A Letter to Pogo
(IN THE STYLE OF WALT KELLY)

Peggy Edwards
Okeefenokee Extra Special

Dear Pogo,

This here crittur, name of Porkypine, just wish to convey its deep apprelishun for the top-notch time that was had by all at yo' fish-fry and stomp.

Churchy and Porky (name of me) had us a humdinger of a confab on the way home. Mr. Racketty Coon deposited me on my own everiovin' doorstep about middle day, safe, sound, and chonk full of happiness and cinnamon-type balls. All ten toe-bones is gettin' a lil' rest; but they also claims they had fun, even if'n they was throwed out of their natural-born joints.

A pretty sizeable hunk of excitingments was carryin' on when I got home. Lumpy Looie's lil' tad nephew had upped and got hiself lost in the batter of a raisin cake, an' Miz Frog kep' on a' fishin' out raisins a' stead of her own everlovin' tad. Man, how terribobble it would've been if'n she hadn't cotched him. Ol' Looie was beginnin' to get quite a worry on him.

Li'l Grundoon, the groun'chuck chile, stil' has the bitin'est set of natural-born tooth-bones I ever seed. -Bit ol' Albert's ceegar in two places and guv it a mortal ache.

Miz Manzelle Hepzibah and Boll Weevil enjoyed the circus magnet's perloo—you know ol' P. T. Bridgeport the circus feller with the drummer named Floyd, don't you?

Write to me when ol' Homer Pidgeon starts his south to north mail delivery in the summer. I will send you postern card from the East Okeefenokee when I go over for a couple weeks to visit my Uncle Baldwin.

Profound reegards from
Porky-Pine, Esq.
(writ by han'.)

"Button, Button—"

Skip Bloemker

To the unobservant, buttons are buttons. But to those who know them, buttons are as different as people. The common work-a-day buttons are round, flat, and white. Their centers are pierced by two to four small holes used for sewing them on garments. This everyday group earns its living by holding together the various, ordinary garments of human beings.

Less conservative are the middle class buttons which sport bright and varied colors and are of different sizes and shapes. These flashy buttons amuse themselves by playing follow the leader on pretty blouses and dresses.

The aristocrats of the button clan are often made of gold, silver, crystal, and other precious substances. They try to out-do one another by adorning themselves with rhine-stones and pearls which flash and sparkle on chic, high fashion clothes.

Members of a dying generation are the shoe buttons. The dictates of fashion occasionally bring them back into existence as members of the fashionable clan, but their number is steadily decreasing.

Other members of the button tribe are the collar button, the elevator button, and the black sheep of the family—the Dewey button.

Buttons, like hobos and children, are very fond of wandering. They also like to play games. Some of the buttons' favorite games are called “Popping Off,” “Hide and Come Seek,” and “Who Misses Me?” Buttons most enjoy their playtime when the button-wearer is already fifteen minutes late for an important engagement. It is at such times that buttons are often replaced by safety pins.

To the unobservant, safety pins are safety pins. But to those who know them . . .

Spring

Carol Manwaring

Scenery is no longer ethereal. The pleasant mystery of the white is over. There is an awkward stage of transition everywhere. There is no heraldry of summer. Not yet. There is no cheery promise of that which is to come; only the ugly reminder of that which was beautiful a few days ago. White crystals are now black mud, unpleasant and inconvenient. Trees, whose branches had been laid barren for the explicit purpose of receiving the bounty of winter, are barren now without purpose. Their branches hang limply, overcome by the weight of the struggling sap. A few bilious yellow crocuses try to shout the message. Lacking the volume needed to make themselves heard, they surrender to their environment. The brown, patchy grass surrounding them wilts their exuberance. Unhappy robins and cardinals, dirty, muted in color and voice, pick their ways distastefully across mires that once were lawns. They find food scant and tasteless. The clingy grass, insulted by its aggressors' appearance, is impervious to making itself more desirable.

Earthworms, tricked by the concealing beauty of the night, lie listlessly, pink and bloated on sidewalks. This is the beginning of Spring.

Then, suddenly, the grass seems to resent the tweaking of the birds. Its color rises, and its blades bristle upward. The silt of the puddles finds a certain affection for the rocks at the bottom and
clings to them. The remains furnish little mirrors in which the birds realize their sad condition. They preen because the social life of bird-dom is quickening its tempo. More visitors from the South arrive daily. Song fests have more volume. The olive-drab forsythia, wishing to attract these desirable tourists, turns a brilliant yellow. Realizing the new amicability of old enemies, tree and sap unite in a common purpose. Delicate green sprouts grace rain-washed branches. Curious crimson tulips venture a look around, followed closely by shy hyacinths, who can no longer compose themselves.

NEVER LAND

Walter R. Miller

Before me glows a studded sky,  
A shining star, a journey of a day.  
An isle of joy, of trees, of birds,  
Of golden suns which never set,  
Of silver nights which never die.

Beside me hangs a tiny bell,  
Which tinkles softly in my ear.  
The sound commands my loyalty,  
My everlasting adoration.

Across the sky  
A graceful ship sails by.

Before me steams a musty swamp,  
A pit of mire, a journey of a day.  
An isle of sadness, sin and toil,  
Of suns which never set,  
Of nights which never end.

Around me hangs a brazen bell,  
Which clanks and jangles in my ear.  
The scream of horn,  
The wall of sax,  
My blood pounds within me.

I glance back toward the studded sky,  
The shining star, the journey of a day,  
The isle of joy, of trees, of birds,  
Of golden suns which never set,  
Of silver nights which never die.

And as I gaze,  
Across the sky a graceful ship sails by.

Democracy

Roland Becker

OUR ship dropped anchor in Phaleron Bay late in the evening of a buoyant August day. All was still except for the metronomic beating of the water against the sides of the ship. The stars seemed near as I leaned on the rail and gazed at the multitude of glittering lights before me. The shoreline was marked by the streetlights of the boulevard lining it.

Over to the left, the city of Piraeus was visible. A carpet of lights swept inland and seemed to disappear into the sky. And there, above the carpet of twinkling rays of light, as if on a cloud, aloft from reality, stood the most famous of ancient structures. The Parthenon, with its Doric columns gleaming in the lights of the modern era, portrayed the beauty of classic Athens—Athens, the capitol of the nation that had seemed crushed under oppression time and time again, only to reappear; Athens, the city whose history was summarized by Sylla when he said, “The inflated skin may be dipped under water, but cannot be sunk.”

It was my privilege to walk the streets of this ancient city, to wander in the footsteps of the great statesmen of twenty-five centuries ago. I visited Pryx Hill, where the ancient Athenian Assembly met. I wonder how many times Socrates spoke from its orator’s platform. I visited a triangular rock, known as Areopagus, or Mars Hill, from which Saint Paul delivered his message to the Athenians. I visited the Acropolis.

It would be folly to attempt to describe the beauty of this, the greatest of all citadels. It would be folly for one so lacking in wisdom to attempt to convey its history and its significance. Facts, such as “The Parthenon’s construction was started in 447 B.C. and was almost completed in 438 B.C.,” are too cold and impersonal. I would rather ask the reader to think of the Acropolis as a visible monument to the wisdom of the philosophical mind. I would rather ask the reader to think of it as an indestructible shrine to “Athens, the eye of Greece, mother of art and eloquence.” I would rather portray to the reader the realization that was mine, the realization that “I” am small and insignificant, but that “we” are great and mighty, and that “we” shall endure.