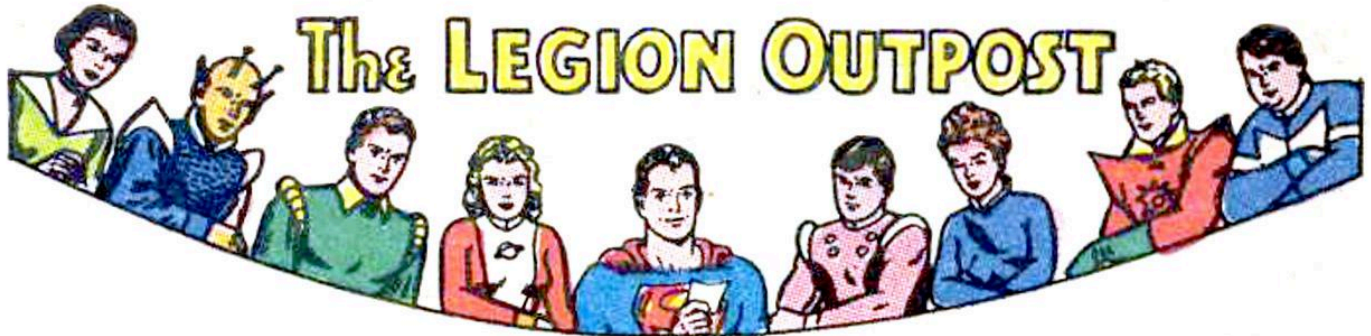


Legion Letter Columns (part 4): “The Legion Outpost” of *Action Comics* (1969–1971)



See also: [Part 1 \(Early appearances\)](#) | [Part 3 \(Adventure Comics\)](#)

Note: Letters that did not involve the Legion have been omitted. The Legion’s feature moved into *Action Comics* after their last appearance in *Adventure Comics*, #380 (May 1969). See also: [Adventure Comics Letter Columns](#)

Optical character recognition was used to create this document. Even after editing, some errors will exist.

Action Comics #379 (August 1969)

The ballots are in! The votes have been counted! You readers have elected a new Leader for the Legion of Super-Heroes! But before we give you the results, let's see what some of you had to say about the heroes you voted for:

"I cast my vote for that duplicating doll, Duo Damsel. After all, two heads are better than one!" —Ricky Stevens, Owensboro, Ky. ... "I vote for Lightning Lad. He's the only original Legionnaire who hasn't been Leader. I probably would have voted for Timber Wolf, but I think he needs a little more experience." —Teddy Upshaw, Montclair, N.J. ... "I vote for

Chemical King for two reasons: (1) I want to be a chemist myself someday. (2) He is new. He would have some fresh ideas." —Dana Chatellier, Chestertown, Md. ... "Last year I wanted to vote, but by the time I decided who I preferred, the election was over. This year I vote for Element Lad because he is one of the most powerful Legionnaires. The only Super-Hero he can't defeat is Phantom Girl, because she can become a phantom and be immune to any substance he creates." —Christopher Kelleher, Cambridge, Mass.

"I think the Legion's new Leader should be Mon-El. So far, as Deputy, he hasn't taken over once when Ultra Boy was away. He is the oldest Legionnaire and was in the Phantom Zone for 1,000 years, so he should have learned alot about Earth during that time." —Nelson Fox, Oxnard, Calif. ... I cast my vote for Superboy. Why? Because I think he is the most valuable Legionnaire. Even if he can't be in the 30th century all the time, the Deputy Leader can always take over for him." —Charles Fisk, Santa Susana, Calif. ... "My vote goes to Karate Kid. True, he can be a bit impulsive, but his good points far outweigh his bad ones. In ADVENTURE No. 378, no one else thought to ask the Crime Computer for the probable whereabouts of the Fatal Five. Not even Brainiac 5 thought of that." —Doug Schwarlz, Encino, Calif. ... "I cast my vote for Karate Kid because he had to work to gain his super-powers. He won even more of my respect when he beat Ultra Boy in ADVENTURE 375 and when he fought the Fatal Five in No. 378, He's tops with me." —Philip Stocklin

He's tops with a lot of other readers, Phil—enough to give him an easy victory in the race for Legion Leader! Mon-El came in second, so he'll repeat as Deputy this year. Here are the final tallies:

Karate Kid—2,218; Mon-El-993; Element Lad—799; Superboy—652; Lightning Lad—378; Chemical King, Duo Damsel and Sun Boy—320 each; Chameleon Boy—319; Supergirl—255; Timber Wolf—246; Dream Girl—197; Colossal Boy—184; Matter-Eater Lad—162; Shadow Lass—159; Phantom Girl and Princess Projectra—116 each; Bouncing Boy—91; Star Boy—88; Light Lass and Shrinking Violet—34 each.

A very few readers ignored the rule that no votes were to go for the former Leaders. Brainiac 5 got 5 votes, while Cosmic Boy and Ultra Boy received one apiece. Sorry—these votes couldn't be counted officially.

We'll get Jim Shooter to write a story about Karate Kid to celebrate his election but now, back to your letters.

Dear Editor:

I have a question that has been bothering me for a long time. What color are Princess Projectra's boots? I've seen issues in which they were red, white and blue. —Lee Wrage, Phoenix, Ariz.

(She's a princess with plenty of money. She can easily afford three pairs of boots in different colors. —Ed.)

Dear Editor:

I have noticed that you are having the Legionnaires call each other by their real names instead of "Saturn Girl" or "Karate Kid." I think this is very good and I hope you will continue the practice. It makes your magazines much more realistic. —Joe Gulick, Phillips, Tex.

(It will be much easier now that we're using fewer heroes per issue. But we'll probably continue to call Mon-El "Mon" instead of "Lar." Shrinking Violet "Vi" instead of "Salu," and Brainiac 5 "Brainy" instead of "Querl." Somehow, these nicknames just seem to go with the characters. Agreed? —Ed.)

Action Comics #380

Dear Editor: The Legion has my congratulations. If you can get my father interested in it, it has to be good. About a week ago, I went to read some back issues of ADVENTURE, starring the Legion, and they weren't there. I looked for them and finally found my dad reading them. He said he liked them and I could keep on buying them as long as he gets to read them. Thanks. —Unsigned, Frankfort, Ind.

