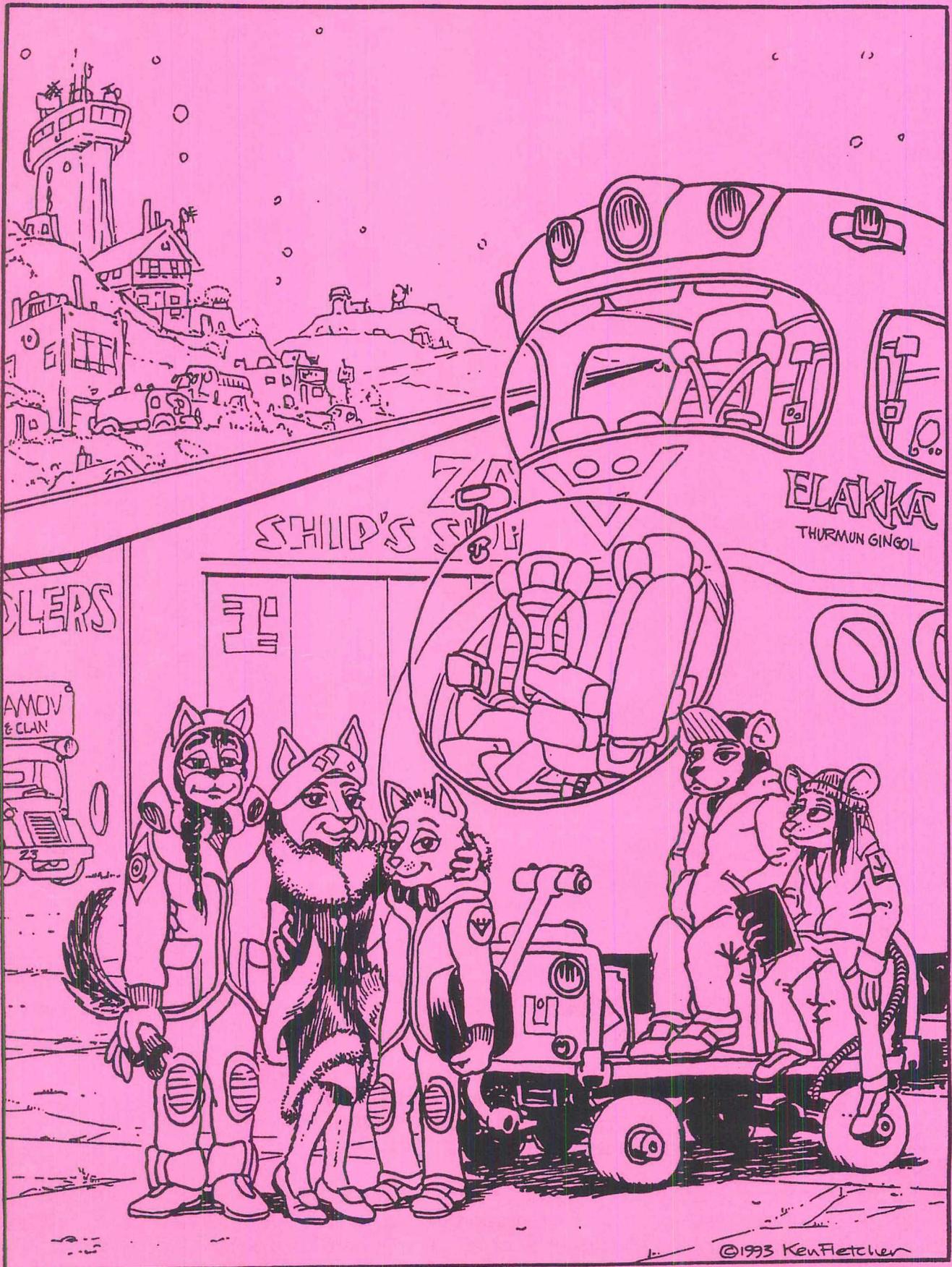


# RUNE 85



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March 1995

# IRUNNE

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# Beyond The Twiltone Event Horizon

by Jeff Schalles

Everybody asks about *Rune*, but nobody wants to write for it. A year or two back I thought it a humorous greeting to accost fans like Victor Raymond or Karen Cooper, running into them at parties or standing out on the prairie at the Winnipeg Folk Festival or as they drove by in the opposite direction on 35W, with the hilariously witty phrase: "Hey, where's your *Rune* article?"

Well, like repeatedly asking Terry Hughes "What's new in fandom, Terry?" (an old and long-ago tired Fabulous Falls Church Fandom catchphrase) asking local fans about their promised *Rune* article gets old after awhile, and the accostee, even one as terribly polite as Terry Hughes Himself, eventually lets me know in some subtle way that I'm being Just A Bit Much.

*So, where is your Rune article?*

And don't tell me your shoulder dragon ate it.

One theory of mine is that *Minicon has eaten Rune*. Thirty years ago the fledging club wanted to run a worldcon, but withdrew their bid after seeing what winning the worldcon had done to St. Louis fandom. Now we run a worldcon *every year*. Minicon has grown to worldcon size, and it takes up a lot of volunteer time throughout the year to maintain the momentum. A lot of people love coming to Minicon. Far fewer actually jump in to help run it (and a 3,000 person convention does not run itself.)

This *Rune* has taken two years to complete. The editorial group we formed has changed in this time. Ken Fletcher has asked to be removed from the masthead (though he can't escape from my belief that *Rune* wouldn't be *Rune* without Ken's art.) Garth has taken a sabbatical to pursue some less demanding interests (he's been working on his stamp collection) and Tom has been busy doing publications for various Big Conventions In Town. Garth may still come back and do more issues (which is why I've asked him to retain his title of Senior Executive Editor) and Tom claims he is amassing material for an issue based on stuff he has been downloading from the Internet.

Meanwhile, back at the MinnStf Board of Directors, they want a more frequent *Rune*. They are quite right, and we currently stand in jeopardy of losing the editorship. A fairly vocal complaint has been raised from one club member, Kevin Trainor, and what follows are suggestions from a text he distributed at the March 18th Minnstff meeting:

*Publication of Rune on (at least) a bimonthly basis. Replacement of its editor on an annual basis, one month after the Annual General Meeting. Restatement of Rune's mission: to provide news of Minnstf activities, business and events; to serve as a source of news for the local, regional, and national fan communities, as Linda Bushyager's Karass once did. Avoidance of revenue sinks, perhaps by subscription fees and/or requiring members to pick up their copies at meetings. Unification of all Minnstff publications under one officer.*

Ideas are always welcome, though automatically replacing the editor every year might seem just a bit much. And why do all MinnStf pubs *need* to be under one officer? And who is dying to *be* that officer? Please remember that there hasn't exactly been a rash of people breaking down the club's door volunteering to do all this work. And believe me, whether you do it with a computer or with an old IBM Selectric and some rubber cement, it is a heck of a lot of work. It can be done (Fred Haskell did it—*with style*) but unless you have a true love for this business of fanzine publishing, and at least some amount of experience doing it, bi-monthly volunteer newszine production will eat you alive. Or, more probably, you will lose interest real darn quick and just disappear. So, if there is someone out there who really wants to dive in and start cranking out frequent issues of *Rune*, possibly based on a model like the current very excellent Madison clubzine, *Cube*, please contact me or the board of directors at once!

However, my own clear and immediate response to all the people who want to get *Rune* going (again) is this: go find some material. Write something yourself. Good articles almost never just show up, an editor has to go out

and find them, even beg for them. You may note that most of this issue was written by fans from outside the club. That is my doing; I know a lot of people in fandom. If you can come up with acceptable material to fill the substantial portion of an issue we may make you the guest editor for that issue—with a chance at a place on the masthead. *Rune* goes out to a wide variety of readers, and there is room for material on many different subjects of interest to science fiction and fantasy fans.

My own selfish concern over *Rune* being taken over by people from outside the fanzine community is the immediate loss of continuity (don't laugh) in the letter column and mailing list. The mailing list has been set up in the past to run on a sort of auto-pilot as a subset of the MinnStf One True Mailing List. Unfortunately, without a knowledgeable fanzine fan involved with the updating of the list, most of the interested readers around the world would very likely be quickly dropped by the autopilot's subroutine. Possibly, though, this is what needs to happen. *Rune* started out as a small, regular, club newszine, and, when it grew beyond this into the fun genzine you lay around reading in the slanshacks of the 1970's, *Einblatt* (begun by Ken Fletcher) was created to take up the local news reporting slack.

So once again, I am printing nearly everything I have on hand in this current *Rune*. I would have liked to have saved part of the material as seed for another issue a few months from now, but am loath to do this. I've held on to too much of this for too long as it is.

Which brings me to, again, "so stop complaining and write something already!" Review some books (though we

have a policy of not printing reviews of books by local authors), tell us about your Ace Special paperback collection, write up that piece about your car's anthropomorphic antics. Fanzine writing does not always have to have a science fiction or fantasy subject as long as it is in itself something fun or interesting to read. Most fans read anything and everything, from backs of cereal boxes to Perry Rhodan books. Write something, rewrite it until it sings, and either send it to the club PO box or email it direct to me: [ jjschalles@aol.com ]. If you write something for an apa or a limited circulation fanzine that you think deserves wider circulation, send it to us to reprint. I would particularly encourage people with a gaming interest to send me some material—I have, in the past, been somewhat cool to gaming. It's not something I do, and for many years I didn't take gaming very seriously in fandom. Several good friends apparently disappeared into role playing games and have never resurfaced. Well, it's taken me awhile, but I finally realized that ignoring gaming won't make it go away, so instead I've decided that I need to learn more about it—kind of like the way I keep trying to listen to rap music. There must be something there if only I pay real close attention. So tell the rest of us what makes gaming so interesting to you, tell us about the sense of community of the gaming sub-fandom, tell us where all our friends have gone.

A quick production note: I now have a flatbed scanner and OCR (optical character recognition) software. This is how most of the articles and all of the letter column (except for a few handwritten ones) were entered for this issue. The main exception to this is the LASFS History reprint piece. An anonymous friend sat down one day and typed it for me from the crumbling twiltone mimeod pages of the 1968 fanzine it originally appeared in. (The Bjo art accompanying the piece is the actual original stuff, carefully scanned from the dying twiltone.) I have proofed and edited as closely as I could, but there may be some odd glitches left from the OCR programs' strange assumptions about American English and dot-matrix printers.

**Happy Holidays from Jolene & Pat & Marlys & the sales and catering staff of the Radisson South**



# Lee Pelton

Rune Co-Editor, 1978-1980

*Editor's note: long-time fan and former Rune Editor Lee Pelton died this past December, and it seemed a fitting tribute to devote part of this Rune to memories of Lee.*

## Carol Kennedy

Going through the Pelton/Kennedy *Runes*, preparing to write this, I found what I wrote for *Rune* 61, our final issue: "I never would have done this on my own. But he needed my help. I had the experience; he had the enthusiasm. I had the mimeo; he had the . . . enthusiasm. No matter what, he had that. Through broken mimeo, crummy ink, missed deadlines, ripped stencils, recalcitrant writers, temperamental artists, and post office snafus, through moving, and moving again, and moving again, through beginnings and ends of relationships, through relative poverty and relative affluence, through sickness and health and Minicon, he had enthusiasm."

The main thing I remember about Lee and *Rune* is the main thing everyone seems to remember about Lee and *everything*—his passion. He never did anything halfheartedly. Again from *Rune* 61: "He got virtually all the artwork and most of the written work, and he made friends of the artists and writers. He sent out spec copies and cut the mailing list and went through dozens of COA columns and kept the list more up-to-date than any fannish mailing list has a right to be. He mimeographed almost every page of almost every *Rune* we did. And he coaxed, prodded, bribed, and coerced an often reluctant coeditor." He ate junk food by the bag and drank pop by the two-liter bottle—from the bottle. He didn't fuss; he raged. He didn't remind; he nagged. He didn't smile; he beamed, he glowed, he vibrated. He sang old rock 'n' roll songs as if they were hymns—which they were to him. He collected things—obsessively. Too much was not enough. Along the way, he introduced me (and it sometimes seems, half of fandom) to strange music and obscure movies (or vice versa), as well as hockey and SF conventions.

Lee's death hasn't brought me the profound grief that some people seem to have expected me to feel. Over the years we had become pseudo-siblings who followed very different life paths—he with his movies and records and books, with Giovanna and art shows, with his continuing love/hate relationship with fandom; me with Jonathan, parenthood, work, and a live-in invalid mother. Lee and I

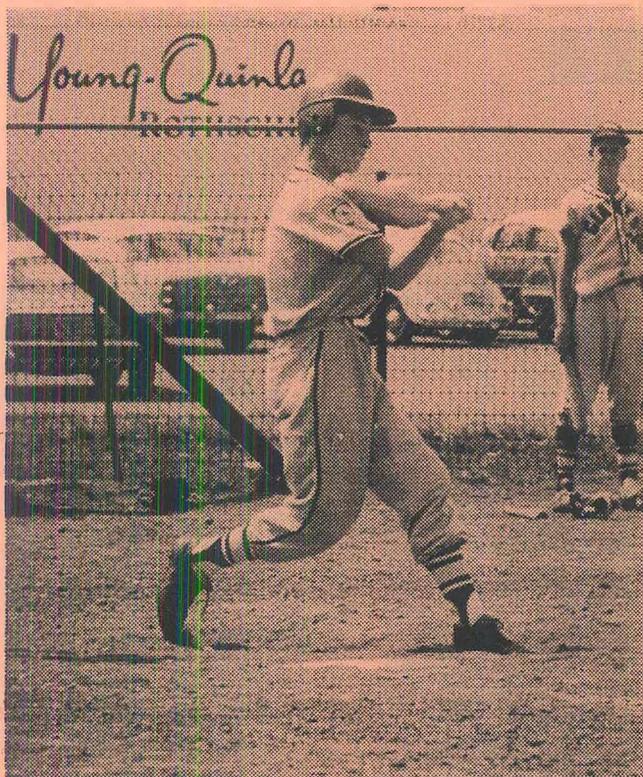


Cover for *Rune* 53 by David Egge

remained devoted to each other and always able to count on each other, but were not part of each other's everyday life. We seldom saw each other in recent years, and didn't even talk on the phone often. Still, he was *there*, in the background, part of how I became who I am, just like the two brothers I grew up with.

I've only cried over Lee's death twice. Once was at his memorial, when his daughter, whom he hadn't seen in many years, arrived—with the grandson Lee never knew he had. Because, perhaps, of the path my life has taken, his broken link with his child saddened me so much. And now any future in which to repair it has been taken from them all.

The second time was in writing this, remembering, alone. There are all those moments about which I can no longer say to anyone, "Remember when . . ." because only



Lee and I were there. Still, he *was* there, and he'll always be there in my memory. Those times aren't lost; they live on in who I am today.

I think I haven't yet found the part of my present life where he's missing. I suspect that one of these days I will, and I'll cry at least a third time.

Lee wasn't much of a religious believer, nor am I. But when I think of the possibility of heaven and hell, I know that Lee would have to be in heaven. God, being God, has infinite patience. But Lee would drive the devil crazy in about half a day.

## **Giovanna Fregni**

How do I condense 15 years of friendship and living into a short article? Writing's never come easy to me, and so personal a subject makes it even more challenging.

Lee and I met sometime in 1980. It was at a room party at a con I don't recall. I do recall his Betty Boop t-shirt and how easy it was to talk to him. I rarely felt so comfortable with people I've just met. Over the years Lee was always someone I looked for at conventions, often missing most of the programming because we were in intense conversation mode.

Lee was also my first publisher. He saw a drawing I did and wanted it for *Private Heat*. I was afraid he wouldn't be able to pull it off, because it was filled with dark crosshatching. Well, he managed to do it. Art was

always important to him. He was always more interested in including a drawing and having it turn out perfectly than turning it down because of a small trifle like technical difficulties.

Lee was a perfectionist. Lee was also stubborn.

Perhaps more than anything else, that was what kept us together through the roughest times. We were both very stubborn people and well matched for butting heads. Many nights were spent yelling, gesturing, fuming and stomping until we wore each other out, finally finding a compromise.

Life wasn't all storm and fury, though. Lee never forgot a birthday or special occasion. And when someone needed him, he was there, often sparing no expense. Friends were important to him and he always wanted to make sure they were supplied with as many creature comforts as possible.

Lee was also a voracious collector. He could never own one of anything. He usually stuck to books, music, and videos, but in his last years he found newer and more eclectic things to collect. In a way, it was his idea of money in the bank. Certainly, not as lucrative as stocks or a passbook, but far more fun to look at or listen to.

Lee fervently believed that it was never too late to have a happy childhood and threw himself entirely into whatever he enjoyed, whether it was watching a ballgame, driving across country or just listening to some new music. Life was to be enjoyed.

Not that there weren't hard times too. Probably, the most difficult part of being diagnosed with AIDS was that he knew, ultimately, that he couldn't beat it. Lee never believed in giving up and he never backed down in the fight against the disease. I really don't think he intended to die. He was so determined to fight and win, that it came as a shock of betrayal that his body wore out. If will power alone were enough, he'd still be around for years to come.

In a lot of ways he still is around. He has quite a legacy of art, music, writing and friends to his name. Over the years he has supported so many artists, writers, and musicians, either by encouragement, by buying a work, or by honest (sometimes brutally honest) criticism. He was an early coeditor of *Rune* and produced his own fanzines, *Private Heat* and *Secret Traffic*. He contributed to many apas over the years, usually jumping headlong into controversy and fanning the flames of debate. Life was never dull around Lee, but you always knew where you stood with him. He never suffered fools lightly.

Of all people, I think he preferred cats. Lee was a charmer of cats. Hardened and half feral toms in parking lots would allow him to pick them up and purr in his

arms. Cats trusted him and I think he found an honesty in them that he rarely found in humans.

I'll remember Lee in so many ways: searching for that long, lost music in dusty, old record stores, showing Ellie how to throw that perfect forward pass; running into the ocean for the first time at abalone cove; being delighted at the parade of dragons and drums at Chinese New Years. Most of all I'll remember all those hours when he held on to me and told me everything will work out all right.

## Nate Bucklin

Lee and I started as instant friends, and were friends again by the end. Please remember that while I struggle toward a reconciliation of my memories—not reconciling them with “the facts” (and who really knows what all of them are, anyway?) but with each other. My view of Lee while we were on the outs doesn't match my view of Lee before or since. If there is an absolute truth to be found in there, I don't know what it is. I strongly suspect Lee would resent being remembered as a saint. (I haven't been one either.) So—keeping in mind that I've now made three separate tries at writing down the whole story of Lee and Nate, and always reached page 10 or 12 without getting past the breakup of our band, almost seventeen years ago—I will try to summarize. Maybe you'll figure out why Lee and I had such a stormy friendship.



Lee's first contact with fandom was very simple: I found his wallet on a street. My ex-wife called him to come get it. They talked for long enough to find a mutual interest in performing music (though in fact Caryl and Lee never played in the same band) and long enough for Lee to ooh and ah over our publicly displayed science fiction collection. (His own may well have rivaled ours even then—he didn't say.) Caryl apparently made a point of telling him that I, not she, had found the wallet, and made an equal point of telling me that this Lee Pelton person was a former rock band lead singer and an s-f fan. But she didn't give me Lee's number or tell me to call him; in all our minds, the transaction was finished.

Four years later, I was divorced, and back from California with a new girlfriend, Kara Dalkey, also a musician. We were attending our first joint Minn-stf meeting, and circulating separately, Kara conversing with whoever she could, me pointedly trying to meet the people who were new since I'd left. I'd noticed a burly, handsome fellow about my age conversing actively with some people I knew. I went over to him a bit later. “Hi. I'm Nate Bucklin. What's your name?”

“Lee Pelton.”

We both grinned spontaneously. Neither of us had forgotten. It was almost, “Son!” “Dad!” We scarcely stopped smiling at the sight of each other for six months.

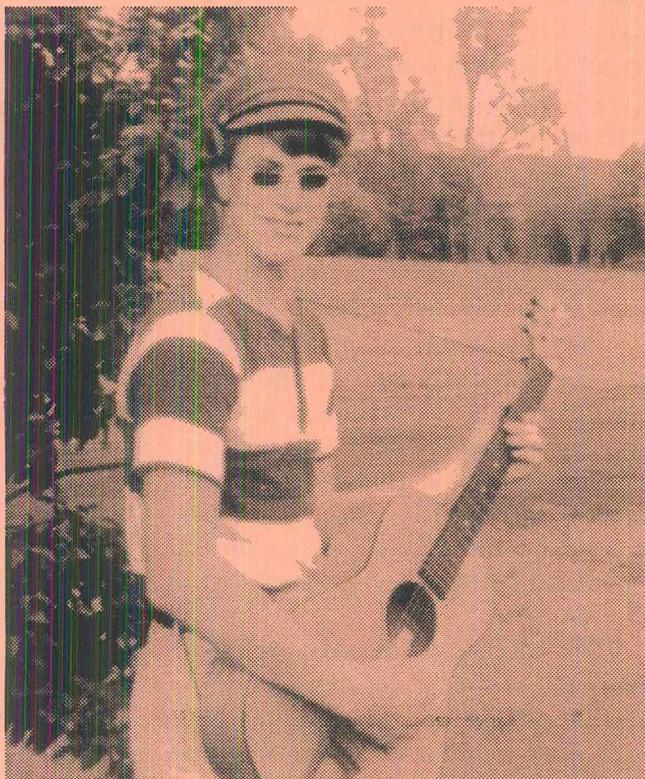
Lee Pelton and Carol Kennedy (still using her first husband's name then, but not for long) met at a Minn-stf picnic. Carol credited Kara and me for getting her to attend. I suspect that it was only a matter of time before Carol (who had perversely gotten into fandom strictly by mail, through the Los Angeles fans) would have sought out fandom in Minnesota, where she lived, and done just fine. Nonetheless, this was where she and Lee met. They moved in together three days later; I may have been the first fan to know. I was thrilled and amazed—and all the happier that I'd found Lee's wallet four years earlier!

Soon, Lee and Carol and Kara and I were an inseparable foursome. Kara and I were getting our band Runestone onto its feet, and Lee and Carol were our two staunchest fans. I had heard Lee's excellent harmony singing, and knew him to be *really* musically inclined—probably more so than our actual lead singer, Robin Wolf—and respected his opinion, with an occasional “Whaaaaat?” when Lee said something that didn't match my worldview.

The full story of Runestone took me seven or eight pages, the other three times I tried to write about it. For all that Lee and his criticisms were an integral part of what came down with Runestone, I shouldn't ask anybody to wade through that much extraneous stuff! I viewed our

biggest problems as poor equipment and a very bored drummer. Lee, though, as a lead singer himself, was watching the lead singer, Robin Wolf (a spectacular John Denver imitator, but really not a rock'n'roller), and growing more and more convinced that he could do better than Robin. (Actually, it was an apples-vs-oranges competition. I was a hotel lounge player, first and foremost; Robin, young and inexperienced, was as happy playing hotel lounges as anyplace; Lee was a confirmed hard rocker, and felt that if he led Kara and me down the path to rock'n'roll success, we'd have more work, the band would sound better by any standard, and we'd all be happier. It took me years to realize that Lee and I had no business in the same band at all. Would I have hired Mick Jagger to sing lead, and then broken up our friendship when he sang and acted like Mick Jagger?)

Robin and drummer Alden tried to talk me into firing Kara. I obviously couldn't be persuaded. (Though I signed the contracts, I viewed Runestone as Kara's and mine *jointly*; they could work with either of us, or neither of us.) By the time the dust had settled, Alden had quit, I'd fired Robin (who was deeply hurt and blamed Lee's sniping at his vocals, rather than admitting he'd wronged Kara) and Runestone was composed of Lee, Kara, Al Standish and me. (Al, who didn't know for years that Lee had taken an instant dislike to his drumming, quit inside a



Lee as High School Troubadour

couple of weeks anyway; we never did get an adequate replacement.) It was a dying band, and Kara's and my relationship was no better.

