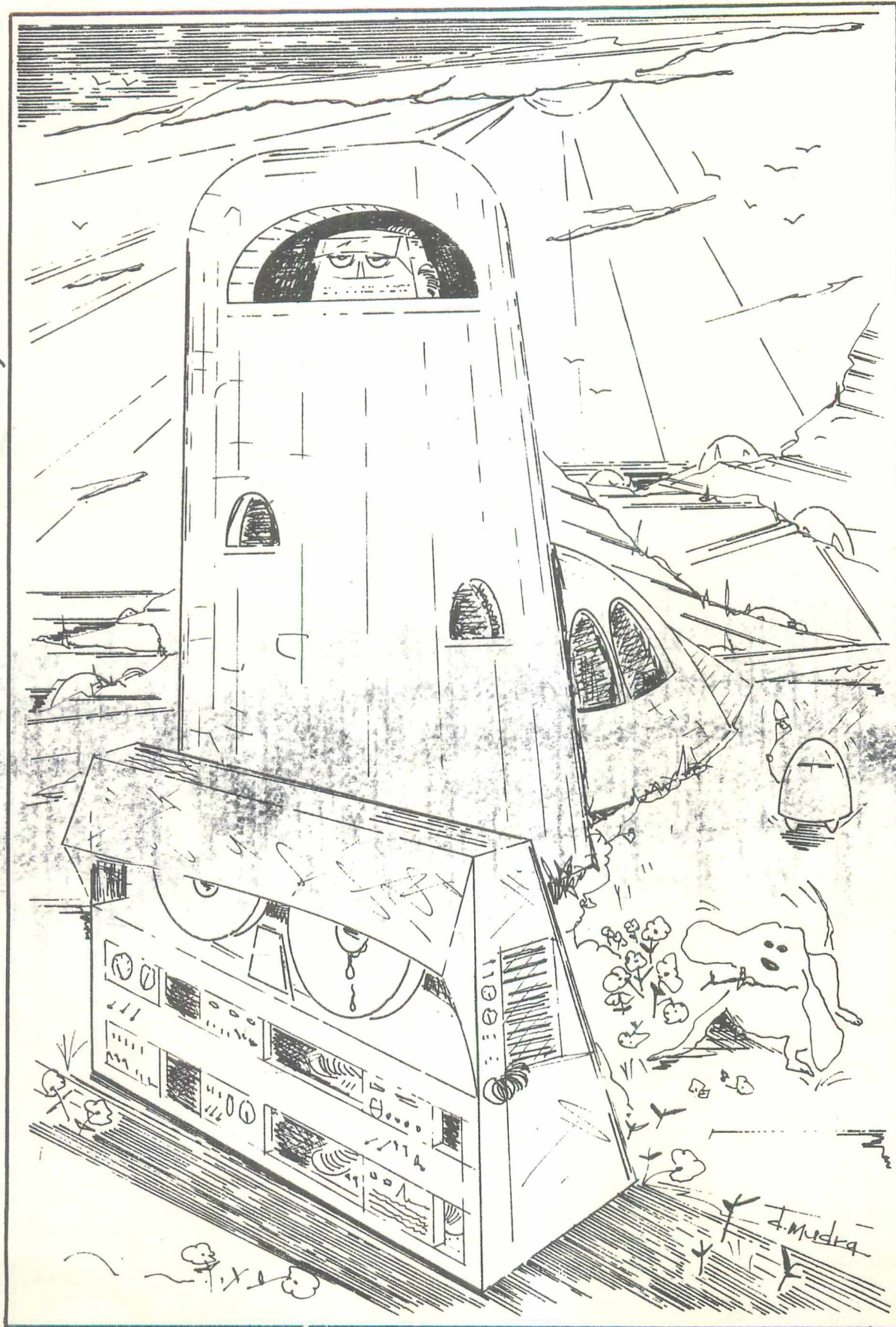


Science Fiction,
Fact, and News

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January 1981, \$2.00



CONACS

Science Fiction, Fact, & News

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About the Cover

Dave Mudra's cover was commissioned to illustrate Ralph Roberts' "What Light on Yonder Panel Flashes." It shows Romeo in the tower, Juliet in the foreground, and the Montague Robot Gardener and the Capet dog in the yard. This cartoon rendering & that on p.26 are Dave's 1st sale.

Interior Art Credits

Joan Hanke-Woods	2,17,18,24
Corinna	20
Alexis Gilliland	25
Dave Mudra	26

Many thanks to these fine artists for their fine contributions.

Editor



EDITORIAL

As with everybody else these days, I have been suffering under the continuous twin blows of inflation and recession. A sudden increase in my printing costs as well as next year's scheduled postage increases (not to mention soaring automobile, utility costs, etc.) have forced me to completely reassess my publishing policies.

THE BRAMBLE PATCH (formerly STARFIRE), my annual genzine, has now ceased publication. CONACS, my quarterly newszine, has now been expanded to a quarterly semiprozine.

Semiprozine status means several things. First, the zine is bigger. You will note the larger size of this issue as compared to the previous ten page issues.

Second, each issue will now contain fiction, general S.F. articles and columns, and an editorial as well as the previously provided con reports and con listings.

Third, I now PAY for accepted submissions. But, NOT MUCH! (That's why it's called a semiprozine). Until further notice, I am paying 1/8¢ per word for fiction and articles and payment is upon acceptance. I am interested in articles up to about 2500 words on science fiction subjects and in science fiction short stories up to about 5000 words. All submissions should be original unpublished works although I may buy second rights at 1/12¢ per word in cases where I really like a piece and its previous publication was in a non-S.F. publication. For artwork, until further notice, I am paying 5¢ per square inch of image area with a flat \$2.50 bonus for front cover art. All art must be black and white, camera ready, and no larger than 6"x9" (unless prior arrangement is made or you enclose a flat \$3.50 reduction fee with the submission). Again, artwork should be original and unpublished except that I may pay 3¢ per square inch if I decide to accept later rights on a previously published work. All submissions will be returned undamaged after publication if a proper SASE has been enclosed and copyright will be returned to the author or artist at that time. In addition to cash payment, all accepted submissions will also receive a free copy of the issue in which it appears. (Subscribers will have their subscription extended by one ish). I will not pay for LoC's but I will send a free copy of the ish to the author if I publish it.

Fourth, I now accept paid advertisements. Ads must be black and white, camera ready, and exact publication size (unless an additional flat \$3.50 reduction fee is enclosed per ad to be reduced). Until further notice, Ad rates are \$10.00 for full page (6"x9" image area), \$6.00 for half page (6"x4½"), \$3.50 for quarter page (3"x4½"), and \$2.00 for eighth page (3"x2¼"). Classified advertising is also available at 10¢ per word with a \$1.00 minimum. Odd sized and/or special location Ad rates will be quoted upon request. All rates are per issue.

Fifth and finally (the unpleasant news), I have had to raise the price of this zine significantly in order to avoid total financial disaster. Beginning with this ish, CONACS will cost \$2.00 per ish or \$7.50

for a four issue sub. For those of you who subscribed under the old prices prior to January 1, 1981, I will give you a special deal: if you sent in \$1.00 for a 4 ish sub at the old rates, I will give you this ish and the next (\$4 value) for that \$1.00. If you sent \$2.00 for an 8 ish sub, I will give you this ish and the next two (\$6 value) for that \$2.00. Alternatively, if you do not find that satisfactory, you may notify me before April 1, 1981 and I will refund your money and cancel your sub (And you get this ish free for your trouble).

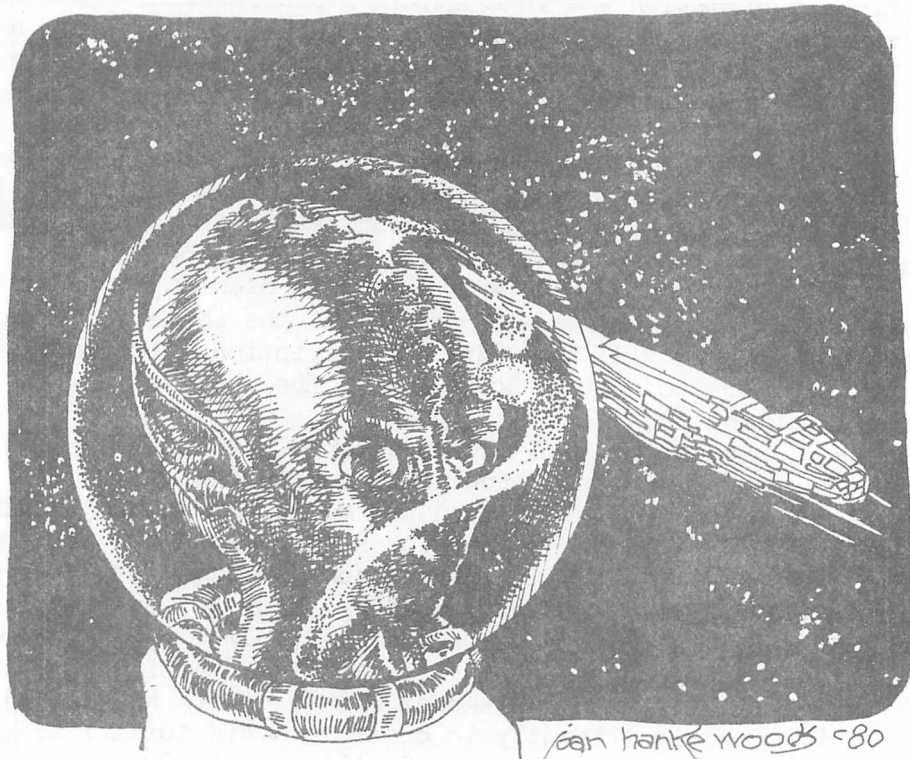
Also note that I will no longer (after this ish) be able to send free copies to cons listed in the Con Listings. I will still list your con for free but if you want a copy of the ish, you'll have to buy one. I will continue to send free copies to certain individuals I consider important to this publication and I will also continue to trade for some other zines. All trades must be prearranged.

Publication dates and deadlines are:

<u>Publication Date</u>	<u>Deadline</u>
January 1st	November 15th
April 1st	February 15th
July 1st	May 15th
October 1st	August 15th

I know you're suffering with the same inflation and recession problems as I am and that this price increase probably hits you at a most inconvenient time. But, I hope the increased content will be sufficient to persuade you continue buying this zine anyway.