(And a cheer for your dad from us. We think he shows great taste in his choice of reading material— though, admittedly, we're prejudiced. —Ed.)

Dear Editor: A few years ago, I created and sent to your magazine a character called Duplicate Boy. Since then, I have heard a lot about a hero by that name. I was wondering whether this was my creation. —Paul Decker, Oconomowoc, Wis.

(No—according to our records, Duplicate Boy, who first appeared back in 1964, was created by Steven Cohen, Newburgh, N.Y. incidentally, he reappears in the next issue. —Ed.)

Dear Editor:

The Legion stories have reached what I once thought was an unattainable quality in comics. You have given the members personal feelings. They have always had feelings, but not this strong, coming from conflict with the other members. Take my first issue, ADVENTURE No. 312, for example. Everyone was sad because Lightning Lad was dead and was happy when he was revived. But it was the personal conflicts between the Legionnaires — each willing to sacrifice his or her life for L.L. —that made it really interesting. I also thoroughly enjoyed the scene in ADVENTURE 369, when Duo Damsel cried herself to sleep over Superboy. It is the

human interest that makes you want to keep up with the Legion. —Tim Justice, Newport News, Va.

(That's why we insist on putting the human element foremost in our stories. By the way, Duo Damsel is back in this issue, with the wildest split-personality story you've ever seen. —Ed.)

Dear Editor: Now that the Legion is in ACTION, you need a new title for your letter page. Here's my suggestion: "Metropolis: 20th and 30th Centuries." —Pete Winblad, Tacoma, Wash.

(But isn't "Metropolis Mailbag" more logical now, with both features headquartered in that city, than when Supergirl, of Midvale and Stanhope, had the second spot? Actually, we're considering changing the ACTION letter column's name, but are putting it off till we get one of you fans to suggest a good permanent title for the new ADVENTURE column. —Ed.)

Action Comics #381

Dear Editor: I have noticed in the past that when Superman or Superboy encounters Green Kryptonite, his skin turns green. But in ACTION No. 377, when Superman ran into Green K twice, he didn't turn green. Why? —Joseph Vasil, New York. N.Y.

(He just didn't get enough exposure to do the trick The Green K radiations cause Kryptonite blood poisoning, which will, after a while turn Supie green. If he turns completely green, head to toe, he is a goner. In other words, when he's dyed, he's dead! —Ed.)

Dear Editor: I'd like to contribute some bits of graffitti chalked on a 30th-century wall: Shadow Lass sleeps with a night light ... Colossal Boy is afraid of heights ... Matter-Eater Lad takes Pepto-Bismol ... Star Boy is over weight ... Dream Girl has nightmares ... Fire Lad has bad breath ... Color Kid is color blind. —David Pauley, Waynesville, Mo.

(We ran across a few good ones ourselves: Clark Kent wears red and blue underwear ... Lex Luthor lost the lead role in "Hair. " ... and David Pauley writes funny letters. —Ed.)

Dear Editor: I have a suggestion for an interesting Legion fight: Duplicate Boy of Lallor versus Nemesis Kid, the villainous ex-Legionnaire. N.K. has the power to defeat any one foe, so he could presumably win; but D.B. has the power to duplicate any super-power, so he could

probably duplicate Nemesis Kid's. How about it? Who *would* win? —Leonard Philip Zinna, Brooklyn, N.Y.

(That's an easy one! Remember how N.K. was beaten last time? Duo Damsel did it by becoming TWO people. And Duplicate Boy could mimic her power, too! —Ed.)

Dear Editor: I've noticed some things about your villains. First, you never have villains from those Legionnaires' home worlds where *everyone* has super-powers. Second, impersonations are always carried off with rubberoid masks. Don't you think a combination of 30th-century Earth science and alien technology would come up with portable illusion casters or something? —Rand Lee, Roxbury, Conn.

(First, have you forgotten Saturn Queen, who comes from Saturn Girl's home planet? And we've had a few stories which featured Chameleon Men from Chameleon Boy's world. What's more, they didn't need masks or illusion casters! —Ed.)

Action Comics #382

Dear Editor: I am a marine serving in Vietnam. I am writing for the whole squad. We enjoy Superman comics very much. We also like the Legion of Super-Heroes. They remind us very much of ourselves, because Superman and his friends fight valiantly against crime as we do against Communist oppression. We don't get very many Superman comics, but when we do, they are read by the whole platoon. You don't know how good it is to come off a patrol, sit down, relax and read a good comic. 1 Charlie Squad, Kilo Co. 3/4 Marines, 1st Platoon, Vietnam

(Thanks for the unsolicited testimonial—and we sure wish you dodge those speeding bullets. —Ed.)

Dear Editor: Here's an idea for a Legion story. Someone from Duo Damsel's planet (where each person can become three people) marries somebody from Chameleon Boy's world (where everyone can change shape). They have a son with both powers and he grows up to be a criminal, who impersonates members of the Legion., sometimes two or three at once. —Kevin Naughton, Spring Valley, Calif.

(And how does it end? Does one of him turn in the other two for the reward? —Ed.)

Dear Editor: Why is it that Superboy has to worry about keeping his identity a secret and the other Legionnaires don't? Some crooks got at Colossal Boy through his parents in ADVENTURE 371. —Arthur Lovisi, Norfolk, Va.

(Right! But in most cases, the Legionnaire's powers were openly known before they turned to crime-busting. So they had little chance of trying a new identity for Legion business. However, another Legionnaire tries a secret identity for a different reason in the next issue of ACTION. —Ed.)

Dear Editor: Concerning whether Legion girls should wear different clothing every issue, just because they're female: let's remember something. The Legion lives in the 30th century. People change their styles from century to century, I'm not saying you wouldn't be able to tell the boys from the girls, but since the girls are as much Legionnaires as the boys, they should be *proud* of wearing their Legion uniforms. Besides, would you condemn a *nurse* for not being feminine, just because she doesn't wear "civilian" clothes? What most attracted me to the Legion stories was that the author had no hang-ups about male-female roles. He was only concerned with *people*, not *stereotypes*. I'm a girl and proud of it, but I'm also a human being. Keep the uniforms! —Bev Mendheim, Los Angeles, Calif.

