

# Winter Doldrums

by  
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It's January! It's cold; it's grey; it's raining...and it may even be snowing where you are (but, of course, not here in California!). Going to club meetings, going to the post office, going...anywhere, well, it's just not a pretty picture. Can't lounge on the patio, can't work in the yard, can't have a picnic. Even all the Christmas parties are over. *[sigh!]* It's winter.

Oh, God! You've got some 10 weeks of this. What to do! What to do! Hmmmmm, let's see...You could help the wife cut out all those dress patterns, or you could play cards with your brother-in-law (in 10 weeks, you'd have time for about 1,680 hands of gin rummy). You could paint the inside of the house, oil the cabinets and shampoo the carpets, maybe repot all the house plants.

But, what about all that hobby work you've been putting off or just haven't gotten around to? You know, that stack of correspondence from fellow collectors that you've been dusting around for the last three months. And, then, there are all those stacks and bundles of covers that need to be checked against what you already have in your albums. Maybe you need them; maybe they're dupes. What about those three albums that were designed to hold 600 covers each, but you've managed to stuff them with over 900? You could use some reorganizing there.

Yes, all those full-books that still need to be stripped, and, Oh!, what about the boxes you've slipped under the bed and in the closets that have been since ignored? *[reminds me of the late and lovable Warren Marshall. He would have auction lots, still unopened, years after purchasing them]*

*THIS* is the time to get caught up and get your collection squared away. Think about it. There are probably all sorts of hobby work that really need to be done. And they're not really 'chores'. It's your hobby! You do it because you enjoy it...so get going!

Since you have so much time ahead of you (10 more weeks of winter!), you can correspond, sort, organize, mount covers in albums, strip full-books, and all the usual pleasant hobby activities, but, I'm going to suggest a couple of more *unusual* endeavors.

First, if you maintain cover lists, now would be a great time to list those unlisted covers. If you don't currently maintain any lists, why not do one? You can start a listing of a category that as yet has no listing, or you can take over an existing list that is currently orphaned. The Filigree and Uniglo listings, for example, have no one overseeing them at the present time. Each list is a legacy for future collectors. You can see what lists already exist, and which are not being updated by looking at the Master List of Lists at [matchpro.org](http://matchpro.org).

Second, and perhaps even more important, why not sit down and crank out some articles for your probably beleaguered club editors (for whichever clubs you belong to)? They're always begging for input, and your articles would not only help them out, but they'd have the additional benefits of your peers benefiting from your knowledge, and your benefiting from thinking out the particular topic, sorting out your thoughts, and coming to logical conclusions.

But, *"I can't write!"* *"I'm not an expert."* *"I don't have the time."* As an editor, I can't tell you how many times I've heard that over the last 30 years. You *can* write! If it has to be edited, the editor you send it in to can make whatever changes or corrections are needed. There's not a professional writer around who doesn't have an editor.

You *are* an expert! No one else has your experiences. You don't have to write on something technical if you don't want to. You can write on what got you interested in the hobby, why you focus on your particular categories, how you house your collection, what things would make the hobby better, etc.

And you *do* have time! At the very least...you have the next 10 weeks!

