

Land of Milk and Honey

Ramblings on Suburbia

The house we're living in is wonderful. It's a bit of a flashback; two of the three houses I grew up in were four-bedroom, two-bath structures like this one. Since I left for college I've lived in a 20-year-long string of apartments, including a studio that I shared with another guy which was about 200 square feet (including the closet and bathroom).

Clayton was originally a horse town, a stop on the dirt roads between Concord/Walnut Creek and Pittsburg/Brentwood, back in the days when the entire Diablo Valley was walnut orchards and grazing cattle. The town works hard to stay close to its roots: the biggest business is the saddlery; the publically-maintained trail system includes many bridle trails.

And it's hilly. The street along the side of our corner lot dead-ends, one house up, into Mt. Diablo State Park, which is rolling savannah leading up to a 3800' peak (our house is at about 600'). Sunday we walked along a fire road into the park, past fields of dormant, tall, gold-brown grass and widely-spaced, gnarled, dull-green oaks. The trailhead parking lot had a dozen cars and a half-dozen horse trailers.

The Rockridge gang—Jason, Gwen, Karen, and Mark—have joked that on the way here, they're on the lookout for the state line sign. They always fill their water bottles before they leave.

But now the town is upper-middle-class suburb. Houses like ours (more than 15 years old) have yards front and back; newer ones are closer together, or even condos, or they crowd around the country club. There are now nearly 8,000 residents (about 95% of them white) and fewer than 500 jobs.

Dead Poets Society

Number 2

Pete Gaughan / Daphne Langley / Cathy Gaughan

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So this is the kind of neighborhood where, when I was a kid, you knew everyone, right? Not any more. I see folks walking dogs, or jogging (especially when I leave the house, at 6 a.m.). Sometimes on a Sunday evening, two of us will be dragging the trash to the curb at the same time. But the only other times we go outside, we're headed somewhere. Is this everyone else's experience in these developments? I don't have a frame of reference, after 20 years of necessarily meeting apartment neighbors in tight quarters. Maybe kids are outside more and more likely to meet each other?

It's so stereotypical that sometimes I have to cringe. Everyone, it seems, owns a sport utility vehicle (including us). The latest business to open? A Starbuck's. The homeowners' association pool has a summer swim team.

And we have the largest concert venue in the East Bay, the Concord Pavilion, just up the hill (which means we have to check our watches if we're going out to dinner, avoiding the main intersection on Clayton Road for the hour just before a performance.)

From Terry Tallman: Judy is having a good time with the horses, but it's getting to be a lot like having a second job. Feeding and working with them takes the two of us a couple of hours a night.

The babies need to be talked to and touched a lot so that when you do things like wash them, bridle and saddle them, or even just lead them on a rope, they are ready to trust you and not fight.

Of the three babies, this year two are at the puppy stage—they come to you and want to be petted and scratched. And they tend to stay that way. The third baby was born while Judy was sick and didn't get as much initial handling, so we are having to make that up now.

She also has three yearlings, and this winter we will start them on having blankets and then light saddles on. Ideally you don't ride until after they are two and then only for short periods. After three they can be ridden a lot or even worked lightly. Their growth is pretty much complete at about five.

Work has still been a lot of road work. I may be in Alameda in early October and always get a rental car so I will check with you guys when I get a schedule pinned down.

[continues on page 11]

ARSENIC

Autumn 1902

Austria retreats f gre otb.

Russia retreats f swe-fin.

Turkey retreats a ser-alb, f sev-bla.

Winter 1902

Austria (Kathy Caruso): builds a bud; also has a ser, a tri.

England (Mark Fassio): builds a edi; also has f bre, f nwy, a bel, f eng, f nts.

France (Jim Burgess): builds a mar; also has a bur, a vie, f spa/sc.

Germany (Steve Emmert): builds a ber; also has a par, a swe, f den, f kie, a mun, a ruh.

Italy (Don Williams): disbands a boh; still has a tyo, a ven, f ion, f tyn.

Russia (Bob Slossar): has a gal, a rum, f ank, a sev, a ukr, f fin.

Turkey (Jim O'Kelley): disbands a alb; still has f bla, a gre, f aeg, a bul.