I do remember that agent Bobby Rogers had told us, "Learn ten country-rock songs and I can book you every weekend. If you don't, I can't book you at all." Lee accepted this when we first discussed playing in the same band, but couldn't live with it, and knew only two country-rock songs when the band finally broke up. It took me years, first, to figure out that Lee and I had no business playing in the same band; second, that Lee and I had discussed Lee's taking complete charge of our repertoire, as he didn't think the songs Robin and I had been picking were going over, yet I'd forgotten that conversation as certainly as Lee kept forgetting our original agreement to play country-rock; third, that if I'd gotten the solid-body rock'n'roll guitar Lee had wanted me to buy (and about \$3000 for amplifiers, a better P.A., a totally professional bass for Kara, and a van to haul the stuff in—not to mention a driving hard-rock drummer who couldn't play softly to save his life) and played songs of Lee's choosing, we might very well have had a group capable of playing top rock clubs. In fact, it was sometime in the mid-'80s when I realized that some lead singers spend their entire careers picking every song they sing; Lee's willingness to do about a third of the songs we'd learned with Robin, and another third oldies, constituted far more cooperation than I might have gotten from some top professionals.

Meanwhile, Kara was spending more and more time over at Lee and Carol's. My best guess was that she was trying to find an easy way to leave me, and going to our two closest friends for support. Kara had decided on her own that when we broke up, she would leave, and let me keep the apartment; I'd heard Lee volunteer couch space for her, if necessary. I wouldn't dream of interfering with the process. We tentatively agreed to live together until June 1, 1978, and part peacefully; but Kara's romance with Joel Halpern came out of nowhere in mid-May. I called Carol to make sure the couch was available, told Kara that I had done so, and proceeded to fall apart.

Carol was far nicer to me on the phone the next day than I expected, and made it clear that the fact that Kara was staying on their couch did not make them less my friends—but, Nate, remember that Kara is *never* coming back. I waited until the next day to talk to Lee, with one question. "Lee, are we still friends?"

Lee's response was slow and methodical. "Yes, Nate, we're still friends. But you should know that I've been trying to break up you and Kara as long as I've known you. In fact, last night Kara had told us that she planned on

going back to your place and staying until June 1 as she originally planned. I talked her out of it.” (Pause) “Nate, you’ve got a lot of problems, and shouldn’t be dating anybody until you’ve got your head straightened out.”

Carol Kennedy told me later that Lee had not tried to talk Kara out of going back to my place, but she had. As for Lee’s trying to break up Kara for as long as he’d known us—all the evidence was that Lee had never attempted anything of the sort. Why did Lee try to take the blame for something nobody had done?

A month later I was feeling seriously depressed, and Carol came over to keep me company. Lee, on his own phone dime, called every friend I had outside the Twin Cities area (missing only my blood relatives and one woman who is not a fan) and got them to call me in a convoy. It took me several calls to realize that Lee was doing it. (Note to anybody who saw references to Lee’s brutal honesty and courage, and suspected that Lee was an insensitive brute when alive and healthy: He was nothing of the sort.) But the storm a week or two later knocked Lee’s and my friendship out of commission for ten years.

Lee started a Minneapazine with a rant about how irresponsible Mike Wood was being about putting an occasional three-week gap between mailings, rather than making it a four-week gap the way everybody wanted and needed. (Minneapa had started as an every-two-week apa; some of us had gone to him requesting that it be every three weeks, so the collation would not be the centerpiece of every Minn-stf meeting; he’d gone along with it. The slide to every-four-weeks had never been official, but was the best compromise Mike could work out with his convention schedule. A few people had suggested that every four weeks become the norm; one or two others had objected; 3/4 of the apa had said nothing.) I was horrified at this, but tried to keep it under control. (Mike, who had spent most of his fannish life in more apas simultaneously than I’ve been in my life, managed to blow this off. I could not.) Then Steve Brust made two comments back to back, trying to make sure both Kara and I knew he still wanted to be our friends. Lee made an ice-cold comment to Steve that his comments to me proved he did not understand the situation and were very much uncalled-for. I ran out of the meeting in a rage, walked around the neighborhood for a while, and finally came back. “Lee, you and I have to talk.” I specified my objections to his attacks on Mike and Steve.

Lee refused to back down, and insisted that I’d misunderstood him. (Lee had written in remarkably clear English; there was nothing there to misunderstand.) I finally yelled, “Lee, you and I are no longer speaking. Good-bye!” and ran out of the house yet again.



**Lee standing front-row center at the site of the original Woodstock main stage**

It may be easier to summarize the next ten years than the first couple. Lee and I could not manage to remain hostile; we’d occasionally sing “I’ve Had It” at a party, or some other old Runestone songs if Kara was around to play bass. We exchanged five-page letters about the Steve/Mike mailing comments, getting nowhere. Lee amazed me when, as a platonic roommate of Kara’s sometime later, he came to me and apologized for anything he’d done to hasten our separation, as it was now apparent that there were problems on both sides. (This may not have been fair to Kara, either; but I appreciated it.) From then on, it was just a matter of time. Lee had made the first move.

At the ’89 worldcon in Boston, Lee, Giovanna, and Jim and Deirdre Rittenhouse were accepting toward the idea of a fifth roommate; they had plenty of blankets and floor coverings. It was a match of convenience; but Lee and I got to talking. And then we spent an afternoon together cruising record shops and sheet music shops in the area of the hotel. I didn’t even care what we did or where we went; I had my friend back.

Since then, Lee and I got together on a number of occasions for Lee to play music out of his collection, some of which I taped. (I never did figure out Lee’s taste in music. Miraculously, he figured out mine.) Giovanna suggested toward the end (after Lee had told me he had AIDS) that we get together for this once a month, as their “isolated” house is only one long bus ride from where I work, and Lee, far too sick to work himself, was feeling trapped in the house. Lee and I both wanted to continue with this. Unfortunately, it was not to be. Lee went into the hospital, suddenly unable to talk and barely able to write. He came out, somewhat better, for just long enough to marry Giovanna. Then it was back into the hospital. I spent considerable time there, but mostly with Giovanna

interpreting. She was having troubles figuring out what her husband needed, too, but could at least make reasonable guesses, and Lee would make a thumbs-up or thumbs-down in response. (At one point on Lee's 45th birthday, I was the one person there besides Lee, Giovanna, and the helpful VA Hospital staff. I felt as though I was butting into Lee and Giovanna's private time. Lee used a vehement thumb gesture to assure us that I wasn't. I stayed quite late that night.)

A few days after Christmas I got the call from Ericka Johnson. "Nate. He's gone."

It was over. I'd had my friend back for just over five years.

I was waking up with the might-have-beens for over a month. If Lee and I hadn't been at odds over the whole Runestone situation if Kara and I had had better equipment, making it possible to play louder rock bars—if Lee had been on better terms with Steve Brust, with a clearer understanding of the alleged romantic triangle that supposedly disqualified Steve from saying anything about Kara's and my breakup—if I'd explained a few things to Carol three years earlier than I did—even if I'd succeeded in my frantic search for psychiatric help any time between 1967 and 1978, so the mood disorder I was eventually diagnosed with would not affect my band, my primary relationship, my friendships, and everything I did—Lee and I might not have had the ten-year gap. My only real excuse, though, is that I never knew how little time Lee and I would have left.

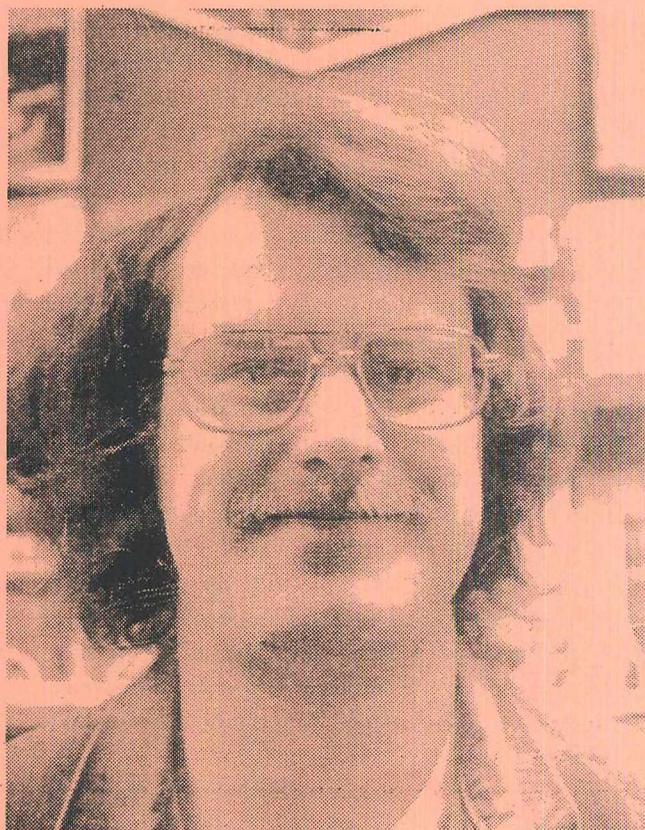
I've left out so much. (If anybody had realized at the time that Linda Moss was leaving me for Lee Pelton while Jane Freitag was leaving Lee for me, it would have been fantastic fan gossip! But we all readjusted slowly over a few months, and Minn-stf found other things to talk about.) Lee was a complex person. I was fortunate to have had him for a friend, even for a while. I miss him. Let's leave it at that.

## John Stanley

*My Life and Times with Lee Pelton*

When Jeff Schalles told me that he wanted to have several people who knew Lee Pelton do a memorial section for the next issue of Rune, my first thought was "What a wonderful idea!". My second thought was something along the lines of "Good ghod... How can I do justice to 20 years of friendship in just a few pages?!".

Writing about what makes a friendship and all the neat things that I liked about and shared with Lee this soon after losing him has been very painful. It's also been a learning experience.... The first thing I learned that I've been relying on Lee's uncanny memory entirely too much. Lee had an almost perfect memory. He's one of the only



Lee at Downtown Comics & Games

people I know who would sit down and actually read a movie reference book, but he's also the only person I can think of who would from then on be able to tell you anything at all about almost any movie in that book. I could always count on Lee to remember names, places, phone numbers, addresses, relationships, movies, books, music, almost anything, even 15 or 20 years after the fact. If any of the following chronology is off, I can only apologize and tell you that if Lee were doing it, it would be perfect...

I first met Lee in the spring of 1975 when I was 18, shortly after I moved out of my parents' house and into the small two bedroom apartment I then shared with Jeff Berry at the corner of 9th and Portland in downtown Minneapolis. Lee got involved with my circle of friends and we discovered we had a number of common interests. The three primary ones being SF, roleplay gaming, and a shared taste in women and good food... (Ok, ok, four primary ones.)

Lee had just separated from his first wife. Soon after we first met, he moved into another apartment in the same building which he shared for a while with Adrian Thornley. For a few years we had a small Slan-apartment-building going with friends dropping in to either apartment at all hours and a few parties which spilled over from

one apartment into the other (which was a real trick since we were three floors and several building-sections apart). Lee and I both tended to be night people (Lee doing temp work and me attending college) and we would frequently go bowling at 1:00 A.M. when we had no problem getting a lane.

Lee loved SF conventions. Over the next 18 years (frequently from 1976 thru 1986 and occasionally after that) Lee and I attended dozens of cons together and made many out of town friends. I started to try to list the cons we attended together, but soon realized it would take me several months to go thru all my old notes and con material and Lee went to many cons that I missed. Just assume that if there was a con in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Iowa, or Michigan any time from 1976 thru 1986, there's a 50% or better chance that Lee was there.

In mid 1977, Lee and I both found ourselves without roommates. We decided to try sharing an apartment, so he moved into mine. It was the first of two times Lee and I would share a place, and much to our mutual surprise, it worked quite well. However, it didn't last very long. In August Lee met Carol Kennedy at that year's Picnicon and they were almost inseparable from day one. Even at the picnic there was a sense of two pieces of a matched set coming together. Lee moved in to Carol's Brooklyn Park place soon afterwards.

It's hard to believe they were together only two years (it seems more like four). Lee and Carol were the driving force behind several of the, in my opinion, best Rune issues ever created and the hosts for many local fannish gatherings. They split up in late 1979 and managed to stay best friends in the process. (Over the next 15 years Carol came to Lee's aid many times when he most needed it and provided substantial aid during Lee's fight with AIDS.)

In early 1980, Lee got a job as manager of the Downtown Comics and Fantasy bookstore on Hennepin Avenue in downtown Minneapolis. The store carried a mix of comics, SF & Fantasy books, and (Lee's doing, I'm sure) a series of classic old radio programs on tape. I came to work for him in mid 1980 which both saved me financially and rekindled a forgotten love of comic books (I used to read them a lot as a preteen). Lee and I attended a number of cons as hucksters. The store did ok, but never really made enough to keep the owner happy. I left the store for a computer job in mid '81 and Lee left a few months later when the owner finally decided to close the store. For the rest of his life, one of Lee's fondest dreams was about opening his own bookstore (and later a used record store), but he never got the chance.

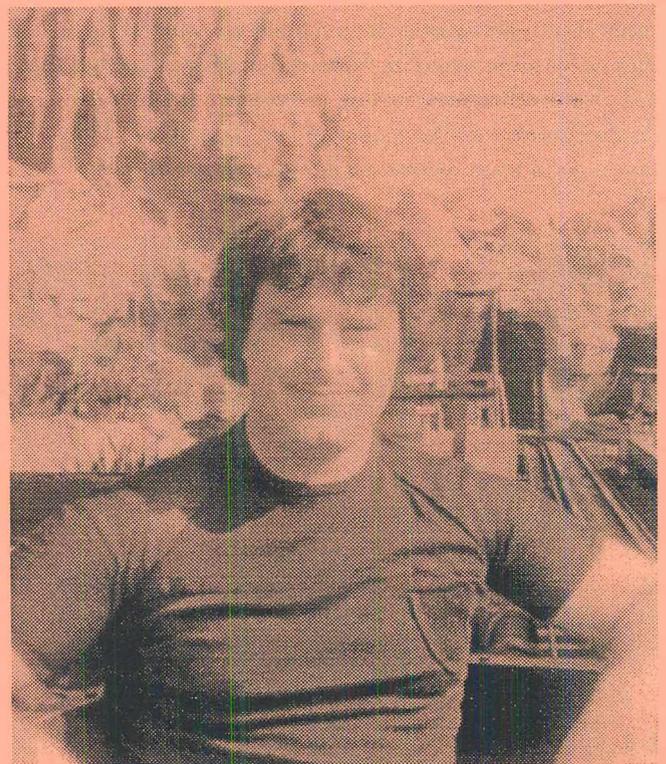
In August of '81, Lee and I both wanted to try to save some money so we decided to give the roommate thing

another try. We found a place on 34th Ave. near Minnehaha Park. It was a three bedroom place and the third roommate was Erin McKee. Erin left in November or December and Jane Freitag moved in in January of '82.

Jeanne Mealy (my SO of the last 13 years) and I got involved in late December of 81 and Lee & Jane got married soon afterwards. For a while it was a kind of idyllic existence at the 34th Ave. place. The three of us (Lee, Jane, and myself) were living in a neat house in nice neighborhood. We each had a special someone and we all liked each other. It was one of the happiest years of my life.

Lee was able to talk to almost anyone about almost anything. This frequently included talking big-name writers and artists into contributing their work to one of his pet projects. While living at the 34th Ave. place, Lee published some of the best issues of his personal-zine called "Private Heat" which featured really great writing and artwork. I can't count the number of times I'd be sorting out the mail and find a RTE (really thick envelope) from some well known or famous person. (Anyone who has any orphan copies of "Private Heat" are welcome to pass them along to me and I promise to find a good home for them.)

Unfortunately, although I didn't realize it at the time, I now know that the bookstore folding had been a serious blow to Lee. Despite all the neat stuff happening around him, he fell into a cycle of recurring depressions. Lee was



**A Day at Knotts Berry Farm in California**

also unemployed for most of this period which was a strain on his relationship with Jane, a problem with the household finances, and didn't help his emotional state.

The household finally broke up in a series of events in late '82 and early '83. Lee and Jane broke up, and I moved into an apartment much closer to Jeanne.

For a while Lee and I drifted apart. I had a new apartment, a new job, and I was spending most of my free time with Jeanne. Lee lived in Minneapolis in a small efficiency apartment on LaSalle Ave. near 13th street for much of this time. We still occasionally went to cons and did other things together but nowhere near as often as before. Lee kind of dropped out of sight for a while although I know he went thru a long series of temp jobs of many types and he spent some time experimenting with various life-styles. (This might have been when he picked up the HIV virus although it also could have been later while he was in Chicago.)

Eventually Lee decided that he really really wanted to move to Chicago. He knew a large number of friends there and he was convinced that the temp-job market was better there. So in the summer of '84 I packed his entire apartment into a delivery van borrowed from Lynn Anderson and drove him to Chicago (Lee didn't drive and there wasn't room for anyone else).

While Lee was in Chicago I visited him a couple of times but mostly we only saw each other at cons. In '86, during one of our rare visits, he started talking in glowing terms about this artist person named Giovanna Fregni who he was interested in. She lived in Milwaukee but that was ok since Lee was starting to get tired of Chicago.

Lee moved to Milwaukee in late June of '87. They were a good team. Giovanna is a good artist in several

media, but wasn't half as confident about selling her creations as she should have been. Lee knew the retail and convention sales side and he knew the things Giovanna created were good.

At the time Lee moved to Milwaukee, he knew it was a temporary move. He had seen enough of the world and wanted to go back home to Minneapolis. On the other hand, Giovanna had just bought a house and she wanted to stay in Milwaukee until her daughter Ellie was out of high school. At the time, made the most sense for them to be together in Milwaukee but various things kept pushing them to move to Minneapolis. The house they shared had physical problems, their neighborhood was known as a high crime area, and the city itself was having long-term social and economic problems.

Finally, in mid '91, Lee and Giovanna decided they couldn't wait any longer. It was time to move to Minneapolis. Lee came back first to find a job and a place to live and Giovanna made a series of long roadtrips with her truck loaded to the rafters. The final load arrived late October of '91. For those of you who either don't know or don't remember, that was the day of the infamous Halloween blizzard. We got more than 12 inches of snow in less than 12 hours. Quite a memorable welcome-back.

For a couple of years they lived in a small apartment building nicknamed "The Raymond Place" (Victor Raymond & Lynn Litterer lived there and it was on Raymond avenue.)

In March of 1993 Lee and Giovanna moved into a house in St. Paul near the fairgrounds. They had been looking for a nicer place for a while and they liked the landlord. (The house was managed by another local fan, Dean Gahlon.)

Soon after the move, Lee started experiencing a long series of one medical problem after the other. Eventually, on Oct. 21, '93, the VA doctors finally figured out the cause. Lee was experiencing the early symptoms of AIDS.

Lee and Giovanna told me right away. My first reaction was stunned disbelief. Even though I liked to think of myself as an "AIDS aware" individual, a rapid series of thoughts and emotions flashed thru my mind. "Sure, I know in the knowing sense that 'people' are sick and dying from AIDS, but not Lee." "But he looks so healthy." "No, it can't be Lee." "Please no."

It was AIDS. They had told him he had one to three years...

I don't recall much of the next week. I was in total shock.

MAP (the Minnesota AIDS Project) was a handy resource. There's an amazing amount of help for the AIDS victims and their families. They provided supplies,



David Schlosser, Giovanna, & Lee, Abalone Cove, California

information and advice. Unfortunately they couldn't do anything to change the eventual prognosis.

There was an interminable period of several months while the VA doctors went thru one string of medications after the other. They frequently had to come up with medicines to fix the side effects of other medicines that Lee had to take to fix other side effects, and so on... Just when they seemed to have the right combination, the virus would change how it was affecting Lee and they'd have to spend several weeks rebalancing his medications. He had days when he was ok and days when he hardly had the energy to get out of bed.

Frankly, I'm amazed that Lee and Giovanna were able to survive this period as well as they appeared to. I suspect in their situation I might have quietly gone insane on a weekly basis. All I could do was help out when there was something I could do and to try to spend more time with Lee. When I went to visit, we never knew if I would be able to stay around for several hours or Lee would run out of energy in a few minutes.

Then came that fateful day in late December '93. I don't remember all the details, but I remember I was talking to an unusually quiet Lee on the phone and he suddenly started verbally tearing me apart. I tried to get him to calm down and he responded by saying some especially hurtful things and telling me he never wanted to have anything to do with me again and then he hung up.

I tried talking with Giovanna and only learned that that same day he had walked out of the house without his coat and he had said something about he wasn't going to be coming back. (Somehow she did manage to get him to come back.) He had also been agitated and angry and wouldn't talk to her. Carol Kennedy was the only person he would listen to and it took her several hours to calm him down. At the time, all I knew was my best friend for the last 18 years had suddenly turned on me. He had said several things that you *don't* say to *anyone* you ever want to have a civil conversation with again. I stayed in touch with Giovanna, but Lee and I stopped having anything to do with each other for almost a year. I was confused and hurt, torn between wanting to "go away" as he had told me to do and desperately wanting to go back to being friends.

In mid November '94 Giovanna finally managed to get us back together again. I learned that because of AIDS, Lee had been having problems that day with a disease known as Toxoplasmosis. It can cause many symptoms, including extreme rage and irrational behavior. He apologized for the things he had said and I apologized for believing him. Basically we went back to being friends again, and not a moment too soon.

In late November Lee suddenly lost the ability to talk and most of his muscle coordination. He was only able to communicate by writing and gesturing. He was constantly in and out of the VA hospital for one emergency after the other and finally in mid-December, he simply wasn't able to come home any more. Giovanna was there every day and many friends visited him. I remember long chats and piles of gifts that arrived there for his 45th birthday on December 19th. In late December he went into a coma.

Around 7:30 am on Thursday December 29th, I awoke to the sound of my answering machine taking a message. With a feeling of dread I got up and listened to the message. It was Giovanna. All she had said was "He's gone." My world crumbled. I had know it was coming, but you're never ready for *that moment*.

I called Giovanna at the hospital and then rushed there. I was soon joined by Reed Waller, Kate Worley, and Ellie (Giovanna's daughter). We all just stood around for a while saying those really-last good-byes to Lee and then we joined Kay McCutcheon (a friend of Lee's from Eureka, CA. who had come to visit Lee) went to a Bridgman's restaurant for breakfast and several hours of mutual consoling.

Newyear's day '95 friends and family gathered in the party room in the basement of Peter Hentges and Ericka Johnson for a short memorial and party. Even Lee's father who he hadn't seen since Lee left home and Lee's grand-daughter that he never knew about were there. Lee had asked for it to be a party rather than a funeral service and I think we did an ok job under the circumstances. For those of you who weren't able to attend, there's going to be a memorial gathering hosted by Giovanna at Minicon this year in the Minneapolis in '73 suite Saturday night. Bring memories and pictures if you have them.

Lee was my best friend for nearly 20 years. We were closer than brothers for most of that time. I still can't really accept he's gone. I'll love him, and miss him, and carry part of him in my heart until my last days.

*Good-bye Lee.*

### **Jeanne Mealy**

It seems totally unreal that Lee Pelton is gone. He was so physically and emotionally strong, brimming with opinions and ambitions. Somehow I have to accept that he really did die, that he's not just down the hall or across the state. I have to fight the strong sense of denial, the anger at the waste of a life—and what it did to those who cared about him.

That's the mixed bag of emotions I dip into now, looking back to when I first knew of Lee. I'm fairly sure it

was during my first year in fandom. I joined a new SF club at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse in the fall of 1975 and attended my first convention, Minicon, in 1976. Wowie! It was very exciting to meet a large group of people who liked SF/F. We clubmates traveled to several regional conventions on poor college student budgets in the next few years, sharing transportation, food, the room, and occasional adventures. Somewhere in there I got a copy of *Rune*, Mn-Stf's clubzine, in the mail. I believe that Lee and Carol Kennedy were editing it. I was entranced: these people wrote about interesting things in witty, thought-provoking, and sometimes downright silly ways. There were illustrations, photos, and jargon to marvel at and puzzle over. I caught on quickly that if I wrote back and expressed interest, they'd send more of these zine things—free. So I did and they did and occasionally they'd print excerpts from my letters. Neat! So, Lee was instrumental in introducing me to the heady world of fannish publishing and quality writing.

My next clear memory was of getting acquainted with and visiting my SO (significant other) John Stanley while he was sharing a duplex with Lee in south Minneapolis in 1981. Lee and John had been best friends for years. Soon after John and I got together, Lee and Jane Freitag got serious about each other. So there were four of us wandering around with glazed eyes and happy smiles, chatting and watching TV and passing by in the hallway. Lee seemed very happy and focused.

