with cojones?)

GG to Yard: If anyone still has 10 hp, I propose we all wing some slush his way.

Food for Atog: Motorola Cellular Phone—allows player to call friends in other yards and call in Artillery Support. +10 to success for artillery aimed at Hurst.

Darth Vader: Don't act so surprised, Your Highness, you weren't on any mercy mission. Several transmissions were beamed to this ship by rebel spies. I want to know what happened to the plans they sent you.

Brown to Gardner: Is there any truth to the rumor that this is a map of your backyard? No wonder you haven't been hit in two moves!

Rikko to Narhi: You'll be beggin' to have insipid Beavis Butt-Heads back after a generous dose of Rikko commentary...

Señor Beavis to FR: Hey! Is someone, like, saying my name? 'Cause, like, you know that saying, heh, heh, 'speak of the Beavis.'

Fearless crows: For this fight I will need only half my strength.

Rikko to Pete: And you tell this poor little greenhorn he's "lucky"...

Atog to Haggis Hound: "Easiest target"?! What about Fearless Reaper?

Fear Les to Hound: That haggis creature sounds suspiciously like a snipe. Happy hunting.

Haggis Hound to Fearless Reaper: Nothing personal, but you happen to be the easiest target.

Sickie to Haggis: Haggis is so awful that our state has added it to its hazardous materials list, along with limburger and lutefisk.

Sickie to Sado-Masochist: And, yes, I have eaten haggis. It's an experience one does not wish to indulge in twice!

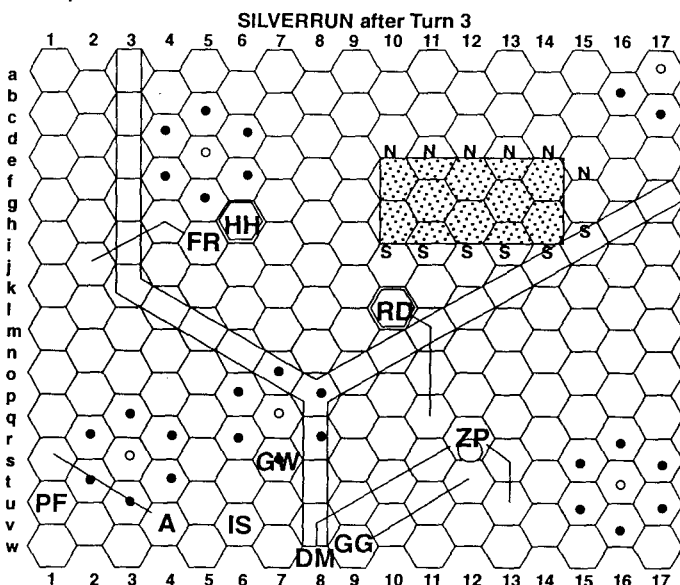
HH to RD: But does your fort have a 486/66 MPC?

Food for Atog: HH's MPC—stolen from his house by Beavis & Butt-head while the Scot was out getting drunk (surprise, surprise). This is snowball fighting, not who-has-the-most-RAM-fighting.

Señor Beavis: Heh, heh, toadies are cool. If you, like, lick 'em you get a wicked buzz.

Rikko to Pete: Ah, yes... Olsen! But I wonder which is worse: S.M.A.-toadies or Duck-toadies? It must be a case of "six of one; half-a-lunch-blown-on-the-other", eh?

Food for Atog: 1 cubic foot mini-fridge—tucked in the corner of your room, can store snowballs all summer and your mom won't throw 'em out. Then, in the middle of July, you can run over to Hurst's house and pelt the back of his head from two feet



away. Then, because you *know* he won't find it funny, you can laugh your butt off at the look on his face.

Atog to Haggis Hound: What, there's a fake Highlander? Remember, in the end, there can be only one!

Princess Leia: I confess, Lord Vader, Atog ate them.

Sickie to Gus Hooley: Now that you are closer, I see that you are both differently visaged and aromatically challenged. Allow me to correct both conditions with this Lysol-anointed Dirigible.

GG to Zorro: Yes, we *are* called by Destiny! Destiny is my mother's name and it's probably time to head for the kitchen to dry off! My Converse shoelaces are like frozen bars of iron and my cheeks are getting snowburn. (The cheeks on my *face*, Dirty Ol' Man!)

La Doña to ZP: Come a little closer, you're my kind of man and the game is so young. (p.s. I belong to the Old Man and he's not a bad man—Jose).

ZP to HH & Cathy: I wear neither skirt nor pantie (just this flamboyant faggotty cape and cute little flirty mask). I have learned the true meaning of 'machismo' by riding Diablo over rough terrain in toreador-pants... without a jockstrap even! I have *also* learned to render an exquisite falsetto with the boys' choir in Santa Fé. Frankie Valli is our alto, and we're recruiting PeeWee Herman for tenor. (Or, Steve Urkel) Bassos? We don't need no steenkin' bassos!

SM to ZP: You misspelled 'ache-ismo'. You're welcome.

Food for Atog: K-mart Blue Light Special Broom—allows you to make a sidewalk space a snowball-generating space, by brushing snow there from adjacent hex. Also, allows you to poke long handle into front wheel of Hurst's bicycle, flipping him over the handlebars, onto the ground, from which he must withstand a barrage of neighborhood laughter.

HH to All: Another month of heavy rain in Southern California, complete with mudslides and rockfalls. I love this place already.

Food for Atog: Sharp Minicam—increases base hit chance 5% after watching Hurst get whacked by snowballs from every angle and in slo-mo.

Atog to Puff & Fresh Snowboy: I'll be back! (And with ten more vps for you!)

Fearless addresses his typing critics: Hey, it is hard typing with a scythe in your hand! Sure I could put it down but one of you lowlife's would rip it off. Ever wonder why I'm only throwing RRs? A dirigible takes two hands!

[[More Silverrun press on page 9.]]

TRALFAMADORE / 1994Xm22, Youngstown XV

Oops: Sorry, I listed both 'tonga' and 'fiji' in the SC chart. They're two names for the same space and the official name is 'fiji'. Also, France should have been listed at 7 centers, Japan as 'even'.

Rules: One player asks, "I don't see in the rules that there is an automatic separation of seasons. Was this at your choice, or will they always be separated?" My choice, this time only due to the vast number of adjustments.

• Several players who must declare additional build centers did not do so with their Winter 1902 orders. Because this is a playtest, I'm going to allow them another chance, but it must be taken now (or they won't get such a build center at all). The following are all countries which may so declare; anyone marked 'late' must make their declaration now (Spring orders may be conditional on these centers):

Austria, France, Germany, United States: late

Chile, Egypt, Morocco, Transvaal: must declare by Winter 1904

Canada: alaska; England: cunene; Italy: tunisia; Mexico: baja california; Turkey: asir.

Ethiopia: has not reached 5 centers yet (has two years from reaching 5)

Autumn Retreats: Austrian f greece-albania; Canadian f norwegian-iceland; English a norway off the board; French a burgundy-gascony, f south china sea-osaka /impossible, annihilated/; U.S. f leeward islands off the board.

Winter 1902: Boatbuilding Bash

Australia Z (Doug Brown): builds f sydney, f melbourne; also has f tasmania, f new zealand, f fiji, a south australia.

Austria A (Steven McKinnon): builds a vienna; also has a ubangi, a congo, a galicia, a budapest, f albania, a serbia.

Brazil B (Charles Goetz): builds f sao paulo, f recife; also has f leeward islands, f windward islands, a british guiana, a la plata.

Canada C (Jamie McQuinn): declares Alaska a build center; builds a vancouver; also has f labrador sea, f newfoundland, a alaska, f iceland, f clyde.

Chile L (John Bryden): builds f santiago; also has f south pacific, f antofagasta, a colombia, a peru.

China X (John Galt): even; has a peking, a kansu.

Egypt Y (Daniel Wartko): builds f cairo; also has f eastern med, a asmara, f red sea, a anglo-egyptian sudan.

England E (Matthew Lahtinen): declares cunene as a build center, builds f liverpool, f edinburgh; also has f north atlantic, f norwegian sea, f north sea, f english channel, f cambodia, f johore, a namaland.

Ethiopia P (Michael Quist): even; has a mogadiscio, a wabi, a uganda, a kenya.

France F (J.R. Baker): even; has f cape verde, a gold coast, f saigon, a brest, a paris, f portugal, a gascony.

Germany G (Ward Narhi): even; has a zaire, a dar es salaam, a burgundy, a belgium, f holland, a denmark, f helgoland.

India H (David Schlosser): builds f madras; also has a delhi, a sikang, a calcutta, f gulf of aden, a vietnam, f somali sea.