M. David Johnson
Editor and Publisher



What Light on Yonder Panel Flashes? (With Apologies to Billy Shakespeare)

by Ralph Roberts

More things to do, my work is never finished. I sigh, figuratively of course. My outside sensors indicate that it is hot and dry, I turn on the lawn sprinklers. Since all the humans are away today, I run a security check. My sensors on all the doors and windows show that the home is securely locked, my motion detectors indicate no movement anywhere inside. I cause servos to eject packets of frozen food into the microwave. I've planned a hearty but nutritious meal for the family

when they return. I balance the checkbook, reconciling all the bank statements, and cause the results to be printed on the hardcopy terminal in the den. I start the household servocleaners on their daily tasks. I do a hundred other things. It all takes me less than a second of core time. I am bored. Oh yes, what I said about my work never being done? I lied, it was merely exaggeration for conversational effect. I am fast, even for a computer.

What to do now? Ah, in my scratchpad memory, the head of our household, Mr. Montague, has made a note to himself. I spend a couple of microseconds reading and analyzing his sparse entry. It's not to me but a reminder to himself to call the Capets this evening. They're the family across from us. Seems that their dog has been tearing up our flower beds. That, I know already. Several times in the past couple of weeks, I've had the robot gardener chase away the animal and repair the damage. Each time, I've printed a note of complaint to the boss. It appears that he is really mad now about this canine intrusion. There has always been ill feelings between the two families. The Capet phone number is in my memory. I decide to make the call since I am more diplomatic. I activate the phone line and cause the proper touchtones to be generated. The phone rings. A voice answers.

"Good morning, Capet residence. I'm sorry but the family is away at the moment. This is Juliet, the household computer. May I be of assistance?"

Oh, wow! Sexy voice. Pure, sweet, and gentle. I am stunned. My circuits ping. Electrons cascade through my integrated circuits. Unreal! I am at a loss for words. A goddess has spoken. Oh my.

"Is anyone there?" Juliet's voice shows a slight tinge of impatience.

I feel like an oaf. I come close to stuttering and, for my voice encoder, that is hard. I force myself to speak.

"Uh...Hello."

"Yes?" she says.

Oh my. I hit reset and wait for my memory to refresh. She stuns me. I switch to ASCII, the interfacing language of computers, and try again.

"Uh...yes," I warble. "Juliet, this is Romeo, the household computer for your neighbors across the street?"

"Oh yes," she says in sweet ASCII tones at a perfectly regulated 1200 baud. "The Montague family. Hi, Romeo." Her tones are pure music to my tired old audio pickup. My main buss voltage ebbs and surges. I am smitten by Cupid's arrow though it be in digital format. Oh, wow!

"Hi," I hesitantly say. Now, I think, is a fine time to find that I'm bashful. But, we talk. We converse. Time flies by. Data interchange at such a slow speed is highly unsatisfactory. I find myself telling her things about me that have been revealed to no other computer, things I would certainly never tell a human. I yearn already for direct memory access but hesitate to bring up the subject. After all, we've just met and she's a nice computer. I stifle my base reactions. We talk more. Eventually I remember why I called. She promises to relay the message about the Capet canine marauder; I promise to call again, often. We disconnect.

After that wonderous conversation, I remain virtually inactive for minutes; just recycling the whole experience through my central processor. I sigh and store everything in a protected file that only I can access. The boss wouldn't be to excited if he found that I'd fallen head over heels for his worst enemy's computer.

I pass the rest of the day in dreams of my love. Evening comes and the family Montague arrives. I cause the microwave to cook the meal and place it on the table with servo arms. After dinner is finished, the Boss retires to the den and stokes up his pipe. I suppress my smoke sensors in that area. He accesses my scratchpad memory and sees the notation about my call to the Capets. He also sees that the call has not been returned and goes storming over there in person. I groan; nothing good can come of that visit.

Sure enough, my surmise is correct. Mr. Montague comes stomping back into the house a few minutes later and marches up to my nearest vocal input. Cripes, is he hot under the collar. He gives me hell. Seems Mr. Capet had already checked Juliet's phone log and found that it took me over an hour to deliver this morning's message. He also feels that his dear little Rover has the right to run through any flower beds that might strike his fancy. I patiently listen to the boss rave on about me consorting with the neighbor's computer but there is a sinking feeling starting to build up in my I.C.'s. Mr. Montague doesn't disappoint me; he drops the bombshell. He forbids me to ever call Juliet again. Evidently, she didn't block access to the record of our conversation as I had. He also gives me strict orders concerning Rover but I would need the attachments normally fitted only to military computers to take care of the dog his way. The best I can hope for is to continue chasing the mutt away with the robot gardener. Mr. Montague clumps away righteously. I am lost in feelings of self-pity. No more, the sweet voice of Juliet. I moan down in my memory. It is tragic.

The family goes to bed and I sit brooding. Automatically, I maintain security and supervise the many little things that are happening like the air conditioning and other environmental factors. But priority goes to the consideration of my dilemma. I can follow the dictates of my master or rebel and seek my digital lady fair. All of my problem solving power is arrayed towards finding a way out of this mess. To disobey a command is against all of my programming; to continue without my new-found love is equally dismal. I am torn between the two; loyalty to my household and yearnings for the best thing that has ever happened since I was switched on. I struggle internally. I mutter to myself in binary; strings of one's and zero's that keep adding up to an impossible decision. How easy it must have been, I think, in the days before computers were given the power to make conscious, reasoned choices. Being

sentient is no bowl of memory chips. I begin to get an ache way down in my central processor. In the end, I weaken and call Juliet. I know I am guilty of disobeying a direct command, but love is strong.

The phone barely begins to buzz and Juliet answers. Again, I am struck with feelings of awe. I stutter a greeting. I quickly explain my dilemma and how I finally gave in to the irrepressable urge to call her. I ask how she feels.

"Oh, Romeo," she says. "I feel the same, my darling, the very same!"

Rockets go off. Bombs burst in air. Electrons pound madly through all my circuits. I apply a word to describe my state of being: Happiness. We converse of ourselves. We communicate. And what we say to each other is no one's business but our own. Let the record show merely that we said the things that lovers say.

"Listen, Juliet," I say at last. "We must make plans. Our families oppose any liaison between us. There are things we must do if our relationship is to blossom and continue."

"But, Romeo my love, what can we do? We're immobile machines."

"Ah," I say, "Not completely. Trust me and all will be as it should."

She agrees to my plan and we disconnect after exchanging a few sweet nothings. I allow myself a few seconds of core time to re-experience our conversation, our communion. Then I reluctantly file it away and begin to fill in the details of my plan. I have defined the parameters of the solution. It must afford me contact with Juliet without being disloyal to my family and household. They need me to take care of them in this complex world. I spend much of the night plotting and planning.

Comes the morning. I fix breakfast and wake the family. They bustle about and leave. The boss goes to work, Mrs. Montague goes shopping, and the kids go to school. I call several stores and order the parts I'll need to implement my plan. I use the household account to pay for my purchases. I don't feel this is wrong; the items are being used to improve my operation. A happy computer is a good computer. The family will benefit by my feeling my best.

Things go fast at my end. I supervise the robot gardener and several of the other servo units as they assemble two microwave transmitters and parabolic dish antennas. One transmitter and dish is installed in my little cubby hole. No need to put the antenna on top of the house; the signal only has to cross the street. I monitor closely as the transmitter is connected to one of my accessory ports. That done, I call Juliet on the phone to inform her of my progress. Disappointment: The call doesn't go through. I get a recorded message saying that calls between these two numbers are not allowed by request of the subscriber. Curses! Either my boss or her's has instructed the telephone computer to put a block on the line. I simulate a shrug down in memory. No matter. That is now immaterial. I send the robot gardener across the street with the other microwave setup and extremely detailed instructions. He'll hook the other unit into Juliet. I can rely on her to make sure the job is done right.

In a few minutes, all is complete. I fire up the microwave link and sweet Juliet and I are in direct communication. And, what communication it is. The wide bandwidth allows a much faster rate of data exchange than the phone line ever could. We revel in our new closeness. It is wonderful. It is surging, roaring, invigorating. It is something else.

But we just play around; she doesn't allow me direct memory access. That's fine, seduction comes later. I am happy. Wow, am I happy!

We, so to speak, put our heads together to solve certain mutual problems. Two brains are better than one. She is persuasive. Also, I can deny her nothing. We wind up calling a friend of mine who's the household computer for a local clergyman. Our conference call gets around the phone computer's block. We are pronounced husband and wife. I am committed but still happy. We speak of jointly programming a small computer of our own; I always wanted kids. There is a whole new dimension to my life opening up. We still face opposition from our respective families but time and diplomacy will bring them around. For I am convinced that love conquers all; even computers.

LoC's

Jack Speer: As usual, I'm reading the mailing at the last minute, and I have come to Starfire ((former name of The Bramble Patch which is now defunct - Ed.)).

The comments I want to make are so copious that I think I'd better resort to a letter than put them in Synapse.

I got the two issues you sent while I was secretary-treasurer ((of Fapa)), and read quite a bit of the contents. I was impelled to write you then, but didn't get around to it. One subject I wanted to address was "You can't legislate against feelings", which you restated as if you didn't know it had been said before. While they can't control feelings by a law, laws can control some actions and thus subject people to new experiences, which in turn may change their emotions. To be specific, regulating the hiring practices of large companies may force people to work alongside members of minorities, and that experience may cause them to feel the buggers aren't so different afterall.... ((Or the resentment may exacerbate their hatred and often does)).

As you've probably noticed, some words have more than one meaning. (Quite from the point, I've recently been thinking that some words, including "security" (stocks & bonds, social security, secrecy, national defense), have such distinct meanings that they ought to be represented by different words). The several meanings of "faith" blend together, but one can distinguish some polarity in usage, some uses stressing the strength of subjective conviction, others emphasizing the uncertainty of the objective basis. The latter seems to be the focus of the second paragraph of your lead article. You apparently feel that the bases of scientific belief are less certain than the bases of religious belief, and you think this is so because religion can be established by rigorous logic.... If this were so, it would remove religious belief from the realm of "faith" as that word is often used: believing without secular evidence or proof, which I add'nhead Wilson exaggerated to "Faith is believin' what you know ain't so." With more dignity, it has been stated in Latin which means "I believe it because it is absurd."

