

called San Francisco Fanzine Fan. And this year my wife Linda and I ran an unsuccessful campaign for DUFF and published our ad zine QUOKKA QUEST #1. If anyone wants a copy of either of these please let me know.

As some of you know I worked for Montgomery Wards for more than 20 years selling electronics until they declared total bankruptcy in early 2001 and laid me off. I had about 3 months warning although I was notified about the store closing by my customers before the store managers bothered to let us know. I was at work one day when a customer said "Turn on the Channel 5 News". Well when I did the story was all about this 100 year+ company going out of business. While not really a big surprise it was a rude way to hear about losing my job!

So I started studying at a thing called ROP (Regional Occupational Program) here in San Mateo County. Studying Air & Travel Industry with promise of an internship or job with an airline. So almost as soon as Wards closed in 2001 I began working for United Airlines as a Customer Service Representative (CSP). Checking people into their flights, checking in bags, etc. Both classroom and on the job paid training and work. Five months later I was sitting in Ticketing Class at 6am watching in horror as the planes started crashing into the World Trade Center. On 9/18 2001 I was laid off for the second time that year.

After that I started collecting unemployment and wasn't in a hurry to start over again from scratch since I had worked almost 30 years straight without a break between

jobs.

During the next 2 years I worked for 3 months as Assistant Manager part time at a Temporary Book Store.



Like most book stores this didn't pay very well, but I enjoyed the work. Clearance and remaindered books. The real point of this job was to start working again as I have a theory that it is much easier to get a job if you have one. I hate job hunting and until this year I never actually had a resume. But this time it was good to have a recent job to list and a good reference too!

In August I got called by 2 different jobs for interviews followed by pee tests, background checks etc. I passed all those tests including FBI fingerprinting! So there I was deciding to either take the easy low paying job at Target Dept Store or the harder better paying job with Swissport Cargo.

Swissport won a contract to take over United Airlines Cargo operation, so I'm doing work for United again. They sent me to Chicago for 2 weeks training at the beginning of Sept and I've been working at Small Package Dispatch (SPD) at SFO next to Baggage Carousel #4 ever since. Sun through Thursday 230pm to 1100pm.

The work is very time sensitive since late packages travel FREE and there is lots of stress at times when 6 or 7 drivers bring in dozens of packages at the last possible moment to get them on the popular redeye flights to Chicago (ORD) or JFK. Basically I'm doing shipping and receiving so I also drag incoming packages off the carousel and into the office and input all the information at least twice into the Apollo & Unimatic computer programs. I deal a lot with shipping for UPS, FED EX, DHL and other professional shipping companies.

The public (also known as "unknown shippers") are only allowed to ship up to 1 pound maximum due to 9/11 security and it costs them about \$75! Most of the time people are sending passports to some one who needs it NOW to be able to travel abroad immediately. I did have someone ship a Calif. Recall ballot to their husband who was in Hawaii on business 2 days before the election. He was then to ship it back. That was one expensive vote (about \$150)!

Also every day I'm shipping kidneys, livers, blood, human tissue for transplant or diagnostic samples. Some of this stuff is designated "lifeguard flights" meaning priority in takeoff and landing for the plane it is on. I haven't had any hearts yet as far as I know.

Daily newspapers, periodicals, cancelled checks, movie films, etc. are the type of stuff I

deal with. It is hard to imagine 1000 lbs of cancelled checks being sent back to Hawaii on a daily basis!

They call them "small" packages not more than 70 lbs each, but when there are 16 full packages on the belt at one time that is a lot for me to handle.

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DUFF THOUGHTS

Recent run for DUFF got me thinking about fan funds in general. It is clear that they are not some kind of charity as those who run are spending their own money to run and those who win are expected to repay the fund with a year long effort to further the fund through wise and diligent administration. I spent more than \$150 on postage and printing of my DUFF zine QUOKKA QUEST#1 and sending out ballots all over the place. I feel that it was a good cause and I don't regret the money or time spent. I thank everyone who helped me. Many fans were very generous in writing good things about me and my history in fandom. Thanks to all my nominators too.

Of course I'm still disappointed, but not surprised at defeat. I ran partly because in recent years there didn't seem to be any old time fanzine fans running. Nobody I knew at least. So I felt I might have a chance until I found out that our opponents were Guy & Rosie Lillian who publish one of the biggest, frequent fanzines going. I realized that I really had no chance at that point, but decided to carry on anyway. We got about 60 votes which in some years would have been enough to win and was a respectable number.

I can't say I enjoyed the political aspect much as I've never liked politics. Of course I've been in fandom for 40 years and have never won any awards, or been a guest of honor or even a member of a panel discussion at any con. Still I felt that I did have some worthy achievements back in the 1960's in FISTFA, APA F, FOCAL POINT, and the bid for the 1967 NYCON. And I made note of these in my platform. I was a bit shocked that some fans felt I was unworthy to run for DUFF because I hadn't been to many cons recently, or because I only occasionally voted for DUFF in the past. Had I known the contestants, I would have voted, but since I didn't and was also unemployed I didn't vote. And of

course if I hadn't run for DUFF there wouldn't have been a race this year, so I feel that I helped raise a lot of money for the fund.

All in all it was a good experience and I wish only the best to Guy and Rosie and DUFF in the future

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MAILING COMMENTS

Looking over the list of fanzines in FAPA mailing #264 I really wish I could comment on the zines. But the only zines therein that I've seen are Eric Lindsay's GEGENSCHIN and Robert Sabella's Visions Of Paradise. I used to get Fred Lerner's Lofgeornost but have been rightly dropped for lack of response. And I recalled seeing Siamese Standpipe and meeting Helen Wesson back in mid 1960's when we were both members of NAPA(mundane apa).