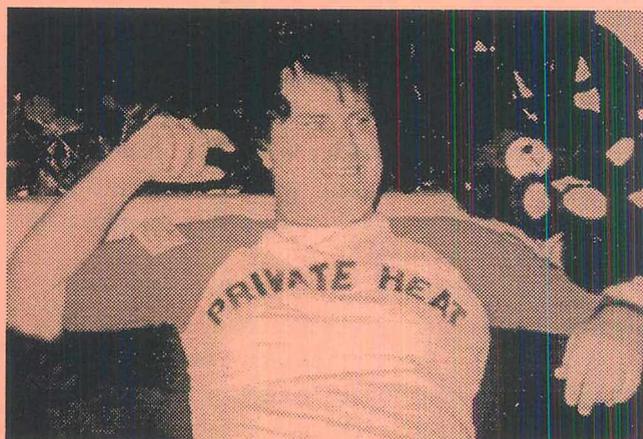
Rummage sales turned out to be a common interest. John and I attended some with Lee and Jane, and later with Lee and Giovanna. While the hunt for bargains and actual purchases was exciting, the companionship stands out most in my mind. We'd chat about what was for sale ("I could get this for you." "Don't you DARE!"), what it reminded us of ("I had a shirt like this once." "Glad you developed some taste."), and whatever we felt like talking about ("Know any good gossip?"). Just as we do with other friends who aren't with us, we will probably note Lee's preferences ("He would LOVE this.") when we go rummaging this year. Maybe he'll be there in spirit, nudging us to see That Perfect Deal.

A few of us went bowling on Sunday mornings for awhile, too. We were often the only customers for awhile in a large alley. Lee was a better bowler than most of us and offered tips when we (usually) appeared to need them. Again, it wasn't so much what we were doing as the fact that we were having fun.

I visited with Lee while he sat behind convention huckster tables, at parties, and in print. We were also in several apas (amateur press associations), writing about

many topics and commenting on the other members' contributions. His writing was interesting, amusing, and often startling. For one thing, Lee didn't believe in sugarcoating his opinions. For another, his enthusiasm and energy came through clearly, whether he was talking about someone who would be writing or doing illustrations for him or ideas he wanted to write about.

Lee also lent a hand with Congenial, a small annual convention held in Racine a few years ago. (It's in another location this year.) I can't remember how many years he helped with it, but I do remember his insistence on high standards and weird beer.



Lee was good with massage, as I can personally attest. During one New Year's party a few years ago I was surprised by someone massaging my shoulders with great force, yet amazingly not hitting any painful spots. Within seconds I felt more relaxed than I had for years, and could barely turn around to see who was behind me. Lee smiled at my amazement and offered to keep going. Melt... We had a few other sessions here and there after that. I expressed my gratitude at his skill, but he was fairly humble about it. He felt he did well, but had more to learn. The concept was mindboggling to contemplate.

A few years ago, Lee moved to Chicago. He and Jane had split amicably. Somewhere along the line, he and Giovanna connected and sparks of love flew. He moved to her house in Milwaukee, where they stayed until the neighborhood deteriorated too badly. The siren call of Twin Cities fandom lured them here.

We hadn't seen too much of Lee and Giovanna in the last year or two because they were busy earning a living at art shows or we were busy with our own diversions. They dropped out of apas, didn't come rummaging, etc. Then we got the awful news that Lee had AIDS.

Disbelief ran rampant. We had faith in Lee's amazing strength and stubbornness to beat the disease. However, he was severely taxed by many complications that left him ill and weak due to being treated incorrectly. He complained about being bored lying around watching TV. Now this was serious—Lee was the original couch potato who loved to park in his chair to snack and watch sports and movies for hours (or was it days?). Instead, he lost weight and became discouraged.

Finally, someone caught on to what he really needed. OK, now he'll get his strength back and be cured soon, right? No. His health took a turn for the worse last fall and Giovanna began regularly rushing him to the VA Hospital's emergency room or to see his doctor. This was a very hard time for all four of us. John and I had just moved after many years in the same place and still were very disorganized. The holidays came soon with their own activities to plan for and participate in. I can't count the number of times John rushed over to help Lee and Giovanna, glad he could help somehow. While he and Lee weren't as close as they'd been years ago, there was still a bond between them. And Giovanna certainly needed and deserved support. While I knew what had priority, I couldn't help wanting some normalcy. It was quite a strain to deal with my own anger and sorrow over Lee while facing the challenges of temp work and job-hunting. And trying not to scream about the messy house. (I think I did *some* screaming, even so.) I was also concerned about John. He'd had a number of stressful events recently, including the death of his mother in 1992. This was way too soon for another major loss.

All too quickly, Lee had to stay at the VA. It was shocking to see him losing abilities and stamina. Giovanna was a lot more upbeat than I imagine I would be under such circumstances. Friends visited when they could, but there were still a lot of lonely hours.

On Christmas Eve, we came by to drop off a few gifts and say hello. We looked through a photo album that Lee and Giovanna had compiled of his life up to the mid-70s or so. I had to fight back tears many times as I looked at Lee as a boy, a young man, a father... and know that the man in the hospital bed would have very little future.

Lee Pelton died at age 45 on December 29, 1994.

Friends hosted a memorial gathering on January 1. It was well attended and there was no doubt that twice that many would have come if possible. Lee had been estranged from his family for years, so it was quite a surprise to have his father get in touch just before Lee died. Lee's father, brothers, ex-wife, daughter, and grandson were able to be at the memorial. They shared some memories

and were appreciative to hear what had happened to Lee since he'd dropped out of sight. Many people spoke of how Lee had touched their lives. No glossing-over made him out to be a saint, though. In fact, there was a lot of laughter as people described his, uh, strongmindedness and bluntness. There was plenty of gratitude, and some tears. However, Lee hadn't wanted people to be sad and the mood eventually shifted to that of a mellow party, as he'd preferred.

The world still doesn't seem quite right. There are so many images that keep coming to mind that I haven't mentioned! Lee cuddling with his cat, running the film program at Minicon, taking care of a significant other who needed tending, chatting with friends, waxing enthusiastically about videos, the Wall of Salsa Bottles with bizarre names and labels, and... Ah well, that's enough from me. I trust that other people will fill in more of the picture from their viewpoints. I also hope that other folks will drop a line to *Rune* with their own reminiscences.

Take care out there, Lee. I'm grateful to you for many things. I hope you're getting all of the cuddling, SMOFing, rummaging, music, collecting, and snacking that you desire.



Bacover, Rune 61

# BE-fit vs. Vegetology

An Examination of Major Religions  
Special to Milky Way Today  
by Religion Correspondant, Lloyd Preservus  
(Intercepted by Etherwave Surfer David E Romm)

## Vegetology:

Everyone has a vegetable, spice and a condiment , which both reflect and rule aspects of your life. You determine this by taste and experience: eg Eggplant/Ginger/Relish.

## BE-fit, The Bowman-Emerson Fannish Inventory of Type:

Everyone's personality revolves around these four axes:

Media/Print (M/P)  
Fannish/Sercon (F/S)  
Con/Zine (C/Z)  
FIAWOL/FIAJAGH (W/J)

People are designated by their four letter Type: eg, PFZW, and if an axis is smack dab in the middle that designation is an X, eg XSCJ

**Romm's Corollary to Clarke's Law:** Any sufficiently advanced philosophy is indistinguishable from religion.

## Dateline: Year of Our Moonlanding 5,271,009

The hostilities between by the Curry System and the Fijagh Empire have concluded with the Broccoli/Hyphen Accord. While the big news is the end of the longstanding conflict which has caused the death of several billion people and three indigenous races, it is also signals the end of the religious conflict which has dominated the last two millenia. Much has been written about this conflict, but a brief overview of the root causes is warranted.

On Old Old Earth, two of the biggest phylum of pre-electronic hardcopy were Cook Books and Diet Books. The people were lost in the spiritual garden. Vegetology started as a series of Fanzine articles and testifying at Conventions by Founding Farmers Elise ("I Yam what I Yam") Matheson and Sharon ("If it doesn't have onions in it, it better be dessert") Kahn. That the Root of Vegetology was nourished in the fertile soil of the BE-fit purview was later a cause of both indigestion and common ground. Soon, seedling thoughts had spread to the pulpits and talk shows all over the planet. Disbelievers were weeded out Secular authorities tried to halt the growth of

Vegetology with anti--stalking laws, but the the flock kept coming to the Farmer's Market for spiritual nourishment. The religion can be summed up with this major tenant: You are what you eat.

As the religion grew and flavored more and more lives, cults and sects spread. The Fruitarian Heresy, after much strife, was allowed into the Recipe of Life. The Ovo-Lactorians claimed further restrictions on diet, but were constantly at odds with Jews for Cheeses. The Fiber Sects, the Oat Quakers and the Bran Davidians, tried to keep all life regular.

BE-fit derived from the proto-cult of the Myers-Briggs Personality Inventory. The religion's catechism is a series of questions which determine where you are on four major personality axes. It started out as a system for modeling and interpreting behavior, not a religion. But then again, so did Dianetics. The original epiphany was by First Editors Jeanne Bowman and David Emerson, hence the name. They saw how George Bush got burned, and it was revealed to them that a test to indicate how you thought about issues relevant to Fandom was good. It's hard to believe now, but at the time of the revelation, Fandom was barely known outside of a small group and Fans had little political power. The original range of questions was developed by Editors of the Flame Steve Glennon and DavE Romm, and honed by Glennon, Romm, Emerson and First Consulting Editor Barb Jensen. Introduced at Reinconation III, in Year of Our Moonlanding 24, it was an immediate sensation. The first True Believers and the necessary balance of the Doubting Unbelievers were revealed there.

Soon, BE-fit had expanded from a way to help Fans communicate with each other to a Way which Believers could establish their Special E-Mail Account with the Creator. They were granted Net Privs with the Sysop of Cyberspace. It was a matter of being in the right place at the right time; 'Beefies' and 'Fitters' were on the Fast Lane of the Information Superhighway.

It is difficult to call variants on BE-fit 'heresies' before the Dimensions of Life were established, but some did

create false axes. There were attempts to add a Dog/Cat axis, but that can be determined in one question. Those who claimed the axes were too specific to Fandom were thrown into the Myers-Brig. One of the early tries at reconciliation was the genetically altered Vegetable/Spice/Condiment triple axis, but this got poor ratings during Sweeps Week.

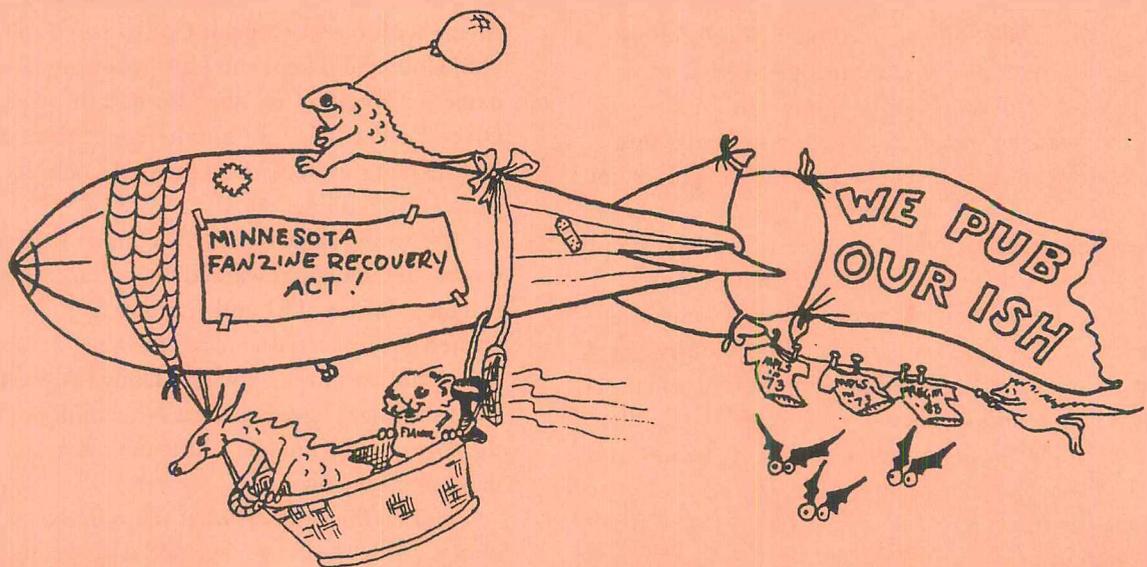
After these humble and occasionally violent beginnings, the religions grew, supplanting local worship. Religions based on achieving an afterlife died off when contact with the Flatliner race determined that God did not communicate through one book, but by interactive media. By seeing a virtual afterlife, people could get a good read on how their life was going. After a few millenia, those diehards waiting for the Third Coming just couldn't find dates, so their race died off. Any religion based on ancestor worship found that there were too many people at family gatherings who couldn't get along. Recombinant DNA and nanotechnology made dietary restrictions irrelevant. Religions based on reincarnation couldn't find enough people for caste parties.

By the time of the first Meganium, Vegetology and BE-fit had become the dominant religions throughout Known and Suspected Space. These religions do not, now, seem mutually incompatible. There was no reason that, for example, Fourth Meganium Over-President McMoishe, a Celery/Pepper/Chutney, couldn't get along with Junior Executive Al-Ras O'Tomisha, a MSZW, but you know how it goes. They both kept admonishing the other until hostilities broke out, and the Scold War lasted over 5,000 years.

The Curry System established itself in the last Meganium by distributing favors among the followers of of Vegetology. It dominated the Spice Trade between Andromeda and the Cauliflower Cluster. That brought it into immediate conflict with the growing Fijagh Empire, who wanted to have a mustard-tasting panel at their Conventions. At first they didn't care that much, as Befitting their J axis, but after a few hundred years of store-bought yellow mustard, the leaders began to get testy. The Concom held an Organizational Meeting, and it was decided to go to war. The Curry Chefs responded with a Bamboo Shoot. Slowly, the conflict simmered, coming to a boil and adding other religious disputes as side dishes and apazines. At last, the stalemate in the Twiltone System forced peace talks last year, leading to the Broccoli/Hyphen Accord. The peace talks reached fruition despite initial disagreements about which hotel to use, and what kind of dip will be used at official functions.

Most major rhubarbs are more politically based than religion based, of course, and this one was no exception, being about control of trade and resources. But some of the more radical elements really hate each other on religious grounds. The Spicy Vegetologists and the XXXX Milksops will probably never sit at the same table. Still, many people did expand their philosophies to include both, and there is once again Good Food in Consuites.

So let us rest under the Palm Tree of Peace, as the Opening Ceremonies of a New Convention of Harmony begin.



# I Remember Dolly

by Alexis A. Gilliland

*Editor's Note: I did not mean for this Rune to be an issue of memorials, but after Dolly died 3 years ago, Alexis sent me this piece for Rune, and I very much wanted to print it (even though it has been delayed for so long.) I lived in Dolly and Alexis' neighborhood in Arlington, Virginia for several years in the late 1970's, and went to many a local SF club meeting at "Doll's House." Although Dolly was and Alexis is an East Coast fan, they traveled much the byways of fandom, and were in Minneapolis for the 1989 Corflu—Geri has photos of Dolly and Alexis sitting on our couch at the Monday night party to prove it. People don't come along in fandom much more wonderful than Dolly Gilliland.*

—Jeff

Up to a point this is pretty much Dolly's official version of what happened in her life. Dolly's mother, Elizabeth Gorfain, was born about 1910 to a wealthy Jewish family near Vilnius Lithuania. The family left for the US with a small fortune as the Russian Revolution took hold, but was unable convert their currency, and arrived impoverished in the promised land. She married Kohlman Cohen while very young, (Kohlman changed the family name to Cohle, pronounced Cole, in 1951) and had two children, a son, Abba born about 1926 and Dorothea, born January 20, 1930. Because of health problems, she was unable to bear any more children. Not unnaturally Elizabeth lived a lot in her fantasies, and Dolly, her second and last child, was the reluctant object of some of them.

The short form of what could well be one of those four volume Mother & Daughter trilogies is that what Elizabeth wanted for/from her daughter was for Dolly to get married to a nice Jewish boy and live in Harrisburg and have babies for her to visit and play with. This is not an unreasonable expectation, and one that any number of daughters have fulfilled for any number of mothers simply for want of anything better to do. Dolly, however, was different because she had a very clear idea of something better to do and from a very early age. Enormously talented musically, she enjoyed performing and making audiences happy, and that is what she wanted to do She had no interest in getting married, or making babies, and eventually she found Harrisburg totally boring, a place to be gotten away from

At the start of World War II, in early 1942, Abba, Dolly's older brother, enlisted in the Army, while Dolly, age 12, began playing the piano in the Harrisburg USO to

support the troops. She was not only good, but with most of the men in service, she was the best there was, and local bands scraping around to find talent picked her up. She became a member of James Petrillo's AFofL Musicians Union that same year, playing in clubs where she was so obviously under the drinking age that nobody dreamed of carding her. Was she a professional musician? Absolutely, even though she was a minor living at home, she made a substantial contribution to the the family income. Later, when she went to college, she was exempted from the 11 PM curfew because she was working late hours to help pay her way through school.

College. If her mother had wanted her to meet a nice Jewish boy and get married, the natural place to go would have been Penn State. However, her mother also wanted her to be closer to home and Abba had used the GI Bill to go down the road a piece to Lebanon Valley College, so it was a place she knew about. Despite being a missionary college (United Bretheren Evangelical) little Lebanon Valley had an excellent conservatory, and Dolly graduated with a BS in musical education from the college, and a BA in piano from the conservatory. Dolly auditioned at Julliard in New York, and was offered a full scholarship, which she turned down. Partly, she said, because she felt sorry for those students who were devoting endless hours to practice, and partly because she felt that New York would have been more of a distraction than she could cope with.

That summer she studied folk music at the University of Mexico in Mexico City and took a course of folk dancing on the side. She was always a good dancer, and had a wonderful time. Her fellow students there just naturally pronounced her new family name, Cohle, to rhyme with ole'. Dolly felt Cohle' had a little more dash than Cohle, and kept the Latin pronunciation of her name. In Mexico City she also met the great muralist, Diego Rivera, and told him he couldn't draw women—that he just put breasts on men. He laughed and propositioned her.

When she came home, the conflict between what mother and daughter wanted finally came to a head. After reaching the age of 21 and graduating from college, Dolly wanted and expected to play jazz in nightclubs In retrospect, the jazz musician whom Dolly felt was closest to what she might have been was Nina Simone, popular with the cognoscenti, but just a little too musicianly to ever make the really big time.

Her mother wanted what she wanted; she couldn't help it. Dolly should get married and live in Harrisburg, or, all right, teach music for a few years, and then get married and live in Harrisburg. She shouldn't play in

clubs; musicians were bums, drunkards, and dope addicts. No compromise was possible, but when Florida State offered Dolly a full scholarship to study piano, it was possible to put the decision off for a time. While in Florida, Dolly began playing in clubs again, and in Harrisburg her mother, suspecting the worst, worried herself into a heart attack.

That was the end of Dolly's musical career; she could not bring herself to go on playing if it was going to kill her mother. That fall she accepted an offer to teach music at a little town called Mountain Top, turning down an offer to play in New York, at Birdland—THE Birdland, the big time—for about five times as much money.

It is the nature of these generational conflicts that neither side gets what they really want. Dolly gave up playing, true, but she wasn't living in Harrisburg and she wasn't the least bit interested in getting married, so her mother had won the most hollow of victories. She taught music for four years in four different schools (usually she turned in her resignation by November because of conflicts with the various supervising principals) in Pennsylvania to get her permanent teachers certificate, and then went south to teach in Bethesda, MD, in the 54-55 school year. Her parents urged her to get out and meet people, so one night a week she went down to the Lafayette Square USO, an old, converted theater (another building that isn't there anymore, although they preserved the facade) across the street from the Treasury Building, and that is where I met her. January '55 is probably the time, because for her birthday, on January 20th, I gave her a 25-cent cactus plant, and that would have been after meeting her once before.

Dolly quit teaching at the end of the '55-'56 school year; she had developed a severe, chronic cough which had no physical basis, but vanished the day after school was out. She went to work downtown for the Department of Agriculture and took a room at Hartnet Hall, at that time the world's largest boarding house. She was on P Street, near 22nd, while I had gotten out of the Army and moved into an apartment at 2104 O St. in January 1956. Eventually we ran into each other on the street, and discovered we were neighbors sometime in the summer or fall of '56. There was, you will be astonished to learn, a party circuit at Hartnet Hall, and Dolly introduced me to it.

Meanwhile, back in Harrisburg, her mother, Elizabeth, fretted about her little girl becoming an old maid, and urged her to join the Jewish Community Center to meet some nice Jewish boys. Dolly, always noted for a somewhat warped sense of humor brought home a 'nice' Jewish magazine salesman, appalling her mother who

backed off. When I got to know Dolly, I found that she was, would you believe, subject to really bad depressions. Thinking back, one of the pivotal incidents in my courtship was surely coming to her room one evening and finding her so blue that she'd let me in because it was me, but wouldn't talk. Undaunted, I told her a children's story, about the Greedy Goroo, and the avenging cheese that ate him up and became the Moon, (if you look at the full Moon, children, you can just see the Greedy Goroo inside) and when I went out she wasn't depressed any more. In the winter of '58-'59 I proposed marriage, and Dolly gave me a conditional acceptance: She would marry me if her mother didn't object. She was then 29 years old, and she had an excellent fix on her mother's thinking. Kohlman, her father, liked me at once, but he didn't really have much to say about it.

In spite of Dolly saying that 40 was a good age to get married, I really believe that I was the only serious suitor that she had ever presented, or ever intended to present. She had been forced to go straight against her will, and wasn't looking to get married, but for the right man, for me, she made an exception. In as masterful a display of strategic thinking as it has ever been my pleasure to witness, Dolly anticipated her mother's objections and maneuvered to circumvent them before they could ever be raised. I converted to Judaism, and we were married in Temple on August 29, 1959.

I have said that she was a musician, but she had other talents as well. When Dolly was in grade school, they gave an eye examination every year. Dolly was seriously near sighted, and needed glasses, but she passed the exam every year until she was in grade six by going into the room before the exam and memorizing the eyechart before the test. Compensation. Living with her weak sight she compensated by learning to interpret those fuzzy images her optic nerve was sending to her brain, and instead of merely seeing, she began to perceive. When she got her glasses, a whole new world opened up for her, but she had already learned perception, so she saw more than you would imagine was there, and she sorted it out faster.

At work, she used her sense of perception to figure out what the bureaucracy was doing. She would tell me about it, and her day at work was strangely more interesting than my own, because her natural curiosity took her into the strangest places. Once she figured out how the promotion game was played, she became a management analyst, and one of the best. She could look at a spreadsheet—this was before the days of computers, remember—and once she was familiar with it, a wrong number would jump out at her. I had my doubts, but her father said the same thing happened

with him, and recently our son Charles has started to do experience the same phenomenon.

In 32 years of marriage there is just way too much stuff to put into a fanzine article. A few anecdotes will have to do, the first from the very beginning. A couple of weeks before the marriage we ran into Fabio Convers, a mutual friend, and he invited us to visit his parents, in Bogota, Columbia, for our honeymoon. I said: Why not? Dolly was astonished, but since Fabio's father had connections in the diplomatic corps, there weren't any problems with passports, only with the tickets, and we drove down to Miami, Florida to catch a flight to Bogota on stand-by going down, and on stand-by coming back. In the event there was no problem, and no adventures worse than having my pocket picked on a bus, or fleabites from the little puppy that came into our bedroom sometimes. It was a very happy time, and a memorable one.

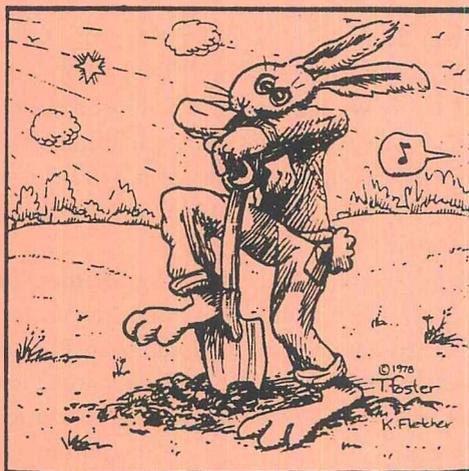
The second can be from as near the middle as makes any difference. In 1974 we moved to Arlington, and because I was in correspondence with Susan Wood, we were somewhat involved with the fan fund to bring Mae Strelkov up from Argentina to Discon II. The money had been raised, and the question was how to handle the details? Dolly suggested that we invite Mae up in advance of the con, to give her a chance to get oriented before plunging into the worldcon maelstrom. Susan agreed, and we arranged for the tickets, taking a short vacation down at Nag's Head with Mae, who hadn't seen the ocean since she was a child, and Charles. After we got back, Susan Wood came down a day early to visit with us and Mae. After Discon II, Mae bought a Greyhound bus pass and went travelling all over the country. Dolly told her to be sure and see the Grand Canyon, and she did, confessing to being very, very, impressed. While she was galivanting around the Estados Unidos, Mae's husband, Vadim, continued to write Mae at our address. One night Mae called from the bus station. Just passing through, on the way to New England, she said, just thought I'd say hello. Dolly told her she ought to come over and spend the night in a real bed for a change, and, dear, we do have some mail for you from Vadim. Mae came over, read the mail, and went back to Argentina the next day.