Italy I (Doug Kent): declares tunisia as a build center, builds f tunisia, also has f tyrrhenian, f ionian, f western med, a marseilles, a corsica.

Japan J (Jim Bailey): even, has f south china sea, f philippines, f east china sea, f philippines sea, f northwest pacific, f canton.

Mexico M (Vince Springer): declares baja california as a build center; builds f baja california, f guadalajara; also has a norfolk, f gulf of mexico, f mid-pacific, a nicaragua, a colorado, f caribbean.

Morocco O (Rich Irving—note COA in roster): builds f casablanca; also has f spain/sc, a mauritania, a senegal, a british nigeria.

Netherlands East Indies N (Brad Wilson): even; has f malay sea, f palembang, f banda sea, a brunci, f celebes sea, a hollandia.

Russia R (Alex Simmons): builds a moscow, a omsk, f st. petersburg/nc (one build waived); also has a rumania, f sevastopol, a warsaw, a rumania, a norway, f sweden, a outer mongolia, a sinkiang, a manchuria, f yellow sea.

Transvaal V (Eben Kurtzman): builds f durban; also has f mozambique channel, a tanganyika, a katanga, a barotseland.

Turkey T (Matt Heppe): declares asir a build center, builds f smyrna, a baghdad; also has a iran, a hejal, a asir, a constantinople, f syria, a greece, f aegean.

United States U (Martin Johnson): even; has f northeast pacific, f sargasso sea, f puerto rico, f micronesia.

Steve Nicewarner's 'farewell' is in the letter column.

Deadline for Spring 1903 is May 27.

Brazil to Egypt: Pharaoh, in answer to your question, "How does one turn a rank in sand?" I offer this suggestion: first, use your armies to kill as many of your enemies as possible, letting their blood soak the sand; second, mix well with the feet of your advancing forces; then let mixture bake in the glaring sun. Viola! Instant cement. Your armies will never again have to get mired in the sand. ...pardon? You built a fleet this turn?! I am at a loss then to provide a suggestion...

Chile to Europe: Perhaps if you fellows were to tie each others shoe laces together you could trip over yourselves more effectively in your bid to help Russia.

Australia to Chile: First one to Cape Colony gets it!

Austria to Austr-al-ia: Australia! Australia! Australia! We love you! Amen.

Screenwriter to GM: Now that we've got enough of a script to present to a studio (or at least more script than was presented for the *Brady Bunch Movie*), who should we get to direct this epic: Spielberg, Tarantino, Zemeckis? What about starring as Rick: Costner, Kilmer, Cruise?? And as Ilse: Foster, Ryder, Streep???

Austria to Bailey-san: Are you just listening to "Live Through This", or do you have other stuff? We here in Austria would relish a sample of babes. We recently commissioned some Veruca Salt and some re-issued Sarah McL., but mostly it's been a month of new Metal.

Egypt to U.S.: Boy, did you get screwed. Wow.

USA to Mexico: Gee Vince, just because you screwed me doesn't mean you don't have to write back anymore!

Brazil to Mexico: a pesky insect...? You suggest that your invasion of your kind and noble neighbor was instigated by me? Amazing. Do you really think that anyone is going to buy that? Even if it is the case, and I am indeed then a bug, what does that make you, the mighty Mexican able to be ordered around by a bug?

Mexico to Canada: Snicker snicker giggle.....

Australia to Mexico: One down, three more American continent stabs to go!

Brazil to Canada: Glad to have you off the fence.

English Navy to Canadian Navy: You have learned well. But sailing fighting boats and battleships are two different things.

Turkey to Chile: In light of unexpected Mexican maneuvers I propose moving to plan B.

USA to Western Hemisphere: Thanks to all of you for offering your support in my defense. I know I couldn't recover from this without you guys, and I hate to waste the only opportunity I'm likely to ever have in a 21 player variant!

A-Kaiser to G-Kaiser: You're tellin' me with that ring stuff. Why I hear the Sultan has one through his—

Censor to A-Kaiser: Watch it! *[note: not press by GM]*

Brazil to Transvaal: Good to hear from you. I am very glad that you want to maintain our current agreement. I will gladly continue to keep up my end. Hope you will do the same. So many other interesting places in the world to visit. As to your rather interesting proposals... hhhmmmm.

The World's Biggest Asshole: Eric Cantona.

Turkey to Transvaal: Just a brief note to let you know that there is an English Army maneuvering in your rear area. I wasn't sure if you had noticed.

Australia to Transvaal: Let's divide the Southern Hemisphere. And yes, La Plata can be yours.

Germany to AH: Any chance I get Basoko this time around?

A-Kaiser's Wife to Mrs. G-Kaiser: Ok, you can have the dot you supported Russia into, okay?

Egypt to Russia's neighbors: Four builds? Do you all have a death-wish?

Austria Wails: You can call me crazy. You can call me wrong. Cause I was born a liar. Albatross, fly on.

Egypt to India: Egyptian proverb, "He who sits on the fence too long gets slivers in his butt."

Germany extolls best New Industrial Album: In case anyone else likes this sort of music, *Leather Strip*, *Double or Nothing* is pretty good stuff.

Shameless Plugz: Kyuss, *Sky Valley*; Corrosion of Confomity, *Deliverance*, Veruca Salt, *American Thighs*; Bush, *Sixteen Stone*.

Pharaoh to Pope: Tempora mutantur, et nos mutamur in illis.

German to New Italian: Welcome! Glad to see you in Marseilles. Now you and Morocco should determine who gets what in Iberia. All I want is Paris. Any help would be appreciated. Sorry about the non-chalant attitude towards you France.

Austria's Film o'the Month: *Dreamlover*.

Brazil to Chile: I agree.

Great Moments in Babeousness, Part VI: first time Cpt. Janeway appeared on screen.

V-Turk's Babes o'the Moment (subtitled: Where's My Vexvelt?!): Judy Davis, Kate Mulgrew, Diane Venora.

Germany to Japan/Austria: Cannot join you on the C. Love bandwagon. I still think the only reason we has gotten anywhere is because of that Nirvana guy. That "Doll Parts" song just annoys me although I will admit to the lyrics being pretty decent.

Element o'Babeousness: blood splatters.

Russia to Pete: Is it okay if a disguise my rules question using a different part of the map so no one knows who is asking it? For example, suppose a really annoying Turkish units is attacking an innocent Russian Trading Fleet in the Windward Isles, and the wind was blowing southeast ...

Turkey to Russia: I don't think they're buying it.

Austria replies: No, but your face is.

*ST:V update: Apparently the word "Island" will be added to the title next season. There are rumors about a new first mate and some other crew changes ...

Russia to Germany: ST:Vger?! Excuse me, I seem to be choking on a piece of holographic lung.

GM to Russia: Excellent! Nice turn of phrase, sir.

Austria to Germany: Did you say "Voyager"... don't get me started.

X-23 / 1994IC

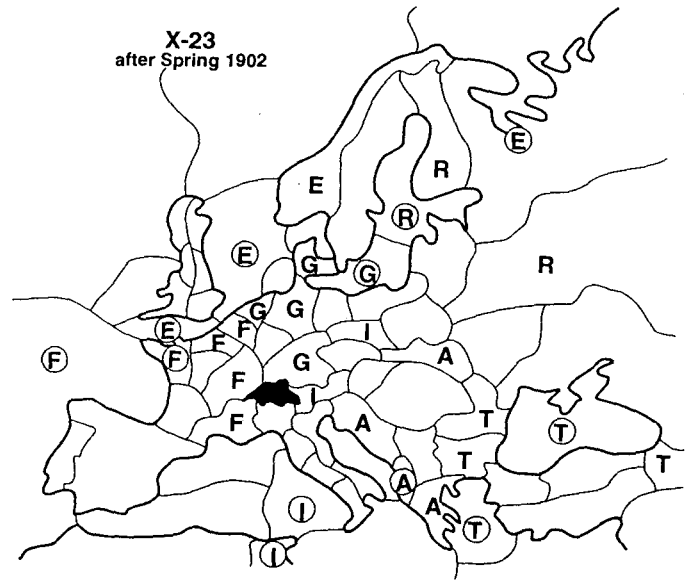
Spring 1902

- Austria (Vince Springer): a bud-tri, a vie-gal, f tri-alb, a ser-gre.
- England (Ward Narhi): f lon-eng, f bar-stp (a nwy s [f nts s nwy]).
- France (Lance Anderson): a mar-bur (a bel s), a par-pic, a spa-mar, f por-mid (f bre s).
- Germany (Jim Bailey): a mun h (a kie s), a hol h, f bal unordered, a den-swe (f bot s /nsu/).
- Italy (Jim Robertson): f nap-tyn, f tun unordered, a boh-sil, a tyo-sil /impossible/.
- Russia (Stan Johnson): f stp/nc-nwy /annihilated/ (a fin s), f bot-swe, a sev-mos.
- Turkey (Doug Brown): a smy-arm (f bla s), f con-aeg, a rum ms a bul.