Addresses

Kathy Caruso, 6363 Astor St.,
Norristown PA 19401

Mark Fassio, 3071-A Wayne Pl.,
West Point NY 10996-1817

Jim Burgess, 664 Smith St.,
Providence RI 02908-4327

Steve Emmert, 1752 Grey Friars Ch.,
Virginia Beach VA 23456-5436

Don Williams, 27505 Artine Dr.,
Saugus CA 91350-2193

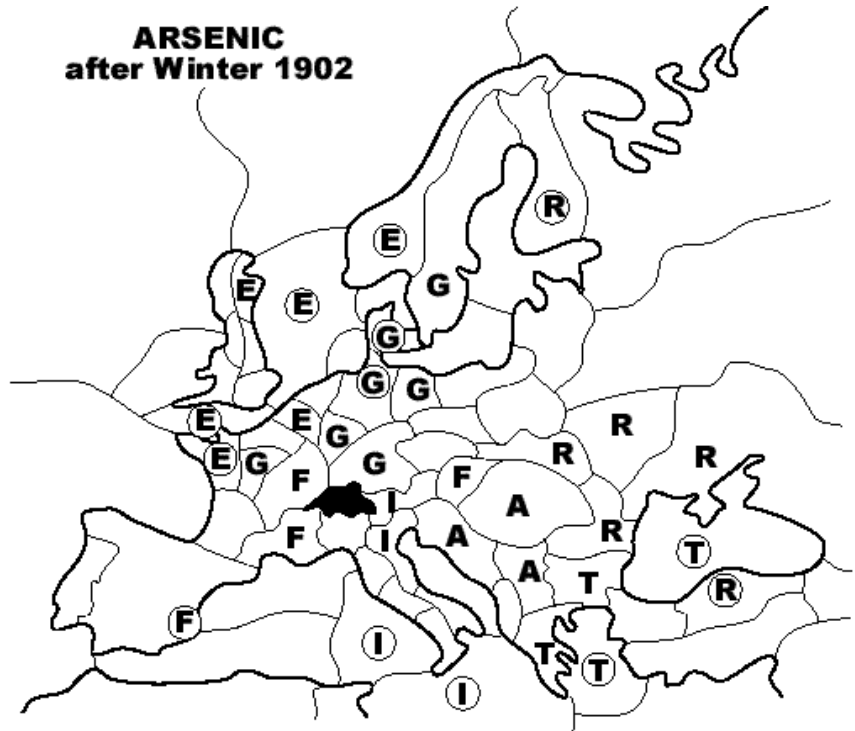
Bob Slossar, 14 Buck Hill Rd.,
Huntington CT 06484

Jim O'Kelley, 664 W. Irving Park
Road #I-6, Chicago IL 60613

Next Deadline: October 31

Boo!

ARSENIC
after Winter 1902



Press

GM to Arsenics: Fair warning to all: because Terry finally did send me all the accumulated, unprinted 1902 press, there may be items in here that are outdated or don't make sense. (In fact, I guarantee that any press you guys write will contain items that don't make sense.) Also, there are plenty of press songs, and I'm leaving them unattributed for the time being.

Boob to Farts: I decided to just go with ALL my press. If the glove doesn't fit, you must acquit.

GM to Farts: You are all just soooooo blessed...

Boob to Nurse Ilsa: The cute Ilsa I knew became a doctor (Charlotte isn't reading this, is she?). Are you her? I show my Boob to anyone but my tushy only to people I know. Don't pay any attention to the Toadfather, he doesn't know hairy arms from stunning beauty.

GMS to Boob: That's the Sex Ghod you're talking about, buster, not to mention my Toad. Step lightly or incur my wrath.

Steve to Jim-Bob: Can you please explain to me the hobby's propensity to use the term "Ghod"? What's a Ghod? Are we discussing a routine deity reference here, or is there something funny going on? I figure you would know.

Eccentric Uncle to Chummy Nephew: No Shirt is soooo five minutes ago. Get over it.

GM to Eccentric: Who was that, Don Henley? "The big, bad world don't owe you shit..."

GMS to Italy: I happen to adore "no shirts".

Italy to GMS: You satisfied the Three Stooges last time, and left me all cold and damp? Sniffle ...

Daf to Duckie: Ooohh, Aaahh, Sweetheart. Once again we are together in the pages of a szine.

ARSENIC press continues

Just the rustle of the photocopied pages is enough to get me warm and tingly all over. Quack for me riiiiiiight?... there. Yes! Yes!! Bill me Baby!

Italy to GMS: Aaaaaah, ooh, much better ... hmmm, lower, umm, a little more to the right ...

GM to Italy and Daf: Okay, okay, you two, knock it off. I can see you standing there reading your scripts. Porn just doesn't work on radio.

Boob to Failed Prognosticator
Emmert: I had McGwire for 69 or 70 from early in the season, you can look it up! My "Season of Monica Lewinsky" side of my brain had it for 69, obviously. Since McGwire made it to 70, what does that mean for poor Bill?? Care to improve your prognostication credentials? Nah, you'd just screw them up even worse.

GMS to Boobish Prognosticator:
Does "prognosticator" mean you can make yourself disappear?

Pete to Boob: I didn't try to guess the number, but I was betting McGwire would break the record. What surprised me was how far back Ken Griffey finished. (And I may get slapped for that comment

Supply Centers Held as of Winter 1902

Austria	bud	tri	ser	.	.	.	.	.	3
England	lon	lvp	edi	nwy	bel	bre	.	.	6
France	mar	por	spa	vie	.	.	.	.	4
Germany	ber	kie	mun	hol	den	par	swe	.	7
Italy	rom	ven	nap	tun	.	.	.	.	4
Russia	mos	war	stp	sev	rum	ank	.	.	6
Turkey	con	smy	bul	gre	.	.	.	.	4

now that we have a Seattle fan in the household.)

Seattle Fan to Peter and Boob: Don't pity Jr., gentlemen. 50+ homers in a season is nothing to sneeze at.

(London): A new operetta opened at St Toadfather's Theater this week. Dubbed "It's a Wonderful (Short) Life," the story is a fantasy set in early Industrial Europe. Several monarchs of Europe are portrayed living happily among each other, with peace reigning throughout the continent. In one touching scene, Archduchess Katherine and Doge Donald (as in the Yosemite Sam song, "I can't get along, little Doge") are seen frolicking in French Tyrosine, marveling at the procession that goes by and exclaiming, "Bears and Frogs and Infidels, oh My!" When a duck quacks to cue Scene Three, King Faz waves to his fellow rulers and

sings, "The sun will come up, tomorrow," followed by "It's a Small World, After All." What moved this reviewer to tears was the carefully-rehearsed reply song bellowed out by his fellow rulers: the lovely evening serenade of "Stertorous pro cerebroid habeas" ("You have shit for brains"). Truly, the theme of world peace in THIS one is indeed "a fantasy for all Europe to experience!"