What did Doll do at Discon II? Well, according to Harlan Ellison, she saved his life. The details? She was directing and producing and playing the piano for a musical, "2001, A Space Opera," which she had helped me write by kindly telling me that what I had just done wouldn't do, and why. (And some of the changes were very late in coming. My original opening, which she had really liked, was "When you're an ape, you're an ape all the way," taken from "West Side Story." After the second

rehearsal she said: "The cast can't cut it, write something else. Ouch.) We had an all star cast, including most of the con committee, and we went on as the warmup for Harlan's presentation of a rough cut version of "A Boy And His Dog." We played to standing room only, in the main ballroom, and got a standing ovation. Then Harlan rushed up to put the movie screen in place before we could give an encore. The techies never were able to make the sound track work, and he later told us that the audience didn't lynch him after hours of frustration because they'd already *been* entertained.

The last anecdote is from the fall and winter of 1990. When Dolly was young, she helped her mother with the shopping, and because money was so tight, she'd walk to all three grocery stores near her house—about a ten block range—to price the vegetables they were going to buy. Then Dolly would go back to the cheapest one so as to save the extra pennies. I didn't always share this enthusiasm for value, but at the time in question we were routinely going out to the shopping malls to give Dolly an outing, and a little exercise.

At Springfield Mall, we saw the clerks stocking this very nice jacket, golden wool, a replacement for one I should have retired from service many years before. It was priced at, oh, say, \$160. "That's too high," said Dolly. "They'll mark it down in a week or two." So I played the waiting game with her. Sure enough, the jacket price came down, to \$140, \$120, \$99, to \$85, about three weeks before Christmas. We bought it at \$85. "It may come down another five dollars," said Dolly, who had been debating getting it at \$99, "but this is the last one in your size." The next time we saw the jackets, they were on sale for \$95, two for \$180. Sometimes the simplest things make you the happiest, and getting the very best value on that coat pleased Dolly more than I can tell you.



# The Zen Cosmic Sinkhole

by Steve Perry

Today's bit of silliness concerns one of the most mysterious and baffling (not to mention underfunded) areas of research:

## *The Zen Cosmic Sinkhole!*

The Zen Cosmic Sinkhole was first discovered 1923 by Waine Krolke of Twin Falls Idaho, while working in his study late one night trying to find a shorter trade route to Fargo.

Waine had just flipped the page of his Oscar Homolka Special Edition World Atlas and turned to pick up his sandwich (a ham and cheese on white with mayo and the crusts cut off), when he made a startling discovery.

His sandwich was gone!

At first, he suspected the family dog had snuck in and grabbed it, but then he remembered that he had neither dog nor family. This Epiphany led to an astounding realization: He was alone as well as peckish.

Stunned by this revelation, he began an exhaustive search of his desk - a used Samsonite "Cardo Supremo" (with real fake leatheroid dealing surface) - but to no avail. The sandwich had mysteriously disappeared.

Given this bizarre turn of events, Waine knew he had but one recourse: Make another sandwich.

As he returned from the kitchen with the new sandwich firmly in hand, he was fully determined to consume it with all due haste and vigor and return to his maps and charts.

He took a bite of sandwich and set it down in the usual place (marked by numerous oil stains from leaking mayo) intent upon a possible route via the Tehachapi Pass.

He ascertained that rerouting trade through Barstow might not realize a great enough savings in time to be profitable, and once more reached for his sandwich only to receive the gravest shock of his evening.

There were now TWO sandwiches on the mayo-stained card table. And it was exactly where he remembered putting the first one earlier!

When the profound shock of this discovery had worn off to the point where he could think - and eat - clearly, he realized that he was on the trail of a secret so profound that no one speaks of it to this day.

Waine promptly named the effect the Zen Cosmic Sinkhole - or ZCS for short - for reasons now both

dubious and obscure. He commenced a long series of carefully planned experiments consisting of taking ordinary household items, placing them near at hand, turning to a different task, and then returning to retrieve the previously placed item.

By keeping careful records, noting the type of item, times of occurrence, and duration of disappearance [or "gonitude" (pronounced gone-i-tood) as Waine preferred to call it], he soon had a large enough collection of data to encourage him to apply for a research grant from major universities and institutions.

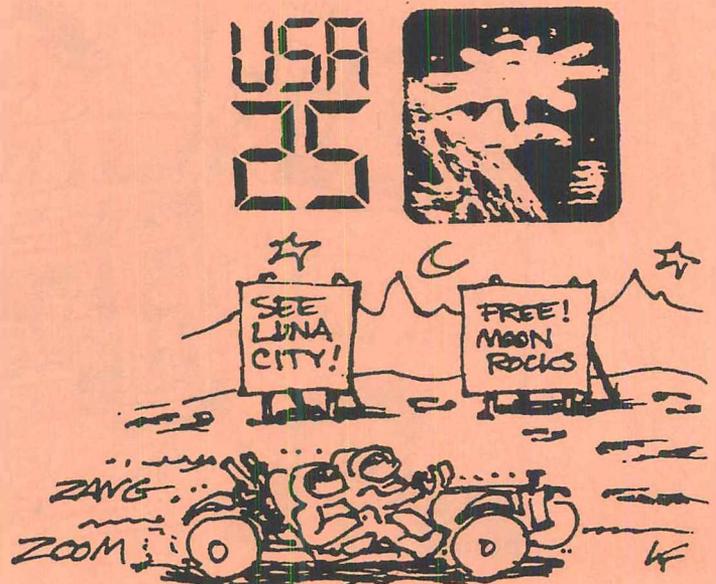
All of them turned him down flat.

Undeterred, he sought help from whatever dubious source he could find. His searches ultimately brought him to a small edifice of higher learning in Arkham, Massachusetts.

He was immediately given an Impure Research Grant, an office/lab in a disused basement broomcloset of the Women's Gym, and a small stipend which kept him in ham and cheese with mayo sandwiches quite comfortably.

There, Krolke continued his delvings which lasted through the end of his life in 1929. He was found after the Annual Research Faculty/Staff Christmas Party and Banishing Ritual; his body mysteriously shredded, drained of all bodily fluids, and missing its brain.

Arkham Police Chief, Charlie "Three Eyes" Chtullu ruled it "the damnedest suicide I ever saw."



However, his efforts won him the coveted Elias P. Bonewacker Chair (Posthumous) in the Department of Really Weird Stuff at Miskatonic University.

But who cares.

Most modern scholars of the Phenomenology of Missing Stuff generally agree that the great and difficult work done by Wayne Krolke was, in the words of Tangram J. Monsanto "doggie doodle".

However, in light of recent evidence and the return of the Democratic Party with a viable presidential candidate for 1992, more researchers are returning to Wayne Krolke's seminal works.

Most notable of these is "Where'd It Go?; a Study into Goneology (with 8 pages of startling photographs)" Published by Miskatonic U. Press, 69pp, ill., \$19.95.

In this weighty tome, Krolke postulates small pocket universes, similar to the ones in women's purses. But, whereas the Purse Universe can contain a volume of (mostly useless) objects sufficient to sink a moderate sized supertanker, the Zen Cosmic Sinkhole is only large enough to contain one or at most three items of moderate mass, such as a screwdriver, a cup of coffee, or a small yappy dog.

And where the Purse Universe (or PU, as Krolke dubbed it) was accessible - though only to women as we fellows have discovered while looking for the car keys in our wife's or girlfriend's purses -, the ZCS was a capricious and randomly selective phenomena which took and gave back what and

when it damn well pleased. Much like the IRS.

More recent experiments show that the ZCS tends to take items based on (among other criteria) their usefulness at the time of disappearance.

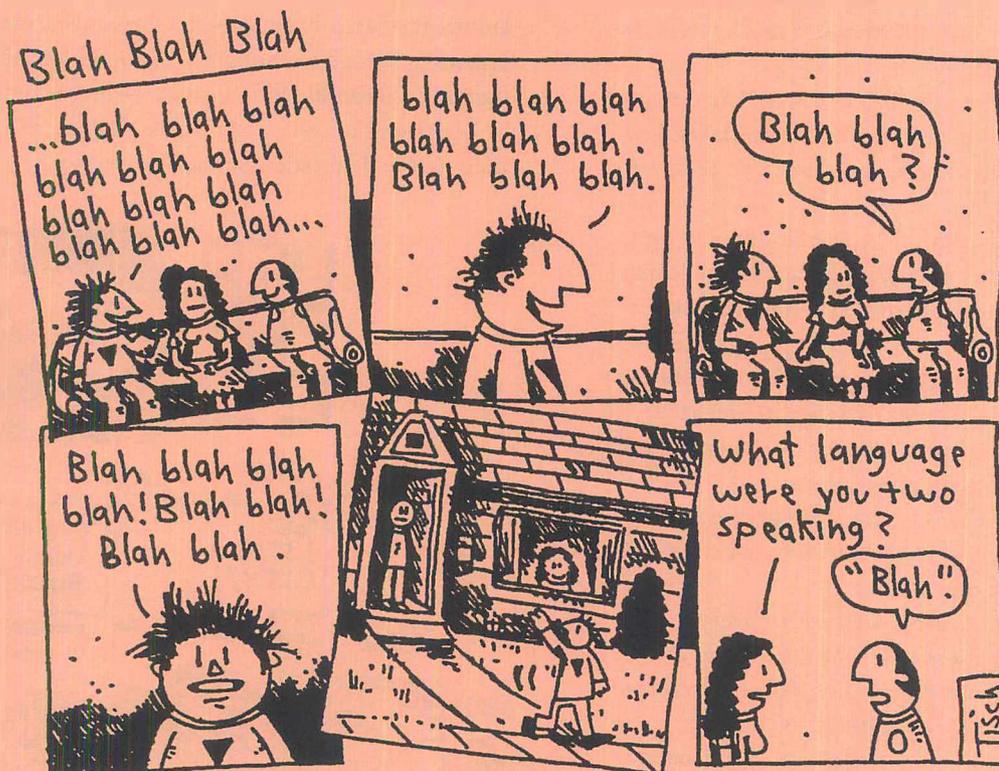
Hence, an artist or writer may discover that his/her pen or pencil has been captured at the precise moment of Ultimate Inspiration, only to be returned to exactly the same spot from whence it disappeared and only after the artist or writer has 1) made a furious and exhaustive search of the work surface and surrounding area, 2) torn up the rest of the room while threatening mayhem on family, friends, and pets, and - most importantly -3) forgotten what they were going to do with the tool or instrument in the first place.

Attempts have been made to link the ZCS phenomenon to the Bermuda (and, to a lesser extent the Wisconsin) Triangle, but as of this writing, nothing has come of that line of investigation.

It may be safely inferred, however, that the ZCS has been responsible for more frustration than the Documentation Division of the Microsoft Corporation.

While the serious investigation of the Zen Cosmic Sinkhole continues at a rate which would astound its discoverer it is safe to say that it probably won't come to any conclusions in the foreseeable future. And even if it does, who would really give a flat rat's anal orifice anyway?

Now where did I put that disk? It was just here a minute ago. Ah, c'mon! I just used it! Where the Hell IS IT?!



# Los Angeles Science Fiction Society History

1955-61

by Ted Johnstone

*What is this piece doing in Rune, I'm sure some puzzled readers will be asking. Well, read it (because I doubt you've ever run across it before) and be a good sport about it. If nothing else, the Mineapa/APA-L mailing exchange connection should provide some resonance. I read this piece in the 10th grade—1968—and it made me want to run away from home to a city where fans hung out together and did neat stuff. If you've never done that, you should try it sometime. Originally published in John D. Berry's Foolscap #6 in 1968, as the text of a speech given to the LASFS, and reprinted once since (or so I was told, but I forget where) I am reprinting it here with Bjo Trimble's wonderful original illustrations.*

The topic of this evening's entertainment is supposed to be something along the lines of "LASFS History from 1956 to 1961, as I lived it." Fortunately I was given a lot of advance warning on this, and for the last few months I've been dredging up bits and pieces of memories from ten years ago. And let's not mention that again—that's more than a third of my whole life, already.

This is quite a time, though. In a way, it was the most important 5-year period in the whole history of the club, and I was lucky enough to see it through all the way from start to finish. In 1956 the club was withered, feeble, and fossilizing. Five years later in 1961, the L.A.S.F.S. was once again the spiritual home of True Fandom.

Let me reach a little farther into the past than my early limit, and explain that, some years earlier, the publication of *Ah, Sweet Idiocy!* had nearly shattered the club, and the shock weakened it through a few years of fading. When Willis stopped by in 1952, there were still enough people around to give him a good welcome. But by 1954, LASFS had very much faded from its position of eminence. This was the period of the two- or three-member meeting, the loss of communication with the outside world. Only the Outsiders kept publishing from time to time.

About this time I answered an ad in one of Ray Palmer's magazines—he would run free classified ads for his reader; marvelous things—and got in touch with George Fields, another stf reader, interested in the historical and literary aspects of Science Fiction. Somehow or other he had gotten hold of strange mimeographed things on multicolored paper, and they were called "fanzines."

Well, I'd heard about fandom. About two years earlier I had been wandering through my local library when one of the librarians—all of whom know me on sight—informed me that somebody was speaking about astronomy there at their regular Tuesday Evening Improving Lecture Series, and he was a science fiction writer.

This really excited me, and I made it a point to come to the lecture. The speaker was Dr. Robert S. Richardson—Doc Richardson, back when he and fandom were on speaking terms—Philip Latham to dozens of slobbering readers all over the world. His talk wandered here and there. I can't recall at all what his subject was. But at one point he said something about "fandom," and fished a little booklet, about 2½ by 3½ inches, out of a pocket, and held it up.

"I don't know just where I got this," he said, "but it tells about this 'fandom.' If anybody's interested, they can have it."

Well, I popped right up there after the lecture and got it. I also got his autograph as the first pro I ever met. I took the booklet right home and read it. It was called *What is Science Fiction Fandom*, and it was published by something called the National Fantasy Fan Federation. It contained several short articles by people I'd never heard of—names like Bob Tucker, Art Rapp, Forrest J. Ackerman—on various aspects of this 'fandom' business. And it sounded pretty frightening. All these groovy, sharp people with their own little world, writing back and forth, and publishing their own material—and it sounded just marvelous, but far far above my head. I decided I could never compete with a crowd like that—and besides, there was nothing in the booklet about how to get in touch with this 'fandom' if you *were* interested.

So I put the booklet away with a sigh and regrets, and didn't think of it again until George pulled out these things called 'fanzines,' and I connected the two.

Well, I started reading these fanzines. And some of them were pretty awful. George was all enthusiastic about raising money and starting our own fanzine, but he really didn't have any idea how to go about it. So we kind of looked around, and advertised, and picked up a few more kids our ages who were interested in stf, and formed

Twentieth Century Fandom. Actually, George had invented it before I came along, but the treasurer had gone to South Carolina with all the records.

And then finally George discovered Forrest J. Ackerman, and I remembered the name. This was somebody important in fandom! George got in touch with him, and I even talked to him on the phone once. And then he told George about the Westercon in Oakland that summer, and about the LASFS. George talked me and another friend of ours who grew up to be Steve Tolliver, into coming along. Two weeks before the Westercon George went to the LASFS and joined, and then came home and told me all about it. The following week I went downtown with him on the streetcar to a large room in the half-basement portion of an old hotel, called the Prince Rupert. The window along one side near the ceiling ran along the sidewalk outside.

The walls were painted light green on either side and white on the ends. The floor was dark red, and the ceiling was blue. Great flakes of the blue would come

off occasionally and shatter on the floor. All across the end of the room where a sort of head table stood were scrawled autographs of all the famous people that had been there. George told me the walls were the artistic work of Mel Hunter, by that time quite a rising young cover artist.

The clubroom also had several shelves of stuff—books and magazines, some of which I'd never seen before! Naturally I joined at once, and my membership card was signed by Ray Capella just before he was voted out and Rick Sneary was elected director in his place. Sadly, that card was lost, then found, then finally lost again about 1961.

The meetings were generally small, around that time. I remember the One Thousandth Meeting—there were over a hundred people there, filling the room and overflowing into the halls. I was still terribly impressed—there were people there like A.E. van Vogt, and Ray Bradbury, and Charles Beaumont, and Richard Matheson, and lots of people I'd heard of.

But the meetings were generally small. I remember one three-member meeting in early 1957—Forry, myself, and I can't remember who the third one was. Possibly Barney Bernard.

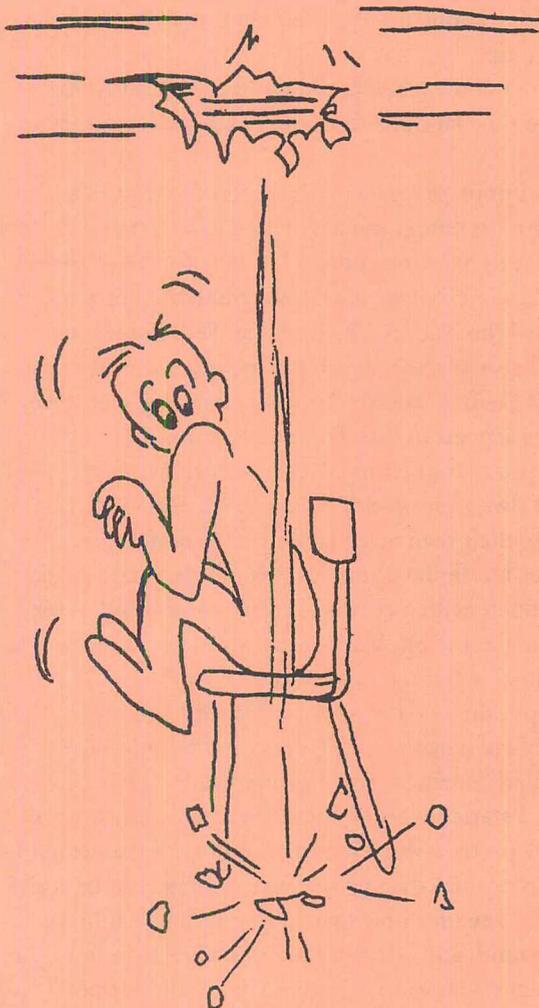
In April of 1957, something called a Fanquet happened. Forry had been to Europe, and everyone decided to give him a testimonial dinner on his return. I took copious notes, and wrote up the whole affair in my very first *own* fanzine. Dittoed, half-subsidized by Forry, mailed to total strangers. But there it was. And I remember the night I took an armload of the fresh copies to the club—and Ray Bradbury had just decided to drop in, with his buddy, Chuck Beaumont. It was quite a marvelous thing.

Our noises rose through the windows to the street above, and almost every week people would look in and openly ask us what was going on. What we told them depended on how we felt at the moment.

This evening a little old lady spent some time looking in at us, and finally Ray wandered wide-eyed over to look up at her with that big teddy-bear smile of his, and she asked him, "Who are you people?"

He spread his arms wide and told her brightly, "These are all science fiction people, and I am Moby Dick!" He had just finished the film with Huston, at the time. She looked startled, and fled.

Some time around this period, we fell in with Len Moffatt and Rick Sneary, and became sort of honorary Outlanders. We, once again, is George and myself, and most of the time Tolliver. We helped Len put out the first few issues of SCIENCES FICTION PARADE, a very



sercon little mag plugging for South Gate in '58. As early as the fall of 1956 I put in my first real fanac slipsheeting for SFP #1.

All in all, it was a quiet, peaceful, stagnant period. Nothing much happened—we couldn't afford to go to Worldcons in places like New York or London, but the Westercons were available in LA or the Bay Area. We got fanzines from the rest of the world, and read about fantastic people like Walt Willis and Ted White, and Vinç Clarke and S&y S&cerson, and Bob Shaw and Bob Tucker and something in New York called a "Nunnery." But we never saw these people. Forry, of course, saw them every Con, and knew them all personally.

Rick Sneary said once, about this time, "Just as many fantastic fannish things happen to us as to Irish Fandom—we just don't have a Willis or Berry to write them down."

But, sometime in 1957 a new face entered the club—a very fetching face, with red hair above it and blue-green eyes with flecks of gold, and freckles. And she looked around, and said to herself, "This is a nice little club. I think I'll make something out of it."

I can remember one night in late '57 when she and George and Steve and I were sitting around at George's, and she was dashing off cartoons and saying clever things, and Steve Tolliver gave her a long considering look out of nowhere, and said, "I think you should be a BNF."

She said, "Who? Me?" and Toliver nodded.

He said, "I'll bet I can make you a BNF inside of two years." We all started off by laughing, and ended up inventing a fanzine called MIMSY, which Steve would edit and she would decorate. Her name was Betty Jo Welles, but she signed here artwork Bjo.

The fanzine started coming out regularly, and pretty soon people started showing up to write for it. Ron Ellik, a bright young squirrel just out of Junior College; Jack Harness, a bright young kook just out from Pittsburgh; and a whole bunch of other bright young people.

About this time the Solacon suddenly became an impending reality. South Gate in '58 had paid off. And purely in search of an inside view of just what was going on, I got on the con committee, in a menial position.

A few other things were happening about the same time. Bjo's marriage had broken up, and she was in rocky shape. But even then she was directing more of her interest toward the club. I remember one night in the spring of 1958 when she and George and Steve and I and a couple other people were driving to George's place for the second stage of a party, and she said she'd been thinking about getting the LASFS started publishing again. We could raise half the price of a duplicating machine—not just any old duper, but a real silk-screen



impeccably printing Gestetner!—and float an issue of stock to cover the other half.

It looked good, and she started sounding the LASFS on the subject. The Solacon was infusing a lot of new spirit into the club at this time, as the eyes of the world were glancing over to see if LA fandom as really dead or not.

About this time, in the middle of '58, we lost our happy home at the Prince Rupert Apartment Hotel, and sought temporary refuge in the home of a member—Zeke Leppin. The temporary refuge lasted for two years, during which time his house served as a fan center for LA and a residence for fans who were in need of one. Jack Jardine stayed there for a while, and Bjo and Djinn Faine lived there as well.

Meanwhile, Twentieth Century Fandom had acquired a few more members. Milo Mason came in and showed us a thing or two; Rich Stevens was a welcome addition—he had a car for when Milo was too drunk to drive; and rich brown was quite a kid, with an enthusiasm for fandom I've never seen matched.

Let's see... George went gay about 1960, and has only been see occasionally since. Tolliver is married, and working for JPL. When I last saw Rich Stevens, he was a graduate student in journalism at UCLA, and quite

sercon. The last time I saw Milo, he'd recently done six months in the cooler, and was engaged in forging checks. rich brown stayed with fandom. He's quit it forever several times, but he's still present and voting.

And it was rich brown who introduced me to Paul Stanbery, and Paul who introduced me to Coventry.

If Bjo represents the creative force in the renaissance of the LASFS, the Coventry business represents its...if not destruction, at least termination. Similar to the Laney feud a decade earlier, on a smaller scale, people today are not speaking to or of other people because of the Coventry business and all it led to.

But all this was in the future at the Solacon. The growing shadow of the worst New York feud of the decade had been blackening the eastern horizon for some months—the World Science Fiction Society, Incorporated, was biting its tail in agonies, and its thrashing was splitting fandom down the middle. Boggled in red tape and mutual willful misunderstandings, the whole mess was aimed squarely at the business session of the Solacon. Everybody was holding their breath, and the topic of conversation most avoided was the WSFS, Inc.

The rest of the con had been wonderful. I led an expedition out to Disneyland, then only three years old, with about fifty fans from the convention, and had the opportunity at last to meet some of these wonderful people who went to conventions and did things like that. The costume ball was highly memorable—Jon Lackey made his usual last-minute entrance as something ancient and eldritch, waving a smoking urn around the room and gibbering in a strange tongue, standing six foot nine in his shoes, with skull-white makeup and long robes. He won handily, then disappeared.

He and some straightmen went out to Pershing Square, about ten o'clock on a Sunday night. Jon made one turn around the square, in character, and paraded back to the hotel with a couple hundred bums in tow, convinced that this was the new Messiah. Jon ducked into the hotel ahead of them, and appeared on the second floor balcony with his arms thrown wide and a flashlight on his face from below.

