-SAY WHAT?

How the CIA bungled the Panama coup and other weighty matters of — ARTHUR, NO!

his week I was going to give a detailed analysis of the aborted coup in Panama and how the CIA acted like a bunch of retarded sanitation workers as usual, but then I realized this would require actual brainwork on my part, so I decided to write about my favorite subject, sex, but my editor thinks I'm perversely attached to it, which I am, so I was going to write about the most efficient way to pick your nose.

But then the dog ate my homework.

I'm not making this up, either. I'm living with a dog named Arthur who, I swear, is a cross between a poodle and a Great Dane and who's got this thing for paper products. And judging from the amount of activity in my house over the past month, I think the catch phrase for the '90s is going to be "ARTHUR, NO!"

He's hard to get used to because I've never lived with a pet before, except a goldfish named Goldstein that I had when I was 6 who I flushed John Bland less filling

down the toilet thinking he'd find his way back. I still have nightmares that somewhere in the sewers of Winston-Salem there's a 36-foot mutant Jewish goldfish looking for revenge.

Arthur's not mine, but like I said, I've never lived with a dog before, especially not one who's growing like Howard Huge. I mean to tell you, this dog's only 10 months old, but he's already the size of a subcompact Toyota and if he gets much bigger, I'm planning to supplement my income by giving rides to the neighborhood kids at a quarter a pop.

Arthur lives in the house because he's too big to stay fenced in, and lately I've been thinking about just giving him my room because most of the time he gets locked in the hall outside and starts making these nauseating whimpering sounds like someone's whacked him upside the head a couple of times with a snow shovel, so then I have to go out and whack him upside the head a couple times with a broom to get him to shut up. But as soon as I slam my door he'll get to barking in this highpitched yawp that they must be able to hear in Guatemala, which means, of course, "I'm hungry."

That's all a dog thinks about. A professor of mine once remarked that he tried to write a poem from a dog's point of view, but gave up because he just kept repeating "Food/Not food/ Food/Not food/Food/Not food." And to a dog, if it can be chewed, it's food. For example, a dog thinks a car is food until he catches it and tries to gnaw on the bumper. Chrome is not food. But a shoe is food. A J. Crew catalog is food. Anything we tell Arthur not to touch is food.

It doesn't matter that Arthur's dish stays full. Noooooooo. Ken-L-Ration's

not good enough for Arthur. Kibbles 'N' Bits ain't good enough for Arthur. He's got to have whatever I'm pulling out of the fridge at the time.

"Arthur!" I shout. "Get away from me, you've got your own food!"

Of course he understands me perfectly, and indicates so by drooling on my shoe.

(In this aspect of his personality, Arthur excels. In obedience school, "Drooling 101" was the only subject he got an A in (he took everything else pass/fail).)

Once I'm all set for dinner (feet up, Sanford & Son on, plate in lap, beer in hand) Arthur decides he wants to go out and scratches at the door.

"No, Arthur. You've already been out once today and you can't go out again," I say, meaning that I'm too damn lazy to go and open it for him.

Arthur scratches again. And again. And again and again and again until there's a nice new bas-relief of a tree underneath the knob.

Worrying that he's going to put that power.

an unwanted piece of furniture in the middle of the living room, I get up wearily and open the door.

Arthur just stares out like he's looking at Mars for the first time.

"Go on," I urge him. "You wanted

to go, so go."

He sticks his front paw out, like he's testing the water before going swimming. I ask him if he wants a bathing cap.

He turns around and goes for my dinner. A struggle ensues, during which Arthur ends up with a nice tuna sandwich and I end up going hungry. Do I punish him? Noooo, because when I get all mad at him he puts on this look that makes me feel like Pilate about to crucify Christ. You know what it looks like. He makes his eyes as big as dinner plates and starts this low whimper that sounds like all the starving Ethiopian children put together and I feel so bad that I hit myself instead.

Dogs, like babies and women, have

Bowling with the undead makes for a delightful evening

e had record attendance last week at the Joe Bob Briggs Invitational at the Bronco Bowl in Dallas. The best turnout we've had in five years now.

Six people showed up.

Course, part of that figure I can't take credit for, cause one of 'em was a drunk that came in for League Night, hung around too long afterward, and had too many whiskey sours in the Tenth Frame Lounge. He thought he'd been there a whole week and League Night was starting again. And then we had to go out and get one more guy from the Oak Cliff Retirement Home across the street so we'd have an even number.