Turkey to Board: Mark your calendars for October 23. On that night, by little sister will be guest-starring on the new *Love Boat*. She'll be playing Tawny, a newlywed on her honeymoon with her professional wrestler husband. When her husband's tag-team partner shows up, the mayhem begins.

GM to (London) and Turkey: If you people keep this up, *DPS* will need an entertainment reporter. (Or,

DIPLOMATIC IMPUNITY SCOREBOARD (DIS), SOPHOMORE JINX EDITION

Fall 1902	And a good time was had by all ... er, some ... er, the Nazi-Anglo Pact.
Nazi-Anglo Pact	Say it ain't so, Winston.
Fassio's Resignation	DIS wants a recount.
France	Old DIS: Frog's legs. New DIS: Power Toad. Newer DIS: "You want fries widdat?"
Austria	Butcher of Budapest Battles Back in the B-B-Balkans
A Bohemia	Go away little block.
Huns	Bulking up on (foreign) growth hormone?
DPS	Done as only PJGIV knows how. (Errors? What errors? DIS didn't see no errors.)
GMS	DIS'll be right over with the ESL hunchbacks!

ARSENIC press continues

maybe with this level of performance, an Entertainment Tonight! reporter.)

GMS to GM: We sure as hell won't need a fashion editor.

Boob to Kitton: You know your very wish is my command... I just can't live up to "Billy Basher"'s sublime capabilities though. I'm really a fallen toady.

Daf to Kathy: Are you really going to let him call you kitton? My how the mighty have fallen.

Boob to Kitton: Milady, your knight in shining armor marches at double-time to your rescue!

Daf to Kathy: Back when long hair was in, Peter's was short. When drinking was in, he was a teetotaler. You wanna take a guess who the longhaired drunk guy in the corner is?

Butcher of Budapest to Tsar Slossarnov: I promised to behave, see how good I was this turn? — please, please let me keep you — I hate Turkey — I won't even eat it at Thanksgiving!

Austria to Old Friend: Now, Daf, that should give you quite an opportunity.

Old Friend to Old Friend: I wouldn't eat either one of them.

Pope to Hapsburg: Get down on all fours and bark like a dog. And after that, mix me a Virgin Mary and bring me a paper.

GM to GMS: Now, *that* should give you an even greater opportunity.

Daf to Golden Toady Two: You have done well for a weak-minded (but great-bodied) sex toy. Now you will strip nude and give me twenty jumping jacks, followed by forty-five hip thrusts. And no stopping after five like last time!

GMS to GM: I make my own opportunities.

Eccentric Uncle to Chummy Nephew, Part II: Speaking of slick tricks, tell us again about how you parlayed a practically fersure plus-two season into a minus-one turn. That warn't none of my doing, Ace.

Boob to Kitton: Yes, the Duck denied that his consummate genius play has been responsible for anything except ruining the game for everyone else. Byrne Opening? Yeah, right! I still wish we were beating Gary Behnen up instead. Then you could have been guaranteed he and the Duck would have been screaming.

"They Don't Know How to Love Chum"

Chum Magdalene:

I don't know why they hate me
Why they lie, why they cheat me
I've been stabbed, yes really stabbed
In these past few turns, when I've read the news
I've felt like Jack McHugh

I'm not sure how to take this
I don't know why they hate me
I'm the Chum, I'm just the Chum
I've won some games, drawn a few
But in this game of games
I've been P.U.

Should I N.M.R., should I quit the game
Should I run and hide, let them know my shame
I never thought I'd lose so fast — got no one to blame

Don't you think it's rather funny
I should be in this position
I'm the Chum, I've always been
So calm, so cool, no neighbor's fool
Hosing friend and foe
But here I blow

I never thought I'd lose so fast — I'm the one to blame

Yet if I find an ally
I might live, I might come back
I'm gonna fight, yes I'll fight
I'll wheel, I'll deal, I'll lie, I'll plea
I'll get down on my knees
I'll wear kneepads
I am the Chum
I am Shark Chum

GM to Boob: How can you put "Duck" and "consummate" in the same sentence and not fall apart laughing?

GMS to GM and Boob: I can!

Italy to Balkan Brouhaha: Flash'll be waiting, alright, with big, sharp, pointy teeth.

Boob to Faz: I honestly, honestly, feel most sorry about not being able to tell you of the need to abandon our plan in advance. I couldn't be sure that you wouldn't find it to your advantage to divulge our plan to the Duck. Don't worry, you'll survive, though you'll likely not forgive me easily.

Piedmont to Le Boob du Burgesse: And your subsequent moves haven't improved my estimation either.

ARSENIC press continues

Jim-Bob to Don: Don, Don, Don, what do you take me for? Fool me once, shame on you; fool me twice, shame on me. I decided to keep ALL the shame on YOU!

Budapest Butcher to Ill Italian: That's ill in the brain, right? When you open your mouth, I suggest you insert your foot — before you begin speaking. That will save you a lot of re-planning.

Italy to Austria: I'm no liar. If my tongue's on fire, it's 'cause I've got hot lips!

GMS to Italy: Can I hear an amen!

Insulting Italian to Da Commune: We are abjectly sorry if we insulted you all last month. We did not mean to do so. We meant only to insult Pete. Please accept our apology.

Communal Daf to Italian: I accept your apology. Be a little more careful with those insults, though. It's pretty close around here.

Commune-ist to Insultin': You certainly are abjectly sorry. But don't worry, looks aren't everything.