There's nothing like a crowd to attract a crowd. Inside of five minutes traffic was blocked and the police arrived. Jon skinned up to his room, out of his costume, and down to the basement garage and out and away. It was wondered, after, how long the Second Coming was talked about in the sun-bleached beards of Pershing Square.

But the Business Session was approaching, and the WSFS forces were gathering strength, on both sides, for a fierce battle. And the night before the business meeting, we all met with Tony Boucher in the Con

Suite. Anna was expecting trouble, and the main topic was what to do about it. It was Tony who came up with the point that there was actually no legal relationship between the Solacon and WSFS, Inc., and therefore they had no place at the business meeting. And that was what Anna told them the next day when Belle Dietz brought the subject up before the Convention. "The WSFS, Inc. is not the business of this Convention," Anna said. "The Solacon is simply a social meeting of fandom, and has not connection with the legal problems of the World Science Fiction Society." That ruling sort of let the air out of the whole thing. It took a couple or three years for the feud to die down, but it never blew up to its former proportions after that.

\* \* \*

Well, the Solacon let the rest of fandom know that Los Angeles fandom was not dead. We were meeting in Zeke's living room and we were just on the verge of buying a Gestetner and hadn't published anything in years; Paul Turner put out an issue of SHAGGY in late '56, I believe, and George Fields brought one out in late '57 or early '58, I seem to recall, but the idea of the LASFS publishing fanzines was still somewhat alien.

Ron Ellik went up to Berkeley about this time, and met a couple of fans named Terry Carr and Dave Rike, and about that time a whole flock of New York fans moved to San Francisco and Berkeley. Things started to happen up there, like great big fanzines, and little frequent fanzines—and something called FANAC. This was a bi-weekly newszine published by Ellik and Carr to plug the Solacon, and it just sort of kept going after the con was over. Inside of a year, it was considered indispensable by a majority of fandom. Its lineal grandchild is published today by Pelz—RATATOSK. FANAC won a Hugo, Ellik came home to LA, Carr went to New York, Breen took over FANAC and it was rarely seen again. Then Ron started STARSPINKLE, and when it folded Pelz took over.

But this is out of my assigned era. The West Coast was once again becoming a fun, fannish area, by the middle of 1958, and when the World-con came around, fen showed up from everywhere. Scores of people who had only been mimeographed names and characters suddenly showed up with glasses and loud shirts, and saw that these were indeed real people they'd been hearing about in Los Angeles. Well, most of them. Carl Brandon never showed up at the Convention.

Then the LASFS got its Gestetner. We all stood around the big white table in Zeke's living room while the salesman set it up and gave us all a one-hour course in how to run the thing. He wasn't quite sure what to make of

this bunch of strange-looking people buying a machine which usually went to large offices, but after a while he got to like the idea. He hung around for years, visited the club a couple of times and helped us out with repairs, supplies and advices. His name was Brian Storey, and he was quite a fine gentleman.

The first issue of the new SHAGGY came out, and people all over the country looked up and smiled. They'd heard about Bjo in the zines from the Berkeley Boys, who commuted back and forth along the 400-mile strip of California that separates the Bay Area from here, and they'd seen her cartoons and artwork in several fanzines. And here she was editing good old SHAGGY; this should be fun. Well, it was.

SHAGGY attracted the attention of several people. One of them was a college student in Florida who'd read a biographical sketch of a LASFS member in SHAGGY. They met at Detention in September 1959, and formed a friendship which has terrified generations. The Floridian, by this time a college graduate looking for a place to start, was Bruce Pelz, and the LASFSian was me. Pelz looked over the LA crew, and decided they were his people. There were a lot of 'em too. Bjo had organized a caravan with about eight or ten or twelve people in three cars, and we'd brought most of the inner circle of LASFS.

Pelz joined the caravan on the trip back to LA. He looked around for a month or so, then went home. But he was back with a small truckload of possessions about the end of the year.

About this time John Trimble got out of the service, and he hit town about the same time as Pelz, looking for a place to live. Bjo was getting tired of Zeke's cooking by this time, and was a little better off financially, so she and Djinn Faine also went house-hunting. I don't know whether the discoveries were made simultaneously or not, but they ended up in two tiny apartments a couple of blocks apart on the top of a hill overlooking the Civic Center on one side and Chavez Ravine on the other. John and Bruce moved again shortly to an impossibly tiny house on the other side of Bjo's a block and a half. They were joined there by Ernie Wheatley, and from time to time by other fans who needed beds or floor space. And gradually the centers of fannish consciousness began to focus around these two apartments on what was to become known as Fan Hill. The name was given by Rotsler, and the apartments were specified as the Right Breast and the Left Breast, but I have never met anyone who can be sure of having them straight as to which was which, except possibly Rotsler.

More people started arriving in town from about the country, and fans whose only activity had been going into

the apas for years suddenly started appearing at meetings and parties. They needed a better location. Bjo's apartment was about ten by thirty, plus a kitchen; the other place was a perfectly square foundation, twenty by twenty, divided into living room, dining room, bedroom and kitchen by four quadrating walls. The bath was squeezed between the bedroom and kitchen. A marvel of compactness and efficiency, but somewhat crowded with three or four people living there.



They found a big old house on Eighth Street, near Vermont. It had once been a rooming house, and sported seven bedrooms upstairs, two huge rooms, a studio, a back workroom, a large kitchen, and miscellaneous closets downstairs. It was more or less love at first sight. I can remember my first look around the place, one night in the summer of 1960. The electricity wasn't on yet, but Bruce wanted to show me the new fan center, and I wanted to see it. He had a key, and we went in the back door with flashlights. I stood in the hall downstairs and looked around, and thought about what a lot of fun we were going to have in this house and wondered what wonderful things would be going on there in the next few years.

By this time SHAGGY was coming out pretty regularly, and was well on its way toward winning a Hugo. The regular meetings were attended by twenty-five or

thirty, and the treasury was robust enough to support several parties a year. Everyone was getting active in apas, and at one time very nearly all the officialdom of most of the apas was concentrated in Los Angeles, a good portion under the roof of this place which was called the Fan Hillton. The Gestetner was churning out zines day and night, there were parties every weekend at least, and usually oftener. And there was always something going on there. You could walk in any time there was a light on and find someone to talk to or play cards with or hash out an idea for a fanzine article.

In paying residence, there were Bjo and John, married a few months earlier, Ernie Wheatley, Bruce Pelz, Jack Harness, and Don Simpson, the full-term residents. The other rooms were filled from one time to another by Jane Gallion, Larry McCombs, and Karu Beltran.

Karu is worth a chapter of his own. He drifted into the circle of fandom through someone he knew, and came to stay at the Hillton, cooking and cleaning to cover his rent. He was an Oriental Magician by trade, and quite a good sleight-of-hand artist. He was also an accomplished improvisatory cook, who could take a dollar and a half to Grand Central Market and feed a dozen people, counting the guests who would usually drop in. He seldom made the same thing twice, and all they had in common was a basically Oriental layout. Bjo sketched him once standing at the stove stirring a huge pot, with a tentacle writhing over the edge. The story is told of someone referring, of an evening, to the excellent breakfast Karu had fixed that morning. "By the way, Karu," they asked, "what was that we had for breakfast?"

"Well," said Karu, "it was a little early in the morning to be making up a name for it..."

Karu never really mingled much with the fans, but when he did he could be counted on for surprises. He would sit quietly at one side of a party, producing lit cigarette from the air for a girl who needed a smoke, accepting cigarette stubs, extinguishing them in the palm of his hand and making them disappear. And then there was the evening he brought out his drums...

Karu had an old car parked behind the Fan Hillton, and in this car was at least one of everything in the world. "Just a minute, I think I've got one in my car," became a catchphrase. A special had been advertised on television, and everyone wanted to watch it, but we had no set. Karu excused himself and returned with a small portable which served the Hillton for the rest of the period he stayed. Bjo was working on a spice recipe which needed the function of a mortar and pestel. Karu found them in his glove compartment. Once, on a bet, I inquired after a sixteen millimeter movie projector. I lost; it was on the back floor.

And one night he began producing drums. He brought out a couple sets of bongos; a thing called a boobam which was played with a mallet and went either boo or bam, depending on where it was hit; a set of tuned bogos, about eight pieces of bamboo cut to different lengths and headed, capable of delivering eight random notes across about two octaves, a big standing Conga drum; and assorted claves, marracas, and noisy things. And we started a jam session. Somebody would start off a simple beat on the Conga, and hold it for long enough to



get everyone started. Then one at a time the other instruments would come in, working around the basic beat, improvising rhythmic patterns, and eventually everybody would be going at once. And then the Conga would take off. The whole improvisation would run for five or ten minutes, and gradually wind up, everybody together, when it felt right. it wasn't just a fluke, either—we shifted instruments and did it two more times. By then there had been a lot of beer spread around, and things get kind of hazy. My only clear memory from the rest of the evening is sitting at the Conga drum in the dining room while Lee

Jacobs pummeled dixieland jazz out of the old piano there, beating the drum in accompaniment with the help of a second pair of hands belonging to a girl I was in love with at the time, with a can of beer bouncing on the drumhead between us. Somehow that seems an unlikely memory, but that was the impression I had.

The Fan Hillton was quite a place. I spent about half my time there, what with one thing and another. I was out of one college and not started in another, and had plenty of free time.

Eventually time took its toll, and the wheels of progress caught up with us. The property was sold for a small office building, and the old house had to be razed. Fandom was poorer for its loss. The night they finished moving out, I came back with Bruce for a last look around. The electricity had been turned off for the last time, and we went in the wide open front door with a flashlight. I stood in the hall downstairs and looked around, and thought about what a lot of fun we had had in this house, and all the wonderful things that had gone on there in the last year and a half.

\* \* \*

I remember Pelz becoming bored around seven o'clock one lovely clear evening and saying, "Let's go for a walk." We walked and talked for some time. Eventually we got to the far end of the Sunset Strip and it was two in the morning. We had a bite to eat and walked back, arriving as dawn broke, after having taken a bus for only the last two miles of a twenty-mile hike. But we got a lot of talking done.

I remember Pelz standing over me while I pounded out two manic six-page apazines because I was leaving for vacation that evening and would be dropped from both apas if I didn't get a zine in. I made it.

I remember Jack Harness as OE of N'APA, shrugging off his duties and going on a picnic the day he was supposed to send out the mailing, and everyone else in the Hillton getting together and putting out the mailing before he got home, complete with a highly insulting (to Jack) forgery of the Official Organ.

I remember Ernie Wheatley and his madness for gooey pie, and his strange rapport with the Gestetner, and the fact that his room at the Hillton was the only one that was always impeccably neat.

I remember Bjo bouncing in with another idea, like flying kites, or running down to the beach to look for seashells, or going to ride a carrousel somewhere, and everyone wrapping up in about thirty seconds and taking off for an unexpected afternoon of fun.

And I remember Unicorn Productions, making The Musquite Kid Rides Again—which is also worth a chapter

by itself—and Persian Garden. Those were perhaps typical of the best activities of the LASFS at that time—utterly fantastic fun things, impossible to achieve but fun to think about. With Bjo behind them, they came off, and they were wonderful.

And I remembered the Guardian, whose activities had centered around the Fan Hillton, and I thought of everything that had gone up in the conflagration of personalities that had aroused and the friendships that had been shattered and the enemies that had been made. And I looked around the downstairs hall, thinking instead of sitting on the bottom step of the stairs, telephone hard to my ear, trying to block the noise of the New Years Party, as we tried to establish a telephone connection to Walt Willis, in Northern Ireland. Or sitting halfway up the steps with a girl on my lap, snogging a little bit, separated from the noise of the party, in semi-darkness of the stairwell.

And I was the last one to leave, and I closed the door behind me, ending a fannish era.

\* \* \*

The end of the renaissance was already visible from the time of the Solacon. A fringe-neo had invented a fantasy world of gigantic proportions, and several people had gotten involved in it. Some saw it as a game, I saw it as a readymade background for a vast range of stories, and some people saw it differently. I can't answer for anyone else exactly how much they were involved in this thing called Coventry.



But it grew, and more and more people were becoming involved, and their activities seemed to be getting quite out of hand. And so the Guardian was born. He was the slapstick equivalent of an underground terrorist organization. You would wake up in the morning and find a cryptic message chalked on your sidewalk, or in an unstamped, unpostmarked envelope in your mailbox. And your answer would get back to the Guardian from the mail table in the front hall at the Fan Hillton.

Essentially, it was assassination by ridicule, aimed at Coventry and anyone connected therewith. The campaign ran for something like six months, during the course of which nearly everyone except Bruce and myself found out who was behind the whole business, and in many cases added helping hands.

Eventually it all blew wide open, and everyone found out who had been on which side. And almost at the same time, the Fan Hillton was sold off and fell. It was a sudden and total change when they moved to a somewhat smaller house, and those who had been most hurt by the Guardian took off on their own. SHAGGY was no longer quite as regular, and the years of regrowth were ended. There became two or three fan centers in the central LA area, and everyone was publishing actively and going to conventions, but the old unity was gone.

\* \* \*

From the inception of the club, in the ancient dime days of the middle 1930's, before most of us were born, Forrest J. Ackerman had been the guiding spirit of the LASFS. Over some fifteen years he led the club to the place of pre-eminence among the local clubs of the whole world as a synonym for trufannish good-fellowship and fun. It was "Shangri-La" all through the 1940's, and the place where all good fen wanted to go before they gafiated.

And even Francis Towner Laney, the man responsible almost single-handedly for the fall of the LASFS, stated in his malignum opus, that the LASFS had always been Forry's club, and always would be Forry's club. He said that you could come to the LASFS in the year 1980 and it would still be Forry's club.

But Forry's club had died, very nearly. It was a tottering corpse, moribund from the aftereffects of the Fannageddon, until Bjo came along with freckles, brains, stubbornness and guts, and made it come back to life. About this time Forry invented Monsters and over the space of a couple years began to have less and less time for the club. What had once been his driving passion, fifteen years earlier, was now only a hobby.

Actually, it was no longer Forry's club by the time of the Solacon. Bjo's blood filled its veins, and it was her

breath that kept the lungs working. By the time of the Fan Hillton, LASFS was alive again and able to continue, but it was still Bjo's club.

But gradually, as the whole club became stronger, Bjo let it go on its own and moved out of direct control. And the club today is essentially the same as her creation of seven or eight years ago. The membership is 90% changed, the whole spirit of the club is Bjo's rather than Forry's. Just as fandom itself has changed over the intervening decades, the sercon stfnal discussion of the forties was lost in the surge of faaanishness in the early fifties. Degler, for all his faults, had started something that was to mean more to fandom than any other influence in its history—he gave fandom self-awareness. Fen suddenly began to think of these other people as "my kind," and although the idea of a shared star-begotten heritage was laughed off the stage, fen were becoming aware of fandom as a unit in the middle '40's.

Bjo had seen the Chicon in '52, and loved it; she knew what this new kind of fandom was like. George and I, and most of the young fen at the time, had been nurtured on fanzines from active centers about all the fun they had. We were ready for someone to come along and do something, and Bjo came, and before we knew what was happening, we were doing things, and doing them well. And when she left, we were able to continue.

\* \* \*

This was the period between 1956 and 1961, as advertised. I feel more than anything else, the key to the entire era can be summed up in one word—"Bjo." When she came, there was nothing. When she left, there was one of the best clubs in the country.

If I were to take two words, the other would have to be Solacon. That was the opening gun of the cultural renaissance in Los Angeles, and gave us the kick we needed to get started.

Now, I've left out a lot of details, I know. But I've been going for the better part of an hour now, and if I tried to get in another layer of reminiscence I'd be here the rest of the night.

So I'll just remember sitting at the bottom of the front stairs at the Fan Hillton, talking on the telephone to this strange kid who had called long distance from fer-ghu-sake Vermont, and wanted to talk to somebody in the LASFS. We told him he should stop calling us and save his money for a trip out here. He finally did, and stayed. He's Owen Hannifen, once a disembodied voice at the Fan Hillton, now with a slan shack of his own, the biggest since the Hillton fell. And that is how the history goes on.

# Tooney Loons by R.J. Johnson

Tripping up to Minicon for this reporter is only successful when he gets the opportunity to partake of some aspect of Mipple City ambiance. Visiting a local ice cream haven. Scoping out the Humpdome.

Visiting a Target store and buying a tape . . .

Perhaps the tape I found could be had at another store (maybe even in Chicago,) but I saw it in Minneapolis and, thus, it is now part of my personal Minicon history. And now, dear reader, it's part of yours.

The tape had to be purchased both because of it's title and because I have a fearsome reputation for telling tall-tales. If I did not have some form of physical evidence to share with my audience, they would dismiss my account as the futile attempts of a promising storyteller burned out trying to top himself once too often. The title alone rendered my eyeballs temporarily glazed.

The name of the tape is NEW AGE LOON.

\*Pause for reader's eyes to cease glazing\*

The title alone was worth the \$8.99 plus tax, but after purchasing it and bringing it back to Minicon (of course, I had to share this with my friends and fellow Bozos) I took a look at the back cover of the tape. Gentle reader, I fear my eyeballs are now in a permanent state of glazedness.

Of course, it is my duty as a reporter to share the cause of my condition with you.

I quote:

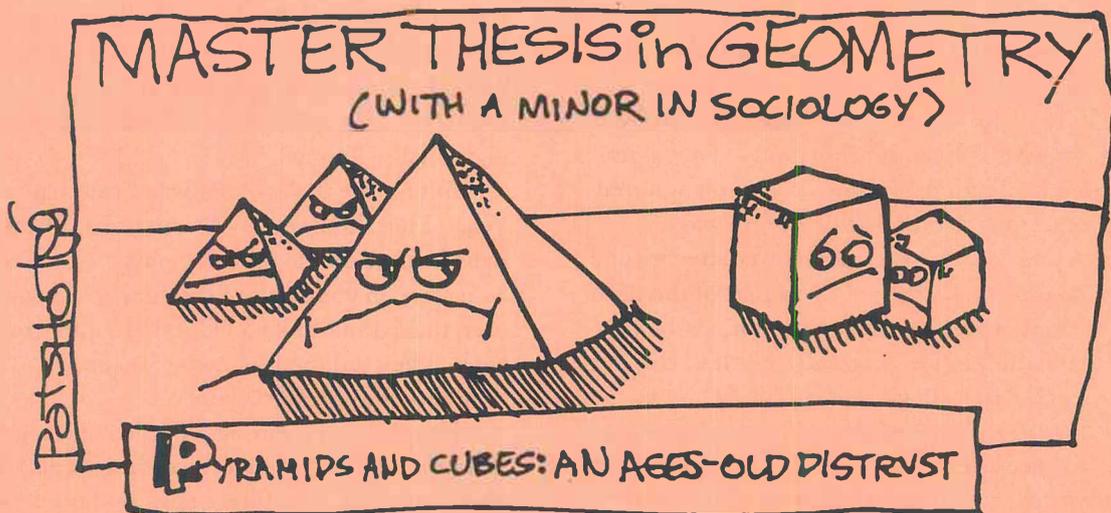
*Brimming with wilderness spirit, NEW AGE LOON brings you the hoots, wails, tremolos, and yodels of the common loon, deftly woven into the melodic sounds of lilting New Age compositions.*

\*Pause for reader to accustom him — or herself to permanently glazed eyeballs.\*

I took NEW AGE LOON to Jeff Schalles, publisher of the mighty BOZO BUS TRIBUNE, and suggested that a music review was in order. After arguing for a few moments about whether actually listening to the tape was necessary, Jeff won out and popped the tape into his boom box. Since the tape has been on, I have had brief chats with Jeff, Geri Sullivan, Karen Cooper and a few other folks who have wandered into the room. I cannot for the life of me remember anything about the tape.

Thus, your humble reviewer gives NEW AGE LOON a rating of 4 Spleens... but are they Amalgamated Spleens?

I can't remember... must be Those Darn Loons.



*as experienced by John C. Sulak at the Berkeley Community Theater, November 20, 1993.*

### More sugar!

The Firesign Theater are back with all of the original members. I saw them last week live, on-stage, doing their "greatest hits" and more. The highlights of their first five albums were presented as one act plays. The four guys on stage were not clever punsters playing mind games (although there were some clever puns.) They were not comedians telling jokes (although they were funny.) They were actors, playing characters in tightly scripted stories.

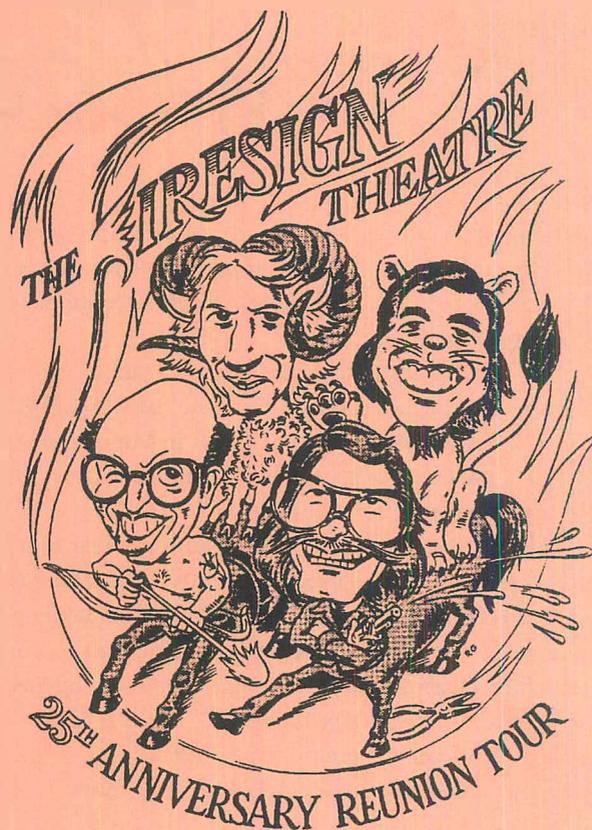
The original recordings were complex in format and in content, with multiple layers of sound and meaning. But even after multiple listenings they sometimes seemed to lack coherent structure. Seeing them recreated as theater it became clear that this was not the case.

During the performance of "Don't Crush that Dwarf..." I realized that the framework of the story was very similar to that of Ingmar Bergman's movie "Wild Strawberries." In the beginning a bitter, unhappy old man wakes up in the middle of the night from a bad dream. He embarks on a journey during which he revisits his past. He has dreams and visions that give him insight into the mistakes he made with his life. In the end he reaches his destination and is happy and light-hearted.

In "Wild Strawberries" the old man is Isak Borg, a retired Professor on his way to receive an honorary degree. He takes his trip in a car, and in the closing scene relives being a child playing on the beach. In "Dwarf" the main character is George Leroy Tirebiter, a retired actor who goes on his journey by sitting in a recliner chair and flipping through the channels on his t.v. set. The story ends with him getting up out of his chair and chasing after a Good Humor truck for an ice cream cone like he did when he was young.

"Don't Crush That Dwarf..." was nominated for a Hugo for Best Dramatic Presentation when it was released in 1971. It lost. The winner was "No Award." This really pissed me off at the time, but even worse was when Science Fiction Fandom as a whole ignored "I think we're all Bozos on this bus." Here was a dramatic presentation that accurately predicted virtual reality over 20 years ago! "Bozos" was part of the 25th Anniversary show, and even more relevant, visionary and funny than when it was originally written. Dig out that record and listen to it again!

I would love to see the Firesign Theater performing at a Worldcon, for people that might really like them but who don't know what they're missing. As it was, the audience seemed to be the kind of people I hung around with in



high school. Back then, the Firesign records gave us in-jokes to share with each other, something in common other than the fact that nobody else in school wanted to talk to us. (Hey, we sure didn't want to talk to them.)

After graduating from high school (or college at the latest) concerns like that didn't so important anymore. Most of the Firesign fans I saw at the show seemed, like me, to be entering into their forties. They were there to sing along on songs like "Back From the Shadows Again" (three times!) They laughed more in anticipation of hearing their favorite lines than at the actual lines themselves. It was hippie nostalgia, a chance to return to stoned nights in the dorms.

But for me the evening was a cathartic experience. When I left the Berkeley Community Theater I felt as light-hearted as the reborn George Tirebiter. I bought an ice cream cone before catching the train home. (It even turned out to be a "Good Humor" brand drumstick. They sell them in convenience stores now. Synchronicity strikes again!)

I hope that the Firesign Theater stay together, and that they start making new recordings. Lets see what they have to say about the future now. And maybe this time the Hugo voters will listen to them!