(We intend to. But you won't grudge the gals a chance to dress in "civvies" when they're off-duty, will you? Even the guys frequently do that. —Ed.)

Dear Editor: What is the correct pronunciation of Mon-El? My friend and I have different ways of pronouncing it and would like to know the correct one. — Richard Jochner, San Leandro, Calif.

(It's pronounced "Moan-Ell"—you know, "moan" — like what the Editor does when he sees a batch of letters pointing out boo-boos. —Ed.)

Dear Editor: Where do the crooks in present-day Metropolis get the knowhow to build inventions that are still experimental 1,000 years from now in the Legion stories? Where do they get the money for those inventions? —John R. Schwartz, Galveston, Tex.

(Several crooked scientists studied under Lex Luthor, whose scientific genius is way ahead of his time. And it should be obvious where brainy bandits get their money for anything: they steal it! —Ed.)

Action Comics #383

Dear Editor: ACTION No. 379 was just great! And why? Because Mon-El was in the L.S.H. story and he played a major role. Please show him more. He is my favorite hero. —Mike Robinson, Linwood, N.J.

(Then you'll flip over the next issue. It features Mon-El in one of the strangest and most shocking adventures in Legion history. —Ed.)

Dear Editor: In ACTION No. 372, you showed Superman hurling a Piece of Green Kryptonite into the ground. In ADVENTURE No. 373, in a Legion story, Superboy came across a chunk of Green K in a cave near Metropolis. Could this be the same piece Superman hurled there a thousand years earlier? —Tim Vandagriff and Kevin Mize, Spencer, Okla.

(It's possible. And it would be quite a weird paradox if Superman put the Green K where he had already been endangered by it during a trip to the far future. —Ed.)

Dear Editor: Why not have Luthor's sister, Lena Tharol, in the LEgion? Her power is E.S.P., you know. —Jeff Alexander, Waynesboro, Va.

(Lena is too busy with her husband and their son. And if you haven't seen her son, then go out and get the December ADVENTURE COMICS quick, before it sells out! —Ed.)

Dear Editor: In SUPERBOY No. 143 there were two soldiers from another world, Ezag and Querl. They both had green skin. Are they from the same planet as Brainiac 5? After all, his name is Querl, too. And if they are from the same world, do they know Brainy? —Sandy Witherden, Edmonton, Ont., Canada

(Ezag and Querl could hardly know Brainiac 5, since he lives in the far future, but they are from his world, Colu. They were exiled when super-intelligent computers took over the planet—the same computers that created Superman's computerized foe, the original Brainiac, whose adopted son was Brainiac 5's ancestor. —Ed.)

Dear Editor: One of my favorite pastimes is dreaming up logical explanations for seemingly impossible things in your magazines. In "The Only Way to Kill Superman," you mentioned the super-dense neutronium. Legion fans will recall neutronium mentioned as the most powerful matter used in the 30th century. Is the dwarf star material, of which a handful weighs 2 million tons, the same matter used in the future with such ease? No! They alloy it with an anti-gravity element and a super-hard element—Supermanium! The result, Neutronium II, is commonly called simply "neutronium." —Gary Skinner, Columbus, Ohio

(A brilliant analysis. We should call the alloy "skinnerium," after you. —Ed.)

Dear Editor: In a previous issue, you stated that Duo Damsel can duplicate any object she's carrying when she splits. So why doesn't she hold Superboy or some other hero and duplicate him? —Robert Wiles, North Tonawanda, N.Y.

(Suppose her power didn't work the same way on living things, and each of her wound up holding half a hero? —Ed.)

Action Comics #384 (January 1970)

Dear Editor: My favorite Legionnaires are Duo Damsel and Superboy. We all know D.D. has a crush on Superboy. So why don't you have an Imaginary Story about the Adult Legion, in which D.D. marries Superman?

(Just imagine—she could nag the Man of Steel twice as much for tracking moon dust on her freshly waxed floors! —Ed.)

Dear Editor: Everything was perfect about ACTION 380 except for the cover. On it you show Superman revealing his secret identity, by signing himself "Clark (Superman) Kent." He didn't do this in the story. And you have him confessing to crimes he didn't think he committed in the story. Otherwise, the issue was good. —Joe DeShon, Macon, Mo.

(It looks like you put your finger on some points we forgot to "cover" the story. —Ed.)

Dear Editor: I see your tricky little pen has stirred up some L-O-V-E among the Legionnaires. Not that I'm against it. But how did those little romances start? Did Mon-El save Shadow

Lass' life? How did Light Lass get interested in Timber Wolf? Get with it, man. —L. Andre, Youngstown, Ohio

(How do people usually fall in love? They meet and something clicks. It's not big heroics and dramatic rescues that do the trick: it's what a person is. did you know that Lois Lane never fell for Superman until he had temporarily lost his powers, so she saw the man instead of the hero? —Ed.)

Dear Editor: On a news program, July 14, a newscaster said that Neil Armstrong would place his left foot on the moon first. According to ADVENTURE No. 343, if he does that, he's in trouble. In that issue, Lightning Lad said he broke one of the oldest luck taboos of spacemen by stepping on a world with his left foot first, and that's why he lost an arm. I wrote a letter to Mission Control in Houston and told them of this. It's a strange coincidence, isn't it?
—Michelle Alexander, Grafton, Ohio

(Well, Armstrong and the other astronauts returned from the moon without mishap. Which helps to prove what Saturn Girl said in that same Legion story you cited: good and bad luck symbols are all just imagination. —Ed.)

Dear Editor: I've noticed in current issues that you show **Bouncing Boy** looking fatter than he was a year ago or two ago. As I understand it, he has the power to inflate his abdomen and bounce like a rubber ball. But, in issue 380, for example, his mid-section is already inflated to abnormal size. Please bring back the good, ol' slim, trim Bouncing Boy. —Mark Hedgecoth, Sumter, S.C.

(That won't be easy. It seems B.B. has been inflating his mid-section with things like malts, sundaes and Dagwood sandwiches. —Ed.)