Follower to Cult Leader: Okay, Mr. Emmert, I bought the Nikes and purple cloak like you told me. What's next?

Corriere della Sera, Roma: In a series of news events and plot twists practically too sordid for even this experienced reporter to stomach, informed sources have come forth to denounce the depravity recently admitted to by the Butcher of Budapest. Amidst much handwringing over the lascivious and lurid content of his sex-soaked tome, Special Grand Inquisitor Mark "the Shark" Fassio stoutly defended the report's legal standing and libidinous urges, stating, "The proof of the pudding is in the eating." No one from his office would return calls to explain what he meant by that. (Leaks from his office continue to suggest that SGI Fassio has an unnatural and not entirely healthy fascination with the eating of various exotic puddings. Usually from the bare skin of scantily clad interns from Southern California who've had a morality bypass operation.)

Government alchemists have confirmed that the "stains" left on the Butcher's apron are actually Hungarian Goulash wogs left by the Butcher and the Tsar during one of the starr-crossed lovers' illicit trysts. The odds that the stains were not the Butcher's are estimated at

Radio Clash

Radio Clash 1: We shall now play a few tunes to titillate the masses. Crack the lyrics and identify the tunes, lads and lasses; then sing along!

[Song titles and artists nextish. —PJG]

Radio Clash 2

Wake up Burgess
I think I got something' to say to you
It's late '01 and I really
should be... movin' through
I know you keep us amused
but you know you've just been used
Oh Jim-Bob, I couldn't have lied ... any more
They made a first-class fool out of thee
Walking' straight into ol' Gay Pare e
Black stole your city, and that's what really hurts...

Radio Clash 3

Well they... blew up the Grandma down in Philly last night
Well they... took away her capitol, too
Down in the... Balkans they're getting' ready, for a fight
Gonna see what them vulture boys can do
(chorus) Everything gets taken, Kathy, that's a fact
But baby everything they take, someday comes back
Put your boxing gloves on
Fix your armies up pretty
And go kick some butt down in Vienna City ... (harmonica) ...

Radio Clash 4

Really don't mind, if we take England out
His word's but a whisper, in paranoia, a shout
Faz builds up his fleets, but is lost where to sail
His tactics are useless, his strategy will fail
So he sets himself up on the co-o-o-oast
But his country will soon become to-o-o-oast
And his "big-name rep" will be hard-pricked
And he'll sink deep ... like a brick

Radio Clash 5

Springtime, for Embers, in Germany
Knife blades are flashing, once more
He's marching to a faster pace
Look out, here comes the mid-game race!
Springtime, for Steven, and Kriegsmarine
Another ship is sailing today
Springtime for Stevie, and animals
Means that Sea Lion is roaring today!

Radio Clash continues on page 6

ARSENIC press continues

Radio Clash continues from page 5

Radio Clash 6

...As the game rolled slowly past, Italy found himself alone
 Surrounded by neighbors he thought were his friends
 He found himself further and further from his home
 ...And I guess Don lost his way
 There were oh so many roads
 He was livin' to stab and stabbin' to live
 Never worried about truth or even having Boob toad...
 (chorus) Into the wind, He was (Old) Fartin' into the wind
 He was once at 5 but soon will be barely alive,... Fartin' into the wind...

Radio Clash 7

Stop! Wait a minute, Mr. E-Mail
 Waaaaaiit, Mr. E-Mail
 Mr. E-mail, could you check for me
 Is there a message from the Turk, Jimmy?
 Please Mr. E-mail check the queue for me
 Jim hasn't written since Febru-ary!!...
 So many weeks have passed me by
 Mr. E-Mail I just wanna cry
 O'Kelley was prolific, he said so straight out
 But for months now he's been in a drought
 He's cutting back notes, he says he must
 Mr. E-Mail, his notes are a bust
 Please Mr. E-mail, check it today
 Tell me the Turk has rejoined the fray...
 You got to send me something, send me something, oh yeah
 send me something, send me something...

Radio Clash 8

Spent my days, with neighbors unkind
 Built my stuff and moved out, with a whine
 Made up my mind, to make a new start
 Goin' to Galicia with an achin' in my heart
 Williams told me there's a girl down there
 With fire in her veins and barbed wire, in her hair
 Took my chances with the Western Two
 Never let 'em tell you that they're honest too
 Oh, the south was red, and yellow too
 No one who followed the map, could ever discount a "screw" (oh yeah)
 Flat lands and the seas, with a tremblin' shake
 Units of the Tsar, begin to awake...((continue))

approximately 1 in 7,352,788,000, leading the her newly retained legal counsel Steve "Call Me Johnny" Emmert to quip, "See? That practically proves she's not guilty!" In deflecting additional questions regarding the inappropriate relationship between his client and the Tsar, Emmert cast aspersions on everyone else's manhood, most notably the Sultan's. "Hey," he said in a carefully leaked NFP press release, "Is it just me, or has anybody else noticed how the Sultan sucks on those cigars? It's disgusting, you know? I mean — and I'm not suggesting anything here — but where do you suppose he sticks the ends of those things before he puts them into his mouth? And why does he always strap on those knee pads first? It's mighty suspicious, I tell you. The SGI will probably have to offer him immunity — and an injection of penicillin — before he'll come clean, but we'd really like to talk to him about that cigar."

To date, the Butcher has fought off all cries that she resign amidst charges of reckless behavior and loss of personal integrity, stating that she must think first of her pension, er family. Surrounded by religious leaders from who she is seeking spin control with the public and questionable spiritual guidance having to do with crystals and the Comet PJGIV-Hmm Bop, the Butcher answered questions about her illicit relationship with the Tsar in typical fashion.