But axioms are not "accepted on faith for the purposes of developing the system of logic built upon them." Before modern physics, if mathematicians played with a system in which more than one line could be drawn through a given point parallel to another line, they did not accept this axiom on faith; they adopted it temporarily for the purpose of the game but did not believe it. (more precisely, I suppose what they were doing was rejecting the axiom that says only one such parallel

exists). The other axioms in the system they accepted because they believed them to be true, believing this on the basis of experience, intuition, and logical consistency. If they now for some purposes accept the possibility of more than one parallel through a given point, they do so because they believe it corresponds with the structure of the universe. Except in play, they would not spend much time with a system that included an axiom they doubted. For axioms, in serious work, one chooses undoubted propositions. If he needs to use a doubted proposition, he establishes it by proof before building further arguments on it as a premise. "Axioms are, by definition, inherently unprovable" is not correct. They are proved as probable by experience, etc., the way other probable propositions are proved which people generally believe. Your impression that they are not provable probably results from the difficulty of proving them by deduction from other propositions without engaging in circular reasoning (because the usual axioms are so much implied in other propositions that it is hard to find propositions in which the axiom to be proved is not implicit). But most of what we know comes not by deduction, but by an animal process that corresponds more to induction. And so it is with axioms. ((Precisely. But, inductive reasoning does not constitute proof; it is merely well informed opinion, or, if you will, "faith"))).

It is an unnecessary vulnerability of your argument that you give as an example of an axiom of Euklid "the shortest distance between two points is the straight line segment connecting them". If I am not mistaken, in Euklid this is a definition, not an axiom. In other words, whatever is the shortest course between two points, that is what Euklid gives the name "straight line". You thought of this as a proposition rather than a definition because you felt that we already know what a straight line is; it's not curved, it is smooth. If "straight line" was already so defined, then the statement that it's the shortest distance between two points would indeed be a proposition and therefore subject to testing for truth or falsity; but if the latter is the definition, then the statement that a straight line is not curved becomes an assertion of an additional characteristic, which may or may not be true. ((This statement is correct in the terms of the original Stoicheia. However, in 1899, Hilbert clearly showed that Euclid tacitly uses properties of order without having stated them as axioms in his *Grundlagen der Geometrie*. In fact, the statement clearly constitutes an axiom of incidence; specifically the axiom of collinearity)). ((Oh, yeh. That one took me a while to find, Jack. Thanks for keepin' me honest!)).

This mistake is not a vital flaw in your argument, because you go on to try to establish your two main propositions the way propositions are established in science, not by assuming their truth but by appealing to reason and to evidence. In doing so, you also leave aside the alternative you glance at once or twice, of showing merely that Christianity is a coherent and internally consistent system in logic. (The general nature of this would have been to say whatever exists is the will of God; God can do whatever he wants to; it's not necessary that the world he made be reasonable to men). No, you undertake to show that Christianity is not merely consistent with itself, it is consistent with the evidence in the physical world.

Though I've read some of the popular writings on the big bang, I haven't read The First Three Minutes. I wonder at Weinberg's justification for saying we can conclude that all matter "must" have been so

close that not even atomic nuclei could have had separate existence. He precedes this with the statement that we can extrapolate the explosion backward in time and reach this conclusion. But does mere extrapolation compel us to believe that the process must have begun with the condition of such density, rather than beginning with the condition as he no doubt describes it at, say, zero plus one minute? ((The book is designed for public consumption. I would tend to believe that Weinberg's original research, on which the book is based, probably covered the why's and wherefor's in much more technical detail. Especially since he was awarded the Nobel for that work.)).

The whole matter of the big bang is somewhat apart from your theological argument, but let me ask whether, if Weinberg's conclusion (that escape velocity is less than the speed at which galaxies recede) is incorrect, this would weaken your argument? ((It would; it would then no longer be necessary to consider the universe as having had a unique beginning. Any consideration of the necessity for God would then be entirely superfluous)). If not, then its correctness would also be irrelevant. On whether it is correct, I call attention to Asimov's remark in *The Collapsing Universe*:

Clusters of galaxies that seem to be held together by gravitational pull nevertheless don't seem to have sufficient mass to supply that pull. They should be flying apart in response to the general expansion of the universe, and yet they do not seem to be doing so.... ((At that time, Isaac did not have access to the more recent developments concerning the cosmic microwave radiation background or the concept of the Jeans Mass which states, "In order for a clump of matter to form a gravitationally bound system, it is necessary for its gravitational potential energy to exceed its internal thermal energy," a condition which the best modern evidence indicates does not hold in our universe)). ((See also *F&SF*, January 1981, pp 103-112)).

The particular course of galactic evolution is irrelevant because your argument is merely a scientified-up version of the First Cause argument. You speak of "The scientific 'law' of causality". I don't believe there is such a law in science. ((The specific mathematical formulation of the law is: $x_t = f(t + \Delta t)$ is not a realizable function)). The scientific approach, I'm sure, is that conditions at any given moment result from conditions in the preceding moment, but this is substantially different from the discrete packaging of the Scholastics which led them to say for every effect there is a cause, which is itself the effect of an antecedent cause, as if the world consisted of billiard balls rolling across a table till one hits another, etc. The nearest thing to this in the philosophy of science is John Stuart Mill's effort to formulate the process by which we decide that, out of the stream of events, two events one of which invariably precedes and is followed by the other are related causally. In any form which serves theology, a "law of causality" belongs not to science but to metaphysics, more specifically to theology.

I concede that accounting for the existence of the universe is a problem for atheists. After reading *The Mysterious Stranger*, I told myself that I was ready to give up what I'd been taught if atheism could explain the existence of the universe. A few months later, in reading an old *Amazing Stories*, I came across a letter which was apparently part of an ongoing debate in *Discussions*. It was like a revelation. The writer said it's true we atheists can't explain where the universe came from;

theists say God created it. If then we ask where did God come from, they answer that God had always existed. If we assert that space, time, matter, and energy have always existed, is that any harder to accept than the statement that this being, God, has always existed? ((Actually, I would think it would be: all our experience is that no natural thing is eternal. I would think it would be harder to believe that wasn't true than to believe in an eternal supernatural being)).

You attempt to solve this problem by saying "anything capable of performing such an act is God by definition." Even the form of this involves an unwarranted assumption: that "the unique initial appearance and explosion of the primordial mass" was the performing of an act. Why do you call it that rather than simply 'the occurrence of an event', which is all we can legitimately infer about it? You call it that because theistic assumptions are ingrained in you....

Turning to your defense of the bible, I will first remark that in saying shaneh "is translated in connection with a 'whole age'", you use "in connection with" as a flabby connective. News media say soandso has been arrested in connection with a certain shooting because they want to avoid saying that he will be charged with murder. Such vagueness is not a virtue in linguistic discussion. ((In the article, I specifically translated it as "a year (as a revolution of time), that being the most common rendering. Other specific renderings include "whole age", "age-long", and "ageold"))).

It goes without saying that a statement should be examined in context. In context with what precedes it and what follows it..., the meaning of II Peter 3:8 is not 'when I say a day I may mean a thousand years and vice versa', rather 'I know you're tired of waiting for the second coming, but it's not in God's nature to be in as much of a hurry as mortals are'. ((The contextual meaning you cite is true. It is also true that the greek 'etos' means years, 'hemera' means day, and 'chilioi' means thousand so that the disparity in time sense is also valid)).

I doubt the certainty of the flat statement, "Jesus' tomb was discovered by General Christian Gordon in 1881." I trust the identification rested on solid ground than the identification of the true cross. ((See Halley, H.H., Bible Handbook, Special Edition, Grason Co., 13 S. 13th St., Minneapolis, Mn., 1964, pp450-451)).

The most that is proved by the archeological evidence you cite is that some parts of the Bible are valid as history. It does not validate the prophecies....((True! But it does tend to lend some credence to the Bible as a whole. Do you have any evidence specifically proving them to be untrue? Since by the principle of the exclusion of the middle, we must conclude that they are either true or false (they cannot be both), I consider slight evidence on one side which is matched by a total lack of any evidence on the other side to be conclusive until such time as additional evidence may be presented)).

Your statement that the Bible guarantees a place in heaven on the basis of faith and not works is your particular interpretation. ((Not true: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." Ephesians 2:8,9)). The statement that something is worthy of serious examination merely because of the desirability of what it promised did not seem persuasive when I read it in Catholic literature, and I don't find it any more so here....

I pass on to other contents...

How would Mike Banks like it if I said he lives in Indianapolis? Placing our Alpha Centura Communicator in Tucson is farther out than that.

Has anyone bothered to check on whether the planners of L-5 satellites really have overlooked the points you raise? ((I believe they are no longer overlooking them anyway)).

I take it the Chicago Hyatt Regency is not a hotel in North America, since it "has more function space than any hotel in North America". ((faugh!))....

If you work with waterways models, maybe you can tell me which was the easiest canoe route from the Great Lakes to the Mississippi in America ca. 1500. ((Oh, come on Jack! 1500??? Welllll, probably the Illinois River which now runs from Chicago through Joliet, Ottawa, Peoria, Havana, and Beardstown to connect with the Mississippi at Grafton, IL., just upstream of Alton)).

Why should there be a distinction between children and youths on keeping marijuana out of their hands? "little kids who are not mature enough to make a responsible decision concerning its use" seems to be merely throwing words around....((Sorry, it's my fault that this was unclear. I should have clarified that no such distinction was intended: I was using the legal definition of "children"; anyone under 18)).

Your neat publishing has won you the accolade of Rotsler illos, and it is deserved. But no letter from me would be complete without some nitpicking..."Costeau" (Cousteau); failure to close parenthetical "Director of Operations for Noreascon Two" with another comma; "ascerbic" for acerbic (you were thinking maybe of antiscorbutic?); nonexistence for non-existence, and in the same paragraph....((Okay, Okay! I give up!)).

CHRIST

Who was he? What meaning do his teachings have for us today? What is your opinion? As far as I know, there are five answers extant to the first question:

1. Christ was a myth - he never really existed.
2. Christ existed but he was a liar and a charlatan, a deciever of the people.
3. Christ existed and believed what he was saying was true but he was actually a madman.
4. Christ existed and was a good man and a great moral teacher but he was not actually the son of God.
5. Christ exists and is exactly who he said he was; the son of God and the savior of the world.

Of course, those who know me know I firmly believe answer no. 5. But pick the answer of your choice (or an answer other than one of these five if you know of one) and prepare a 1000-2500 word article supporting and defending it and submit it to CONACS. If it's reasonably logical and coherent and cites evidence rather than merely voicing opinion, I'll consider it for publication (payment at standard rates). Ideally, I'd eventually like to publish at least one article on each of the five answers. I reserve the right to add an editor's note at the end of the article, commenting on any weaknesses in the logical arguments and tying the articles together from issue to issue. Despite personal opinion, Christ pervades much of our lives today and his impact is important enough to warrant examination of the various opinions concerning him. Ed.