Deadline for Fall 1902 is May 27.

Russia to World: Talk to me, fellows!
 Turkey to Russia: Considering you have one army to oppose my three that could come your way, your threats are not exactly the best diplomatic strategy.
 Rome (AP): Rumors continued to circulate throughout the capital this week about the health of King Vittorio-Emmanuelle III. Despite official statements refuting such rumors, it remains a fact that the king has not been seen in public in a number of weeks and in his last few public appearances he appeared confused and disoriented.
 "The king is enjoying his annual holiday," said a palace spokesperson, "with a skiing trip at his lodge in the Italian Alps. His mental and physical health and condition are as astute as they've always been." Nonetheless, a source close to the king reports that the king is shut off from all but his closest advisors — who continue to run a shadow government — and passes his days listening to Italian operas.
 And while Nero fiddles, Rome burns.

England to AH: Yes, it is a small bed but it is cozy.
 GM to England: It *would* be cozy if you have to share it.
 Constantinople to Concord, or Turkey to GM: Again, I graciously accept any concession proposals to me!
 England to Frenchie: My foray into the channel should not be interpreted as an act of antagonism, merely scouting. Note I did not support the action.
 France to Turkey: You'd better check your addition again. I grew just as much as my neighbors did. I believe that you are in a similar position when compared to R & A/H. Pot calls kettle black...
 GM to France: ...and gets a busy signal...
 AH to World: Just don't know who to trust!?!
 Pommie to Deutchlander: Either you are in Sweden or I'm in St Petes. If you gained, please help me out by cutting possible supports. Otherwise I will help you out. Agreed?
 Dusseldorf Dossier: The recent strike at GT&T and the German Postal Service has put a serious crimp in the war effort. As one ranking official in the government said, "The communication situation is terrible. Our forces don't know what to do, so



most of them are standing around in the field doing nothing. As for our allies, I don't even know if we have any anymore."
 England to Turk: Gutless?!? I notice you courageously decided to take on the oh so powerful Russian who is without allies. You, sir, are bravery incarnate.
 Italy to England: Eel impression?!
 GM to Italy: Sure. You lay your eel out on a piece of wax paper...
 Turkey to Italy: Written English is not *that* hard to master. Put pen to paper once in a while and tell me your plans.

X-23 / SUPPLY CENTERS held as of Winter 1901 (Greece is neutral)										
Austria	vie	tri	bud	ser	.	.	.	.	.	4
England	lvp	lon	edi	nwy	.	.	.	.	.	4
France	par	mar	bre	spa	mar	bel	.	.	.	6
Germany	mun	kie	ber	den	hol	.	.	.	.	5
Italy	nap	ven	rom	tun	.	.	.	.	.	4
Russia	stp	mos	war	sev	.	.	.	.	.	4
Turkey	con	ank	smy	bul	rum	.	.	.	.	5

VEXVELT / 1992R

Whoops! Not So Fast!

My apologies! It was no editorial commentary that I left this game out last time—mere human error. A separate adjudication was sent to the players.
 T win: EFT no. E/T draw: E yes, FT no. EFT draw: EF yes, T no.
 FYI, in *Perelandra*, no vote received = no.
 Winter 1912: England builds a lon, a edi.

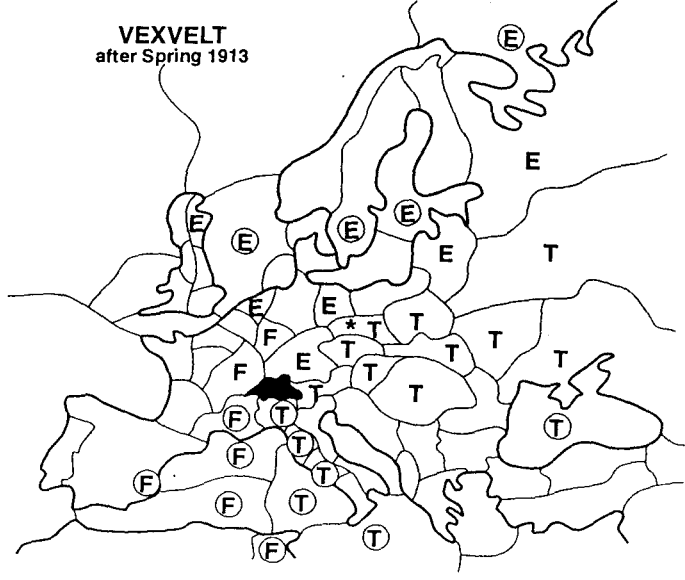
Spring 1913: Little Feat

- England (Lance Anderson): a lon-hol (f nts c), a edi unordered, a mun h (a sil s /dislodged/, a ber s), a lvn ms a stp, f bot s lvn, f bar unordered, f swe-bal.
- France (Tom Hurst): a ruh & a bur s english a mun, f tun ms f wes, f lvo ms f mar, f spa/sc s lyo.
- Turkey (Steve McKinnon): a war-sil (a gal s, a boh s [a vie s boh]), a ukr-war, a tyo-mun, f rus-lyo (f pie s), f tyn-tun (f ion s), f rom-tyn, a rum-ukr (a mos s [a sev s mos]), a bud supports its large family, f bla tells Hurst jokes.

Summer Retreat: English a sil.

Deadline for Fall 1913 is May 27.

England to Turkey: I'll miss your observations of female beauty as you've made some excellent choices that I heartily agree with.
 Turkey sent this note: Glad to see Vexvelt still exists. I thought perhaps the neighbouring planet had exploded, rendering Vexvelt a dead planet for all eternity.
 Fleet Black Sea: Why did the chicken cross the road?
 Fleet Black Sea: To get away from Hurst.



VEXVELT / SUPPLY CENTERS held as of Winter 1912																	
England	lvp	lon	edi	hol	kie	den	mun	ber	nwy	stp	swe	.	.	.	.	11
France	par	mar	bre	spa	por	bel	tun	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	7
Turkey	con	ank	smy	bul	gre	tri	ser	sev	nap	bud	rom	rum	ven	vie	war	mos	16

BARSOOM / 1993HI

Autumn Retreat: French a tyo-ven.

Fall 1906: Takedown, Breakdown

England (Jim Grose): a nwy-den (f nts c), a fin h, f wes s french f tyn-tun, a den-ber (f bal c), f bar h.

France (Paul Rauterberg): f lyo-spa/sc, f tyn-tun, a mun-ber (a kie s [a ruh s kie]), a ven-tyo, a bur-bel, a mar-pie.

Italy (Dave Golias): f adr-ion (f run s /dislodged/, f nap s [a rom s nap]).

Russia (Nelson Heintzman): nmr. a arm, a ukr, a mos, f ber /dislodged/, a war all u.

Turkey (Tom Johnston): f eas s italian f adr-ion, a con-ank, f bla-sev, f alb-gre, f gre-aeg, f aeg-smy, a tyo h (a vie s, a tri s), a gal-ukr.

Autumn Retreats: Italian f tun; Russia f ber.

Would Nathan Trent please stand by for Russia?

Deadline for Winter 1906/Spring 1907 is May 27.

England to Italy: Russia responded. You didn't. Compare your resulting situations.

England to Russia: As promised, while I relieved your of Ber, StP is still yours.

GM to England: I'm curious whether you regret that philanthropy now.

Paris to London: You know, with Russia as an ally, you don't need me. He could slow

Turkey, while you'd support yourself to Kiel and move to Bel (or Hel). Fleet WMed to Mid could catch me with Bre and/or Portugal wide open.

Sigh. We can't have that happen, eh?

GM to Paris: With Russia as an ally, England needs just about anyone.

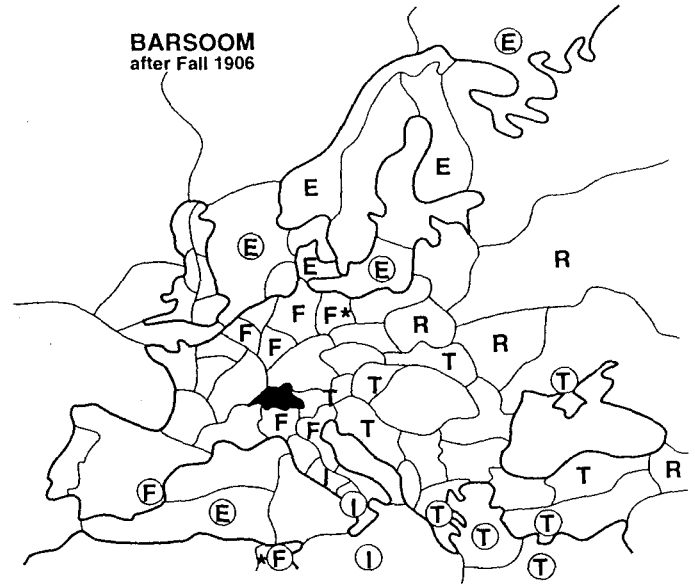
England to France: Time to teach Turkey a 'ing or two.