"You morons! I said I never had relations with 'that man'. Have you seen the Tsar? You call that a man? Schmucks! Besides, we sort of just groped each others' centers in the hallway, I wouldn't exactly call it a real relationship. I mean, had I cut his heart out and fed it to

the Sultan, now that would have been relations. Hooboy." Growing visibly aroused during the statement, the Butcher was quickly escorted away by Steve "CMJ" Emmert. Vowing once again to do "everybody necessary" to put the

issue behind her and the Austrian people as soon as possible, she immediately launched unprovoked nasty attacks on the completely bewildered populations of Croatia, Montenegro, Albania and Italy.

ARSENIC press continues

The Tsar remains in seclusion from the media at this time, issuing desultory and contradictory statements, accusations and disclaimers in a half-hearted and aimless manner, and claiming that, just because he has 'big hair' he is not a gigolo. He further claims that, prior to the sex-change operation, he was Anastasia.

Belatedly, Le Boob du Burgesse, who ignited the current constitutional crisis by going to Special Grand Inquisitor Fassio back in January with secret tapes of his intimate conversations with the Butcher proving low crimes and misdemeanors in high places, continues to work the daytime talk circuit while he peddles his tale of misdoings searching for a book deal and fending off requests that he appear nude in the neo-royalist publication, *Monarchy Today*. Speaking through an agent, du Burgesse said, "If I only had a brain, I'd be burning Williams in this stupid press release instead of it going the other way 'round."

Williams, uncharacteristically, remains unavailable for comment.

GM to *Corriere*: Sez who??

Duck to Flash: What the hell is a Mitteleuropa strategy, and what does it have to do with me? The "Western plan"? Kathy's right — you are off like last week's buttermilk. How bizarre.

GM to Duck: Did you drive here in a Chevy '59? Buy the rights...

Mochamachine to GMS: Care to plug me in? I'll freshen that espresso for you in no time ...

GMS to Machine: I'd rather have you froth my cream.

Golden Toady TWO to Golden Toady ONE: I got to hand it to you. After nearly two decades of

rivalry, you've finally bested me to take the coveted monicker of Golden Toady One. The things some people won't do to win an award! Henceforth, I must look for guidance from the GMS to otherwise worship abjectly on her altar in some more creative way. (I'd best shut up now, I'm starting to sound like du Burgesse.)

GMS to Golden Toady: I am learning, painfully at times, that toadys and relationships don't mix. You are officially the one, the only, and the most-loved Golden Toady.

GM to heavens above: Oh, the agony! Williams concedes the battle yet wins the war! "Agony... Pain that cuts like a knife!"

Adam Smith's Journal: Free trade demands that Karl Marx be allowed to ply his useless theories in Paris. All decent intellectuals are warned to stay way clear.

Karl Marx's Journal: MONDAY — Italy is lovely this time of year, and I certainly hit the jackpot when I came looking for mindless despotism. What a fertile environment for the flowering of my dialectics. I only see one problem. For some reason, this pope has enchanted the people with the opiate of Catholicism. How can I inspire them to revolt, even against such a hopeless leader? I'd better face facts and try another country. Maybe Austria. I hear the people there are basically leaderless. Surely they will see the wisdom of my thoughts. I hope I get there before the they will see the wisdom of my thoughts. I hope I get there before the Italian army pollutes their national conscience with the same mind-numbing nonsense that has worked so effectively against the Italian people. Come on, Groucho; we're going to the train station.

Duck to ENG/FRA: It wasn't a "last minute defection", it was the "latest infection". And it wasn't my fault, it was Austria's. I feel so dirty.

Boob to Junk Bonds: If there is a novice in the game, you're it. You're also FAR from the best player. Anyone arrogant enough to even hint at such a status for oneself shows himself to be the lowest form of Milken swine. PS if you're not reading my press, why are you responding to it. I still have yet to tell you anything of use while your mind is like an open book to me.

Red to Thud Rooter: O'Kelley looks like hobbit material to me. Don't we have a door somewhere that needs opening? Unless of course it's an iron door — then we'll use Don.

Boob to Duck: You'd think since I could read so well, I'd be a better Diplomacy player. Ms. O'Kelley is so... well, limited, isn't she.

Mies van der Rohe to Boob: My son, ordinarily, when one builds a structure, one must pay close attention to the true needs of the space. Putting one extra decoration with no meaning renders the entire structure irrelevant. Unfortunately, when dealing with the structure of this szine and the participation of Shark Chum like Ms. O'Kelley, less is still more, but how much less you need to have enough is far more than one would ordinarily guess. You have my blessing, my son, to continue to build the perfect structure.

Boob to Mies: Thank you, thank you, sir. I shall always be in your debt.

Daf to O'Kelley: So, how old are you anyway. You are of age, aren't you? I wouldn't want to be convicted of contributing to the delinquency of a juvenile.

ARSENIC press continues

Idiot Italian to Brain-Dead

Leprechaun: At least I didn't screw up the first adjudication I've touched in months and months and months, unlike some GM I could name.

GM to Idiot: So that's why your game reports were always so slimy—you were groping them.

Boob to Squid: That's it, the Aegean Sea is beautiful all year round. I'm sure you'll love it. Those ships need all the ink you can muster.

Tallman, Burgess, Emmert, Fassio, Williams, and Gaughan to O'Kelley, Caruso, and Slossar: We're from the governments, and we're here to help you.