# THEY COME OUT AT NIGHT, MOSTLY

BY ROBERT WHITAKER SIRIGNANO

“Why did the chicken cross the road?”

“I don’t know. Why?”

“To show the opossum that it could be done.”

*(told to me by some smart ass nine year old that I like a lot.)*

## Opossums

The first time I saw an opossum was in South Carolina in 1962. The station was at Charleston Air Force Base in South Carolina. It was a late night affair. My brother Arnold caught one. (I still don’t know how.) At about ten at night in November. There were still some small insects, flying around and butting the porch light. He called my father out to look at it with a flashlight and asked if he could keep it. “It’d make a great pet,” Arnold insisted. Larger than a cat and fuzzy gray black and white, strange-looking hand-like feet protruding out of the tufts of fur, hissing and drooling furiously, looking pissed of. I doubted if it would even want to stay the night. One of its eyes was popped open. Blood and fluid ran out of the wound. My father, easily rattled since the Cuban Missile Crisis, said “no.” My brother, ordered to get rid of his prize, grabbed the rope looped around the animal’s neck and wandered through the Air Base settlement dragging his catch, and tied an officer’s dog to the other end. He did not like the officer. It was sport for sons of Master Sargents to tweak the noses of Captains.

Arnold’s sad comment later was “they kept fighting until the ‘possum rolled into a sewer drain.” That ruined his fun, he insisted. He was picked up by the AFB Police and hassled a bit and was requested to pay for the dog’s injuries.

For years after that I saw them only as corpses flattened on the road. Rotting foul smelling things, invoking memories of the dead four eyed cat from TERROR FROM THE YEAR 5000.

Granted that they are interesting only because they are the only native north american marsupial. They have some other interesting qualities. Over the years I’ve encountered some interesting information about them, not all of it flattery, and some personal observation, not all of it flattery...

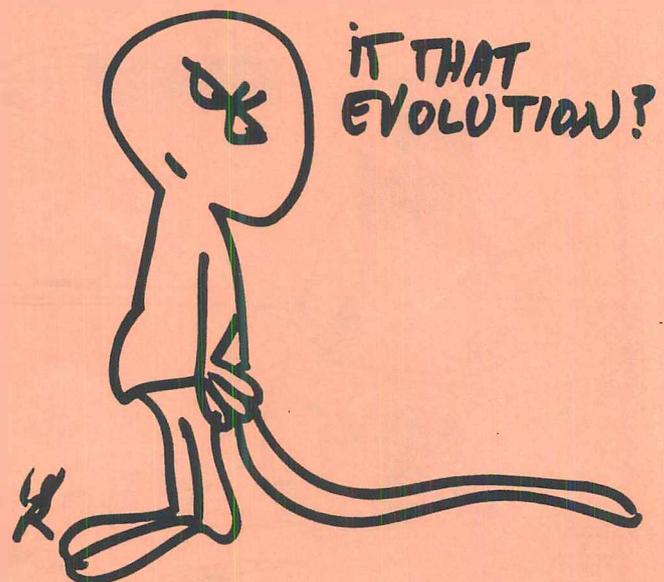
Opossums: imagine an angry rat with the dumb facial expression of Edgar Bergan’s dummy, Mortimer Snerd. This description invokes an opossum.

There was a study done several years ago. Some researchers expressed interest in the x-rays done of

captured opossums. There were an average of twenty four broken bone fractures (some badly healed) per adult opossum. The fractures were largely ribs, but some multiple leg fractures and some hairline spinal fractures were noted. This probably is connected to their ability to sleep while the opossum has its tail wrapped around a branch. Observers have seen and noted this for years. It has passed into common knowledge. It is folklore... but however... What generally happens when the creature passes into deeper cycles of sleep: the grip on the branch by the tail loosens and they drop a few dozen feet. If the opossum is lucky, it will hit the ground with its head.

Usually they fall into another branch several feet under and break a rib. One of the captured (live trap) opossums I caught was a young one (less than six months) that had a disjointed hip and a bone spur poking out of the leg. It had healed over, but the skin could be seen rubbing about a badly set break. I winced when I saw it. I kept wincing when I saw the beast walk. I kept this small one around for a few days, placing him in a pen, making sure it was in no pain. It appeared oblivious to anything except water and free munchies, and kept eating far more than I expected it would, so I set it loose.

Are they dumb? Probably. I caught another one in the live trap. It fainted when it saw me. I set my dog on it. My dog weighs about 14 pounds. Constanza the runty Lhasa Apso sniffed the beast and told me with her facial expressions “You can do better than this.” She’d chase rats and eat mice, but opossums were not anything interesting. Maybe they smell funny to her. Lizards with warm blood. I let it out of the trap. It looked at me. It keeled over. The dog sat on its haunches. She looked at the opossum, looked at me and back. She got



up and sniffed the opossum and then left the area to search out her own amusement. What to do with the opossum? After I watched it for five minutes, it picked itself up and started walking. I nudged it with my foot and it dropped onto its side. Again.

Tired of this sport, I picked up a coal shovel and put it on the spade, carefully grabbing the tail and pushing it onto the shovel with my foot, carried it several hundred feet across the road and flung it into the soybean field. I found the dog. Discovering that Constanza smelled like the dead mouse she had found and rolled on, I took a bath and washed her. She does not like water. But she does share the same bed as I do...

This "fainting" business I researched over the years. There are two kinds of opossum. One that faints and on. that doesn't. I believe it is genetic and not a survival tactic. Like some breeds of goats whose systems overload on the fear factor and keel over when planes or sparrows fly by, the fainting opossum is a genetic anomaly. It does not serve any purpose, but is a result of a genetic lineage that has succeeded even though it contributes nothing to the survival of the species. The response has no real function. To give you an example: I drove home late one night (about 2 AM) and slowed down because I saw glowing eyes staring from the middle of the road. I saw a dead opossum. Snacking on the dead opossum was a live opossum. It looked up and "fainted". I put on the brake, got out of the car and grabbed the tail of the living one and

flung the "fainting" critter to one side of the road, then pushed the dead one to a less hazardous eating area. Fainting in the middle of the road is not a survival factor.

Likewise, the beast is not all that good on roads. I think the animals get a touch of hypnosis on the, following the the white lines as far as they can. I saw one creature following a railroad track in broad daylight, its eyes fixed on the gleaming metal.

The following disgusting opossum story comes from my wife: she was visiting my mother's house and there was an opossum in the neighbor's back yard. My mother's exceptionally stupid dog was set off and carrying on about the invader (imagine a hairball the size of a small volkswagon with an IQ of 15); the previous time there was an opossum in the back yard the dog lost even its small IQ and bit my mother (fun things to do on a holiday: spend Christmas in an Emergency Room ) Back to this story: the creature had no fur on most of its body. It was all raw red flesh, attracting flies. The flies were landing on it. (Were they laying eggs?) My wife, thinking, after looking at it for a while, seeing that it was not in the process of dying and that it had not been crushed, realized that someone had soaked it with gasoline and set it on fire. It was oblivious to what had happened to it and was still foraging.

This is perhaps the most interesting trait an opossum has: blind to pain and hell bent on surviving.

Then there was the one caught in the live trap. Giani and I took it down the road a few miles This was before

Giani got the hankering to make a meal out of one.\* This one drooled and hissed constantly. I set the trap down, opened the cage gate and shoed it out. While it looked around to collect itself (still hissing) I put the trap in the car. Giani began to laugh. "what's up?" I asked. "Oh, the opossum kept hissing. It turned its head and started moving, looking at us and still hissing..." "And?" "It ran into a tree..."

\*she insists she wants to digestively sample all phyla of animals, except monotremes (too rare.) Someone I was driving home one night knew of this commitment. After driving past a very large opossum, he said "Turn around." "Why?" "I'll grab the opossum by the tail and drag it home." "Right," I said, "My wife will want to cook 'Stumpy the opossum'."

\*yum yum.



# Exerpts from Minneapa No. 1

July 12, 1972

## THE MYSTERIOUS CAPTAIN TIN #1

*Frank Denton:*

"I received ANNOUNCING MINNEAPA in the mail tonight along with the TAPS Mailing. And I've sort of been puzzling over it in my mind ever since. No, not really puzzling; mulling is probably a better word . . . I want to watch a new local apa get kicked off, and see if it is successful."

## RADIANT VECTORS #2

*Mike Wood:*

"If my understanding is correct, the idea of a Minneapolis local apa was at least mentioned as far back as the early days of Minn-stf in 1967. Then one day last fall, shortly after I'd just moved to the Twin Cities myself, Blue Petal mentioned to me that he and Ken Fletcher and John Kusske and perhaps others had been discussing the local apa idea once again and had decided that I was the best and/or most likely person to be in charge of such a project . . . MINNEAPA is, at least in part, a successor to Blue's Apa."

## O'TOOLE #1

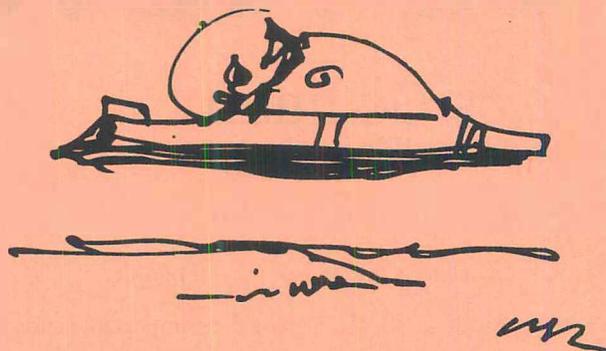
*Nate Bucklin:*

"Presently I am playing bass at the Radisson South (22nd floor, Monday through Saturday) . . . my participation at Minn-Stf meetings is minimal; taking part in MinneApa is, for me, a more less attempt at getting back in at least in spirit . . . hello and long live Minneapa and so on . . ."

## WOGGLE #1

*Ken Fletcher:*

"I'm sitting here watching the opening night of the Democratic National Convention. Hot & humid here in the TV Room — wonder how air conditioned it is in the convention hall . . . I've been hooked on watching Presidential Conventions ever since 1952 — I was 6 years old. Some of the first TV I can remember — sitting for hours watching movements of people in crowded grey halls . . . I just saw the Governor of Georgia yawning privately in front of x million people."



## ZEUGMA #1

*Caryl Bucklin:*

"My ditto machine, recently acquired from Jim Young, and as yet unnamed, is available for repro work by anybody local who has their own transportation and supplies who simply wants to call me up at the aforementioned number and time and OK with me simply coming right over to do it. It's FUN! Congratulations to Mike Wood on the good job of starting and promoting MinneApa. And to Ken Fletch and any others who end up humoring me with the glee I'm having running my new ditto machine."

## RUNNING DOG OF THE AMERICAN IMPERIALIST HIPPIES #1

*Blue Petal:*

"I wish Mike Wood all the luck in the world. He'll need it. I mean, Blu's Apa was fun but everybody seemed to lose interest after a while. But with friends like these who needs ardvarks? . . . I could mention moving into the new apartment and all the hassles that have occurred what with my roommate Ken getting appendicitus and the bathroom flooding out the storefront beneath, but I really am not keyed to talk about that either . . ."

BACOVER by Ken which sez: "Fred Haskell sends his greetings & says he'll see you all next mailing . . ."

# Book REVIEWS

by Rick Gellman  
with Dr. Knowledge

- > Literacy helps us to live as civilized people.
- > It is only one factor and not the most important factor.
  - But it is important.
- > You can be civilized without it and not civilized with it, but it is much more difficult to fully appreciate civilization, and impossible to fully appreciate culture, if you can't read—and if you don't read for enjoyment.
  - This assumes you have a literate or post-literate and not a pre-literate culture."
- > Generally, but not always, knowledge is better than ignorance.
  - This tends to be more true in the long run than in the short run.
  - 'Better' does not imply 'Happier'.
  - Ignorance sometimes is bliss.
  - Sometimes it sits up and bites you.

From *Dr. Knowledge's Handbook of Stuff You Should Know, a work-in-progress* by Rick Gellman. Comments about it and regarding what one should know are welcome.

In June, 1993, on "Sci-Fi Buzz" a fan oriented show on the "The Sci-Fi Channel", a cable channel unfortunately owned by the USA network (I say unfortunately because I believe the general quality of movies and shows shown would be higher if someone else owned the channel—but maybe not . . . maybe the better stuff just costs too much) Harlan Ellison has attacked a certain class of woman sf writers. Some he notes are turning out well written and important works. But some are churning out puerile rehashed sf and fantasy (in a medieval setting) that seduces sf readers from the pure/the good/the literary/the intellectually worthwhile/the serious and constructive writings that all, and especially women, sf writers should

be writing instead . . . with the dark (and trivial) side of the pen/word processor.

Well, there is a lot of truth in his complaint. He seems to hold up Anne McCaffrey and Mercedes Lackey (or at least their book covers since he names no names) as prime examples of this heresy. But his focus is too narrow.

Hey! Lighten up, guy. There is a valued and savored place for quality writing, and for philosophical and sociological writing and for that which expands and deepens our understanding and appreciation of the human (and alien) condition. And those coruscating gems of stories that do it all are to be cherished and enjoyed often.

There is also a place for a well written/well told story that holds our interest and entertains us even when it does no more. This is what I call "popcorn sci-fi" . . . it is filling and tasty but has no real substance. Sometimes an escape via a story that is not taxing is a mental health and/or fun break. It can be both less dangerous and less expensive than achieving the same ends through drugs or other means. A mini-vacation.

Sturgeon's Law (90% of Sf is crap . . . because 90% of everything is crap) still holds and there is a lot of crap out there. Has he even read these authors? I review both McCaffrey and Lackey in this column. The books of Lackey's that I reviewed are well written and have merit, by Harlan's standards, I feel, while set in the kind of fantasy setting he denigrates . . . yet are not "literature" as, say, works by Joseph Conrad or Ernest Hemingway or William Faulkner. McCaffrey's work is not up to her standards, but still entertains, and at her best, she entertains well. Her characters do have human motivations even if they are not as complex or well defined as those of other writers.

If you read only repetitive formula junk, this is not good for you or publishing. This is where Harlan's ire should be focused. If you can't comprehend or enjoy quality writing then you do yourself and the authors of

better work a disservice. You would also miss books like *Glory Season* and *Snow Crash*. But there should also be a place for a good read like *Raft* or *Steel Beach* or "The Videssos Cycle".

On to the reviews.

**Rick's Rating System:** I've come up with 2 scales for rating books. There are the "Uncle Rick's Entertainment Scale" and the "Dr. Knowledge's Worth Reading Scale." The first measures fun, enjoyment. The second: can you learn something, think about something, get a new insight, appreciate the author's cleverness or inventiveness? They both run from 0 (worthless) through 5 (average) to 10 (outstanding). Please let Rune know how well they work for you.

*This Side Of Judgment*, by J.R. Dunn, Harcourt Brace & Company, New York. 322 pp, 1994

This is a well written first novel that makes me hope there'll be a second one. It grabbed my attention early and held it. A straight-forward near future higher-tech-than-now police thriller. It has the elements of a cyberpunk story, but not, for me, the feel. What is the "feel" of cyberpunk—or its conventions? I didn't perceive that Mr. Dunn had anything new to say. But what he had to say he said effectively.

This tale of cop-chases-chipheads reminds me of other cop chase stories, especially Philip K. Dick's cop-chases-replicants story published as *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*, and turned into the movie, *Bladerunner*. It's a good tale. The story lines may be similar but the details are all different. So is the writing.

The story is a bit downbeat for my tastes. I admit it. I prefer upbeat. This makes me perfect prey for "Hollywood." Well . . . no, not actually. I like upbeat but I like so much more of everything that I'm put off by most of Hollywood's output.

A plus for *Judgment* is that it is set in Montana. (Dick's book was set in L.A.) This is not important to the story. We only know it's Montana because the author tells us it is. But so little SF is set in Montana that I like the idea conceptually.

The story takes place against a backdrop of a war ravaged United States, still digging out and rebuilding a few years after the country was attacked by Native Americans from south of the border, led by a charismatic leader, finally trying to push the gringos out of North America. They struck at the computers and communications systems first, before invading. Groups of cybernetically enhanced individuals (CEIs) derogatorially known as "chipheads," "Comphuggers,"

or "imps," thought this confusion useful for their own purposes.

Ross Bohlen, the major protagonist, is a "cossack," an operative for COSSF (Computer Subversion Strike Force), the federal agency trying to eliminate these implanted persons. He is tired of killing CEIs. He pities them because he knows that they overload from the direct input of too much information and their minds become damaged.

As the book opens, a woman has been killed and mutilated, in Ironwood, Montana. Someone has also committed a seemingly sloppy and indifferently executed computer crime at a local bank in Ironwood around the same time. Bohlen is the only one who sees a connection and realizes that the mutilated body left, where it will be found, and the sloppy computer break-in, are a deliberate "I'm here, come and get me" message. He's right.

From here, the events, society, and background of the story get more complex. Bohlen is not a likeable guy. An abrasive anti-hero who's been in the cop game too long. He's good at it and gets away with being an SOB most of the time. Page, the major villain, is also not likeable, and a professional S.O.B. He's a secondary protagonist, a chiphead who's gone mad on the power of the implant and doesn't know it. Jason Telford is a likeable guy. He's the third major character. Also a chiphead, he seems to merely be trying to survive and help others who are implanted to survive. He's trying to not go crazy or mush-brained while protecting other imps.

Given that it's shortly after the war and the country — and people — are still recovering, and far from up and running; it's a depressing time. The characters are affected by their times. They seem jerky and somewhat shattered . . . incomplete. This works for me. They are getting it back together. They're not back together yet.

Dr. Knowledge gives it a "5" for being averagely worthwhile. There is nothing new in the story. We learn nothing new about technology or otherwise. It gets its points for quality writing.

Uncle Rick gives it a "7" to "7.5." Better than average entertainment, but not outstanding. Worth reading.

*The Coming Economic Earthquake*, by Larry Burkett, Moody press, Chicago, 230 pages, 1991.

This is a book somebody lent me. It is readable, and, I think, basically accurate. If you are not aware of how shaky and potentially disastrous the economy really is, because of the federal deficit, this is not a bad primer.

Moody Press is a Christian publishing house so the book has a Christian slant, i.e., here are things Christians should do to try and insulate themselves from the coming economic earthquake. There was nothing in the advice

that shouldn't be just as useable to Muslims, Jews, Secular Humanists, Pagans, Hari Krishnas, Atheists, Sub-geniuses, Ghuists, etc.

A little of what Burkett says seems to extrapolate too far from a particular case he knows of to a general conclusion. This does not mean that the conclusions are inaccurate, just not well supported.

I learned a little. Most of what he says I've heard from other sources. I did not pay attention to, and am not competent to judge, how accurate or applicable his few bible quotes are. I tend to feel any bible is likely to be irrelevant to the economy, although it may well be relevant to personal behavior.

I'm not going to go into the economics here. That should be article or an editorial by itself. If you haven't been paying attention, go read this book or something else and educate yourself. The US economy, and the US, could conceivably collapse in the next few years. It doesn't have to, but, it is possible.

I'm not sure how to rate a book like this for entertainment value. It was quite readable without seeming to have much style. It was chatty, like someone talking to you, not lecturing or diatribing. Written for a mass not an academic audience. It was not boring or difficult. Unrated by Uncle Rick.

Dr. Knowledge gives it an 8 for worthwhile reading, but that could be revised downward if he turns out to be wrong. Remember, this describes a possible scenario if we don't correct our economic problems. It's worthwhile because we must not be complacent, and you should think about this.

All The Weyrs of Pern, by Anne McCaffrey, Ballantine/Del Rey Books, 402 pp, 1991.

This was published the year before *Crystal Line* was. I liked this better than I did "C. L." I don't know if this means McCaffrey is starting to lose it, this is just a fluke, or that I basically like the Pern books more than the *Crystal Singer* series.

I also didn't like this as much as her previous Pern novels with the exception of *Mareta* and *Nerilka*. In both this and *Crystal Line*, the drama in the storytelling was weaker than in most of her books.

I did like this book and will read it again. It fittingly concludes the Pern story. However, there could easily be more stories of how Pern changes as the Pernese learn to become more technologically sophisticated. In any major change in planetary culture there will be lots of conflict and stories of the struggle to adjust. Personally I hope for more about Pern.

While not as satisfying as I'd like, possibly because the ending wasn't quite as I wished, or possibly because

this was a climax to a long story . . . it still held my interest and was page turner. I really wanted to know what was going to happen next.

This takes the story forward from finding AIVAS (Artificial Intelligence Voice Address System) to how it helps them regain lost knowledge and skills, and to fight and destroy Thread. Of course there is opposition from folks of a conservative bent who don't like all the new-fangled changes.

Uncle Rick rates this an 8 for entertainment in spite of the reservations I've mentioned because these are of a personal nature. The next reader may be more entertained. and I don't want my reaction to the ending to overly influence an enjoyable experience.

But, Dr. Knowledge will let reservations, especially in the area of dramatic tension, and the lack of outstanding and clever writing, albeit it was typically enjoyable McCaffrey writing, reduce the worth reading scale to a 6. I would have made it a 5 but for some interesting scientific speculation, and the speculation on cultural and personal adaptation to sudden vast change in technology, and on the nature of Thread and the destruction thereof. On the other hand there was a decision about a couple of the colonization ships that I found inadequately justified.

The Last Herald-Mage, by Mercedes Lackey, Daw Books, 345 pp, 1990.

Vol. 1: Magic's Pawn

Vol. 2: Magic's Promise

Vol. 3: Magic's Price

The titles are appropriate. The covers of the editions I read were beautiful, and beautifully matched. I believe the artist was Jody Lee. High marks to Daw for packaging.

These are the first Mercedes Lackey books I've read that were not collaborations (of which she seems to do more than anybody else at the moment), nor in a shared universe. I had heard good things about her and my brushes with her writing made me want to try her books in the Valdemar universe, which is what I had heard about.

I'm ready to rush out and get more!

Each book is a separate story. These are good stories with well written and believable characters, and quality writing. Some, but not a lot, of action. These are more introspective; more character studies than most fantasy. Avidly held my interest.

These are the first Sf or fantasy novels I remember reading in which a protagonist's homosexuality is a central and important theme. I don't recall at the moment any specifics, but I have encountered homosexual characters before in the genre. Here we have gay, and straight, heros

and villains. Gays are frowned upon in this invented society, too.

"9" to "9.5" from both Dr. Knowledge and Uncle Rick. Fortunately she is a prolific writer. It only Bujold and Moon wrote this much.

The Horses of the Night, by Michael Cadnum, Carroll & Graf Publishers, Inc., 308p.

The protagonist, Stratton Fields, the eldest scion of a once (until recently) wealthy, and still respected family, is either an unappreciated architect falling into mental illness, or he really is in contact with supernatural beings who may or may not be the devil & associates. Possibly we call them "evil" and the "devil", (or "angels"), out of our inability to comprehend them as they see themselves.

I found it mildly interesting, but not scary, and well written. It did give me the feeling that I had some understanding of what it is like to grow up as part of a respected and influential old money family. You grow up knowing you are different, and better, and people will treat you differently and deferentially, as is your due. Also, you have responsibilities.

I found it disjointed at times. This is narrated in the first person by Stratton. If he is undergoing a mental breakdown then this makes sense since it is written from his perspective. This also lends credence to it all being in his head and that there are no supernatural beings to whom he sold his soul. At least he thinks that is what he is bargaining away. They deny the existence of the soul and tell him he wouldn't understand what they want, though they decided they wanted it when he was born.

He wants fame and appreciation, for his talent and aesthetic sensibilities. He loves and is loved by a woman who is a brilliant and humane medical doctor. He is admired by many and has a powerful enemy who envies him. So, to me, this is mostly a mainstream novel.

The writing sustained my interest for most of the book. I think that I would have preferred a supernatural element that was more overt instead of it likely all being in his head.

It has touches of being literary. If you like mainstream novels, especially if they have supernatural or psychological elements, about competent successful people with a love interest, or enjoy stories of the rich and famous, then I think you might enjoy this more than I did. I enjoyed it. I just enjoy other books more.

Dr. Knowledge gives it a "5" for worthwhile reading. I call it average out of having no strong reaction for or against. The writing was its strongest suite for me.

Uncle Rick can't decide between a "6.5" and "7" for entertaining. If this is more your kind of story that mine you'll probably give it higher ratings.