GM to England: Take your time; he'll be around a while yet.

Brest to Moscow: If you're supposed to be a "good guy," why aren't I hearing from you?

GM to Moscow: I could ask the same question!

England to Turkey: I urged you earlier to attack Sev. Now look at the mess you're in.



BARSOOM / SUPPLY CENTERS held as of Winter 1906													
England	lvp	lon	edi	nwy	swe	spa	den	.	.	.	.	7/6	must remove one
France	par	mar	por	bel	hol	bre	mun	kie	BER	TUN	SPA	VEN	8/12 may build three
Italy	nap	ven	rom	rum	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	4/2 remove one or two
Russia	stp	mos	war	ser	ber	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	5/3 remove one or two
Turkey	con	ank	smv	gre	ser	bul	rum	bud	tri	vie	SEV	.	10/11 may build one

GIEDI PRIME / SUPPLY CENTERS held as of Winter 1912																
Germany	kie	ber	hol	den	swe	mun	bel	stp	nwy	war	.	.	.	.	10	
Italy	rom	ven	tun	mar	spa	bre	par	por	bud	edi	lvp	vie	tri	lon	nap	15
Russia	mos	sev	ser	rum	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	4
Turkey	con	ank	smv	bul	gre	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	5

GIEDI PRIME / 1992AK

Autumn Retreats: Italian f aeg-ion; Russian a war orb; Turkish f nap-ion. Both fleets are annihilated.

G/I draw: GI yes, T no, R nvr.

Winter 1912: Germany builds a mun, a kie; Italy builds a ven (plays short due to lack of room); Russia builds a mos; Turkey builds f con.

Spring 1913: Roman Troops Fortify Londinium

Germany (Lance Anderson): a mun-bur /dislodged/ (a bel s /dislodged/), a sil-mun, a kie-ruh, a nwy-den (f ska c), f hel unordered, a war-mos (a stp s), a pru-war.

Italy (Hugh Magen): a pic-bel (f eng s), f yor-nts (f lon s), a tyo-mun (a bur s), a ven-apu, f nap-ion (f tyn s), f rom-nap, a bud h (a tri s, a vie s).

Russia (Greg Ellis): a ser-rum, a rum-sev, a mos-war (a gal s).

Turkey (Andy York): f con-aeg, f aeg-gre, a gre-ser (a bul s), f smy-cas.

Summer Retreats: German a mun, a bel.

Deadline for Fall 1913 is May 27.

From Italy:

Dear fellow geidi primers,

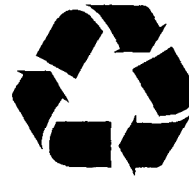
as we see our numbers dwindle due to movements on the board, i must also announce my impending departure. i am planning to go traveling overseas for almost 3 months and will be unable to submit orders. therefore, the game will either come to a close soon or pete will make a call to the poetry shelf for a standby.

i am open to suggestions for possible endgame scenarios; however, a 4 way draw does not seem equitable. please email me any suggestions.

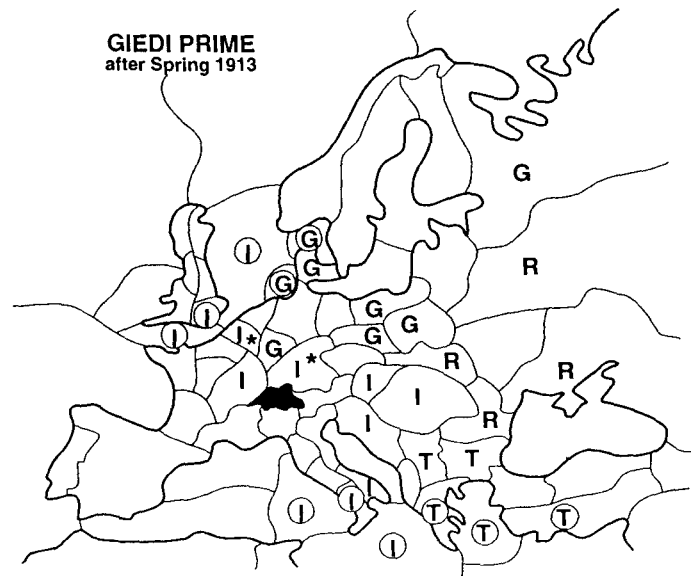
i will be sending in orders for this winter/spring move, and for the following fall move as well, but that will probably be it until another game a few months down the road.....hugh magen

Germany to Italy: I don't intend to let you get the win off of me. I urge you to stick with the two way as agreed. Semper Paratus!

GM to Germany: But for what?



printed on recycled paper



BELT 17 / 1993F

Error: France did not have to remove (due to Spring annihilation).

Winter 1909: Austria builds a bud; England builds a lon.

Spring 1910: Positively Charged Ions

Austria (Rich Irving—note COA in roster): a tri-tyo (a vie s), a boh s russian a sil, a gre h, a bud h, a ven s russian a tyo-pic, a nap-rom, f adr-ion (f apu s).

England (Les Casey): a lon-bel (f nts c), a bel-pic, a pic-bre, feng-iri, a stp h (f bot s), f kie h, f hel-hol, f nwg-nat.

France (Randy Havens): fmid-iri, fnaf-mid (f wes s), a rom h, f rus-pic, a mar-gas, a mun-bur, a ber h, a bur-par.

Russia (Nathan Trent): a tyo-pic, a war-pru (a sil s), a mos h, a ukr-war, f ion-tyn.

Deadline for Fall 1910 is May 27.

England to Austria: France says that the victory has been given to you. Austria never wins— does it?

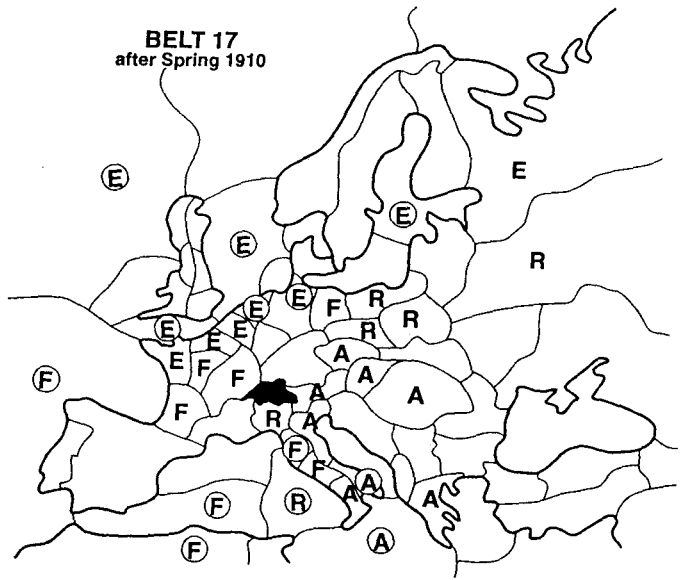
Austria to France: Despite your loud comments last turn, the player with the best chance of winning (IMHO) is located north of you.

Austria reviews "Sliders" (OK, I know it's a TV show, but I haven't seen any new movies or read any new books lately. Only oldies, but goodies.) A fun show about alternate realities on FOX. The main characters "slide" between different versions of San Francisco trying to find their "home" reality. Just a fun idea with a lot of humor, but it remains to be seen if the idea wears well. (*Star Trek: Voyager* has already had 3 "We can make it home—BUT" episodes already!) What is it about John Rhys-Davies? He's English yet he always appears as some other nationality: Rodrigues (Portuguese) in *Shogun*, Sallah (Egyptian) in *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, and Professor Maximillian Arturo in *Sliders* (Arturo? Italian? Spanish?)

GM to Austria: See the letter column for my comments on TV...