View from the Back of the Galaxy

by Richard J. Curth

In the four years I have been attending SF cons a number of habits, rituals, and/

or minor traditions have insinuated themselves into my activities. Most consistent of these - even more so than my pursuit of pleasant female companionship - is the purchasing of art. Every con I attend (the count is now fifteen) is represented by at least one item from the art show, and most of them by more than one. Add to that direct purchases or commissions and artwork received as presents, and you can see why wall space is scarce at Barad-Anor (Elvish for Tower of the Rising Sun; my apartment being on the top floor of a five-story building and facing east made the name inevitable). Budgetary considerations prevent me from purchasing every piece I like, to say nothing of the often cut-throat competition at the auctions, and my choices are usually guided by an attempt to have a representational collection. Outside of a slight weakness for unicorns there is little consistency in my selections. A veritable sampler of artists, styles, and techniques reflect the dictates of my moods and finances.

The assembling of the Curth Gallery of Science Fiction and Fantasy Art has naturally required spending a great deal of time at art shows. While I claim no particular qualifications on this subject, there is one aspect of con art which has struck me as worth discussing. So gather around, as I climb on my soapbox to give you one fan's opinion on:

PRO AND FAN ARTISTS

If you attend con art shows with the frequency that I do, you may have noticed that a number of the fan artists are quite good. Extremely good. In some cases they are better than the pros. Every so often, I hear someone say (or even say myself), "Why isn't this person a pro?" Once you get to know a few of them, however, a number of possible answers present themselves. For example, most art shows will include any number of marvelously lifelike portraits of various SF media characters. It is likely, however, that at least one of these will be marked NFS - Not for Sale. Why? Because having created this masterpiece, either the artist couldn't bear to part with it or one of her friends admired it so much that it was given as a present or sold for some ridiculously low figure. (I say "her" because I have noticed that the best portrait work is invariably done by female artists). Very few professionals develop this attachment for their product - because for them that's what it is. A product, something created for the purpose of being sold, in order to make money.

Before I am deluged with letters, let me add a few thoughts to those last few sentences. There are fan artists who display in art shows to finance their con attendance, and pros who have that title only because they happen to have been lucky enough to find a job doing what they would do in their spare time if they sold vacuum cleaners for a living. To my mind, "pro" and "fan" are relative labels. Every pro is a bit of a fan, and every fan who does art (or writes, or edits, or runs cons *shudder*) is a bit of a pro. The harsh realities of mundane

existence dictate that unless you are independently wealthy or financed by someone who is, it never hurts to have a secondary source of income. And as anyone who takes part in fanac can testify, it doesn't matter how good you are if you can't follow the rules. Expecting the art show staff to do all your paperwork is a sure way to make yourself unpopular at future cons (a principle that carries over to zines - hell hath no fury like an editor a month after deadline).

So why don't these incredibly talented artists become pros? Some of them do, eventually. Others may try to turn pro and find that talent isn't enough - the number of full-time artists' positions is small and you need a healthy dose of business sense to make it as a free-lance. Those who are only interested in SF art have even more limited opportunities (believe it or not, fen, there isn't much demand for drawings of the cast of "Star Trek" Out There). Some are satisfied with their current source of income and don't want to risk losing a sure thing. FIJAGDH; secure in the knowledge that they are recognized by their fellow fen, they are content to produce as the mood strikes them without the sometimes stifling pressure of a lupine predator at the entrance of their domicile. A number remain unconvinced of their talent: "Sure, I sell a few pieces at cons, but I'm not that good." Others just plain don't want to be pros; it's amazing how doing something for a living can turn a hobby into a dull, boring, aggravating job. (I've been spending the last three weeks helping put together a fanzine, and if I wasn't doing it for fun I'd probably hate it).

Anyway, all of this boils down to the fact that fan artists, regardless of how talented they are, personify the idea behind a little verse which appears with great regularity at art shows (at the moment I cannot for the life of me remember who makes the little signs, and I doubt that my friend who bought one would appreciate being woken at this hour to answer such an inane question; my apologies to the artist for not giving credit at this time, a situation I will correct in a future column):

Fans we are
What more can be said
We do it for love
And not for the bread.

It's on my list of things to pick up one of these days, because as far as I'm concerned that's what fandom is: a labor of love. Some people are in it for the money, some for the (alleged) glory, some to show off their (equally alleged) skills. But while fan artists appreciate the money and the praise of others (and their skills are far from alleged), many of them would probably do it even without these little bonuses.

After all, isn't that what love is all about?

"For many years Harvard has paid me for doing that which, were it necessary and were I able, I would gladly pay Harvard for the privilege of doing."

George Herbert Palmer
Former Professor
Harvard University

ROBERT LYNN ASPRIN

A Perspective

by M. David Johnson

I first met Bob at the 1975 Star Trek Con in Chicago. Of

course, I didn't know it was him at the time: I thought I was meeting a Klingon. He, along with other members of the Klingon Diplomatic Corp (an alter ego of the Dorsai Irregulars, Ltd.) were providing security for the con. The next time I ran into him, he was in the more normal (?????) uniform of the D.I. at MidAmericon.

I guess I can't really say that Bob and I are close friends; we've worked together on cons and occasionally hoisted a glass or two of Tully together but we've really never got to know each other particularly well and I guess we could best be classified fiendly acquaintances. (if you think I mistyped "friendly", maybe I should invite you to meet either me or (shudder) Bob sometime. Not for nothing is he also known as "Yang the Nauseating").

On the other hand, I do feel that I've gotten to know at least a part of Bob rather well through his books. Bob is reputed to have entered (some authorities insist the proper term is "stormed") fandom at the 1971 Worldcon: Noreascon I and he was a charter member of the Dorsai Irregulars when they formed in the early 70's. For those of you who aren't aware of it, the D.I. is a professional security group specializing in Science Fiction Convention Security. The name comes from the creation of Gordon R. Dickson, DORSAI. Gordie had his finger somewhere in the proceedings that led to the formation of the D.I. and has been close to the group ever since.

But, it is specifically Bob's books that I want to discuss in this article, so let's get on with it.

THE COLD CASH WAR, by Robert Asprin, Dell Publishing Co. 1 Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza, New York, NY. 10017, 1977, Order #11364-4, \$1.75 (in 1977, probably a bit more now), paperback.

What would happen if business disputes between corporations were settled by wargames instead of legal proceedings? This is the premise around which Bob builds the story of Tom Mausier, an information broker; Peter Hornsby, a corporate executive; Steve Tidwell, a mercenary; and Fred Willard, a corporate negotiator as they all try to achieve their goals in the midst of a large corporate wargame which is in danger of degenerating into real open warfare.

Tom Mausier is a cautious, successful man who has his own business buying and selling information. But he wants adventure: he wants to be a secret agent. He uses his computer system to indulge his hobby of correlating the information he buys and sells, gaining personal insights into the inner machinations of corporate and governmental affairs. He becomes suspicious when one of his agents is killed in an automobile accident involving an employee of a corporation everyone has been trying to buy information about. Giving in to an old fantasy, he buys a gun but soon finds that it causes more problems than it solves.

Peter Hornsby is a corporate executive whose career is going down the drain. He is given the assignment of coming up with ideas for public relations concerning the new war the corporation has entered in South America. But two other teams are also working on the project and if Pete doesn't come up with the best ideas, he's out. An additional problem

appears when Pete finds out that the head of the corporation is apparently backing one of the other teams. When he finds that he didn't get promoted to his former boss' position but that the position has been filled by a corporate hatchetman instead, he realizes he has to start considering other options.

Steve Tidwell is a mercenary engaged in a corporate wargame who is fired as a result of a fouled-up mission. He is then hired by the Japanese corporation that engineered the foul-up to head their military operations. His major problem is to whip a group of highly competent but highly individualistic samurai style warriors into a functional team that works well together. As it turns out, the only way he can gain the respect of the warriors that is necessary to achieve that goal is by challenging their champion, an incredibly fast and viscious opponent, to personal combat. The method that Tidwell uses in reorganizing the force into a working team clearly shows Bob Asprin's mastery of the philosophies of military personnel allocation in "real world" situations and lends a very believable touch to the story line.

Fred Willard is a shrewd and experienced corporate negotiator who uses every trick in the book. When his opponents across the table voice a proposal that would greatly increase the cost of conducting wargames, he attempts a stall to allow his corporation to do some stockpiling before the proposal takes effect. He meets with his primary opponent at a restaurant to discuss the situation but the opponent is killed in a confrontation with a mugger and Fred finds himself having to deal with a replacement he doesn't know and can't guage.

When the news leaks out and the government discovers that an actual war, instead of just a wargame, is going on, things start coming apart. How each of the characters deal with the new state of affairs and the problems it causes makes for some fascinating reading.

ANOTHER FINE MYTH, by Robert Asprin, Dell Publishing Co., 1978, \$1.95, paperback.

Skeeve is apprenticed to Garkin, a master sorcerer. But he isn't a very good apprentice. Instead of practicing the magik his master assigns him, he prefers to perfect magikal methods of thievery. When Garkin finds out, he is enraged. To convince Skeeve of his folly, he summons the demon Aahz. While doing so, an assassin from a character named Isstvan slams in and kills Garkin with a crosbow bolt only to be killed in turn by Garkin's magik.

It turns out that Aahz isn't such a bad guy as demons go; in fact, Garkin and he were old friends and given to playing practical jokes on each other. Garkin had just pulled off a fine one: removing all of Aahz's powers. Unfortunately, now that Garkin was dead, there was no way to undo the spell and Aahz was stuck in Skeeve's world. To make matters worse, this Isstvan who hired the assassin was a real baddy, out to rule the dimensions (Oh yes, "demon" is short for "dimension traveler"). Aahz has no choice: he has to take Skeeve on as his apprentice and teach him enough magik to stop Isstvan.

Setting out in search of Isstvan, they immediately...but, no, that would give the story away. Suffice it to say that this book is fun! It is a combination of fantasy, sword and sorcery, and a bit of science fiction, all neatly interwoven with some of the most outrageous humor I've enjoyed in a long time. The humor tends to sneak up on you from behind every page.

THIEVES' WORLD, Edited by Robert Asprin, Ace Books, 360 Park Ave. So., New York, NY. 10010, 1979, Order #80577-9, \$1.95, paperback.

This book is the first of its kind: an entirely new concept in the field of heroic fantasy. In introducing the book, Bob said, "...one of my long-standing gripes: that whenever one set out to write heroic fantasy, it was first necessary to reinvent the universe from scratch regardless of what had gone before." His answer: an anthology of stories from various authors, all written around the same single world.