Dear Editor: Why don't the Legionnaires use Dream Girl as an early warning system? She could use her prophetic power to tell if someone would try to defeat them, and what the enemy's battle plan would be. Then no one would be able to sneak up on the Legion.
—Norman Bailey, Pine City, N.Y.

(The trouble is, Dream Girl doesn't get premonitions of every event. And even when she does, it doesn't always help the Legion, as the story in this issue will demonstrate —Ed.)

Action Comics #385

Dear Editor: I feel I must sincerely apologize for ever thinking the new Legion series in ACTION would be a flop. "The Hapless Hero" was a masterpiece! Violet and Matter-Eater Lad's out-of-costume outfits were great: Duplicate Boy's. new costume—ditto! The story line was really ingenious; the idea that even a Legionnaire could have problems of poverty was really original. Clever of you to have 10 Legionnaires and a guest-star in one story and yet only feature two. —Paul Decker, Oconomowoc; Wis.

(Seldom has a story stirred as much comment as "The Hapless Hero." Here are a few more we received. —Ed.)

Dear Editor: Well! A member of the Superman Family actually has a serious social problem. Unfortunately, it was cleared up too quickly. Not that I have anything against Matter-Eater Lad, but deep troubles make for interesting stories. Now, apparently, M-E Lad has been suffering for some time, but we readers never knew about it till now. Why can't Mr. Kem continue his gambling ways? It could lead up to some very interesting stories. —Bernard G. Williams, San Pedro, Calif.

Dear Editor: Slums? In the 30th century? Well, why not? But when you put a Legionnaire in one, I nearly fainted! And to think M-E Lad is destined to grow up to be President of his home world (as revealed in an Adult Legion story)! Holy Abe Lincoln! Though I liked the idea of his dad being a gambler, be sure he reforms. That makes it a lot easier to believe M-E Lad will attain such a high office. —Joe DeShon, Macon, Mo.

Dear Editor: Why was Duplicate Boy's uniform changed? New tailor? Or just a new artist? And can't you make up your mind(s) what his name is? In the last Adult Legion story, Shrinking Violet introduced her husband, Duplicate Man, as Ord Qelu. In "The Hapless Hero," she calls him Qued Orlu. Which is it? —Linda Hall, Salt Lake City, Utah

(It's Qued Orlu; in the other story. Vi got her tongue twisted. The change in uniform was the writer's idea, endorsed by the editor and carried out by the artist. We all felt the most powerful hero in the universe needed a sharper outfit. —Ed.)

Dear Editor: **Phantom Girl** seems to be making a habit of getting caught in solid form and being clobbered. She has been caught thus three times within a year. If she were smart, she

would dematerialize whenever a fight was imminent, and would only solidify those parts of her body that she had to use in the battle for example, her hand when she wanted to hit somebody or use a weapon. If she did this, she would be almost impossible to catch.

—Leonard Phillip Zinna, Brooklyn, N.Y.

(We're sure P.G. has the message. The one time she won't dematerialize is when Ultra Boy kisses her. —Ed.)

Dear Editor:

I know ACTION No. 400 is still some issues away, but I just had a great idea for it, and had to write you about it. I think you should devote the whole mag to the Legion. You could make it the Adult Legion, so Superman could still appear in it. Also, give us a run down on the Legion members, plus a page featuring souvenir covers. —Gregory Kent. Goleta, Calif.

(Well, it's certainly something to think about. We might even work in some other former ACTION heroes, like Zatara the Magician, Vigilante, Mr. America, Supergirl, Congo Bill and Tommy Tomomow. —Ed.)

Dear Editor: Arriving in 30th-century Metropolis, I asked a native if he could direct me to the Chamber of Commerce Building. He told me. in full detail, "Grllg mbr rfrmnd st brtpwq, hgnv tnmx jkzds m yllpyt, nb rjiilf mnwy xczqw." Seriously, it bothers me when people from the future speak perfect English. The main language of the 30th century should be Interlac, while English would be Earth's diplomatic language. And English in the future would be as different from ours as modern English is from that of Shakespeare's time. —R. Hornsby, Seattle, Wash.

(But if we had the Legionnaires speaking Interlac and future English, we'd have to include subtitles so you readers could understand them. So we'll continue to publish their speech in 20th-century translation. —Ed.)

Action Comics #386

Dear Editor: I believe "The Hapless Hero" in ACTION No. 381 was one of your best stories. The logic M-E L. showed in the end was great. It's making the LSH more human. By the way, when can we vote for a new Legion leader? —Dana Chatellier, Chesterton, Md.

(Right now! This issue goes on sale January 27; the next issue hits the stands February 26. Send in your vote before then. We'll have to disqualify any vote postmarked after February 26. Remember, all Legionnaires who have not served as leader are eligible in this poll. So pick your favorite from among the following: Bouncing Boy, Chameleon Boy, Chemical King, Colossal Boy, Dream Girl, Duo Damsel, Element Lad, Light Lass, Lightning Lad, Matter-Eater Lad, Mon-El, Phantom Girl, Princess Projectra, Shadow Lass, Shrinking Violet, Star Boy, Sun Boy, Superboy, Supergirl and Timber Wolf. As always, the runner-up will become the Deputy Leader. Get those votes rolling in. —Ed.)

Dear Editor: LSH stands for Legion of Suecr-Heroes, not Lonely Super-Hearts. The heroes' and heroines' private lives are interesting in small doses, but you've given us too much. Let's see a little more action, hmm"? (No pun intended.) —Mary Cowan, Columbus, Ohio

(A check of reader mail indicates there are plenty of fans with you and plenty against you. So we'll generally try combining action with human interest, as in this issue's Legion tale. —Ed.)

Dear Editor: I really enjoyed both stories in ACTION 381. However, I did notice one mistake. On page 3 of the Legion story, **Matter-Eater Lad**'s mother says that they need money to buy food. I thought the natives of Bismoll were able to eat anything. Why didn't she just gobble up a table or a chair? —Rich Perrin, Fort Wayne, Ind.

(If she did that, she'd soon eat herself out of house and home. —Ed.)