Russia says: I don't have any game-related press. I never have any game-related press. I'm just the dog and pony show of this game. "Jump", I jump. "Sit", I sit. There's the safe move, then there's the suicidal move. I tried to stab England, but England wasn't on my side to begin with. I tried to stab France, but France wasn't on my side either. I thought about stabbing Austria, but Austria is the only one on my side and what would happen then, huh? I guess I would earn the reputation of a terrible and irrational ally and no one would ever want to be on my side again so that I would be left all alone to be crushed under the heel of players who wanted to be on the same side without me. Then I would be the 'enemy' to everyone so that I might as well change the name of my units to 'enemese' and get it over with so that everyone would know right away who to *not* be (note the split infinitive) on the same side

BELT 17 after Spring 1910



with. But instead I conform and make myself fit into the acceptable plan and avoid those dangers in exchange for other dangers. Plus, who says Lucky Charms are *magically* delicious anyway? I mean, those charm things are all sugar anyway and I've never met any sugar I didn't like. Sugar, any sugar, is delicious. If those charms are so *magically* delicious, but all they are is sugar, then what's the big fuss? Sugar isn't *magical*, nor even *magically* delicious. Sugar is just sugar. That little green guy is full of it. In fact, I dare *any* of you to prove that Lucky Charms are *magically* delicious. Everyone knows why they are delicious, but just prove it's magical, not sucrosal.

GM to Russia: I was all set to give you Press of the Month honors—excellent writing—but then you lit into Lucky Charms and boy, does that get you on the wrong side of the GM in this zine! Lucky Charms are God's gift to those of us who are too lazy to get the griddle out and make pancakes every morning—the way they get the day rolling *is* magick, no matter what you rationalists say! I won't even get started about your insults to leprechauns; that kind of irreverence has its own punishment, which I'm sure will be visited on you soon...

BELT 17 / SUPPLY CENTERS held as of Winter 1909

Austria	tri	bud	ser	gre	bul	smy	nap	ven	vie	.	.	.	.	.	.	9
England	lvp	edi	lon	hol	kie	den	swe	nwy	stp	bel	.	.	.	.	.	10
France	par	bre	mar	spa	por	ber	mun	tun	rom	.	.	.	.	.	.	9
Russia	mos	war	sev	rum	ank	con	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	6

IX / 1993HG

Autumn Retreat: German a mun-ber.

Winter 1906: France builds a mar; Germany disbands a lvn; Turkey builds a smy.

France proposes F/T draw.

Spring 1907: Stymied

France (Don Scheiffert): f nts-ska, f eng-nts (f bel s, f nwg s), a hol-kie (a ruh s), a mun-ber /annihilated/, a mar-bur, f wes-tun, f tun-ion (f tyn s), a tyo-boh.

Germany (John Schultz): a ber s turkish a sil-mun, f swe-ska (f den & f nwy s [a stp s nwy]), f hel-hol, a mos-war.

Italy (J.R. Baker): a ven-tri, f ion-alb /dislodged/ (f adr s).

Turkey (Vincent Springer): a sev h, a sil-mun, a gal-boh, f alb-tri (a vie s, a bud s), f gre-alb (a ser s), f acg-gre, f con-acg, f eas-ion, a smy h.

Summer Retreat: Italian f ion.

Deadline for Fall 1907 is May 27.

T to I: Okay, I admit it. You're the... CAGEY VETERAN!

Pope to Insult-In: What, *me* tricky?

JR to GM: I've never seen a game yet where Turkey was stopped after he got 13, so all I have to do is keep him from getting 1 ... of Germany's.

GM to JR: Sorry, buddy, you're a moment too late.

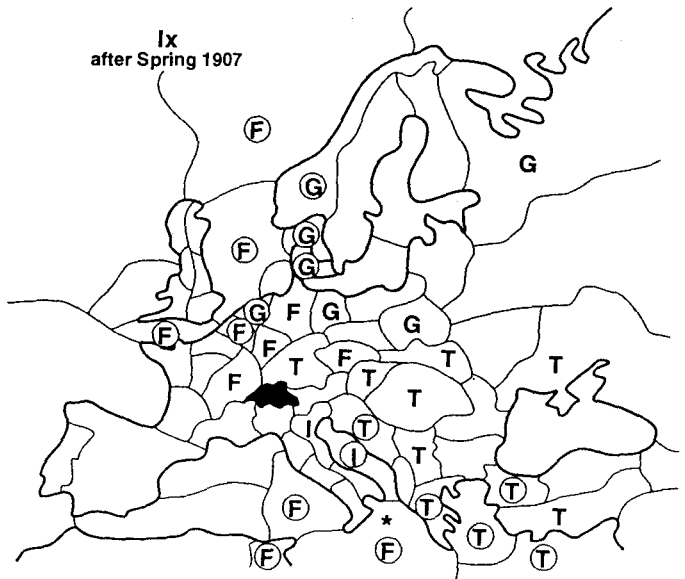
Pope to Frog: I hear and obey, Great One.

T to F: Better send those fleets back up north, my "dressed like a woman" Frenchman [froggie, international weenie, etc.] because the German will be BUILDING fleets in a few seasons!

Pope to Black Forces: Do I hear a proposal?

T to G/GM: It's always fun to dream, aint it??

Ix after Spring 1907



IX / SUPPLY CENTERS held as of Winter 1906

France	par	bre	mar	por	spa	lvp	edi	lon	hol	bel	tun	mun	.	.	.	12
Germany	kie	ber	den	swe	nwy	stp	mos	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	7
Italy	rom	nap	ven	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	3
Turkey	con	ank	smy	bul	gre	ser	tri	bud	sev	rum	war	vie	.	.	.	12

CALLBOARD

Game Openings

KAIDER III / Regular Diplomacy (\$5 gamefee):

Dennis Lynch (pd), Paul Gardner (pd), Tim Goodwin (notpd), Nelson Heintzman (pd), Gerry Paulson (pd), Kevin Wilson (pd), Robert Greene (pd)—START!

Berry Renken, sorry—you were just a bit too late to sign up for this one.

REYNOLDZKAY / Railway Rivals (\$3 gamefee):

Weiss (pd), Brosius (notpd), Brown (notpd), Irving (pd), York (pd), and Quist (notpd) signed up. We had a strong objection to the Kentucky/Tennessee map, so I need more suggestions. I also need more players!

SOLARIS / Diplomacy variant tba (\$5 gamefee):

Hoffman (pd), Hassler (notpd), Springer (notpd) signed up. If you sign up, indicate which variant you would like to play, and whether you're willing to play any others. First one to fill will start. I will supply rules to players at gamestart but if you want to review them before that send a SASE. Options are:

Cline 9-Man: Springer, Hassler.

Diplomacy II: Hassler.

Cosmic Dip:

Seismic Dip:

EAGLESON / Blind Diplomacy 1901 (\$5 gamefee):

Steve McKinnon (Steve, I've put your buck into your sub—do you want to play?), Doug Brown (notpd), Ward Narhi (pd) currently signed up; can take four or five more (Richard?).

If Solaris or Eagleson doesn't fill soon, I'll replace it with a regular Dip opening.

circulation of this issue: 111

Order *Zine Register* now (cost \$2 in North America, \$4 elsewhere)—delivery within a month.

Poetry Shelf (the standby list)

Bounty for Standbys has been increased. Standbys now receive two free issues for each game they are called into, plus two freebies if they play the position to the end.

The Poets are, for Diplomacy: J.R. Baker, Dave Goliass, Jim Grose, Tom Hurst, Stan Johnson, Doug Kent, Steve McKinnon, John McLaurin, Phil Reynolds, John Schultz, Nathan Trent, Richard Weiss, Ward Narhi, Andrew York.

For Diplomacy variant games (some for certain variants only): J.R. Baker, Dave Goliass, Jim Grose, Tom Hurst, Steve McKinnon, Nathan Trent, Richard Weiss, Andrew York (lr).

CALLED THIS MONTH: Nathan in Barsoom!

Conventions

GamesCaucus: May 26–29

...at the Oakland Airport Hilton. It sure doesn't look like I'll make this one; we will probably have a 'dedication ceremony' for my parents' new brick yard (read: barbecue), plus a lot of the old boardgames (like Dip and Global Dip) have dropped off the list. Anyone else for Titan or HotW? Reg is \$20 until April 1; TriGaming Associates, Box 27634, Concord CA 94527-0634.

DixieCon IX: May 26–28

The annual Carolina Amateur Diplomats event at the U. of North Carolina. Many game tournaments; dorm rooms (\$30/night); free shuttle to/from airport; what more could you want? Write David Hood, 2905 20th St. NE, Hickory NC 28601.

ShoreCon III: May 31–June 7

Brad Wilson is once again inviting Dipsters to his family's place on the beach. You're invited for any or all of the week or weekend. Write to Brad at Box 532, Paoli PA 19301-0532 or call (610) 296-2253.

AvalonCon: August 2–6

The Dip tournament here will host DipCon XXVIII, with Jim Yerkey GMing. Held at the Hunt Valley Marriott, outside Baltimore. Write to Avalon Hill for more information.