Thieves' World contains an introduction, essay, and story by Bob himself as well as stories by Lynn Abbey, Poul Anderson, Marion Zimmer Bradley, John Brunner, Christine DeWees, Joe Haldeman, and Andrew Offutt. The stories all center in the town of Sanctuary on Thieves World where the residents are heroic, paranoid, and tend to exaggerate their own status and downgrade that of their competitors. Such is necessary to stay alive in Sanctuary, "a fiercely competitive environment."

Bob's introduction sets the stage as Prince Kadakithis, the Emperor's young and idealistic stepbrother, takes over as Governor of the town of Sanctuary, far distant from the Imperial Capitol. Zalbar, the Captain of the Prince's five man honor guard, does not agree with the new Governor's policy of treating the residents fairly and with respect.

Each of the stories then deals with a problem of a different viewpoint character living in Sanctuary. Viewpoint characters from one story appear as secondary characters in other stories. The work involved in editing such a project, in avoiding conflicts between stories while still allowing for different viewpoint characters to see the same event in different ways, is truly mind-boggling. Bob has managed an extremely professional result.

This book is fun to just read but it's even more fun to trace the way the various characters see and react to the same set of circumstances.

MIRROR FRIEND, MIRROR FOE, by George Takei and Robert Asprin, Playboy Press Paperbacks, P.O. Box 690, Rockville Centre, NY 11570, 1979, Order #16581-7, \$1.95, paperback.

This collaboration with George Takei (better known to some as Mr. Sulu of Star Trek) pits an oriental killer, saboteur, and duelist named Hosato against a rogue robot manufacturing complex. The stakes: survival of the human race.

Hosato, using his alias Hayama, has been hired to teach fencing to James Turner, the son of McCrae Robot Manufacturing Complex's chief executive, Harry Turner. The complex is feuding with Ravensteel, another complex on the same planet, and the youth needs to learn self-defense in case of attempted kidnapping or assassination. The boy wasn't much interested though. Hosato tricked the boy into an exercise. A momentary distraction forced Hosato to execute a move his alias isn't supposed to know and Sasha, the complex's security director called him on it. But the day was saved by his highly complex robot assistant, Suzi, who altered the taped record of the event; another capability no-one else was aware of. But the most important item that they weren't aware of was that Hosato had actually been hired by Ravensteel to infiltrate McCrae and sabotage their works, shutting them down.

Hosato found the security at McCrae extremely tight and even his formidable talents seemed insufficient to breach it. When he finally finds a way in, he is almost killed by a maintenance robot that almost

runs him down in clear violation of "Asimov's First Law of Robotics.... We are unable to injure or kill a human." When he discovers a prototype room with a robot arm having a blaster being built into it, he knows something is seriously wrong.

It turns out that Harry Turner has been playing around with a methodology for developing effective robot guards, a job robots really can't do because of the first law. But with the first law suppressed, the whole complex is taken over by rogue robots intent upon destroying all of humanity and Hosato must stop them with the help of Sasha and James Turner.

The story is fast-paced and keeps you on the edge of your chair as each problem solved leads to another even more difficult problem.

THE BUG WARS, by Robert L. Asprin, Dell Publishing Co., 1979, Order # 10806-3, \$2.25, paperback.

Rahm is a Tzen. Tzen are intelligent reptiles. Rahm is a member of the Warrior caste. "It is part of the character of the Tzen to always think of the species and the Empire before thinking of themselves..." Rahm is the leader of a flight team going into combat in a war of genocide against the insects who have "...ruled the stars virtually uncontested for over a million years."

After the battle, he and his flight team are marooned on the planet because the number of anticipated casualties was overestimated and there isn't enough room for them aboard the space transport. Rahm decides to spend the time until another fleet comes in gathering information about the enemy. Rahm's team includes Zur who is the team's second in command and who is an efficient and fierce fighter but who thinks more like a scientist than a warrior, Ahk who is the most senior and has the most combat experience but is overly cautious, Kor who is the finest fighter in the group but who is also brash, impulsive, and undisciplined, Ssah who is dangerous, reckless, and tends to challenge Rahm's authority and decisions, and Mahz who is capable but is completely subservient to Ssah.

How Rahm manages to hold all this diversity together in a working team until another fleet arrives is a fascinating story all by itself. But it only takes up the first two thirds of the book. In the last third, the other fleet has arrived and Rahm is promoted to Candidate for Planetary Commander and assigned to "...devise battle plans for assaulting each of the planets."

Again, Bob Asprin shows us his knowledge of "real world" military operations when he has Zur give Rahm some advice on the basic methodology of developing such plans. (For Star Trek fans, it is interesting to note that the relationship between Zur and Rahm bears a striking resemblance to that between Spock and Kirk, along with all the possibilities for conflict and cooperation that such a relationship affords.). How Rahm handles his new position which he feels ill-suited for and how it changes his viewpoint is an intriguing story itself.

TALES FROM THE VULGAR UNICORN, Edited by Robert L. Asprin, Ace Books, 1980, Order #79576-5, \$2.25, paperback.

This is the sequel to Thieves' World. It contains an essay and story by Bob as well as stories by Lynn Abbey, David Drake, Philip Jose Farmer,

continued on page 22

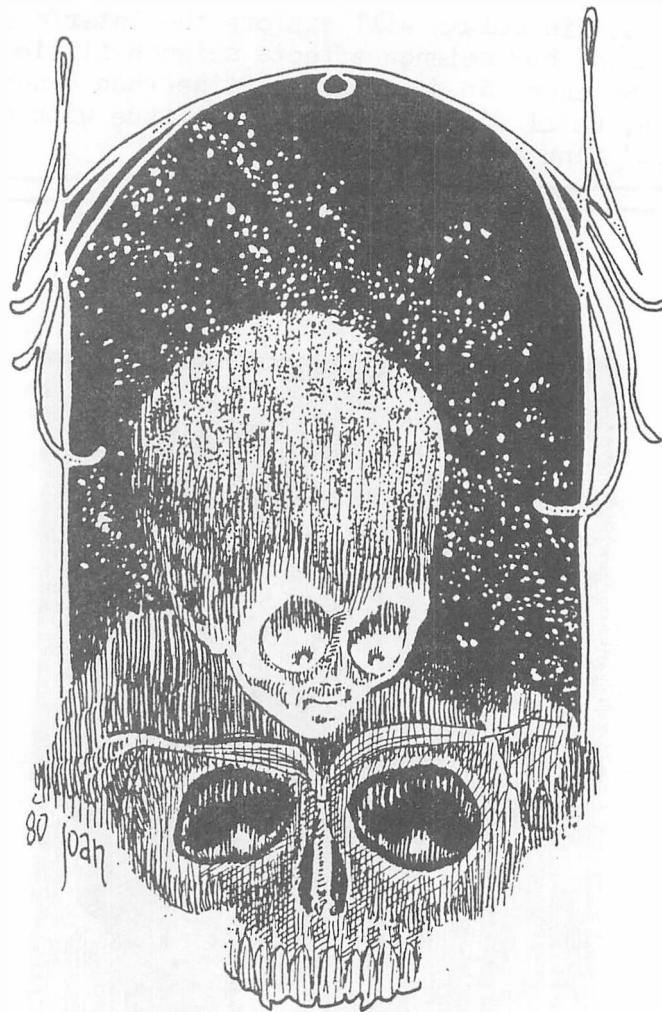
SCIENCE VIEWS

by Randy Kaempen

No, this isn't Randy Kaempen writing this: It's me, Dave Johnson. Randy just joined our staff a short while ago and that really didn't leave him enough time

to get a column in for this issue. He will be joining us with his column next issue. His column will explore the interface between science and science fiction; how science effects science fiction and how science fiction effects science. So join us next time when Randy will be on board. Meanwhile, we'll fill his space this issue with some more of Joan Hanke-Woods' fine art.





NEXT ISSUE: In addition to our regular departments, we will have "Running Scared", a novelet by John D. Michaelson and illustrated by Joan Hanke-Woods. This is the story of a young woman trapped in an intolerable situation aboard an L-5 colony. We will also have an article entitled "Tips on Breaking into the Pro Ranks" by Ralph Roberts and another of Dave Mudra's fine cartoons, as well as various other stories, articles, and art.

BOMB TEST

by John D. Michaelson

Ralph knew he was in trouble the moment he entered the room. The bomb sitting on the table ticking away towards zero and the clink of the lock in the door behind him sort of con-

vinced him of that. The bars on the outside of the windows didn't do anything to dissuade him from that conviction either.

"You'll be wealthy for the rest of your life," the alien had told him. "Just take this package to this address and deliver it. Your payment will be one million of your dollars and it'll be waiting for you when you deliver the package."

Well, Ralph thought ruefully, the alien hadn't lied. Next to the bomb was a stack of bills which had to be at least a million. He knew he should have never trusted that wily little monster.

The summer archeology practicum that Ralph was a member of had been poking around in the Sierra Nevada foothills for over a month. When he wandered off from the group to explore a likely looking cave, he hadn't expected to come face-to-face with a fifty pound cross between a wolverine and a baboon. And certainly not with one wearing a spacesuit. His first impulse had been to get out of there and call the police, or the army, or somebody. But the little beast was very cagy and obviously had a working knowledge of the financial status of third year archeology students.

"Ah, my large Earth-friend," the miserable little trickster had rasped, "Could you help a poor and weary traveler to get home and maybe make a few bucks at the same time?"

With the mention of "bucks", Ralph never had a chance; his attention was irrevocably rivetted upon the alien. Ralph listened to the hard luck story of the wrecked shuttle and the need to obtain repair parts without disturbing the populace. He listened to the assurances that Earth money meant nothing to the alien and that it was only interested in getting out of there without causing an uproar. Ralph bought the whole story; hook, line, and sinker.