Dear Editor: In "The Hapless Hero." I noticed that on page 8, Robot C-31 had oval eyes. But on page 9, his eyes were rectangular, and on page 10 they were circular. How do you explain this? —Steven Resnick, Bayside, Queens, N.Y.

(C-31 was a new kind of robot with three pairs of interchangeable eyes. It's his one way of changing his expression. —Ed.)

Dear Editor: The reel high point of ACTION 382 was the Legion yarn. There has been something wrong with all recent Legion tales except "One of Us is an Impostor." "Impostor" approached being a perfect story, and "Kill a Friend to Save a World" *was* perfect. And what did they have in common? Each had five or more Legionnaires. With fewer than five members, you get bogged down in soppy, emotional epics and the story becomes dull. —Greg Kent, Goleta, Calif.

(We have a Legion tale in the works which will feature only one Legionnaire, and we guarantee it will be anything but dull. Superman can be as interesting by himself as when he's with the whole Justice League—so why not a Legionnaire? —Ed.)

Action Comics #387 (April 1970)

Dear Editor: The December ACTION was a definite plus! The cover was beautifully handled, and the color scheme was delectable. "The Killer Costume" was a humdinger of a story—until I got to the end—ANOTHER continued tale! Oh, well, this one was so good I don't mind the extra wait. As for "Chameleon Boy's Secret Identity," HOORAY! It was terrific—EXCEPT it's just not fair to have poor Elwinda eating her heart out in that other dimension while Cham has found another girl who's her double. Couldn't you reveal that Janice really is Elwinda? How she got into our world would make a fascinating story!

(It sure would, since we'd have to figure out a way for her to lose her memory and her liking for Cham, as well as get adopted by a wealthy family on Earth. Then there's the problem of getting her through the sealed dimensional barrier; there's her father and the throne she's due to inherit. The really fascinating story would be how one writer could cover all these bases in a single tale. —Ed.)

Dear Editor:

Since Superboy is hardly ever featured in your Legion stories now, why not feature one in which he leaves the Legion? We all know he must grow up some time. —Randy Oftedahl, Foreston, Minn.

(You must have been peeking into our minds while we were dreaming up this issue's Legion tale, Randy. Have you been taking telepathy lessons from Saturn Girl? —Ed.)

Dear Editor: Superman and Supergirl have one power that seems almost to be ignored; namely, super-speed. It appears they always approach a criminal slowly enough for him to use whatever weapons he had prepared for them. If they went in at super-speed, all the crook would remember is that everything suddenly went black and he woke up in the hospital prison ward. Also, if it looked as if there were a trap, they could run away and be impossible to catch. —Leonard Philip Zinna, Brooklyn, N.Y.

(Sure—unless the trap was sprung too soon and they found themselves overcome by Kryptonite before they could race away. One dose of those green rays and they'd have no super-speed—all because they zipped in without looking. It's fools who rush in like that, you know. —Ed.)

Dear Editor: Condo Arllk, alias **Chemical King** should be called Catalyst King instead. Why? Because a catalyst is something which speeds up or slows down a chemical reaction without itself being permanently changed. This is exactly the power Condo has. —Mark Stofan, Farmington, Me.

(True—but he's afraid not everybody would understand the word. Some people might think a catalyst is a person who deals in cattle. —Ed.)

Dear Editor: There are many LL's in the Superman Family₁ but Mon-El qualifies as *three* LL's. There's Mon-El and his real name, Lar Gand. And when he applied for Legion membership, in disguise, he used two aliases: *Legionnaire Lemon* and *Marvel Lad*. That makes three. —Watson Adams. Erud, Okla.

(Clever of you to notice these details. Sherlock Holmes would be proud of you, Watson — Ed.)

Dear Editor: There is one thing that has always puzzled me. When Superman compresses his civvy clothes, how does he make them look so neat and unwrinkled? For that matter, how does he get them back to the right size again? —Terry Nicholls, Coventry, Warwickshire, England

(Before compressing his clothes, Superman folds them neatly, so he winds up actually giving them a super-press job. To get them back to his size, he shakes them out at super-speed; using super-strength, and the chemically treated fabrics snap right back to normal. —Ed.)

Dear Editor: In a letter column last year, you stated that the people in the 30th century celebrated Apollo Day, the anniversary of the first moon landing, Now that it is history, can you tell us just how they celebrate it? —Douglas, Matthews, Fort Bliss, Tex.

(That depends on where they are. To some it's just a holiday, with a parade. But in Armstrong City, in the Sea of Tranquility, the people stage a full-scale reenactment of the landing. —Ed.)

Dear Editor: Something has been bothering me for quite a while. That's the monetary system of Trom, Element Lad's home planet. Since the people there could change any substance into gold or diamonds, these things wouldn't be valuable. —Donna Brown, Portland, Ore.

(The money of Trom was paper currency, printed on special presses with plates made by a process no counterfeiter could duplicate. —Ed.)

Action Comics #388

Dear Editor: I have E.S.P. power. I predict that Lois Lane will marry Superman within the next two years. Also, Supergirl will be out of school and get a job in Metropolis. She will continue to meet super-heroes she likes. And more heroes will join the Legion. Should I become a member of the Legion of Super-Heroes since I have this E.S.P. power? —E.B. Spitzer, Tuscon, Ariz.

(Even if they had an opening, you wouldn't qualify, because your E.S.P. struck out. There can be no new heroes in the Legion because the law limits them to 25—the current number. That means at least one of your predictions is a top flop. — Ed.)

Dear Editor: From where does Element Lad's power radiate? It's come from his hands, eyes, and most recently from a salute-like gesture. I'm sure many readers will be glad if you give us the facts. —John T. Alderman. Hillsville. Va.

(E Lad's power to change elements comes from his brain and can be generated through any part of his body. He just wishes for an element change, and it happens. In fact, a laundry once wanted him to change dirt on clothes to soap suds, but he felt the job would be too wishy-washy. —Ed.)

Dear Editor: In ACTION No. 384, on page 3 of the Legion story, Ultra Boy has no bird on his costume. What happened? —Peggy Tao, Palo Alto, Calif.

(His bird insignia flew the coop. —Ed.)