Boob to Duck: You useless, slimy, greasy fowl carcass, how am I to meet Mr. van der Rohe's standards if you keep forgetting to write. I'm not going to banter with Ms. O'Kelley all afternoon. I tell you, when 5:00 p.m. comes, back or no back, I'm pluggin' him.

Daf to O'Kelley: Back in the good ol' days, we used to have wild parties. Staying up till dawn, beer cans in the potted plants, and little green-haired punks running around. But now it's a rare time we can make it past 9:30. It may not have been the Golden Age of Press, but it was the Golden Age of Cons.

The Lone Presser sez: "Boob wants Daf!"? Forget it, Daf already got boobs...

Daf to Boob: You got me—now what??

Boob to Virgin: I know you, you know me...

Sally Ann's Dad to Boob: She's graduated out of that Barney stuff. Now it's *Lady and the Tramp* ("Belle Notte") and *Toy Story* (Randy Newman rules!).

Austria to Turkey: It's been such a long time, I forgot what a stud Bob was.

Italy to Turkey: Austria lies.

Boob to Kitton: Would you join me at the O'K Corral? I will shoot a woman if I have to, but I'd rather have you do it. I know you're a crack shot.

Tsar's Lady to French Fried Fool: The Ill Italian wants me to tell you — your days are numbered. The Tsar tells me he is jealous that you are in my home. I have therefore decided a brainless loose cannon has to go. I hear the German is lonely, maybe you can visit him.

GM to Boob: Sounds as though you'll have to woo some other gal. Tell me, do you always invite your dates to witness bloodshed and violence? Does it ever work?

Boob to Green Eyed Lady: Ms. O'Kelley, you have the most gorgeous eyes, how come the rest of you is Green as well? Have you been living one of Captain Pike's fantasies??

GM to Boob: Oh, fer cryin' out loud, Jim-Bob... you've just been out of the dating scene for too long, haven't you? *Never* mention another man when trying to make a pickup. (Er... well, maybe when you're a guy trying to pick up a guy, that rule doesn't apply...)

Portugal to Tunis: Do you have a pint... er, a point yet?

Boob-Sauron to Edi BeerCan: Thanks for leaving me a full cellar of fine beers. I shall live up to the stunning reputation you mastered in ghodstoo.

Spirit of BirSauron to Game: If you kill off Jim-Bob early, I'm going to sign you all up as members of the Church of the Dead Stay Dead.

You'll never get a second chance if you commit this heinous sin.

Virginia Beach to Port Orchard: You can't fold now! You're within 200 issues of Jim-Bob! C'mon, how about a little perseverance?

Boob to Toad: Did anyone ask about the counterfeiting? I gotta be careful around Marshal Earp. By the way, I always follow all of my Toadfather's lessons, especially the ones about writing press...

Real Boob Press: There was more pressure on the fabric of the woman's bra than there was during the bar exam, thought the man from across the bar. The bra in question was cupped lovingly around two the roundest, most delectable orbs this side of the moon. Ripe full cantaloupe with bing cherries the size of golf balls at the tip—and why was he thinking about fruit salad at a time like this? Like Don Williams getting drunk and screwing up his orders three seasons in a row, the man's slow journey towards the woman in question was inevitable.

Boob Meat to Shark Chum: The size and brittleness of your teeth doesn't concern me either. It won't be my bra that will be stifling the Duck's quacker. Olive oil will not be required either.

GMS to Boob: Don't knock what you've never tried, or been asked to try, or even had mentioned in the same breath as an invitation to try.

Boob to Byrned Fire: Kathy, get me a fire extinguisher! Terry tells me I need to hose off my press!!

French Cojones to Flaccid Chopped Chum: Get up yet? I thought not...

Rome to GM: Elie Wiesel? How did he get in here?

ARSENIC press continues

GM to Rome: Given the low-brow nature of this bunch, by mistake, I'd guess.

Postal Service to Information Superhighway: I have rules against letter passing as mail fraud... it's all too easy to pass letters, you're just so ignorant!

Boob to Kitton: It really wasn't fair to leave you out of it.

Steam to Chum: I still think the little sheep cards look like goats.

Boob to Emmert: I believe every word you said, I'm just disappointed in your lack of vision...

Szine to Szine: It's all Williams' fault!

Boob to IT: Tag, you're IT!

57th Whatever to Cossack: Don't have trouble with the woman part. Or the grandmother part. I'm sort of choking, though, on the "good" part.

Boob to Guty Viscera of Entrail Detritus (alias Shark Chum): Darest thou lie to my Kitton? Listen thou to the flapping duckbill? Oh, sir, you shall pay! We have appropriately taken your scummy behavior to a few more levels of sludge... Guty viscera of entrail Detritus, that's God with viscera and entrails in the middle.

GMS to Boob: Oh, enough already.

Gandhi to Board: Madame and gentlemen, I urge you to settle your differences peacefully. Please put an end to this terrible war! In fact, I think I'll stop eating until there is peace in Europe.

GM to Gandhi: You'd be doing the world a greater service if you'd have the Boob for dinner.

Venice to GM: Ewwwww ... gwoss!

Boob to Marquis of Queensbury: I need that duel with O'K, now!

Why don't you clear out of Paris for me!!

Boob to Toadfather: You gotta print our press, Terry, you just gotta!