For those of you who haven't attended in past years or seen the tournament broadcast on Channel 82, Bossier City, La., the Joe Bob Briggs Invitational is the only bowling tournament in the world that starts at 2 a.m. (that's when the rates go down to a dollar a line) and where storebought balls aren't allowed. If you can't find a ball in the rack, like normal people, you don't have any right to be bowling anyway.

I was paired with Vida Stegall, the modern record-holder for number of frames she's left the five pin. This drives me crazy. It's impossible to leave just the five pin. The five pin is smack dab in the middle of the lane. How can you knock down all the pins in front of the five pin, and behind the five pin, and on either side of the five pin, but you don't hit the goldurn five pin. But Vida does this every time.

Wanda Bodine was paired with Chubb Fricke, who is an ex-professional bowler. Chubb left the PBA tour in 1934, and ever since then Joe Bob Briggs at the drive-in

he's been bowling exhibitions. An exhibition for Chubb is when he successfully lifts an eight-pound ball.

And then the third team was made up of Luther Hobbins, the spry old goat from the retirement home, and Mack Stoat, husband of Betty Stoat, but Betty hadn't been seen for three hours by the time we started.

I was bowling with a new ball this year. It had a yellow star on it and a big ole scratch like somebody took a yellow Crayola to it. The yellow-Crayola gave me a natural hook that most people would take years to perfect. I started out real hot:

6 pins . . . 2 pins . . . gutter ball . . . 10-ball spare . . . 1 pin . . . 2 pins (slipped off the side of my hand).

Then I changed my natural fivestep approach to a fourteen-step approach — as far as I know, it's the only 14-step approach being used in America today — and so I was getting a running start from way back at the complimentary beverage golf cart and bringing my backswing up so high that I threw the ball overhand at the pins, like a basesball. I had a couple of balls that didn't even hit the lane. They hit the pins first. Soon as I did this, I lost a little due to my body making an athletic adjustment:

gutter ball . . . gutter ball . . . gutter ball two lanes over . . . gutter ball that bounced out of the right gutter into the left gutter.

After five frames I had a solid 22. Fortunately, Vida picked up all her

five-pins and so we were only 74 pins down to Chubb and Wanda.

But you know what we didn't count on? Luther Hobbins. Luther's a long, tall, stringy-looking guy who has a delivery like a piece of beef jerky being twirled on a stick. When he let that sucker fly, though, we had to send the assistant manager down the lane to pick up pieces of kindling and give it to the Salvation Army.

Luther's the only man I've ever seen who uses a 2-pound bowling ball. It's all he can handle due to his World War I injuries. But he makes up for it in double-reverse English. He puts so much spin on the ball that it yo-yos all through the pins like a piece of Silly Putty. Luther waxed us. I couldn't hardly believe it. Luther's partner, Mack Stoat, bowled a 12, but that was OK with us 'cause he bought the drinks.

The Joe Bob Invitational. American Athletics at their finest.

Now that's scary.

People are showing up at the "cryogenics institute" to drop off their loved ones and put deposits down on giant ice chests, but once Troy gets his hands on the body, he orders his evil assistant to rip out their hearts, brains, livers and kidneys and sell them to the Mexican black market for body parts. Then one night, during a thunderstorm, all the frozen stiffs get struck by lightning and turned into raving tin-foil zombies — and the only people that can stop 'em are . . . Dan Haggerty, without his bear! But there's an even better one . . .

Linda Blair! She's back! She's sensitive! She's mumbling! She's determined to beat those zombies.

Unfortunately, they aren't very imaginative zombies. They don't do standup comedy, like George Romero zombies, and they don't have oozing faces full of pus that explode slime all over your eyes, like Dario Argento zombies, and they don't really even *chew* on you, like Sam Raimi zombies. No, these are just plain old garden-variety zombies,

herky-jerkin through a cryogenics lab trying to eat Troy Donahue. And since most of their bodies are covered up in tin foil, they're sort of attractive, as zombies go. Zombies are not supposed to be attractive.

Oh well. One breast. Seventeen dead bodies. Twelve undead bodies. Closeup organ removal. Flesh-eating. Ax in back. Frozen character actors. Flaming zombies. Frozen Troy Donahue. Shotgun Fu. Zombie Fu. Forklift Fu. Drive-In Academy Award nominations for Linda Blair, for saying, "These are human organs!"; Troy Donahue for saying "Do I frighten you?"; and Jack A. Sunseri, the producer/director for calling the hospital Kansas City General in one part of the movie and Kansas City Memorial in the other part.

Two stars. Joe Bob says check it out.