Dear Editor: If possible, give Supergirl a different costume in the Legion from the one she wears in the 20th century. I'm sure that the villains of the 301h century would be more fearful of a mysteriously garbed law-enforcer than they would be of a legendary character who died 1,000 years before. —Michael Reilly, Bellmore, L.I., N.Y.

(Really? As Baman once observed, "Criminals are a superstitious lot." What would be more likely to panic them than the appearance of someone who's been DEAD for ten centuries? —Ed.)

Dear Editor: What about having the Legion start its own pop music group? Colossal Boy and Princess Projectra could be the vocalists. Ultra Boy and Sun Boy could play 30th-century guitars, with Matter-Eater Lad on drums and Saturn Girl on a 30th-century organ. —Philip Hedgecoth, Kingsport, Tenn.

(And how about Chameleon Boy? He could turn into his own musical instrument. —Ed.)

Action Comics #389

Dear Editor: I've been thinking about some unlikely marriages of your girl characters. For instance, if Salu Digby (Shrinking Violet) married Richard Loo, she'd be Salu Loo. If Lana Lang married Vincent Van Gogh and moved to Europe, would she be Lana Gogh and far away? If Kara Zor-EI (Supergirl) married John Stuart Mill, she'd be Kara Mill. And if Tinya Wazzo (Phantom Girl) married Wally Wood, then divorced him and married Thomas Mann, she'd be Tinya Wood Mann. —Arthur Harrison, Fort Worth, Tex.

(Why confine your suppositions to marriages? If Ayla Ranzz (Light Lass) got a job as a chimney-sweep, she'd be Cinder-Ayla. —Ed.)

Dear Editor: According to the dictionary, Superman and Supergirl are not invulnerable! The definition states that to be invulnerable, is to be incapable of being injured. Yet Superman and Supergirl can be harmed by Kryptonite and by other super-beings. —Dave Marr, San Bruno, Calif.

(Just when we're at our ease, someone like you comes along to destroy it with your too-precise definitions. No matter how invulnerable we are, there's always a kill-ease hell! —Ed.)

Dear Editor: In ACTION No. 385, Star Boy says Saturn Girl's name is *Imra* Ardeen. But in the next panel, Colossal Boy calls her *Irma*. Which is right? —Bryan Kaster, Green Bay, Wis.

(Imra is right. The fact is, Colossal Boy had been thinking of his girl friend back on Earth, and her name was Irma. —Ed.)

Dear Editor: I would like to write an open letter to Martin Pasko, Steve Carlberg, Loren Lieberthal, Joe Rusnak, Dave Truesdale, Irene Vartanoff and all you other lettercol monopolizers: You may have read DC's longer than I have, you may write more "intellectual" letters—in fa fact. MORE letters—than I do. But the fact that they get printed is not your fault. Guess whose fault it is? That's right, Ye Editor's. The fact that their letters are more "intellectual," etc., is no reason to let them MONOPOLIZE the "free" lettercols from us "poorer" readers. —Alvin Yellon, Winnetka, Ill.

(We've never seen anything in the Bill of Rights that says everyone who writes in has to have his letter published. We pick the best, most thought-provoking letters, and don't notice the signatures till we put 'em in the mag. And yours was ... well ... one of the most provoking letters we've received —Ed.)

Dear Editor: If Lightning Lad and Saturn Girl married and had children, I think they would combine their parents' powers. They would be like Validus, of the Fatal Five, able to project mental lightning. —Colin Robertson. Bergenfield, N.J.

(Or maybe they'd have electronic brains. —Ed.)

Action Comics #390 (July 1970)

The column in this issue concerned *Action Comics* #388 (May 1970), in which the story contained deliberate “errors” for readers to spot.

The Legion appeared later in the story...

On the next page, three Legionnaires show up in a “time-square” instead of a time-sphere. Saturn Girl and Cosmic Boy look as they do on the cover, except Cos is almost colored correctly. Lightning Lad has the Flash's insignia. And these Super-Heroes seem happy at the prospect of ruining Superman's marriage. They show him a newspaper dated one year from then, showing Lois will misplace Superman's costume and he'll keep out of sight from embarrassment. We don't believe she really has "the brains of a cucumber," or that Superman would have only one suit.

Then Lois uses a super-dart-gun invented by Jimmy Olsen to make the Heroes vanish for one flour—and she mentions a non-existent Legionnaire Cookie-Drive. ...

Action Comics #391 (August 1970)

Dear Editor: I think Lightning Lad should be the new Leader of the Legion of Super-Heroes, because we'd see more of my two favorite female Legionnaires (I hope), Light Lass (his sis1er) and Saturn Girl (his sweethearty). So I cast my vote for the Bolt Boy himself, Lightning lad.
—Sam Tallerico. St. Clair Shores, Mich.

Dear Editor: I vote for Shrinking Violet for the new Legion Leader, because I'm tall. I don't like it, and she's lucky to be able to be as small as she wants! —Maureen Hanning, Victoria, B.C., Canada

Dear Editor: In the L.S.H. election, I vote for Chemical King for two good reasons. One is that he's new. The other is that he has an important quality for comic heroes—he makes bad puns.
—Stuart Carroll, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

Dear Editor: In voting for a new Legion Leader. I must choose one not on your list. He has done quite a bit for the organization. and has plenty of experience. Also, he could adjust to anything new. Therefore, I cast my vote for Protv II. —Doug Heller, Grosse Pointe Shores, Mich.

(Sorry—Protv is not a full-fledged Legionnaire. But if the Super-Pets ever decide to choose a leader, we'll give Protv your vote. —Ed.)

Dear Editor: I vote for Mon-El. He's been Deputy Leader for such a long time, he has two years of experience. That should make him a good headman, and speaking strictly as a girl, I think he'd make a cute leader-man. I want to thank you. You make me feel important. This is *one* election I can actually vote in and *real* results will come of it! The Legion will have a new Leader! Thank you again. —Bernadette Robalin, San Antonio, Tex.

Dear Editor: I vote for Mon-El. He has come in second in the last two elections. Maybe someone else will be Deputy Leader this year. —Mike Cotten, Madison. Tenn.