Daf to Terry: Some of this press was bad enough the first time Terry. I know you haven't seen this in a long time, and you're probably going to blame the computer, but really?... (Don Williams Memorial Ellipses)

Kipling to plagiarist: Look, I never wrote any such drivel, nor did I base "Gunga Din" on it. That was something T. S. Eliot sent me as a joke. You should see the parody of "The Waste Land" I sent him. What a hoot! Anyway, can't you people even leave dead guys alone? Go bother Andrew Wyeth.

GMS to Kipling: I didn't know you two knew the works of Stephen King.

Boob Muses: I can dump on the Duck again for his loose lips, but my ship has been the Titanic! Why not...

Boob to Duck: How could you say that?? Only me (or maybe Sludge Olsen) could be so lame!

Boob to GMS: Welcome, boss lady! Can you keep this crowd of misfits and derelicts from falling down? We could all be poster children for the famous "I've fallen and I can't get up" commercials.

GMS to Boob: It's my opinion that a whip, a nice paddle, and knowing how to use them wisely are all I'll need for this group.

Tongue twister of the month: How much wood would a woodchuck chuck if a woodchuck could chuck the Boob's butt clean out of Vienna? Three times fast, please.

Boob to Kitton: Mets all the way in the REAL playoffs, sorry the imposters didn't make the playoffs

in the "other" league. As I write this, my Giants have messed up completing a regular season brilliant comeback in the "other" league though for the last day of the season, but we still have the one game shot. I'll count on fellow Giants fan (heh, heh, heh — what happened to those Dodgers, Pete?), GM Pete, to bring us all up to date on what happened in the most recent days.

Pete to Boob: Those Dodgers have sold out and fucked up and lazed about enough that even I, the Ultimate Dodger Fan, am on the brink of throwing up my hands and becoming an A's fan. (God knows I've hated the Giants too long to join them.)

Boob to O'K: You didn't show up for our O'K Corral showdown. I presume that means that you're yellow... what a guess!! Yesssssss, he scores again!!!!

Calhamer's Emissary to Calhamer: At least we're spelling your name right. Nine times out of ten, when a dipper tries to drag you into our fray, they spell the Founder's name wrong. While coloring the Italian's units Yellow is correct, and keeping Bloodsucker's units Red is correct, O'K cannot have the green units. If you do, they represent the color of his face from nausea on playing with us.

Boob to All-Powerful, Omniscient Faz: Guess wrong again? I think you should just put me out of my misery, I can't seem to avoid misleading you.

Boob to Kitton: I hope O'Kelley wised up about his adjustments!

GMS to Boob: He's a quick study. After we explained that the padding goes on the *front* of the knee, he made the change fairly quickly.

ARSENIC press continues

Boob to board: I'll stand up and say that I didn't vote for the separation and admit trying to manipulate you guys into not going for one either. I recognize that I lost the battle. That's when I stopped negotiating since I didn't really have anything else to say until I saw how these came out. Now I have lots to say (oh, shut up, Don!).

Boob to GM: Thanks, Pete, for going with this. You're the perfect person for this group.

GM to Boob: Hey! GM abuse is for *The Abyssinian Prince*; let's not have it here!

Germany to GMS: Thank you for the lovely invitation, but my wife would have me executed. See, I've spent several months losing more than 20 pounds. Do you have any idea how many calories there are in a dollop of whipped cream?

Daf to Silver Tongued Devil: It's glad you are in this game, Mr. Emmert. It's good to see that you are involved in wholesome pursuits as well as your legal career! How are things going in your life these days? More than 20 pounds! That's great! But I never indulge in whipped cream unless I have some sort of exercise in mind.

Steve to Pete: I like the DIS; I just hope I never make the list myself.

Money ---> Board: You guys are too easy to dupe. This is gonna be cake.

KC to Faz: I hear you change your mind as much as I do. So tell me, are we on the same team?

(Lon) These builds may surprise some of you (most of you, no doubt), but a monarch can't be too safe in this day and age. In reality, these are pretty sedate. We just hope vile rumors of a "pending naval race" are unjustified, as are

the rumors of "green expansionism westward." But just to be safe, we shall play the trump card that has saved England since time began — her navy. Today, fleets; tomorrow, armies! No nation should be forced to cover asymmetrically. Potential vultures—take note.

Williams to board: There he goes again. Hey, if ever you wanted to know how Mark got monickered "Flash", you need look no farther than his last month's press offering — and dare say I, this month's too — otherwise known as the monthly "dishing o' the blarney". This is nothing — Flash could sell contacts to Stevie Wonder.

A Young Man's Diplomacy Primer, Part IV: When the fox preaches, look to the geese.

Daf to Faz: If I remember correctly, you used to play with tanks—real ones! Congratulations on the promotion. You must be doing something right.

Guilty Musical Pleasures #2: Come On Eileen (Dixie's Midnight Runners).

Boob Ponders the O'K Corral: No, I'm sorry, I won't shoot a woman in the back. It just ain't fair. I'm waiting for the Marquis of Queensbury to define the rules.

Wyatt Earp to Boob: What you have to do is be creative. Remember the time I stopped the run on the bank? The bovine creation must be protected and they're dumb as rocks. The junk bond guy is the perfect foil...

Boob to Wyatt: I must have missed it, how did you stop the run on the bank?