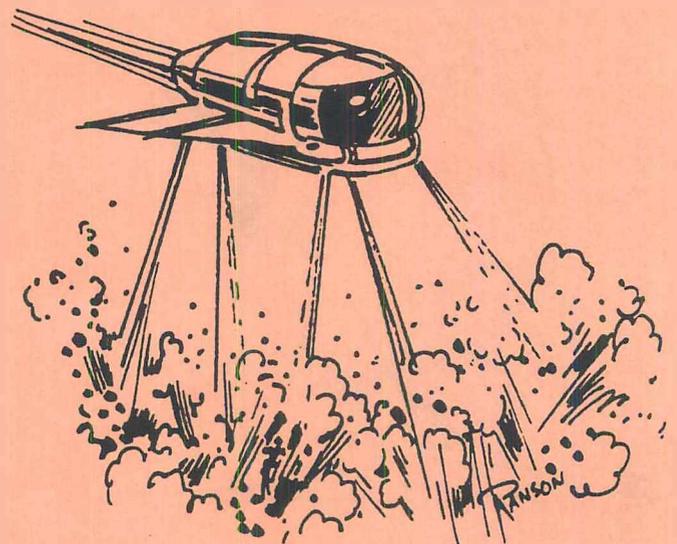
Carroll & Graf have since sent me a paperback copy of Eric Frank Russell's The Great Explosion that they've just reprinted for \$3.95. I haven't had a chance to reread it. I read it back in the 60'S when it was first published. I believe that it wasn't one of my favorites by Russell, but that I enjoyed it. I like Russell. If you like Eric Frank Russell, or haven't read him, you might want to give it a try. The price is right for these days. I'm glad that Carroll & Graf are doing some reprints. I think Russell has been out of print a long time.

The Garden of Rama, by Arthur C. Clarke and Gentry Lee, Bantam Spectra Books, New York, 441 pages, 1991.

This is the third "Rama" book. The fourth and probably final "Rama" book is scheduled for this Fall (1993). I like these books. I think they are getting better and I liked this best of all. The extra characters help because of more, and more diverse, interactions. I also think that Clarke collaborating with Gentry Lee helps. He, I think, adds diverse characters and situations that I haven't seen in other Clarke books. The lower side of the human race. This surprises me since I tend to prefer stories about competent, intelligent, cooperative people.

We learn more about the adventures and life of the Space Family Wakefield. (If only Lost in Space had been written by Clarke and Lee.) Then the extraterrestrial intelligence that carts off the humans in Rama II. returns them to the solar system to pick up a colony of humans to study. The study goes awry. We need the next book to finish up the story. It's left hanging.

I find Clarke's writing to be interesting and idea generated/thought provoking, but not exciting. Clarke's



aliens are more truly alien than anybody else's I can think of at the moment. Few others match his sheer bravura for scientific speculations and extensions.

Dr. Knowledge gives it a 9.7. Uncle Rick a 7.7.

The Hammer of God, by Arthur C. Clarke, Bantam Spectra Books, 226 pages, 1993

This is a thin novel but a good book. The character (singular) never comes to life. His civilization is not fleshed out. Robert Singh, the focus, is really the only character. Everyone else mentioned are walk-ons and spear carriers. There isn't much of a story. And yet, this is a good book. These elements have never been Clarke's strong points or why we read Clarke. Characters, and a central character with a life history, were added because that what the conventions of a novel call for. Clarke's prose is . . . well, prosaic. But his ideas are wonderful. His writing is lucid. sparse. unexciting.

The story is about what happens when an asteroid intersects with earth in the future . . . which it will, sooner



or later. For a fully fleshed novel on this subject read the excellent *Lucifer's Hammer* by Larry Niven and Jerry Pournelle. But read this as well. Clarke writes great hard science. It is as accurate as current knowledge allows and is always interesting. Clarke finds more ramifications and (unexpected for a scientific layman, like me) twists caused by the currently known laws of the universe, than almost anyone.

I think you'll find it interesting to read this and either or both of the last two Rama books in succession. It gives you an appreciation of what Clarke's collaboration with Gentry Lee does for him, and the reader. A typical Clarke book his fans will enjoy, and others should try.

Dr. Knowledge considers this a solid "8". Well worth reading. Uncle Rick found it to be better than average enjoyment and thinks a "7" feels right.

Snow Crash, by Neal Stephenson, Bantam Spectra Bantam Books, New York, 440 pages, 1992.

READ IT! A 10!

One might say that William Gibson's *Neuromancer* was the first major cyberpunk novel. One then might say that the cyberpunk subgenre evolved from *Neuromancer* through a number of other novels, into *Snow Crash* . . . which may define the field.

Wait! Wait a minute, Mitch Thornhill and all you other Phil Dick partisans. I have not forgotten *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* I am going to define it, and any other novels you want to bring up, as: "Pre-First-Major-Proto-Cyberpunk" novels. Perhaps this will generate some feedback in the lettecol.

One might also have said that *Snow Crash* is not a cyberpunk novel, but a near future mainstream novel mistaken for a cyberpunk novel, written by a mainstream novelist — the one who wrote *Zodiac: The Eco-thriller* and *The Big U*. I am not the one who might have said that. John Leonard, the arts reviewer on "CBS's Sunday Morning", in a review of this book on National Public Radio (on "Fresh Air," I believe) is the one who did say that. I think Sf fans and readers will find this to be Sf of the cyberpunk kind, and, hopefully, of the satirical persuasion as well.

It has a world-class level blurb that would be eligible for an award if they had awards for book blurbs. (Do they?) I'd like to know who wrote it. Here it is: "Only once in a great while does a writer come along who defies comparison — a writer so original he redefines the way we look at the world. Neal Stephenson is such a writer and *Snow Crash* is such a novel: a mind-altering romp through a future America so surreal, so bizarre, so outrageous . . . you'll recognize it immediately . . . In *Snow Crash*, Neal

Stephenson ingeniously weaves global post-punk culture, Summerian myth, and just about everything in between with a cool hip cybersensibility to bring us the gigathriller of the information age. Now it is time for you to decide, dear reader. Are you going to buy this book and become the hippest person in your private universe? If not, please step to the side and wave — because the future is about to pass you by.”

Is this blown-up hyperbole/puffery and not totally accurate? Sure. That’s what blurbs are for. But it is good blown-up hyperbole/puffery . . . and it is not that far off the mark. And it sure tells us what marks, er. . . audience. the blurbist is aiming for. I think it was such good blurb writing because the writer was infected by Stephenson’s story and quality of writing. “Infected” is the operative verb here, and, within the context of the book, used literally, not figuratively.

This book is primarily about viral infection. Stephenson claims that information is a virus analogous to a computer virus.

This book has the best opening 5-10 pages of any book I’ve seen in awhile. Stephenson, like Varley, emulates Heinlein, by grabbing the reader by the jugular with the opening sentence/paragraph/page and sucking him/her in.

Here’s how it starts: “The Deliverator belongs to an elite order, a hallowed subcategory. He’s got esprit up to here. Right now, he is preparing to carry out his third mission of the night. His uniform is black as activated charcoal, filtering the very light out of the air. A bullet will bounce off its arachnofiber weave like a wren hitting a patio door, but excess perspiration wafts through it like a breeze through a freshly napalmed forest. Where his body has bony extremities, the suit has sintered armorgel: feels like gritty jello, protects like a stack of telephone books.” End of first paragraph.

Want to read more? Sure you do. Because, friends, that is good writing. And it’s a throwaway! Too bad the book isn’t all like that. That, and not explicitly tying up the loose, ends are my only complaints. It probably would be too intense for most to have all 440 pages like that, but not for me. I like that kind of intensity.

Stephenson is interestingly quirky. He says of himself (in part) that he “. . . issues from a clan of rootless, itinerant hard-science and engineering professors (mostly Pac-10, Big-10, and Big-8 with an occasional wild strain of ivy . . . (he) now resides in a comfortable home in the western hemisphere.

In terms of outrageous and intelligently humorous satire it reminded me of the Roberts: Wilson’s and Shea’s Illuminati Trilogy. This book is fun. It is informative, thought-provoking, psychedelic, enthralling, entertaining.

Not much space left to talk about the story. So let’s just say that our hero, Hiro Protagonist, discovers a conspiracy to gain control of the Earth by doing away with consciousness and reintroducing a form of ancient Summerian goddess worship via an informational/organic/computer virus, both in the real world and in the virtual reality “metaverse” world. As beyond the metaverse is the real, so too, beyond the satire is the real of the story. It is both satire and straight simultaneously.

I said the opening is a throwaway because this describes the protagonist, who is a pizza delivery man for the mafia, at the beginning of the book, setting out to deliver a pizza . . . in a dangerous future where the pizza man needs protection — and a fast car. Stephenson can afford throwaways like this. He’s got lots more.

Waiter, 10’s for everyone. Dr. Knowledge and Uncle Rick will cover it.

This story begins shortly after the millennium. People are still alive who were born at least as early as World War II. Things have changed radically in 10-15 years. Thinking about the changes in the last decade makes it more believable that this much change could happen.

In 1983 we were still in the thick of the Cold War with what the then President/front man/script reader called “the evil empire”. i.e. the Soviet Union. Maybe he’d seen Star Wars too often. Talk about your evil empires. (Ok. it is true, historically the Soviet Union had been pretty evil. Much more so than, say, the British or American empires which were kinder, gentler evil empires. Perhaps it was nearing the evil of, oh, the Third Reich, or the Spanish or Dutch empires.) Less than a decade later: the Berlin Wall existed only as overpriced souvenirs. Germany was reunited, the Soviet Union no longer existed, the busiest MacDonald’s restaurant in the world is in Moscow, we’re trying to help the former Soviet empire to become capitalists, the former Yugoslavia is in a time warp replaying pre-World War I. etc. And that’s just some of the political changes . . . in Europe alone.

History suggests that there could be as much technological/ hyper-inflationary/social/radical political/religious change in a short period of time as Snow Crash envisions.

This is a very different America that our protagonist, Hiro Protagonist, moves through. (People use the name they choose . . . Hiro is a Japanese name, and Hiro is part Japanese.) The United States is better than the rest of the world at only four things: making movies, music, writing software, and delivering pizza in under 30 minutes. The federal government is holding out in enclaves. The new walled, or at least, fenced, middle communities now forming around America have become autonomous city-states known as “burbclaves” (suburban enclaves).

Incidentally, the Twin Cities, which was the last major urban holdout against this fear-driven trend, has finally succumbed and our first guarded communities have been built. The rich have lived separate and guarded lives for millennia. The inner cities have been abandoned to their own fates. They are more dangerous and chaotic than now, having been fully written off. Truly Free Enterprise reigns. Everything is privatized. Franchises are ubiquitous and powerful. Mr Lee's Hong Kong are franchised embassies (safety zones) for "citizens". i.e . . . people who have bought passports. People who can afford to escape, and are so inclined, spend time in the "metaverse," a virtual reality world. Buildings, transportation, the works.

Something is going on. Hiro becomes aware of it when he is offered a free sample of something called "snow crash". outside "The Black Sun," the private "in" private club in the metaverse.

Hiro is a member. He helped design it . . . and the metaverse. He bills himself as the last of the free-lance hackers — and the world's greatest swordsman. Snow Crash is advertised as a drug.

Since it is offered to him in the metaverse, and you can't actually take a drug in a virtual world (but people are taking it and being affect by it in the real as well as the virtual world,) he knows there is more to it. Software is also affected. it is both an electro-neurological agent and a computer virus that rewires your brain and your software. The biological drug-hype (ok, so they throw in a drug as part of the cover) is a scam, but a good way to get lots of people to try it.

I don't want to get into what's really going on. That discovery was one of the pleasures of the book. This is why the "gigathriller" claim of our esteemed blurb writer is only a moderately exaggerated claim. Hmmm. Maybe not. What constitutes a gigathriller?

This book is about politics, religion, economics, sociology. It's about the same basic megalomaniacal desire for control we read about in many mainstream thrillers — and read or hear about in the news every day. It's got a revenge motive too. Nothing unusual there. But it's also got a biker/harpooner with a nuclear bomb triggered to go off by the cessation of his brain waves. Great insurance policy if people know about it, eh. Pretty dramatic surprise if they don't. Of course the guy's an asshole with an attitude. Figures he can get away with it. He's very tough even without the extras. Now your average thrillers don't have that. Nor do they have a 15 year old (going on 30+) suburban female skateboard artist-courier, cybernetic killer dogs, mafia franchised pizza parlors, philosophical and historical rambling on the nature of language and the effect of ancient and modern religions on consciousness, a

floating refugee city/vector agent delivery system, etc. Maybe they also talk about the evils of working for a paranoid federal government.

Snow Crash provides satisfaction for time and money invested. You get inventive writing, a fun to read about world, interesting characters and situations, a well thought out and convoluted plot, information, speculation, mind tickling intellectual/philosophical provocatizations, mirthful and flavorsome satire. A bargain for the money and time invested.

Steel Beach, by John Varley, Ace/Putnam, New York, 479 ages, 1992.

In the category of "Best Opening Sentence in a Science Fiction Novel in 1992". . . - the envelope, please (sound of envelope opening) and the winner is . . . — JOHN VARLEY for Steel Beach!

Come on up, Herb.

It would be unfair to repeat it without going on some. You'll really want to know what is written next. Not because what is written next is wonderful — which i'll leave for you to judge, but because it is next and the opening sentence demands that you read at least the next few sentences.

Varley in Steel Beach and Stephenson in Snow Crash both demonstrate that they have mastered the Heinlein Maneuver of grabbing the reader's attention by the throat at the opening.

There is a problem with boredom and depression and suicide in a "perfect" society. i.e., one that has few hardships, deprivations, diseases, etc. The central computer (known to millions of people intimately as "the C.C.") that controls or regulates everything also has problems. We once again run into the as yet unanswered question of when does an artifact become a sentient life form, or even just a life form, or an intelligent (sentient or not) life form?

Varley takes us on a masterful mystery tour of Hildy's life in luna. Nobody lives on luna. Hildy Johnson is the narrator.

It's the story of an imperfect person (man/ woman/ neither) . . . depending where you are in the book . . . in an imperfect world trying to survive and get through life . . . or not — depending on where you are in the book.

There are a lot of characters, and I do mean characters, in the book who are individuals shaped by their genes and life experiences, not stock cardboard characters. Albeit, some of them think they should be and try to live that way, at least in public. The C.C. is also a character. A cross between HAL (from 2001: A Space Odyssey) and Mike (from The Moon is a Harsh Mistress).

Come to think of it, this book sort of stands in the same relationship to Moon is a Harsh Mistress as Harry Harrison's *Bill The Galactic Hero* does to Heinlein's *Starship Troopers*. Or, perhaps, Joe Haldeman's *The Forever War* is more accurate than Bill.

This book is not quite as good as *Snow Crash*, *A Fire Upon The Deep*, or *Glory Season*, but it is not far behind.

The novel is very Heinleinesque. I liked that. We can use some good new Heinlein stories . . . or as close as we can get. Fortunately, we're getting some. Not just from Varley either. Varley not only pays homage to Heinlein in the style he wrote the book in, but in naming a never finished starship after RAH and calling the local libertarians/anarchists/survivalists "heinleiners". Nice touches.

I liked the novel . . . not as much as some of Varley's other work, but I liked it. I would have liked it better if the ending hadn't petered out into disappointment.

Varley gives us thoughts philosophical and practical to think about. These thoughts are not new but are presented well. Some are more overt, such as how do you keep life interesting if you live for hundreds of years, or is there any reason not to indulge yourself and harm your body if you can afford to make it look however you like and replace whatever organs you destroy? Or. how do you handle depression?

Others are less obvious. For instance, there is a minor scene in which Heinleiner kids are fiddling with human

DNA . . . which is illegal, but their parents only bemoan the kids' poor judgment, which alludes to the question of how much can you muck around with human genes and still be human? The kids make small human-looking animals that aren't intelligent enough to be human. (How intelligent do you have to be to be human?) But like most other animals they feel and react to their environment as all life does. Of course, being kids, and without parents who give enough guidance. they thoughtlessly mistreat their pets. So. by extension, here's something to think about on parental, and societal responsibility. On treatment and care of pets. Or lab animals. Or, for that matter, how far should we. both practically and ethically, go in imposing our human will on other life-forms? I don't know. I'm not convinced the animal rights people haven't gone too far in renouncing species chauvinism. Have they only replaced it with phylum chauvinism? They don't show the same concern for plants . . . or for the third kingdom of life-forms — rusts, molds, and fungi. Ideas, anyone?

Dr. Knowledge rates it 9.5 for worthwhileness. I wouldn't dispute a 10. Uncle Rick gives it an 8 for entertainment. Maybe an 8.5 or 9 with an ending that didn't fizzle out. Endings that fizzle out instead of being strong always detract from my enjoyment.

# Tales of the Unanticipated

A Magazine of the Minnesota Science Fiction Society

Featuring Fiction, Poetry, Columns, & Letters from readers

Edited by Eric M. Heidman

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Glory Season, by David Brin, Bantam Spectra Books, New York, 564 pages, 1993.

This is what I started reading SF for: excitement. adventure, good story telling, ideas to think about and expand my mind. So this book is psychedelic in the sense I originally learned that term, which was mind expanding, and not bright colors/tie-dye patterns or asymmetricality/ and perception altering drugs of a particular type.

I have been waiting years for Brightness Reef, the next book in his Galactic Library/Uplifting universe, and sequel to Star Tide Rising, which Brin is finally working on. This book eases the pain of that wait somewhat.

Going into the story would take a lot of space! There is a lot of story here to go into. It is a coming of age story, it is something of a "go to a (big?) planet and look around" story. It is a rediscover a lost colony story.

It is mostly the story of a young girl being kicked out of her home to make her way, as best she can, in the world. She will always be a second, or perhaps, more accurately, a third class citizen, because is female — as is 90% of the population of Stratos — but also one of the 10% of females that are "vars" or "variants" (non-clones) born during the short summer season. The other 10% of the inhabitants are men, the true second class citizens of this planet. Men are more useful than vars. Men are needed to "spark" the birth of more clones (the first class citizens) as well as vars and men.

Clones are organized into clans of identical descendants of the founding mother, one of the few vars lucky and/or talented and/or ruthless enough to be successful in founding a new clan. These clans can be large and powerful and have clan houses all over the planet, or be as small as a "micro-clan," of one mother giving birth to one clone daughter, generation after generation, without ever getting to the point where the clan can expand. There is upward and downward mobility in this planetary culture. Women do everything except for the few professions, sailing being most of them, deliberately left to men.

Men have been genetically altered to not be sexually active year round as we are use to . . . and fond of, here on earth.

There is a large planetary population. This planet was founded by feminists who wanted to get away from male domination. They also wanted a more stable society that changed more slowly than the "human phylum" interstellar society they left, They succeeded at both. They achieved neither a utopia nor disutopia. Brin paints a thoughtful believable living breathing alternative to human society as we know it, it has good, evil, and people trying to be successful, genetically and otherwise. The clones care as much about status, satisfaction, acceptance, etc. as

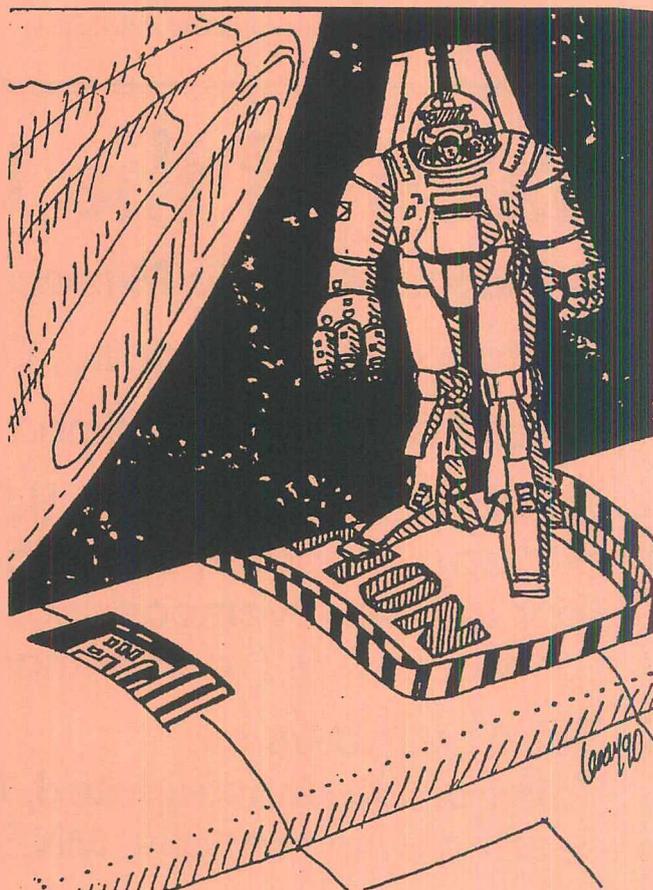
we do. They worry about it less than we, or the vars do, since in any given generation, with change at a slower pace, these are likely to be set at birth.

This is a major work and intended as such. Brin cites some (all?) of what gave rise to this endeavor.

The story does take an amount of suspension of disbelief since there are many instances of seeming coincidence or jumping from the frying pan into the fire and thence into the volcano. It has some of the qualities of "The Perils of Pauline" to it that may be too much for some. It wasn't for me (except maybe once or twice). Yet coincidences and unlikely things do happen to people. I liked the action and adventure encasing the philosophy and speculation. I would have preferred it if some of the characters who died hadn't. This tells me that Brin got me to care about his characters. Our heroine (and she is) has a twin sister. This is an important plot device that gives Brin a chance to explain the emotions of the culture and have us identify with it better.

I would like to see a sequel . . . after a couple of more books in the uplift/library universe.

Dr. Knowledge gives this a big "10" for being worth reading. Uncle Rick is slightly more conservative and gives it a "9.75" for sheer entertainment value.



# RUNELOCS

*Edited by Jeff Schalles*

[ *remarks inside square brackets in italic are mine* —Jeff]

R. J. Johnson  
P.O. Box 10301  
Merrillville, IN 46411

Dear Fred,

Just wanted to send you a kind word about your final issue as editor of RUNE (#48, spring/summer 1976). I realize this missive is a little late, but I didn't see the zine until June of 1993. Guess it got lost in the mail.

Please pardon the inconsistent use of tense; Time-Portal for Windows 3.1 doesn't have all the bugs worked out yet. Uh, TP for Windows is a software application for the IBM. In 1993 we have computers to help us do our fanac and... well, the hell with technology for right now. Just wanted to send this letter back to you in 1976 to let you know that your efforts on RUNE are still appreciated by us young'uns.

Comings and goings are strange things. Your last issue of RUNE is the first one under your stewardship that I saw. I'll have to go back and see if the Post Awful is sitting on any more of your issues, cause what I see here looks mighty good. Just from the technical aspects- mimeo quality, layout design, things like that- the casual observer can tell you put a lot of effort and love into your fanac. These days, any one with a laptop computer can turn out a crudzine that looks like professional quality work. But the care still shines through.

The article by your incoming editor, David Emerson, was a great way to inculcate the neo to the joys of Minn-Stf's brand of fandom. Wish more folks were doing that these days. I especially liked the illo by Jim Young ("I bring a friend.."). That's what faannishness is all about, right? Sharing my peculiar brand of fun with different folks as they share their types of fun with me. After all, we're ALL Bozos on this Bus. Every so often we forget that little insight.

The fanzine commentary was nice. Covered a lot of territory without being overly judgmental. Checked out the fanzines by DavE Romm and George Laskowski that were listed. Not yet up to the quality of RUNE, but they turn out okay. George wins a Hugo (or two, I forget) for

LAN'S LANTERN, and DavE goes on to be one of the co-editors of RUNE

"Running In The Dark" by Wixon was okay. I can't say I really worry about the End of the World (More of my thoughts are about the First and Fifth of the Month), but the essay might have been better served if Dave had expanded on his comments a little more. Some choice points, but the line of reasoning behind them was a little sketchy.

VERY NICE center spread. The photos of Midwestcon show a whole lot of folks relaxing (What a unique idea for a relaxacon!) and the spread by Sirois/Sternbach... I take it this is either Mpls of the future (my future) or what the clean-up for a Mpls in '73 party looks like.