(Good guessing. Yes, Mon-El did win the election— by a fantastic landslide! He polled 1,155 votes — nearly four times the total of his nearest competitors. Yes, we said competitors, because second place was a tie! Element Lad and Superboy got 291 votes apiece. Since Superboy has left the Legion's active roster — though we will keep him as a reservist — Element lad takes over as Deputy Leader. Other results were as follows: Lightning Lad –274; Chameleon Boy – 248; Timber Wolf – 226; Duo Damsel and Sueprgirl – 192 each; Phantom Girl – 183; Sun Boy – 167; Dream Girl – 139; Matter-Eater Lad – 138; Chemical King – 105; Princess Projectra – 92; Shadow Lass – 91; Shrinking Violet – 75; Bouncing Boy – 73; Colossal Boy – 64; Star Boy – 45; Light Lass – 17. There were also two votes for Saturn Girl and one for Brainiac 5, but they were disqualified because they've already held the Leadership post. —Ed.)

Dear Editor: May I congratulate you on your courage and sense of the fitness of things? I refer to the exquisite solution to the problem posed by Uli Algor in ACTION #386. I suppose it would be inaccurate to say that you have made comic book history, but it's the rarest kind of rarity when you see the hero or a story (in the case Ultra Boy) haul off and bash a young lady right in the kisser! On page 10 you see it coming. but you can't believe it's really going to happen. You're sure the writers will never allow the hero to disregard the code of chivalry. He can't strike a girl and get away with it—but you hope he does. Then you turn the page and

there it is! Beautiful!! One of the best kayoes ever portrayed, simply because of its iconoclastic impact. —A.W. Peters. Rockville, Md.

(Well, Uli was one of those women who demand completely equal treatment with men — so U Boy gave it to her. —Ed.)

Action Comics #392 (September 1970)

Note: This is the last issue with Mort Weisinger (who established the robust tradition of the letter column) as Editor. *Also*, it was the last issue featuring the Legion, who moved into *Superboy* with issue #172 (Mar. 1971)—quite the break for Legion fans!

Letter columns in *Action Comics* continued to publish Legion fan reactions through issue #396 (January 1971).

Dear Editor: ... “Sun Boy’s Lost Power” was almost a travesty ... the Legion has progressed so much since it was first published. Jim Shooter’s scripts are vastly superior to Elmond Hamilton’s – although I don’t doubt Ed could do better. His scripts weren’t bad, really, at least not by ‘62 standards, and he improved when the Legion grew to $\frac{2}{3}$ of the book, but today’s stories are a lot better. I admit John Forte’s art is more realistic than Win Mortimer’s yet I somehow like the latter’s work better.

The villain’s name, too – compare Kranyak with such later villains as Kravik, Kralik, Krelik, and Karnak. Would it be too much of an innovation to have a hero whose name begins and ends with K? —Richard H. Morrissey, Framingham, Mass.

(No—in fact, you’ll find Superman’s other identity listed in the Metropolis phone directory as Kent, Clark. By the way, Jim Shooter has left the fold – his last story being “Lament for a Legionnaire” in issue 384. Since then, E. Nelson Bridwell (the Big E) has written most of the Legion tales, although Cary Bates gets the credit for “The Mystery Legionnaire” and this issue’s tale. —Ed.)

Action Comics #393

Note: This is the first issue with Murray Boltinoff as Editor. Legion letters began to trail off.

Dear Editor: ... I can usually count on the Legion to save an issue, but this time it did not. "The Mystery Legionnaire" was a weak mystery story with absolutely no clues to go on. The Legion does need more villains. Where are the Time-Trapper, the Fatal Five and the Legion of Super-Villains? —Richard H. Morrissey, Framingham, Mass.

(They'll be back-after the Legion make its move to a new magazine – SUPERBOY! You'll see the Super-Heroes backing up the Boy of Steel in many issues, starting very soon. And we hope you were as wrong in your criticisms as you were in tagging the writers of the previous six ACTION sues. All six Superman adventures – comprising three stories; two of them serializd – were scripted by Cary Bates! –Ed.

Dear Editor: I was browsing through ACTION #389 when I noticed my name in your letter column. Since I haven't written anything to ACTION COMICS in years, it came as a surprise. More of a surprise was the context in which my name was mentioned. Alvin Yellon accuses me, and others, of monopolizing the letter cols, saying the editor is prejudiced in favor of our "intellectual" letters. Your answer was good, but I'd like to reiterate the reasons for picking our letters over others.

We work on them. We take the time to be legible, coherent, polite, humorous, and, hopefully, intelligent. All that isn't enough, though. Plenty of "intellectual" letters never make the columns. If someone else happens to write a more thought-provoking letter that month, ours are rejected with the same indifference as would be a smudgily penciled, unsigned "I hate your mag" card. Those are the breaks.

But why should Alvin Yellon be disturbed by any of this? The usual object in writing a letter is not to get it printed, but to express one's opinion to the editor. The lettercols are merely an indication of the trends of fan opinion. Sometimes, I grant, they can seem like the permanent

soap-box of a few people. But they aren't. All anyone has to do is write a good, thought-provoking letter. —Irene Vartanoff, Lake forest, Ill.

(Thanks, Irene. You said it all, and very well. We're happy to know ACTION is still in the I.V. League. — Ed.)

Dear Editor: I'm sure that you have been receiving nasty comments that claim you made a boo-boo in #389. You know what I mean—the slight mix-up between whether it was liquid nitrogen or liquid oxygen that froze Klim's body. Well, I bet I know what happened. Chemical King, being an expert in chemicals, would never mistake oxygen for nitrogen. Therefore, it must have been Klim's mistake. Apparently, he was so cold at the time that his brain malfunctioned and mistook the liquid N for liquid O. What does a dumb robot know, anyway? —Paul Hulka, Muskegon, Mich.

(We'll go along with you, Paul — and hope we don't get any nasty letters from robots. —Ed.)

Action Comics #394 (November 1970)

Note: This issue printed biographies of Curt Swan and Murphy Anderson instead of the regular letter column.

Since they've been turning out impressive interpretations of Superman stories in these pages for so many years, we thought it highly proper and timely to satisfy the curiosity of ACTION's aficionados.

Who are these boys behind the bylines? What makes them tick and click issue after issue? Curt Swan and Murphy Anderson share the credits, and between them are more similarities than differences.