Calendar

March: 16 Claire Brosius, 29 Casey Elaine Ellis, 31 Daf Langley

17–19: NovaCon, Concord CA.

April: 30 Cathy Gaughan

May: 12 Richard Weiss, 19 Steve Langley, 25 Pete &

Cathy's anniversary, 26 Walter Devin Ellis

26–28: DixieCon, Chapel Hill NC

31–June 7: ShoreCon, Avalon NJ

June: 1 Fred Davis Jr., 12 Ed Wrobel

July: 13 Andy Marshall, 24 Tom Johnson

13–16: Origins, Philadelphia.

August: 15 Brent McKee, 16 Brendan Whyte, 29 Don Williams

October: 4 Harry Andruschak (okay, Harry, I'm

through playin' with you...), 28 Andy York

November: 5 Doug Brown

December: 1 Bruce McIntyre, 6 Brad Wilson

January: 8 Lance Anderson, 19 Pete Gaughan, 25 Chuff Afflerbach

February: 9 David Hood

Waiting Pool

Betting on the birth of Junior Gaughan. To enter, send \$1 to me, with your guess of date and time to the nearest fifteen minutes. (Your clue is 'late June or early July'.) If duplicate entries are received, the later entrant will be asked to try again.

You can avoid sending the entry fee by affirming to me that you have either donated a unit of blood, or a can of food to charity, in the past month. No entries after May Day.

Winner will receive 3/4 of all entry monies. (Hey, I'm no fool! The remains will go toward The Inheritor's first volume of Dr. Seuss.)

Entries thus far: Rich Irving (6/19, 12:30, pd); James Hardy (6/26, 02:30); Dave Anderson (6/28, 04:15, ddg); Ward Narhi (6/28, 21:15, pd).

Picks and Pans

Marco Poll Underway

Bob Acheson has announced the **1995 Marco Poll**. Please list your top five favorite zines (in order) and the top five best players, and send the list to Bob by April 30: 15715-92 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, T5R 5C5 CANADA.

Diplomacy World Revival

(a message from Doug Kent)

I've posted the following to the Diplomacy sections on Internet, AOL, and CompuServe today. I would like to get feedback from you:

Let's start at the headline and work our way back: I am taking over as editor of *Diplomacy World*, effective immediately. I'm going to make a go of it, even though a few former editors supposedly want to fold *Diplomacy World* for good.

Some of you may know me from my participation

in the play-by-mail Diplomacy hobby and the CompuServe Dip hobby. I've been a publisher of Dip zines for over 6 years.

Back in late 1993, David Hood passed on editorship of *Diplomacy World* to Jack McHugh. I agreed to handle the publication side of the zine (copying, mailing, subscription records). Since then, only two issues of *DW* have been produced. The first was almost entirely composed of material left over from David Hood's tenure.

This weekend, Larry Peery called me to discuss the fate of *DW*. Larry is credited with saving *DW* from detah in the 1980's—taking it over when no one else wanted it, and producing regular and quality issues for some time. Anyway, Larry felt that the thing to do was officially kill off *DW*, and give current subscribers the choice of back issues or a refund.

At first I agreed.

Now, a few days later, I've taken a fresh look at the situation and have done an about face. I can't agree to let *DW* die without first making an honest effort at breathing life back into it. And that's where you people come in—life.

If *DW* is to survive, I need support in the form of articles. Some of you may have already submitted articles to Jack McHugh for publication—but I don't have that material. I only have one of those articles—a real nice one by David Smith on teaching his students Dip that I plan to put in the next issue.

If you've submitted material to Jack, PLEASE submit it to me now. If you haven't, why not consider it? Articles can be on any Diplomacy-related topic: strategy, conventions, hobby news, statistics, personal anecdotes, contests, fiction or nonfiction, cartoons, variant design or review or strategy, and anything else you can imagine. Contributors receive a free issue for every article published.

I CAN promise you on thing—if *DW* is to survive, it must remain on a regular schedule... something I've been a stickler about when it comes to my own zines (my zine *Maniac's Paradise* has always been regarded as one of the fastest and most reliable places to play Dip).

Submissions can be sent to me numerous ways: by email (preferably to my CompuServe address 73567.1414@compuserve.com), by fax to 214-750-5892, or on disk (in ASCII or Word Perfect format) or on paper to 6151 Royalton Drive, Dallas, TX 75230. Articles can be any length—from 1/2 page on up!

I also understand that there has been some work on creating a *DW*-type zine for the Web. To that I can only say—the more the merrier! I am exploring possibilities of making *DW* available for download in the near future as well.

If the support isn't there for *DW*, then I can only resign myself to agree with Larry Peery and fold the zine for good. I'd hate to see that happen! Please support *DW*!

• Pete's response to Doug: I support your move completely. I will publicize it, and I will write for the new *DW*. Obviously, that's a future promise; ZR is my first priority. But once it's gone, I can work on zine-review, historical, and hobby-news items almost exclusively.

New Zine

Paul Milewski is publishing, a zine called *Yellow Pajamas* (the title derives from detective Nero Wolfe's fashions). Issue one has four pages of Paul's formal writing and two pages of house rules; this promises to be a games-primary, text-only monthly. PM, 4154 Allendale Drive #2, Cincinnati OH 45209; (513) 561-3539.

It's Me Again!

by Cathy Gaughan

Gosh, it's been a while since we've been able to get one of these zines out. But life has been a bit hectic for us. Pete already told you his dad had to have open-heart surgery. It was pretty scary there for a while. His dad seems to be coming along pretty good now. Sometimes he overdoes himself and then gets really exhausted. I guess it takes a good three months before he will actually start to feel normal.

All this tends to put more pressure on Pete. He has to work the business pretty much on his own. For a while Dad couldn't even handle talking over accounts. Now, however, Dad, is taking some phone calls and faxing in orders. He still is unable to make visits to the stores. Also, Pete begins wondering how long it will be before he has his first heart attack. I have a hard time talking him out of this sort of thinking since I also figure I will die of breast cancer like my mother did; but I do try to sympathize with him.

Another thing that's hard is trying to read whether Pete's mom is OK. Most of the time she puts on a stiff upper lip and seems like "oh, this is just routine stuff." Other times she seems really shaky and nervous about the whole thing. Pete has just been wonderful for her. He has gone over and stayed with Dad so she could do different things and not have to worry so much about whether Dad would eat while she was gone.

During all this I also had my Sweet Adelines Competition. My quartet, "Full of Surprises," competed for the first time. We were very nervous, but we had a great time. Our scores told us a lot we already knew. Our ballad was too hard for us but by the time we figured that out we didn't have time to learn another one. So we did the best we could with our abilities so far. We ended up placing last, but we're still very happy with our performance. We had people from our chorus, our director included, who said we did the best they'd ever heard us on stage. So we couldn't complain about the outcome. Our costumes were really great too!

The chorus competition is a breeze after competing in a quartet. I was very surprised by the difference in the sound on the stage. The stage was very live (you could hear each other) for the quartet competition. It was very dead (you felt you were the only one singing) for the choruses. I really had fun with the chorus competition. I guess since my first competition I hadn't been so excited to compete.

I was always afraid of the outcome in my last chorus. There was always such turmoil after a competition that competing didn't seem that fun any more. But this year it was fun again. The chorus didn't place as high as the year before, but we actually improved from the year before. The scores themselves were actually lower, but we found out that last summer they actually changed what each level was. They had been using tapes over ten years old to measure what a certain score was. Now they are using current choruses to make those tapes to train judges; Sweet Adelines keep improving so they were running out of space at the top so they made the scoring tougher.

Anyway, to make a long story even longer, some of the members of Diablo Vista (my chorus) were upset with the scores until all this was explained and we got to listen to a tape of last year compared to this year. And we heard with our own ears that we have improved! We still have lots to learn but we're on the right track!

Over Easter weekend we drove to L.A. to see Pete's brother, Mike, and his wife, Sandy. Friday we spent at Disneyland. We included Mike, Sandy, Sandy's parents, and Sandy's niece, Brittany. Brittany is 28 months old. She was just adorable, the best behaved-kid at Disneyland, I'm sure. Sandy & I took Brittany on the Dumbo ride. Sandy's mom joined us on the carousel while her dad took pictures. Pete & Mike rode Splash Mountain and the canoes. We had a great dinner at the Blue Bayou restaurant to celebrate Mike's birthday. After that we all went to take Brittany to the petting zoo, then Mom and Dad took Brittany with them to the airport to pick up Sandy's sister, Samantha.

Pete and Mike wanted to ride the new Indiana Jones Adventure so Sandy and I entertained ourselves for two hours. We saw Captain Eo, a 3D movie with Michael Jackson; we rode the Pirates of the Caribbean; and grabbed a snack. Then we all crowded down by the water and watched a

[[It's Me Again continues at the bottom of page 18...]]