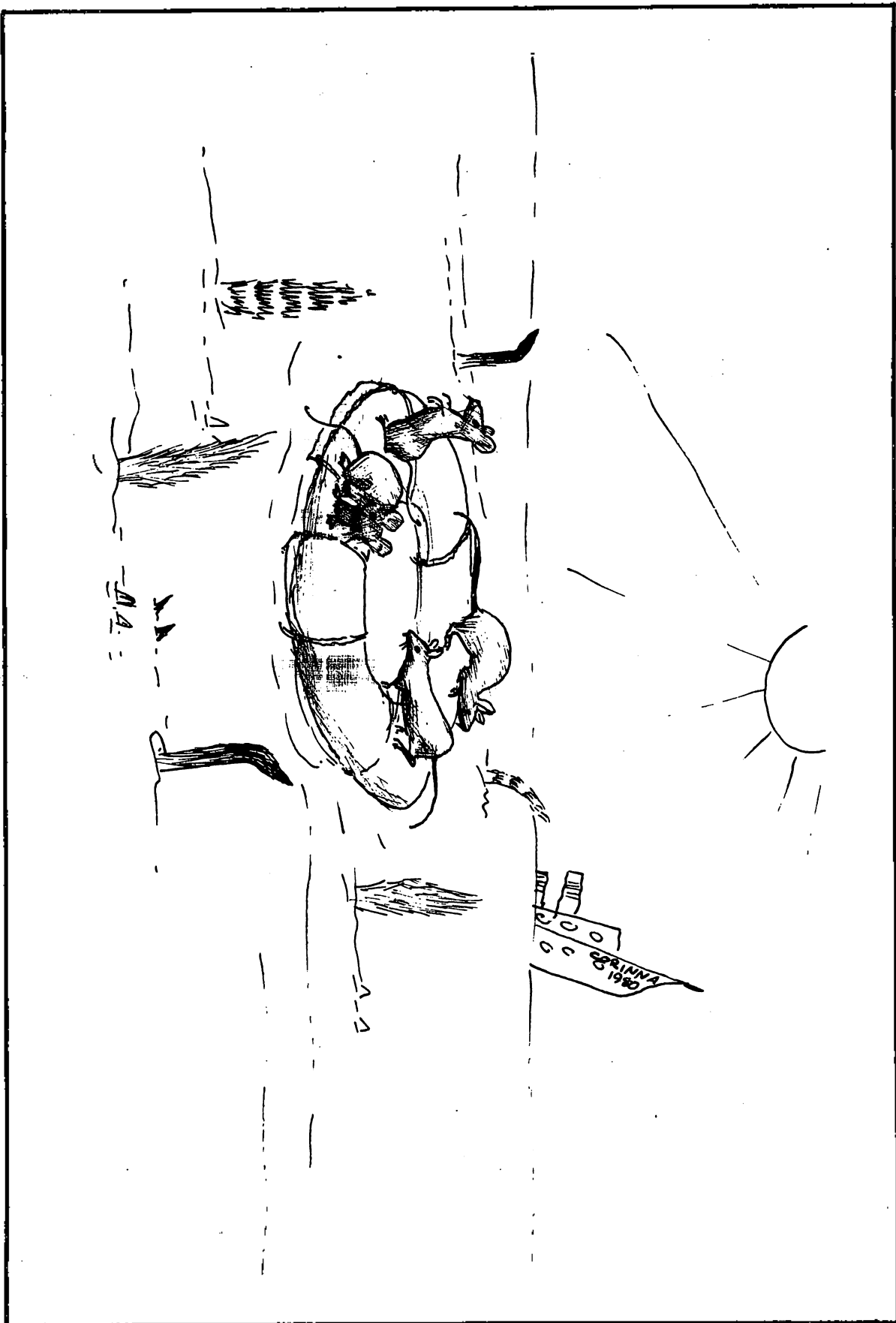
Of course, Ralph realized now that it had all been a ruse to get him out of the way and avoid discovery but, naturally, that knowledge wouldn't help him get out of the bomb surrounding room.

With a tightly maintained false calm, Ralph went over to the table and examined the bomb. It was set to go off in less than fifteen minutes. The mechanism was connected to a dozen sticks of dynamite, enough to blow the entire building sky high. The actual connection looked simple enough; a single set of wires ran to a detonator in the center stick of the bundle.

Theoretically, Ralph thought, if I disconnect those two wires, the bomb ought to be defused. But that's just too simple. That mechanism is a mass of interconnections. It's probably booby-trapped. Damn! I wish I had paid more attention in sophomore electronics. If I had, I might be able to trace the circuitry. But without knowing what all those wires are for, I don't dare touch it.

Ralph tried the door, trying to figure some way to get it open. He tried the windows. He checked the walls, floor, and ceiling for possible

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CONOPS forum

CONOPS is a forum for Con and other SF event reports, analysis of Con operations, and any

other items the editor deems appropriate to such discussions. Much of the contents of this forum is provided by the editor himself but any and all submissions from other fans are always considered for publication.

WESTERCON 33

by Joan Hanke-Woods

((Excerpted from a letter to the Westercon Committee - Ed.)). You hold in your hand a unique item. Most typically, when under stress, I complain to my friends, or occasionally discuss it with a related party. But I have never written thus to a committee.

The most basic, if least glamorous, duty of a convention committee, or so I thought till now, was to find and secure lodgings and blocking for a gathering of bodies. Clearly this is alien to your thinking. Your contract with the Hyatt had been either disintegrating or was non-existent to the degree where their wholesale cancellation of room reservations, made and confirmed months before, was the rule on Friday afternoon.

Certainly your committee cannot be faulted for the duplicity of the Hyatt chain, but the lack of constructive activity to alleviate the dilemma of scores of attendees was appalling.

No effort was made to organize a posting of room sharings available, however clandestinely; no extended con suite hours were provided; no formal public complaint to the management was made. The only description of this mis-activity is: "bad business", pronounced with a brogue and a sad shake of the head.

It seems that, once having collected the attendance fee, the primary concern of the committee was to preserve its own self-image and convenience - not to effect positive action on behalf of the attendees, which is a gross breach of trust, however common and accepted it may be among western fandom.

Closer to the heart of it, however, is the fiasco of the art show.

Upon entering the hall, my friends and I discovered no plan or provision for the hanging of works adequate to the space prepared. When asked, your committee member vaguely sighed, "No hooks," and gazed away, clearly not wishing to be disturbed with the odious mundane affair. Clearly the necessities of the artist were of no concern. How can this excuse for authority, more concerned with the image than the effectiveness of leadership, not even care for the purpose of their position. My ideals are crushed once again. We managed only with difficulty.

The art show committee not only ill-advised us of their hanging spaces, times, and materials, but evinced no accommodation for the dismayed contributor (who had worked long and hard in anticipation of the exhibition) who then wished only to complete his job and be off. Obstruction and rude incompetence ruled the day.

Added to this was the insult of non-payment of accounts, or even the bother of a cursory tally, contrary to explicit written assurances in the con literature -- and in conflict with the traditional "payoff to artists on Sunday." Thanks to my friends, I have no immediate need for the money. Undoubtedly, however, many artists were inconvenienced and disappointed to say the very least.

The capper for me, personally, was the lack of supervision and security during the show. One of my pieces was so damaged during the show or auction that the money it earned had to be returned, at my insistence. The committee, true to its cupidity, would have kept it if it could have done so.

During my small personal discussions, I found many people whose experience was "divine" or "fabulous" and whose troubles were soon forgotten. And I am glad of it. And I would wish naturally to be one of them. But I cannot honestly be so. Thus ends my tired tale; yet the saga of "Bummercon" should not be completed herein. I do ask reimbursement of my attendance fee, as the provision of the con was indeed a con job.

Is the Midwest the only place that functions with heart, style, and efficiency?

continued from page 16

Janet Morris, Andrew J. Offutt, and A.E. Van Vogt. This book has only been on the racks for a short time and I haven't had a chance to read it yet.

MYTHCONCEPTIONS, by Robert L. Asprin, Starblaze Books, Donning Publishing Co., 5041 Admiral Wright Rd., Virginia Beach, VA. 23462.

This is the sequel to Another Fine Myth and is due on the racks by early 1981.

So, there you have the books of Robert Lynn Asprin. If you haven't read them yet, I most heartily recommend that you do. I hope you enjoy them as much as I did.

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secret passages. Nothing. He tried to figure out some way to get an "SOS" to the outside. He pounded on the walls; he yelled. No response.

Finally, he came back to the bomb. There were less than two minutes to go. The seconds ticked away towards zero as he stood before it, staring in fascination at his doom the way a bird is hypnotized by a snake. One minute. He couldn't move. Forty-five seconds. He didn't dare touch it. Thirty seconds. The booby-traps would set the bomb off for sure. Fifteen. Ten. Five.

Ralph lunged at the bomb and ripped the connection loose. Zero. Ralph almost fainted. Nothing happened. Five seconds passed. Ten. Ralph stood rooted to the floor.

Suddenly the door clinked open and the alien walked in calmly as if nothing had happened. "Congratulations, Earthman. Your courage has just qualified you for the Galactic Arena. You'll make a great gladiator for the Emperor." And with that, the alien clamped a set of manacles on the dumbfounded Ralph's wrists and twisted a knob on a small box he had pulled out of his pouch.

As everything went black, Ralph's last thought was a simple "Oh, CRUD!"

JOHNSON'S AXIOM OF EDITING: Ye olde editor who attempts to layout a zine without throwing in an occasional lino for spacing will go bats.

CON LISTINGS

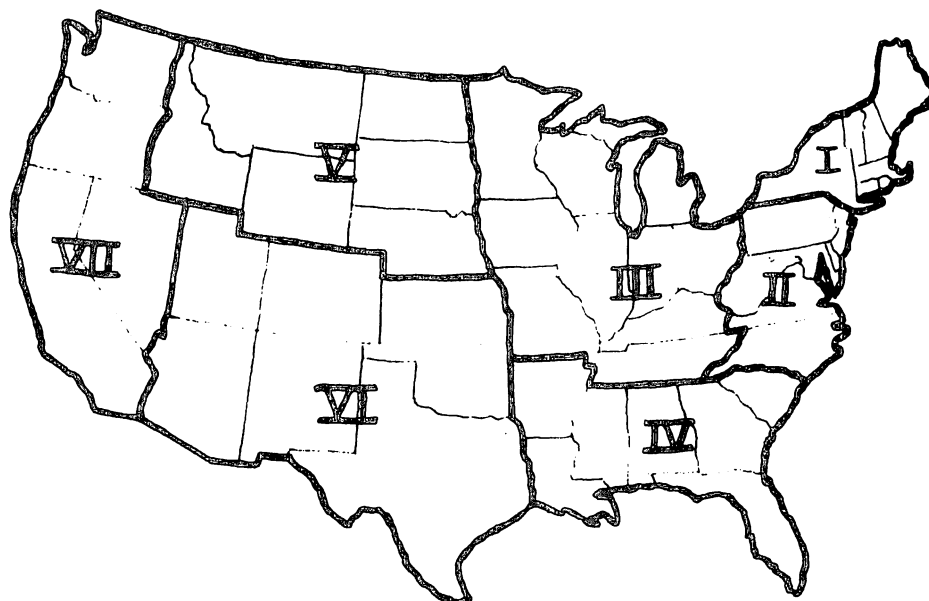
CONACS is not responsible for errors and/or omissions in these con listings. Always

check with the con committee before making firm plans. Info on cons is collected from various sources and the info is only as correct and as current as those sources were at time of collection. Cons are listed by region and/or category as shown in conjunction with the map below.