Carrot-colored crew-cut **Curt Swan** was a Minneapolis school dropout at the age of 17 because the country's depression dipped into the family's finances. Shuttling between a series of jobs, he finally was destined for overseas duty with his National Guard outfit. He ran the gamut of staff sergeant assignments— Mess, Supply, and Regimental Ammunition Transportation. He easily copped a service club contest for a mural, which snagged the eye of

an influential colonel. Lock, stock and rifle barrel were abandoned in favor of a transfer to the Army newspaper, *Stars & Stripes*.

Prior to going overseas, Curt met, wooed, and won a lithesome gal named Helene Brickley, who subsequently joined the American Red Cross. It wasn't until they caught up with each other in Paris in the Spring, like the song says. that Curt bid his Swan-song to bachelorhood. They were married in April, 1945.

The Swans' brood consists of three: Chris is a senior at Union College in Schenectady, N.Y.: Karin will switch from Brooklyn's famed Pratt Institute to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts; Cecilia is a junior in her Connecticut high school. Both girls, says Dad modestly, have a definite flair for art.

Pratt also was Curt's alma mater. He studied nights under the GI Bill after his Army discharge, but other than that he enjoyed no formal training. He inherited a natural talent from his father, who, during the long Minneapolis winter nights, spent endless hours drawing exotic birds. As his ability developed. Curt disciplined himself. Aware that anatomy was the foundation of good draftsmanship and drawing, he studied innumerable books and often persuaded some members of his family to pose. We wonder whether some of them might have prepared him for his future Superman assignment.

The other half of the pencil-and-pen team is **Murphy Anderson**. Born in the deep South, he learned how to read at his mother's knee—comics. Readin', writin', and rough-sketchin' ultimately brought him to the University of North Carolina. Art was not only an interest; it was his passion, kindled by the enthusiasm of the celebrated William Meade Prince, who headed the Art Dept. as well as contributing to the nation's topmost mags.

His ambition to come to New York was realized, on graduation, when his father forked over \$100 with the stern warning: Get a job before the cash runs out, or come home, son! Murph was down to his last dollar when he was rescued by a good Samaritan, a publisher who offered him \$30 a week plus all the moolah he could make freelancing. Big Murph burned up his board, toiling tirelessly. With Buck Rogers as his inspiration. whom he'd admired since boyhood, churned out chores for "Planet Stories" and "Wings," scripted and illustrated "Life on Other Planets," envisioned, like a modern-day Leonardo Da Vinci, jet fighters and drew

them before we accelerated into the jet age. He was a natural for "Suicide Smith," and originated "Tommy Tomorrow," whose title is self-explanatory, for DC.

Murph donned Navy blues during the war, but between deck duties and watches aboard ship, he relaxed at his art board. "Star Pirate" was the rip-roaring result. War's end found him in Chicago, where, of all the climactic coincidences, he was assigned to working on the syndicated strip of his boyhood idol, Buck Rogers! Two years later, he palssed the Buck. He said, "Roger" to Rogers in favor of freewheeling freelancing.

He had only to enter the hallowed halls of DC when he was slated to do Captain Comet in "Strange Adventures." A repeat engagement with Buck Rogers was followed by an alliance with Will Eisner, creator of "The Spirit." For a time, Murph did double-duty, bouncing between DC and Eisner. When the two jobs became too burdensome, Murph had to make a decision. It was the happiest day in our life—and, we hope it was yours, too—when he chose us.

Murph is married to a girl, who, like Curt, he also met while on active duty. By the strangest coincidence, her name is also Helen (without the e). They have three children, Sophie, Mary and Murphy III). What else? It seems from the beginning Curt and Murph's fates would be intertwined.

Action Comics #395

Dear Editor: ... The Legion tale was really Mission: Impossible-ish. More of the Espionage Squad, please! Incidentally. I'm glad Mon-El is the new Leader. He might have developed a complex if he had come in second again.

—Gerard Triano, Elmont, N.Y.

(Being constantly in second place might give him a double complex. Would you call that a duplex? —Ed.)

Action Comics #396 (January 1971)

Dear Editor: ... Cary Bates and Win Mortimer turned out a fine Legion story, too. Saturn Girl's new look is okay by me. Wow, is it! If your characters started wearing anything less than that, the Comics Code might not let you get by with it!

I hate to mess up this nice letter, but that isn't the LSH Headquarters on page 3. And don't say they moved because the old one was inadequate. You know very well the government built them a nice, new one just three years ago, after the old one was wrecked by the Fatal Five.

—Keith Griffin, Mobile, Ala.

(Right—Win goofed on the hq. But you'll see the whole thing, in a two-page diagram, in the April issue of GIANT ADVENTURE, featuring the Legion. We'll have some new Legion uniforms designed by you readers, too! —Ed.)

Dear Editor: ... But the Legion story—WOW!! Cary Bates turned out a winner with “The Legionnaires Who Never Were!” While I couldn't accept the theories advanced on page 7 (I knew you wouldn't dare pull the parallel world trick on us again), I never suspected the ending. And Saturn Girl's new costume—va va voom! It's about time she got out of the dull, old rag she used to wear. And it looks like a change of personality came along, too. Imra doesn't seem so stuck up and computerish any more. Thank goodness! — Gregory Kent, Goleta, Calif.

(Well, it looks like #392 was a winner if our mail is any indication. We think we've outdone it with this issue, though ... and for a real blockbuster, get the January JIMMY OLSEN, with story and art by Jack Kirby – if it's not already sold out! —Ed.)

Dear Editor: THANK YOU! I could've been knocked over by a cloud of helium when I saw Saturn Girl sporting the outfit I designed for her. I hope that the reaction to it is positive.

By the way. I'll warn you, I'm working on new uniforms for a few of the other Legion members. I hope I'm not becoming a pest on this costume ... I mean, uniform business. (Costume sounds too theatrical.) But I think that a couple of the Legionnaires' uniforms hardly look 1970, let alone 2970. —K. Haven Metzger, Columbia City, Ind.

(Which brings up an interesting question – how do you really know what fashions of 1,000 years in the future would look like? Oh, well, let's just go with what we like, shall we? —Ed.)