DURLA / 1994Wrb32 Gunboat Diplomacy

Spring 1903: Garlic Press

Austria: a tri-ven, a bud-ser, a rum-ukr (a gal s), a ser-grc, f gre-ion.
 England: f edi-nts, a stp unordered (f bar s), a nwy-swe (f ska s).
 France: f mar-pie (f lyo s), a bur-pic, a gas-bur (a bel s), f wes-ryn.
 Germany: a kie-den, f swe-den /dislodged/, a mun-ruh (a hol s), a ber-mun.
 Italy: a pic-ven /dislodged/, a tun h, f tyn h (f rom s).
 Russia: a mos h (a war s).
 Turkey: f aeg-ion, f con-aeg, a bul h (f bla s), a sev-rum.

Summer Retreats: German f swe; Italian a pic.

Deadline for Fall 1903 is May 27.

England to Germany: The Swedish Government has requested English assistance in this latest crisis. The English throne has no choice but to honor this request and its commitment to bringing peace to Scandinavia.

Der Berliner observes: Pravda still doesn't recognize the true nature of the Austrians, even at this late date. Perhaps the coming incursions will awaken them...

Moscow to Vienna: I hope the shipment of caviar arrived safe and sound.

AH to T: You are right. Russia is gone and England and France is involved in some kind of love fest. Lets team up and stop them. I would prefer the Balkan split to be me Ser and Rum while you get Bul and Gre. Turkey concentrates on fleets while AH concentrates on armies. Turkey is allowed two armies in Russia and one army is allowed to garrison the Balkans/convoy into Italy/Spain. The Lion/Shark theory is the only way the alliance can work—you can't send a whole lot of armies into Russia and then swing them over into Germany—I will already be there. Good hunting.

Italy to Turkey: Come on with those fleets already. A friend of Austria's in welcomed, far more than an enemy of mine.

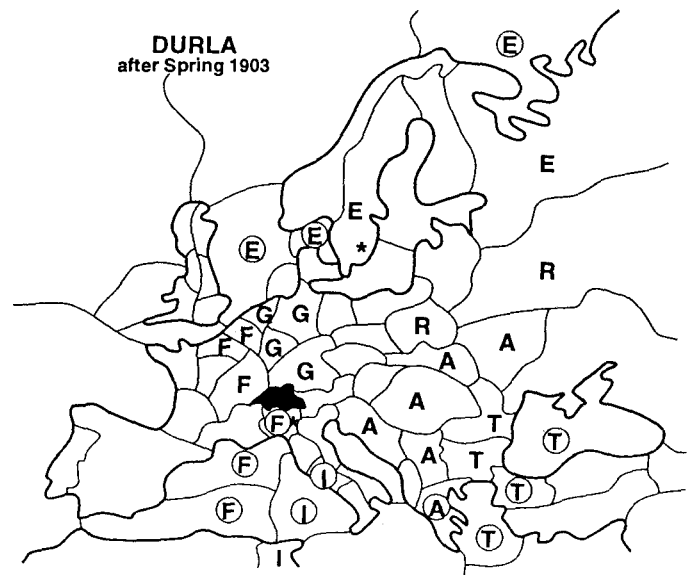
Moscow to Constantinople: Your offer is also welcome to the north.

G to F: If you are going to pursue a war with the Italian, could we possibly 'DMZ' Burgundy? It seems as if the Brit is a bit miffed and I might need my armies elsewhere. Can do easy right?

London to Paris: Based on the evolving situation in Europe, it would seem that Anglo-French cooperation would be advantageous to us both. I clearly have a Northern and Eastern interest, while you may have a distinctly Southern and Eastern interest, particularly with the Turks building so many fleets and a belligerent Italian neighbor. At a minimum I propose a non-aggression pact to secure our mutual flanks. What are your thoughts?

Italy to Durlans: One flew East, one flew West, one flew over the BORING nest. Have I seen this scenario before?

Durla to Italy: Maybe I have, let me check my memory banks... Wait... help... overload!



DURLA / SUPPLY CENTERS held as of Winter 1902							
Austria	vie	tri	bud	ser	rum	gre	6
England	lvp	lon	edi	nwy	stp	.	5
France	par	mar	bre	spa	por	bel	6
Germany	mun	kie	ber	den	swe	hol	6
Italy	nap	ven	rom	tun	.	.	4
Russia	mos	war	.	.	.	.	2
Turkey	con	ank	smy	sev	bul	.	5

Tonight's Cast

There is no longer any NMR Insurance. Bold indicates a new address. Please indicate whether you want your phone number included in future rosters.

PLAYER	ADDRESS	CITY/STATE	COUNTRY	EMAIL	PHONE
Lance Anderson	1200 Dallas Drive #824	Denton TX 76205	USA	IW90@jove.acs.unt.edu	
Harry Andruschak	P.O. Box 5309	Torrence CA 90510-5309	USA		
Jeff August	5057 South 12th Street	Arlington VA 22204	USA		
James Bailey	8337 La Riviera Drive	Sacramento CA 95826-1654	USA	JamesAB5@aol.com	
J.R. Baker	2709 Colonial Drive	Dickinson TX 77539	USA		
James Battle	290 Massachusetts Avenue #435	Cambridge MA 02139-4196	USA	battleax@athena.mit.edu	
Doug Brown	2517 Indian Wells Road	Placerville CA 95667	USA		
John Bryden	Dept. of Math., U. of Calgary	Calgary Alberta T2N 1N4	CANADA	bryden@acs.ucalgary.ca	
Les Casey	10 Wrenwood Court	Nepean Ontario K2G 5V3	CANADA	c357@arch.isis.org	
Greg Ellis	2005 Dublin Drive	League City TX 77573	USA	GregE625@aol.com	
John Galt	701 Welch Road #323	Palo Alto CA 94304-1705	USA	john_david_galt@cup.portal.com	
Paul Gardner	5 Timber Lane	Brattleboro VT 05301-2616	USA		
Charles Goetz, c/o S. Karrofels, 625 W. Madison; Tower 4, Apt. 402.	Chicago IL 60661		USA	cgoetz@kentlaw.edu	
Dave Golias	1200 Alford	Fort Collins CO 80524	USA	bugman@lamar.ColoState.EDU	
Tim Goodwin	49 Williams Street #2	Portland ME 04103	USA	TimG@aol.com	
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Brad Wilson	Box 532	Paoli PA 19301-0532	USA		
Kevin Wilson	373 Gateford Drive	Ballwin MO 63021	USA	kevin_wilson.mmi@notes.worldcom.com	
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[[It's Me Again continues from page 17...]]

great show: Fantasmic. I can't describe it but everyone should see it. It ends with spectacular fireworks! A really long day but well worth it.

Late Saturday afternoon Peg, Pete's sister, arrived. We headed to Sandy's folks' house for some pizza and fun. Sunday Mike had a couple of trumpet gigs at a Catholic church. Sandy and Peg attended Sandy's church. Pete and I stayed at Mike and Sandy's. I slept; I don't know for sure but Pete probably read, and around noon we all converged on Sandy's parents' house again. Sandy's mom was so sweet! She had fixed all of us Easter baskets full of candy! Then we had a fabulous meal. Brittany, I think, only ate butter and maybe some Cheetos. But the rest of us stuffed ourselves with ham, cheesy potatoes, greenbean casserole, sweet potatoes, jello salad and rolls. M-m-m good!

Monday we headed for home with Mike accompanying us; he was on

spring break. This visit entailed lots of hard work by Mike and Pete. Mike installed a screen door at Mom and Dad's on Tuesday; Wednesday began the process of bricking in their backyard. It isn't finished yet, but Pete and Mike made a big dent in it before Mike had to leave Thursday night. Pete and Mom worked on it some more Sunday. All that has to be done now is to cut the bricks for odd corners and then put sand in all the cracks in the finished product. Quite a major task—Pete was exhausted.

Then, there's the baby. It has been moving so much, I think it's doing somersaults. I keep thinking it's so obvious that everyone should know when it's happening. My stomach becomes contorted. I holler for Pete to come look and of course, everything stops. I really wish there was a way for him to feel it. It's just so amazing. Sometimes it tickles, sometimes it even hurts, but most of the time it's just active.

Later, Dudes and Dudettes!

The 1995 Runestone Poll

ZINE POLL

You may rate any amateur postal or e-mail zine that you've read enough of to rate fairly. This means you've seen (or would have seen if not for delays) at least two issues since July 1, 1994. Only North American zines are eligible, but anyone may vote. Rate each zine from 0 (the worst) to 10 (the best)—no fractions, please. Do not rate your own zine. Blanks are for zines I forgot to list. Do not vote for me or my publications.