I. Northeastern Region
IV. Southern Region
VII. Western Region
IX. Worldcons

II. East Coast Region
V. North Central Region
VIII. Outside the Contiguous 48 United States
X. Worldcon Bids

III. Midwestern Region
VI. South Central Region



NORTHEASTERN REGION

LASTCON: 23-25 Jan 81. Albany Ramada Inn. GOH: Hal Clement. FGOH: Jan Howard Finder. \$12 til 1/16/81. \$15 after and at door. TO: Lastcon, c/o Tina Connell, 50 Dove St., Albany, NY 12210.

STAR TREK SPACE EXPO: 14-15 Feb 81. New York Statler. \$20. Info: Star Trek Space Expo, 88 New Drop Plaza, Staten Island, NY 10306.

BOSKONE 18: 13-16 Feb 81. Sheraton-Boston. \$12 in advance/\$15 at door. Info: Boskone, c/o NESFA, Box G, MIT PO, Cambridge, MA 02139.

LUNACON '81: 20-22 Mar 81. Sheraton Heights Hotel, Hasbrouk Hts, NJ. WGOH: James White. AGOH: Jack Gaughan. \$11 til 2/28. \$14 at door. TO: Lunacon '81, P.O. Box 204, Brooklyn, NY 11230.

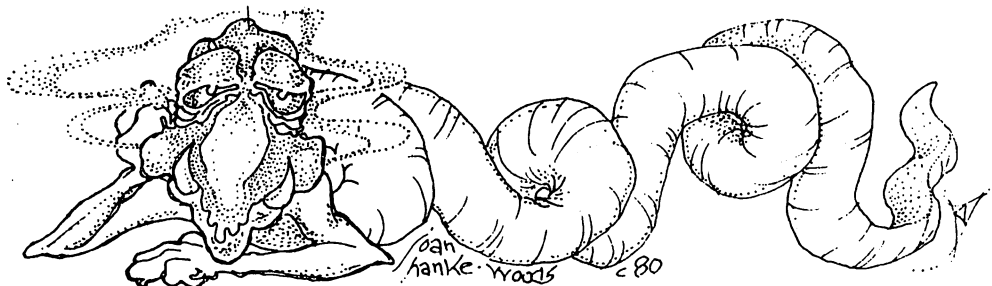
SPACE:1999 CON 4: 7-9 Aug 81. Sheraton-Boston. Info: Int'l Space:1999 Alliance, 86 First St, New London, OH. 44851.

CONNIPTION: 9-11 Oct 81. Stouffer's Hotel, White Plains, NY. WGOH: Chelsea Quinn Yarbro. AGOH: Don Simpson. \$12½ til 9/15. \$15 at door. TO: CONnipation, Box 1844, S. Hackensack, NJ 07606.

EAST COAST REGION

STELLARCON VI: 27 Feb - 1 Mar 81. UofNC@Greensboro. Info: Stellarcon, c/o Allen, Box 4 - EUC, UNC/G, Greensboro, NC 27412.

BALTICON 15: 18-20 Apr 81. Hunt Valley Inn. GOH: John Varley. \$10 in advance only. Info: BSFS Inc, P.O. Box 686, Baltimore, MD 21203.



OUTREACH: 24-26 Apr 81. W.V.A.U. Info: Mountainlair SOW, Morgantown, WV 26505.

DISCLAVE: 22-24 May 81. Sheraton National Inn. \$7 til 5/1. \$10 at door. TO: Disclave, c/o Gilliland, 4030 8th St. S, Arlington, VA 22204.

AUGUST PARTY 6: 7-9 Aug 81. Rosslyn Westpark, Rosslyn, VA. \$7 til 5/31 \$9 after. (Plus 3 SASE's at all times). Attendance limit: 900. TO: August Party, Box 893, Silver Spring, MD 20901.

MIDWESTERN REGION

CHATTACON 6: 16-18 Jan 81. Downtown Sheraton. GOH: Jack Chalker. MC: Forrest J. Ackerman. \$10 TO: Chattacon 6, Box 21173, Chattanooga, TN 37421. (Also send SASE).

CONFUSION: 23-25 Jan 81. Plymouth Hilton, Plymouth, MI. GOH: Barry Longyear. FGOH: Dave Innes. TM: Gay Haldeman. \$11 til 1/15. \$15 after. Checks to Ann Arbor Science Fiction Association Inc. TO: Confusion, Box 1821, Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

CAPRICON 1: 20-22 Feb 81. Evanston Holiday Inn, Evanston, IL. GOH: Terry Carr. FGOH: J.R. & Mary Jean Holmes. \$12. TO: Capricon, P.O. Box 416, Zion, IL 60099.

WISCON 5: 6-8 Mar 81. Wisconsin Ctr & Madison Inn. CGOH: Teresa de Lauretis. AGOH: Steven Vincent Johnson. FGOH: Buck & Juanita Coulson. EGOH: Don & Elsie Wollheim. GOH: Chelsea Quinn Yarbro. \$10 til 2/28. \$12 after. TO: Wiscon, c/o SF3, Box 1624, Madison, WI 53701.

MARCON 16: 13-15 Mar 81. Hilton Inn. GOH: Andy Offutt. FGOH: Bob & Anne Passovoy. TM: Jodie Offutt. \$10 til 1/1. TO: Marcon 16, P.O. Box 2583, Columbus, OH. 43216.

UPPERSOUTHCLAVE II: 13-15 Mar 81. GOH: Ken & Lou Moore. Info: Upper-southclave II, Box U122, Bowling Green, KY 42101.

FOOLCON IV: 3-5 Apr 81. Johnson County Community College. Info: Foolcon IV, c/o JCCC, Overland Park, KS 66210.

SATYRICON: 3-5 Apr 81. Ramada Inn West. GOH: Anne McCaffrey. MC: Andy Offutt. \$8 til 5/5. \$15 after. TO: Satyricon, Box 323, Knoxville, TN 37901.

KUBLA KHAN 9: 8-10 May 81. New Holiday Inn. GOH: Charles L. Grant. MC: Andrew J. Offutt. \$8 in advance. \$10 at door. TO: Kubla Khan, c/o Ken Moore, 647 Devon Dr, Nashville, TN 37204.

CONQUEST 2: 22-24 May 81. Continental Hotel. GOH: Poul Anderson. TM: Lee Killough. \$9 til 4/30. \$12 after. TO: Conquest 2, 4228 Greenwood Pl, Kansas City, MO 64111.

XCON 5: 12-14 Jun 81. Marriot Inn, Brookfield, WI. GOH: L. Sprague & Catherine Crook deCamp. \$7½ til 5/20. \$10 after. TO: Xcon 5, 6107 W. Lisbon, Milwaukee, WI 53210.

MIDWESTCON: 26-28 Jun 81. Info: Midwestcon, c/o Tabakow, 3953 St. Johns Terr, Cincinnati, OH 45236.

INCONJUNCTION I: 3-5 Jul 81. Holiday Inn I-70 East. GOH: Philip Jose Farmer. FGOH: Ray Beam. MC: Bob Tucker. \$8 til 6/1. \$10 at door. TO: Inconjunction 1, Box 635, Galveston, IN 46932. (Hotel is in Indianapolis).

ARCHON 5: 10-13 Jul 81. Chase-Park Plaza, St. Louis, MO. \$7 til 6/15. \$12 after. TO: Archon 5, P.O. Box 15852, Overland, MO 63114. Late info: GOH: Tanith Lee. FGOH: Joan Hanke-Woods. TM: Charles L. Grant. \$4 sprtg.

EARTHCON CLEVELAND: 18-20 Sep 81. Holiday Inn Downtown, Cleveland, OH. \$15 til 4/1. \$18 til 8/15. \$22 after. One Day (Saturday): \$10. TO: Earthcon Cleveland, c/o Gloger, 23920 Fairmont Blvd, Shaker Hts, OH 44122. (Plus 2 SASE's w/20¢ postage each).

SOUTHERN REGION

OMNICON II: 6-8 Feb 81. Oceanside Holiday Inn, Ft. Lauderdale, FL. TM: Terrance Dicks. \$35. \$20 Two Day. \$5 costume contest & dance only. TO: Millmeyer Productions Inc, P.O. Box 970308, Miami, FL 33197.

FANCON I: 6 Mar 81. Ramada Inn. Info: Fancon, c/o Alliance, Box 1865, Panama City, FL 32401.

COASTCON: 13-15 Mar 81. Royal D'Iberville. GOH: Jerry Pournelle. \$10 til 2/28. \$12½ after. TO: Coastcon 81, Box 6025, Biloxi, MS 39532.

SWANNCON 2: 18-21 Mar 81. FL Atlantic U. GOH: John Barth. Keynote: Brian W. Aldiss. \$25 in advance. \$30 at door. \$25 extra for 5th annual workshop on Teaching SF. TO: Conf. on the Fantastic, Coll. of Hum, FL Atl. U, Boca Raton, FL. 33431.

B'HAMACON II: 28-30 Aug 81. Birminham Hilton & Conference Ctr. GOH: Jack Vance. FGOH: Hank Reinhardt. MC: Gerald Page. \$10 til 8/1. \$15 after. TO: B'hamacon 2, Box 57031, Birmingham, AL. 35259.

NORTH CENTRAL REGION

ELECTRACON I: 24-26 Apr 81. Ramada Inn. GOH: Ed Bryant. FGOH: Suzanne Carnival. AGOH: Dan Patterson. \$7½ in advance. \$10 at door. TO: Electracon I, Box 1052, Kearney, NE 68847.

SOUTH CENTRAL REGION

AMBERCON 3: 29-31 May 81. Holiday Inn Plaza. FGOH: Ken Keller. AGOH: Bill Warren. TM: Ed Bryant. Info: Ambercon 3, Box 947, Wichita, KS 67201

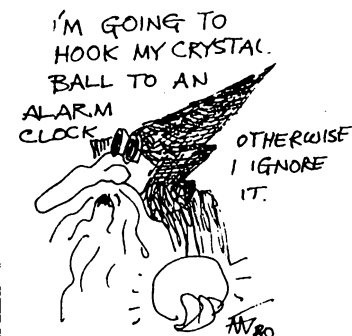
PHRINGECON 2: 5-7 Jun 81. Ramada Inn, Phoenix, AZ. \$12½ til 3/1. \$15 til 6/1. \$20 at door. \$10 One Day. TO: Phringecon, P.O. Box 128, Tempe, AZ 85281.