I especially regret missing out on reading Lovecraft in the 1930 Census(what an interesting title!) and Fantasy Commentator #55 & 56. Got any extra copies of those?

Eric Lindsay in a recent issue of GEGENSCHIN wonders what do the people on cell phones find so fascinating that they talk so incessantly. I think there are 2 factors at work here. First they pay for a certain # of minutes and By Ghod they want to get their money's worth! Second they are talking to each other! About getting their moneys worth!

Visions Of Paradise is interesting to me when Bob is discussing sf or the prozines, or doing the letter column, but then there is a long diary section about people I don't know going to places I haven't been and this section I must admit I skimmed through. I like the fanzine reviews the best but wish they were a little more detailed and longer.

I am looking forward to zines from Nelson, Kemp, Eney, Bond, Eklund, Katzes, Speer, and all the rest of you FAPAns too.

I feel a bit strange about joining FAPA. I don't actually feel worthy somehow to be in the midst of the Elder Ghods. I don't claim to be a very good writer and I guess it is obvious that I'm not. But I do hope this modest effort is interesting to someone else besides me.

FAPA has since a long fannish history and tradition as the first fan apa. I guess I'm a bit daunted by the thought of all those famous fans and legendary zines that have gone before me.

I'm sure I never would have joined except for Robert's urgings over a period of a couple of years.

The last apa I was in was APA F. It is hard to believe how long ago that was! My contributions there were usually 2 to 6 pages each week during the 69 weeks that it lasted. On the current FAPA roster I think only Arnie Katz, Fred Lerner and myself were members there during the 69 weeks of its existence. I wish I still had copies of those "mailings". Got any spares?

By the time you read this I will probably have another new job. 14 or 15 months ago I took the Post Office test for City Carrier. In Sept just after I got back from training in Chicago for Swissport I was called in to the USPO for interviews and was given my 3rd pee test this year, fingerprinted again and submitted a 30 year background info sheet. They told me I passed the interview and pee test and that it would take about a month for the FBI to check the fingerprints and for US Postal service to complete a 10 year background check. Today(Nov 7, 2003) I received a letter saying I passed those tests and to come in next week for a physical exam. I'm in pretty good health except for having a few extra pounds so I expect to get hired then, unless they have more tests to do.

It is like passing the 7 Labors of Hercules to get hired by the government! But the pay is very good and so are the benefits which is what I am really looking for. Currently I'm dragging 70 lb "small packages" at the airport so maybe carrying a 35 lb mail sack around San Francisco won't be too bad. Unless I get a hilly route! As a "part time flexible city carrier" my job will be to fill in for other carriers who are sick, on vacation or off for the day. One thing the job isn't is part time, or temporary despite the title. While they don't guarantee 40 hours of work they tell me to expect overtime because San Francisco is a busy mail spot. And this is considered a career position with sick pay, 401k, health plan and probably someday a few years from now becoming a "regular" probably just as I'm getting ready to retire! Anyway it isn't completely official yet.

SEE YOU NEXT TIME.....

W'HAIRS MIKE?

by rich brown

(Editor's note: Over in England some fans have been raising funds for charity by shaving their heads at cons. There is a short writeup and a collection of photos, before & after at <http://www.livejournal.com/users/dougs/203500.html> Discussions on trufen jogged rich's memory)

I'm reminded of something that happened at FISTFA, when Mike McInerney returned from his sister Susan's funeral. Their father had insisted that Mike either be clean shaven or not attend; Mike had adopted both long hair and a full beard, so he'd not only shaved completely but had had his hair clipped to a butch cut.

Fred Phillips never made it into Fanoclasts, but he was a member of FiSTFa, since Mike's policy was that anyone could attend -- whether he (or anyone else) liked them or not. I'd say, in most cases, 80 to 90 percent of the attendees were Fanoclasts, and I'd venture to add that most of them didn't so much -dislike- Fred as feel uncomfortable around him. He was ... off-putting and strange. He'd memorized every routine Jonathon Winters had ever done and, worse, would break into one of them with little or no prompting. He wasn't a bad guy, really, but he was guilty of -always- Trying Too Hard.

Anyway, I was sitting on a chair in the kitchen, conversing with a few people, when Fred came in and said something about wanting to talk to Mike. Mike was in the front room and I pointed Fred in that direction. Fred walked into the front room but Mike stopped talking just as Fred did so. I could see Fred looking around trying to find Mike, but failing.

Mike -- who may or may not have been aware of this -- came into the kitchen. Fred walked further into the front room, where I could no longer see him. Mike said something to someone else in the kitchen and then walked back out toward the front room again, passing Fred who was returning, having heard Mike's voice. They passed like two ships in the night.

I became aware of what was going on and

had to keep myself from laughing. Sure enough, when Mike got into the front room, he said something to someone else, and Fred -- now fully in the kitchen -- whipped his head around, like a fish who'd been hooked, and started back in the direction of the front room. Mike, however, had stopped speaking. Fred's head kept turning back and forth, taking in the fans in the front room, but never stopping to focus on the clean-shaven short-haired guy for an instant.

Mike came back into the kitchen. I told him Fred Phillips was looking for him. "I know," Mike said with a quiet smile. He returned to the front room, passing Fred again who was on -his- way back into the kitchen, having heard Mike's voice again. Fred came up to me and asked "Where did you say Mike was?"

"Front room. Still there."

On his next venture into the front room, however, he caught Mike talking and realized what had been happening. But it was genuinely funny to watch while it lasted. rich brown

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