— Absolute!	— The Diplomatic Pouch	— Pontevedria
— The Abyssinian Prince	— Dippy	— The Prince
— Against the Odds	— The Eccentric Diplomat	— Protozoan
— Akrasia	— Electric Trains	— Rails by Mail
— Alpha & Omega	— Empire	— Rambling WAY
— American Diplomacy	— The Encounter	— Ramblings by Moonlight
— Appalachian General	— Everything	— Rebel
— Aren't You the Guy...	— Foolhardy	— River City Rwy Gazette
— The Armchair Diplomat	— The Gamer's Zine	— S.O.B.
— Bark of the Dawg	— iCOLL	— The Sports Page
— Batyville Gazette	— Graustark	— Starwood
— Beleaguere	— Hoodwink	— The Strategist
— Blut und Eisen	— I Still Live	— Suicide Squeeze
— Boast	— Imaginary Friend	— The Swiss Observer
— Boris the Spider	— Lemon Curry	— The Tactful Assassin
— Call Me President	— Lime House	— Ter-ran
— The Canadian Diplomat	— Making Love in a Canoe	— War Fair
— Carolina Cmd & Cmnty	— Maniac's Paradise	— Won if by Land
— CDD Medical Journal	— Meet George Jackson	— Zero Sum
— Chessecake	— Metamorphosis	— _____
— Cogniscenti	— Niccolo	— _____
— Costaguana	— Northern Flame	— _____
— Crimson Sky	— off-the-shelf	— _____
— Diplodocus	— Orphan Son	— _____
— Diplomacy World	— The Peery Dipl Letter	— _____
— Diplomag	— Perelandra	— _____

ADVERTISEMENT

For the main lists (zines, subzines, and GMS) send 64 cents, two 32 cent U.S. stamps, or an issue of your zine in which you publish a ballot. For the Poll publication, send \$5.00 or more and check here _____. Last year's publication was 74 pages long. It contained main lists, articles, statistical analysis, and lots more! Thanks for your donations; they really help.

SUBZINE POLL

A subzine is a regular section of a zine which is (a) edited by someone other than the zine editor(s), or (b) edited by the zine editor(s), but devoted to a specific hobby service. Any subzine of a North American zine is eligible. The other instructions are the same as those for the Zine Poll.

— A New Dawn	— Interim	— Strategic Intelligence
— Across the Bow	— Iron Mike's Subzine	— The Tar Pits
— And Now... Rev. LaBoon	— It's Good to be Right	— Tralaz (Blech)
— Beginner's Luck	— It's Me Again	— The Unzine Voice
— The Brazilian Times	— Joe's Subzine	— Vaginal Discharge
— By the Waters of Babylon	— Male Shall...	— The Voice of Sanity
— BYWAY	— Mara's Recipe...	— WAYside
— College Football Ratings	— Modern Diplomacy	— WAYwords
— Fred's Column	— Mr. Toad's Wild Ride	— You're the One
— The French Connection	— Octopus's Garden	— _____
— The Genteel Debauchment	— Plausible Paraphernalia	— _____
— Hardbop	— Sandy's Spotlight	— _____
— Historical Spotlight	— Snowball Fighting	— _____
— Imp's Press	— Steve's Spot	— _____

GM POLL

You may rate any GM under whom you played any postal or e-mail game since July 1, 1994 for long enough to judge him or her fairly. Only North American GMS are eligible, but anyone may vote. List GMS alphabetically by name (not zine). Rate each GM from 0 (the worst) to 10 (the best)—no fractions, please. GMS may not rate themselves. Do not vote for me.

_____	_____
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RUNESTONE POLL CONTEST

Guess the Zine Poll winner—the prize is a travel Diplomacy board with magnetic pieces. To be eligible you must vote in the Poll and correctly guess the winning zine. I will pick the contest winner at random from the set of eligible entrants. The names of the winner and any other eligible entrants will be published in the Poll publication.

To enter, print your address neatly:

The zine you think will win:

Send this ballot to **Eric Brosius, 41 Hayward St., Milford, MA 01757.**

Your ballot must arrive by June 30, 1995. Please vote early if you can.

Indicate one way in which you take part in the North American postal or e-mail gaming hobby (sub to zine XXX, play in game 1995YY, etc.)

Signature _____

Print your name neatly _____

Check here ____ if you do not want your name on the list of voters.

(If I can't tell who you are or your ballot isn't signed, it may not be counted!)

LAMETH / 1992AJ

ERT draw: ER yes, FT no.

Autumn Retreats: French f mid-gas, Turkish a rum-bul.

Winter 1911: England builds a lon; Russia disbands a war; Turkey builds a ank, a smy.

LAMETH / SUPPLY CENTERS held as of Winter 1911		
England	lvp, edi, lon, hol, nwy, den, stp, swe, kie, ber, bel	11
France	par, spa, por, bre	4
Russia	war, sev, mos, rum	4
Turkey	con, smy, bul, gre, nap, tri, ser, ven, rom, tun, ank, mun, bud, vie, mar	15

Spring 1912: The 48th Parallel

England (Stan Johnson): a lon h, f mid-wes, f nar-mid (f iri s), f pic-bre (f eng s), a bel-bur, f kie h, f lvn h (f stp/sc s), f ber h.

France (Martin Johnson): f bre h (f gas s), f spa/sc-por, a bur-pic.

Russia (James Bailey): a rum-sev (a mos s, a ukr s), a gal-bud.

Turkey (Tim Goodwin): a ank-sev (a arm s, f bla c), a smy unordered, a con-bul /nsu/, a bul-rum (a ser s, a bud s [a vie s bud]), a tri-tyo, a mun-bur, f wes-spa/sc (a mar s, f lyo s), f tyn-wes, f naf-mid.

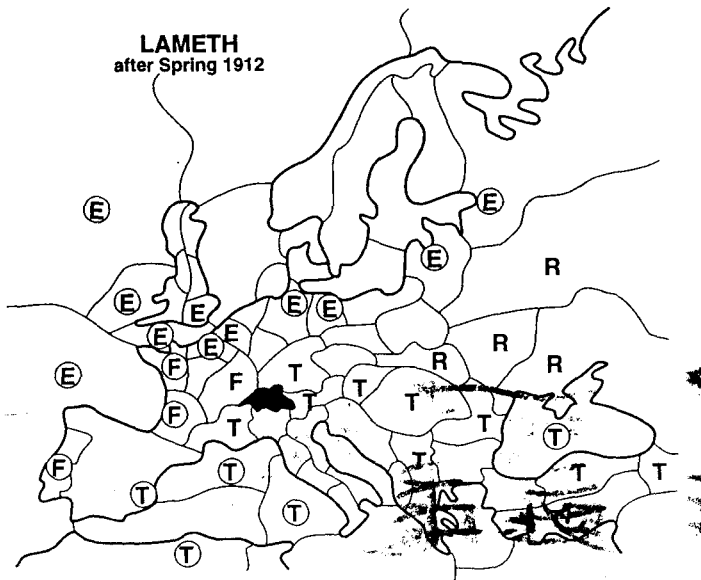
Thanks to John McLaurin for unneeded standby orders.

Deadline for Fall 1912 is May 27.

What's Up Doc?

page	feature
1	Among the Trees / Pete's editorial
1	The Roar of the Greasepaint / the readers' editorial
2	Genteel Debauchment / Iain Bowen's column
6	Literary Quiz
7	The Interim / Bruce McIntyre's column
9	Lusitania / Gunboat Snowball Fighting ASF30
10	Plateau / 1994HJ Diplomacy
10	Vulcan / Deviant Diplomacy endgame statements
11	Silverrun / Snowball Fighting ASF31
12	Tralfamadore / 1994Xxm22 Youngstown XV Diplomacy
13	X-23 / 1994IC Diplomacy
13	Vexvelt / 1992R Diplomacy
14	Barsoom / 1993HI Diplomacy
14	Giedi Prime / 1992AK Diplomacy
15	Belt 17 / 1993F Diplomacy
15	Ix / 1993HG Diplomacy
16	Callboard / game openings, zine reviews, hobby news
17	It's Me Again / Cathy's editorial
17	Durla / 1994Wrb32 Gunboat Diplomacy
18	Cast List / player roster
19	Lameth / 1992AJ Diplomacy

LAMETH after Spring 1912



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The Eagle

Alfred, Lord Tennyson

He clasps the crag with crooked hands;
Close to the sun in lonely lands,
Ring'd with the azure world, he stands.

The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls;
He watches from his mountain walls,
And like a thunderbolt he falls.

Larry Peery
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