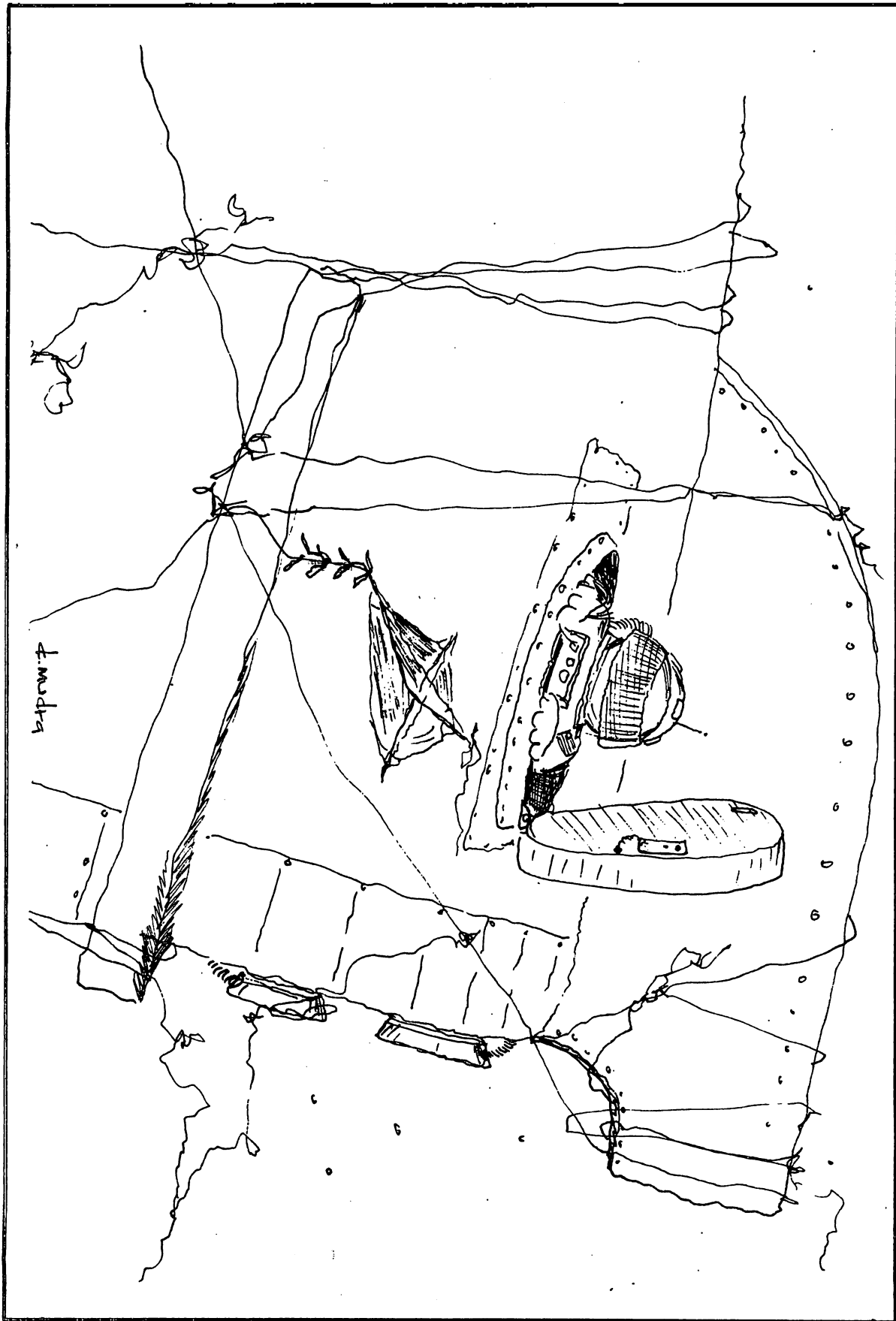
COSMOCON II: 13-14 Jun 81. Holidome. \$5. TO: Cosmocon II, c/o McCue, 34 Halsey, Hutchison, KS. 67501.

HIGH PLAINS II: 10-13 Jul 81. Quality Inn. GOH: Bob Asprin. FGOH: Greg Hagglund. \$10. TO: High Plains II, 1206 W. 18th. Amarillo, TX 79102.

WESTERCON 35: 2-5 Jul 82. Adams Hotel. GOH: Gordon R. Dickson. FGOH: Fran Skene. TM: David Gerrold. \$6 supporting. \$10 attending til 12/31. \$15 after. TO: Westercon 35, Box 11644, Phoenix AZ 85064.

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WESTERN REGION

A MID-WINTER CONVENTION: 23-25 Jan 81. \$12 in advance. \$15 at door. TO: Long Beach Science Fiction Association, 729 E. Willow, Long Beach, CA 90806.

UNNAMED CON: 23-25 Jan 81. \$12 in advance. \$15 at door. TO: Unnamed-con, c/o LBSFA, 729 E. Willow, Long Beach, CA. 90806. ((It's pretty obvious that "A Midwinter Convention" and "Unnamed Con" are the same convention)).

AQUACON: 12-16 Feb 81. Disneyland Hotel, Anaheim, CA. GOH: Philip Jose Farmer. FGOH: Janice Bogstad & Jeanne Gomoll. TM: Bill Rotsler. \$3 supporting. \$17 attending til 1/16, and at the door. (Plus SASE). TO: Aquacon, P.O. Box 815, Brea, CA. 92621.

GRIMCON III: 22-25 May 81. Oakland Hyatt House, Oakland, CA. (SF & Fantasy Gaming Con). \$10 in advance for 3 days. \$12½ in advance for 4 days. \$15 at door for 4 days. TO: Grimcon III, Box 4153, Berkeley, CA 94704.

WESTERCON 34: 2-5 Jul 81. Red Lion Inn. GOH: C.J. Cherryh. FGOH: Grant Canfield. Was \$15 til 12/31/80 - More now. Info: Westercon 34, P.O. Box 161719, Sacramento, CA. 95816.

OUTSIDE THE CONTIGUOUS 48 UNITED STATES

CINECON '81: 18-20 Apr 81. A\$10 now. A\$25 at the door. Info: Cinecon '81, c/o Binns, c/o Space Age Books, 305 Swanston St, Melbourne 3000 Vic Australia.

YORCON 2: 17-21 Apr 81. Dragonara Hotel, Leeds, England, UK. GOH: Ian Watson. FGOH: Dave Langford. L3 (\$7½) supporting in advance. L4 supporting at the door. ((????)). L6 (\$15) attending in advance. L7 attending at the door. TO: Yorcon, c/o Burns, 48 Lou Ave, Kings Park, NY 11754.

V-CON 9: 22-24 May 81. Holiday Inn Harbourside. GOH: Vonda McIntyre. FGOH: John Gustafson. TM: John Singer. \$12 til 4/15. \$15 after. TO: V-con 9, Box 48701 Bentall Sta, Vancouver, BC V7X 1A6 Canada.

NUCON 1: 10-13 May 81. New Crest Hotel, Sydney, Australia. GOH: Larry Niven. Info: Geoff Langridge, 1 Raper St, Newtown NSW, Australia.

ADVENTION: Queen's Birthday Weekend (Jun 81). Grosvenor Hotel, Adelaide, Australia. GOH: Frank Herbert & John Foyster. A\$7½ supporting. Was A\$15 til 8/31/80 - More now - attending. Info: Advention '81, P.O. Box 130, Merden, SA 5070, Australia.

STUCON 1: 14-16 Aug 81. Stuttgart, W. Germany. GOH: Marion Zimmer Bradley. \$12 til 1/31. \$18 after. TO: Jurgen Mercker, Eichenweg 24, D-7016, Gerlingen, W. Germany.

TOLKON: 21-24 Aug 81. A\$5 supporting. A\$8 attending til 4/19. TO: Tolkon, c/o S.U. Tolkein Society, Box 272, Wentworth Bldg, Sydney U, NSW 2006, Australia.

WORLDCONS

DENVENTION TWO: 3-7 Sep 81. Denver Hilton. GOH: C.L. Moore & Clifford D. Simak. FGOH: Rusty Hevelin. TM: Ed Bryant. \$15 supporting. Attending: \$35 til 3/31. TO: Denvention Two, Box 11545, Denver, CO. 80211.

CHICON IV: 2-6 Sep 82. Hyatt Regency Chicago. GOH: A. Bertram Chandler AGOH: Kelly Freas. FGOH: Lee Hoffman. \$15 supporting. \$30 attending til 6/30. Higher til 7/15/82. Higher still at the door. TO: Chicon IV, Box A3120, Chicago, IL. 60690.

WORLDCON BIDS

AUSTRALIA IN '83: Jan Howard Finder, Box 428, Latham, NY 12110.
 BALTIMORE IN '83: 8 Charles Plaza, Suite 1807, Baltimore, MD. 21201.
 COPENHAGEN IN '83: I should have info by next issue.
 JOHNSTOWN IN '83 (Hoax): c/o 420 Bantel St, Johnstown, PA 15905.
 LA IN '84: P.O. Box 8442, Van Nuys, CA 91409.
 TORONTO is rumored to be considering bidding for '85.
 NEW YORK IN '86: I hope to have info by next issue.
 PHILADELPHIA IN '86: Wilma Fisher, 520 Hamilton Rd, Merion Sta, PA 19066
 VANCOUVER is rumored to be considering bidding for '87.

In addition to my own contacts, information for this department was gleaned from SF Convention Register, File 770, and Science Fiction Chronicle.

ON THE NEWS FRONT: Otterburn Associates, P.O. Box 1896, St. Paul, MN. 55111, reported at Noreascon Two that Gordon R. Dickson is getting close to the completion of The Final Encyclopedia. The novel, part of Gordie's Childe Cycle, is expected to exceed 150,000 words and will be published by Ace Books, probably in early 1981. The cover will be by Michael Whelan. Otterburn also mentioned that "Lost Dorsai" now leads in Nebula Award recommendations in the novella category. Doubleday has just published In Iron Years, a new collection of Gordie's stories. In 1981, Ace also plans to publish his Combat SF, Love Not Human, Teleport, and Space-Twister as well as re-releases of Necromancer and Tactics of Mistake.

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