Wyatt to Boob: The crowds were ornery and fierce as they surrounded the bank demanding their money. Imagine Kitton and the Duck demanding satisfaction

from O'Kelley? Well, they were three times as bad. No one thought I should go-a anywhere near 'em. I grabbed some empty money sacks, a deputy, a big wagon, and a driver. I went out to the old iron works, grabbed us up some slugs the size of \$20 gold pieces in the sacks, and me and the deputy rode shotgun back to the bank. I yelled, "In here, pull in here, back those plugs up!" I told the bank officer at the door to clear the crowd, "I got about a million bucks here! Now get these loco jugheads out o' the way and tell your boys to pass the word that we've got a million dollars aboard and that any gent who thinks he can find a better bank to put his money into to go and find it. But he'd better be damned careful he don't get hit over the head and robber while he's doing it. I'm staying here to guard this money."

Boob to Wyatt: Wow, then what happened?

Wyatt to Boob: I brought the iron slugs, laid 'em on the counter for a while and then put 'em in the vault. The crowd disbursed real quick like. But I guess I'm growin' old when I got to ride shotgun on a lot of bridge washers from an iron works just to convince a lot of damned fools.

Boob to Wyatt: I see, I see, I know what I must do. Thank you, Marshal!

Wyatt to Boob: No problem, kid, any time.

Daf to Old Farts: I vote we disallow Jim-Bob press every other season — especially when he's talking to himself. Anyone with me? It would save wear and tear on Pete's grammar checker!!

Pete to all: And that's it for thish. Thank you, folks, and drive home safely!

Dead Poets Con

by Daf Langley [and Pete G.]

“This can’t be happening. My first house con in years and I feel lousy. I’m going to be coughing up a lung with guests around to watch!” These thoughts and others in the same vein were running through my head Friday [Sep. 11] as I waited for the first of the guests to arrive.

We weren’t really expecting anyone much before 9:00, so I decided to jump in the shower at 8:30. As I was coming out of the shower, I heard voices from beyond my (mercifully and thoughtfully) closed door. The first of our guests had arrived and I was wet and unclothed. Mark and Karen Lew and Jason and Gwen Bergmann were getting the grand tour and arrived at my door just as I was dressing.

The others got a game going in the kitchen while Cathy, Gwen, and I sat in the living room and played Encore. It’s a game for two teams, and the object is to come up with songs that satisfy the word or category on a card that’s drawn. This leads to some great times, and often to total brain lock. [Example: after the teams have sung bits of eight or nine songs with the word “hill”, one side gets stumped... and then proceeds to think of songs with the word “hill” all weekend!]

While I had great fun laughing and playing this game, I was keeping one ear tuned to the door. The doorbell rang and I was off like a shot to welcome my wonderful Golden Toady, Don Williams. I flung open the door and scared the shit out of the pizza delivery boy. I then compounded that by having my entire face fall into disappointment as I muttered, “Oh, it’s only the pizza guy.” I don’t think we’ll be ordering pizza from that place again for a while.

I came back to my seat and continued playing. Don did eventually arrive and it was wonderful to see him again. He brought his wife Stephanie with him, and it was great to be able to meet her finally. We ended Friday night with a huge game of Encore in the living room. One of those moments that define a con but that you can never duplicate.

Saturday games were varied. We played many games of Settlers of Catan with the various expansions, [with Gwen and Julienne Malecôt teaching the game to newcomers Maureen Gibson and Richard Weiss]. There was a marathon game of Titan [Clark Millikan eventually beating Jason, Mark, and Pete]; [games like Guillotine and Elfengold with Rich Irving and James Bailey]; a game of Junta [where the Bergmanns, Don, Pete, and Karen shifted alliances like Dip players]; and even a game of Pit [where Richard had about a dozen of us—even Stephanie Williams—shouting at each other over the kitchen table]. [Cathy’s friend Sally Buchanan watched it all with amusement and Sally Ann ran in and out mooching snacks.]

The highlights on Saturday were: the walk I took with Don and Stephanie; glancing up and catching Peter or Cathy’s eye and sharing a look; the wonderful game of Encore that all the women played in my bedroom.

We went to breakfast on Sunday with everyone who had spent the night, then sent Don and Stephanie on their way home. Back in our home, the guys (Pete, Rich, Jim, Eric Voogd and eventually Richard Weiss) played more games; we got the house back to ourselves by 8 p.m. A wonderful party with wonderful new friends and cherished old friends. Let’s do it again next year!

[Pete’s column continues from page 1]

But we’re far enough from dense urban development that we can lay on our back deck at night and watch stars through the pine branches. And when it’s dark—including this morning, as I got in the car—I can hear Great Horned Owls calling. I’ve seen Barn Owls and Red-Tailed Hawks within a mile of the house. Just about the time I give up and figure I’m in Middle America, there’s a tarantula on the porch.

I’m banding hawks every other weekend; it’s hard to know how to dress because the weather at the banding stations in the Marin Headlands (20 miles west of us) is about three climates removed from that in Clayton.

And yes, I’m commuting to work. 35 miles in 45 minutes, all of it on two-lane roads. I’ll probably get to where I can recognize the cattle; I can already identify individuals from the Palomino herd on Vasco Road.

Pete Gaughan

Baseball Trivia

On July 25, 1999, George Brett, Carlton Fisk, and Nolan Ryan could well be inducted into the Hall of Fame. This would be the first time three players were elected in their first year of eligibility. (Ryan is a lock; I’m betting that Brett will be elected, but Fisk won’t until 2000.)

Dale Murphy and Robin Yount are also among those eligible for the first time this year and may well be elected on future ballots.

Years with more than one first-ballot enshrinee:
 1962 Bob Feller, Jackie Robinson
 1982 Hank Aaron, Frank Robinson
 1989 Johnny Bench, Carl Yastrzemski
 1990 Jim Palmer, Joe Morgan