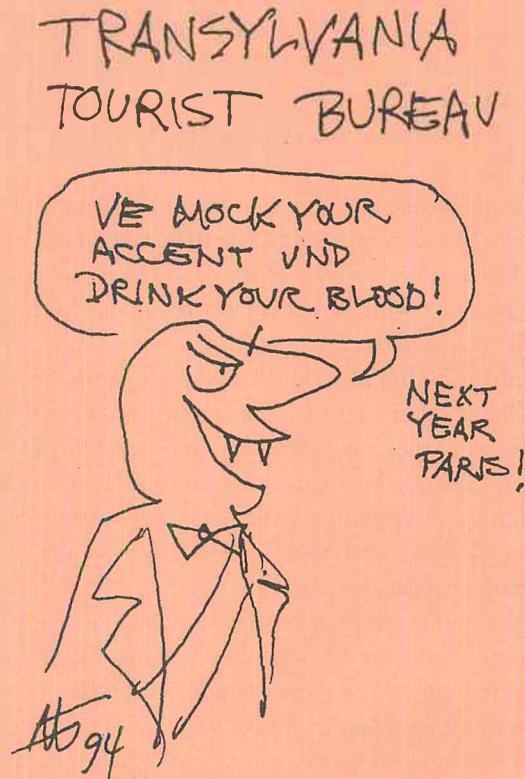
(Damn. I just had a section about Vardeman's and Tucker's Minicon reviews accidentally sent back to the early Pleistocene. I'll try to retrieve it if I can, but you know how it is with these beta test versions. Hmm, actually you don't yet. You will.)

Inher ith Hhil Hrogher! I'm sorry, I mean, "Dinner with Phil Proctor!" (It's hard to convey amazement via the printed word when your jaw is bouncing off the floor.) Sorry if I seem to be acting like a drooling fan-boy on this one, but I only recently was turned on to both Firesign and the Goons. I wish that Time-Portal worked on bringing recorded material into the future (your future) from the past (your present). I would love to be able to experience what the Firesign did to faannish consciousness at that time! The more I trip over their delicious work the more I understand (I think) Minneapolis faandom. Or is that the more I trip over Minneapolis faandom the more I understand their work? Compound sentences have never been my forte. Green stick sentences, however, are my piano. Go figure.

Singer is crazed. I don't know whether we should lock him up and keep small children out of his influence or if he is the Last, Best Hope for Tomorrow. By the way, the Buddha has ceased picking his nose and is now trying to find a set of eyes and a chin cleft that will make him more marketable. Remember if you see the Buddha and his nose, shill him.

Great lettercol. I like the fact that you fillspace make room for missives of all sizes so as to pad the page count let each correspondent make their point clearly and concisely.

The letter from MzB made me think of the ish of RUNE I'm looking at. Through your efforts, Fred, and those around you, you have compacted a significant chunk of What It's Like To Be A Mpls Faan onto the printed page. More importantly, you have made it clear that Mpls faandom is not a function of geography but attitude. We can all be faans with this sort of fun loving nature; one faandom under Ghu, with back rubs and snogging for All, provided we just decide that it's too much fun to do it any other way. This isn't a pitch for One, True Faandom. Our methods may, perhaps must, be varied but we all want to make sure the next Bozo on this bus is having as good a time, if not better, as we are. I know I said this before, bull think that it can't be said enough.



Which brings me to your ultimate editorial as RUNE editor. Da Fred Haskell Song and Slide Show sounds like a great way for you to carry on what you put together in RUNE. Sample life and report back on the gneet and interesting parts. You'll be happy to know that in the future (your future), you and Steve Brust will be performing Da Show at Congenial V (A relax icon in Madison, WI. Hey, maybe you could do

another photo-piece for RUNE?). You're the Fan GoH and he's the Hungarian GoH. I don't know if you two had met, er, have met in 1976, so keep your eyes peeled for him. He's the doubbek player in the Hat with the Mustache. Can't miss him.

Oh, fark. This stupid piece of software just sent my notes about your wife and daughter to the first term of the Reagan presidency. Maybe I should wrap this up before it crashes on me altogether. Just in case Time-Portal doesn't get this to you in 1976, I'll make sure that your future self, Fred A. Levy Haskell, gets a copy at Congenial V. Somehow I think he'll find a way to make sure the 1976 Fred will know his efforts did not go unappreciated by future (my present) fans.

Minneapolis in '73!

P.S. Tell Reed to keep up with the drawings. Especially the naked funny animals.

[ *We believe R.J. has a future in this neck of the woods if he wants it.* ]

Jeanne Mealy  
766 Laurie Ave.  
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RUNE 83

"What were YOU doing in 1970, 21 years ago?" "Past Lives" was a neat feature at ReinConation and I was thrilled to see it here as well. Audience participation always adds a distinct personal touch. Sure, some of us feel a little old after reading these entries, yet the laughs and smiles were worth it. Various people's memories of and thoughts on conventions were fun to skim through, ponder, laugh at, laugh with, etc. Nice job.

Who is this Victor guy and why does he have so much to say about MinnStf?? Actually, he made a number of good points about issues facing fandom in general. I hope it sparked a few much-needed discussions.

Kathy Routliffe's Minicon con report was much fun to read. Odd sidelines, plot twists, possible material for blackmail, and humor throughout. Yes, it's possible to enjoy the con as part of an amoeba-like group of friends flowing through the weekend; it's also quite easy to enjoy the con as a loner, interacting or appreciating by observation as one wishes. Another Minicon success story, bringing the fans back to life on Easter weekend!

Nice editorial, Jeff. It was informative, encouraging, and warm. (Or is it that I'm typing this in August? Never mind.) I'm one of those people who maintains that the art of writing is NOT dead, despite what They say. It kills me to see language being strangled by jargon—whether it comes from business in general, the computer field, advertising, or anywhere else you can name. I know there

are people who enjoy writing letters to friends and passionate essays on whatever moves them at the moment. Some are worthy of mainstream publication for thousands or millions of readers (and, we hope, for significant remuneration). Unfortunately, many of these good writers focus their efforts on computer connections. While these are, in theory, available to all, some of us choose not to link up and thus miss out on wonderful material. (Hey, I don't need more hobbies that take up time!) Fanzines are Different, as you mention here and as Geri does across the page in the fanzine reviews. They've certainly enriched my life. There's never enough feedback or pure egoboo, but it IS an accessible market. Here's hoping your words encouraged a few beginning or intermediate writers to send their stuff to RUNE.

Tom Juntunen's "Passing the Torch" has a clear message. Yep, fandom has changed. So, what do we want to do about it? His advice is also clear: "Get involved. Inspire 'em, get 'em fired up, point out the thousands of SF/F books (and a few fanzines), and do not describe cons as 'a good party'." Sounds fine to me, though I'm in favor of any medium that gets someone involved in SF/F. A media fan who creates their own costume for the masquerade could well criticize book fans as passive. It really depends on how much energy and excitement each person invests. Each convention's program schedule is like a smorgasbord (no lutefisk, please)—mini universes that amuse, bemuse, and sometimes lose me. It's not a successful convention for me unless I feel my mind expand at some far-ranging concept that someone mentions in a panel, on an elevator, or at supper. I try to convey that feeling of rich variety and novelty whenever talking about conventions (while emphasizing that making your own fun is part of the deal). Leave expectations at home—they're too heavy and bulky and tend to get in the way.

Attending a good convention is like going to the Renaissance Festival or the State Fair or anywhere else that creates a unique ambiance. Different yet familiar each time, it allows you to leave the outside world behind for awhile. Cons also provide an opportunity to learn and practice social skills and other abilities handy in the 'real' world. I see people who've developed a sense of responsibility and self-discipline while retaining their sense of humor and individuality. Far out.

Teddy Harvia's "Cartoons to the Editor" was hilarious! There's one error, though, in the "The Famous We Also Heard From" panel: I was wearing a beanie.

And, thanks for Klarn Rays I. It was fun.

[ *Klarn Rays is Garth's ongoing personal contribution—like my editorials—and I hope I can still talk him into doing one for this issue.* ]

Nola Frame-Gray  
PO Box 465  
Inglewood, CA 90307-0465  
Late loc on Rune 83:

One of the things that caught my eye was the fan stating that one of the things people like to do when they go to a certain city for a convention is to go sightseeing. Now, I grant you, this is one of the activities that isn't easy to do in Southern California—sightseeing. It seems conventions are in two general areas: 1) The hotel is great, but the location leaves something to be desired. Case in point: The hotels in the LAX area. Now, I can say this, because I live less than three miles away from the LAX Hilton. I love my city (Inglewood) and I think that the Hilton is keen, but it isn't the sort of place where one might want to be out at night—unless they were willing & able to do what I do—"dress down." Leave the jewelry & fancy name badges at home—or at least in your knapsack, purse, or whatever. Also, tho this area does have the advantage of having bus service down Century Blvd. at night—that is, when there isn't a MTA bus strike, the last buses quit around 11:30 pm. 2) The hotel is fair/good and the location is beautiful, ...and you're still screwed.

I can still remember the extreme frustration that I, Hare Hobbs, and Ky Moffet felt when we tried to go out for dinner at PHIL & ED'S EXCELLENT CONVENTIUON in April. Neither Hare nor I drive, and Ky didn't want to use the car because it was parked in a primo space at the Burbank Airport parking lot. We went to the front desk, to inquire about the shuttle service to [Wonderful?] Downtown Burbank that we had been assured would be available. After finally getting ahold of someone who was able to give us the accurate poop, we had to sit in the lobby and wait 'till the shuttle finished picking up its passengers, before returning to the hotel lobby and getting around to us. When the shuttle did arrive and deposited us at the promised location in Burbank, where the eating places are, we had a very limited period of time to choose where to dine and to eat, because we had to be at the shuttle stop on the other side of the street, from where we were dropped off. So, we got our food & wolfed it down, then went to the shuttle stop and waited...and waited...and waited. Turns out that the time periods that were given were...ah, not fixed in stone.

This incident might not have been so galling had it not been for several facts: that the Burbank Hilton was offering shuttle service to and from the hotel to the eating establishments was prominently displayed in the program book. And that this was one of those hotels where the only place fen could eat on site was the coffee shop. Period.

So, what this diatribe is leading up to is just some of my reasons why some (or mebbie) most fans would not consider **Los Angeles**, and its outlying areas, primo sight-seeing country.

Hope to hear from you soon. I liked your crisp, lean layout and print and was most impressed that you folks had the good sense to still be using white paper, instead of neon-colored which seems the rage in some parts.

Edward E. Ness

P.O. Box 261

Akeley, MN 56433

Colossal! Tremendous! The best ever! The ultimate! Etc. Reference, of course is to Rune 84.

The latest issue arrived, hidden in a stack of junk mail, upon discovery, 84 went to the top of the "to be read" stack.

A note of clarification: Having made countless entries into medical, military, and security logs, where humor is rare, I found the MiniCon log in a past issue some fun. True, it could have been edited down to just "the good stuff". The feature was certainly no more boring than the Minn-Stf Board Minutes also found in the pages of Rune. A repeat of MiniCon logs in future issues would run counter to the "one of a kind" aspect of Rune issues that makes one tremble with anticipation while awaiting the next.

Alright! So make full disclosure, come clean about Dick Safety, already! Hire Geraldo if you have to, but make the investigative journalistic effort! People need to know!

For the future, consider articles about the impact of science reality on science fiction. The space programs of various nations, exploration of the Moon, Mars, the outer planets. Or how the number of books in series has grown along with the rise of the fantasy genre. How there is more emotion and less science. The increase in the number of female writers and attendant themes. How economics, politics, and social factors have influenced science fiction output. Fun, of course, not dry and academic—

Soap opera science fiction on TV, where personalities and relationships are keys to entertainment rather than speculative science (present, often compelling, but secondary). Well, after all, "That's show biz!" Good to see the number of quality science programs on PBS and The Discovery Channel. These, along with copies of Rune, fills the void in the otherwise dull days of commercial entertainment.

Enjoyed Hooper's article ("Why Johnny Can't Timebind"), the perspective, witty and informative. Jeanne Mealy has a deft touch, a way of stating how she was there that makes me feel like I was there, too. Victor

Raymond's ("Winnipeg Folkies on the Loose") inspires me with greater reason to go to the Festival, as good review-writing should.

[ Edward—thanks for the ideas for future Rune articles. How about writing one yourself? ]

Lloyd Penney

412-4 Lisa St.

Brampton, ON

CANADA L6T 4B6

Thanks for sending along Rune 84... I had mentioned in a loc to another fanzine that I feared the demise of Rune again. [ what, again? ] I am happy to be proved wrong, and that you're back on schedule, relatively speaking. Capital stuff, with a capital C. Let's see what's inside to comment on...

James White AND the Willises all went to ReinCONation? How long did it take the ReinCONation folks to come back down to Earth after that? [ Often when I drive downtown in my old Chevelle I think about my taking Walter and Madeline Willis to the Greyhound Bus station—not in hope of finding their lost luggage from 1962 (as I secretly fantasized might happen,) but so they could take a holiday-within-a-holiday at an outstate Minnesota resort. I would guess that many of us are having majical moments from it still. ] By the way, just got the R3 flyers. Take the Kamikaze Editorial Collective off the mailing list...the KEC is out of business, the box was shut down, and that post office station doesn't even exist any more! This isn't Just a COA, it's a notice that the address was obliterated. Keep me on the list, though...

I can imagine what some British fans who might loc this zine would tell Terry Garey about finding a shark on her doorstep....take it inside, kill it, clean it, fillet it, batter the fillets and deepfry them, with french fries. Shark and chips are a delicacy. I've had a shark steak at a Red Lobster. .. yum.

I remember the RAH Blood Drive at L.A.con II... I wanted to give blood, but they refused me. Nothing wrong with my O+ blood, they just didn't know how to process my donation with my Canadian Red Cross card, and in frustration, told me to get lost. If I recall, I told them to do something physically impossible, and gave blood when I got home.

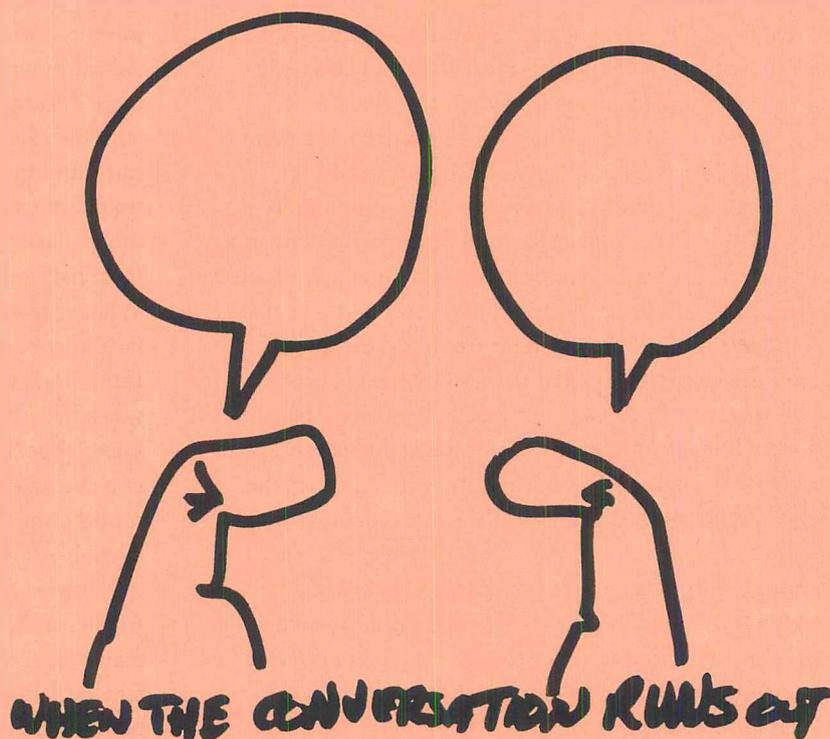
Ah, yes, spring. We had cold temperatures and lot of snow on the ground up until mid-March, and suddenly the temperatures shot up to between 44-55 F for a few days. The snow melted so fast, we had several days of fog. Today marks the day when the last of the snow melted, oh frabjous day. It also reminds me that June is a short distance away, and that Ad Astra 13 is nigh. I am chairing

it this year, and the problems have been few but significant. I'd run the dealers' room at Ad Astra for the previous 11 years (GAAAK!), and now that I'm not tied to a single room all weekend, I can roam the convention, and do things I haven't done before, like admire the wearable art display (costuming goodies), and enjoy some cheesecake in the con suite. (Both meanings, actually. You have to be there.) Romulans will be running our dance, and we'll have a special imported display for the Gerry Anderson fans in the audience.

Peter Larsen couldn't have come up with a more interesting list of fanzines to review, at least, for me. Tim Lane is taking potshots at me now in FOSFAX because I made some remarks about American foreign policy and the Gulf War, and how Kuwait used a hotshot advertising agency to convince the US with propaganda and lies. I purchased a copy of Radio Free Thulcandra from Marty Helgesen at MagiCon, and have received diddley so far. [ *I'm sure Marty means well, he probably just lost your sub in the usual confusion after the con.* ] Ansible and FIT provide me with much more entertainment and cerebral-ignition value, and besides, they arrive at my mailbox with much more regularity.

I certainly agree with Andy Hooper on the level of hostility in fandom. Usually, I would say that if one interest sours, I'd go on to another. and that's part of my philosophy about fandom and staying busy within it. However, the local Trek fans are fighting club against club, the Whovians are fighting with breakaway chapters of their club, and the calmest group in Torfandom today are the litfen. Perhaps one reason Toronto sf fans are fairly friendly these days is the lack of a central club. No, Toronto has no equivalent of MinnStf to gather fans together for fannish projects. What projects there are must assemble themselves. There are 20-25 Trek clubs in the greater Toronto area, and they are all fighting with one another....some have expressed the view that a central sf club would only extend the war to a new field. I'm enjoying the fanzine field, convention management, fan histories and a few other aspects of fandom few know about. However, if All Fanzine Fandom Were Plunged Into War, or someone tried to make me out as the modern-day Claude Degler, I'd be out of here, finding something else with which to stay busy.

A couple of summers ago, blimps were a common sight in our area. One of the hangars at Toronto International Airport was used as a place to store a small experimental blimp, a large blimp purchased by one of the local TV stations (and destroyed just a few weeks later), and what I believe is the cyclocrane mentioned....a platform with a rotating balloon above it. I'm glad Jeanne Mealy enjoyed the Westercon in Vancouver... after reading issues of BCSFAzine, the fallout over who's to blame was quite vicious, with most of it falling upon the shoulders of Terry Fowler. So hard was the attack on Terry that she decided to quit Vancouver altogether, and she now lives in Chicago.



Hello, Victor Raymond! Sorry you didn't move to Toronto. If you ever do get down here, even if it's for a visit, come to the Mariposa Folk Festival, the big folk and other music festival held every year here. Moxy Früvous is great! "Once I was the King of Spain, now I sing for Moxy Früvous." The new music that comes from Toronto is phenominal, and the level of quality is quite high.

I wouldn't be surprised to find that the rain that falls on Detroit and Toronto is quite acidic. Lately, several fanzines have arrived at my door, trumpeting their editors' sneering doubts that pollution exists in the amounts stated in research papers, and they quote their own papers in which such substances as dioxins and DDT aren't really poisonous. These editors are Tim Lane and Ken Forman,

from Louisville and Las Vegas respectively. They need to travel to areas of Ontario where lakes are dead because of toxic substances that are windborne from the Ohio Valley's heavy industrial areas. The national weather channel reports every summer on the pH readings in the rain in various Canadian towns and cities.

[ *Although Rune tries to be non-confrontational, leaving the hurly-burley over what right these berserkers-in-business suits, the deregulate-everything-and-let-god-sort-it-out crowd, have to destroy the planet, to take place in fandom's dot-matrix conservative fanzine of record, Fosfax, I decided not to cut this bit from Lloyd's letter because it provides a unique source of information.* ]

In the past, whenever I complained about the price of sf books, I usually got the catty rejoinder that there's always the library. I stand with Harry Warner in saying that the cost of books keeps many young adults from joining the ranks of the reading. Besides, there are many other things like Nintendo sets, videotapes, etc. that provide the kicks that a book can provide, only much quicker. This demand for faster and faster kicks is pushing books into the old-fashioned entertainment category. Also, many libraries continue to look down their noses at sf as cheap novels instead of the literature that sf can be. I checked the local library, and their stock of sf is quite poor. The newer books are not available, usually because the library board can't afford to purchase those new books. There is a science fiction library in Toronto, the Merrill Collection of SF&F, but it's quite a distance away from where I live.

Steve George has not only made his presence felt through a few locals, but he's also produced his own fanzine, Last Resort and has produced two issues. Hey, Garth... Old Dutch potato chips? Smitty's Pancake Houses? Birch Beer Crush?

Klarn Rays 2... many more great cartoons, but I predict that Taral may rain down on your head. He hasn't gone by the name Wayne McDonald in a long time. Once I called him Wayne, and he blew up at me, saying that only his mother was allowed to call him that.

Lawrence E. Tisch  
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Federal Way, WA 98023

Recently I received a copy of Rune 84, and I thank you for that and for using another cartoon of mine (page 18)!!

I must have 6 bricks short of a load, my question is this: I can't figure out—where do people get all this money, energy, and time to jet around the country to different cities to attend (cons of any kind)??!!

[ *You'd be surprised at how much you can make from the*

*sticky quarters people send in for these fanzine things. Hey, Tisch, send more art. You are my current favorite unnoticed genius.* ]

Buck Coulson  
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Hartford City, IN 47348

Harry, I spent most of one evening at the recent Wiscon in a sparsely attended party, talking to a young woman whose name I never discovered and whom I'd never seen before. We spent a couple of hours discussing this, that, and the other and I had a great time. I'm not sure about her, but she didn't get up and leave. Talking only to people one recognizes is safe, but where is the soaring spirit of adventure that science fiction is supposed to represent? And if Juanita and I are at a con, we will probably have a table of secondhand and some new paperbacks at, usually, a bit over half their original price. (Though we have raised our minimum to \$1.00, even for books that sold for less than that originally.) Some of the Ace Doubles may cost more than that, but the people who buy them are working from lists and buying by the book number, not the titles. What surprises me is that 90% of the current convention fans know nothing about the good books of previous eras. If the book weren't by a big-name writer, forget it. (Wiscon was a happy exception to this rule; there are always a lot of knowledgeable readers there.) Nah, Harry, criticisms of con committees aren't seeping over from mundane news reports; they're the natural outgrowth of criticisms of how fanzine editors put their issues together. Remember those?

I agree fully with Eunice Pearson about children. Juanita and I gave our son Bruce a hard time; we did too many different things. We published a Hugo-winning fanzine, both of us wrote professionally and I reviewed books professionally, we've been guests at various conventions, Juanita has several filk tapes published, and so on. He finally took up role-playing games; something neither of his parents knew anything about...(Now in gaming fandom, we're known as Bruce Coulson's parents.) Oh, he reads the stuff, goes to cons, was once asked up out of the audience to be on a Lovecraft panel because he knew more about Lovecraft than the panelists did, but frequently he's at a con to run the gaming room. No parental competition or comparisons. (Oh, yes, Juanita did a lot of fanzine illustrating at one time, which left that out...)

By the time of Heinlein's blood drives, I was taking medicine for my high blood pressure, and nobody wanted my blood. (This seems unreasonable; letting a little of it out should reduce the pressure and benefit me as well as the prospective recipient, but medics don't seem to see the logic of this.) I gave a few times



before the problem was diagnosed. Don't believe I ever fainted. I blacked out once, while taking some of the eerly across-the-counter asthma medicine (inhaling the smoke from burning Jimson weed, to be exact), but I was still conscious. Strange feeling. I was outdoors when the vision started going, and I got in the house fast and sat down. Everything turned black, all right, but I was still awake, and I sat there for several minutes until my sight came back, and the funny feeling in my midsection went away. Came close to fainting once as a child when I had to have a fishhook extracted from my finger, but managed to stay conscious.

I guess I did pass out during my not-quite-fatal heart attack; I'm not sure if this counts as a faint or not. As far as I was concerned I crawled up on a gurney and went to sleep while I was waiting for the doctor. It wasn't until the next day that they told me how close I came to not waking up.

No, it's not inevitable for a fan to worry about the future of fandom; it's merely fashionable.

Andrew P. Hooper  
The Starliter  
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Seattle, WA 98103

Nothing like publishing an article of mine to get me to write a LoC! Rune 84 may well have been late by the lights of the ambitious schedule (well, don't laugh; it is ambitious to expect to publish four times a year, when you don't have the ongoing, regular support of loccers and columnists like, for example, Fosfax) [ *Maybe I am missing something here?* ] you four set for it, but it was certainly well worth waiting for.

Hard to pick a favorite piece. There are three really obvious crowd pleasers: Terry's Shark from outer space, Don's Manitoba Gumbo and the excerpts from James' Reinconation report. I liked them all very much; I can tell because I was jealous and wished we had run them in Spent Brass. Terry's piece is notable both for her ability to engage in bizarre speculation and her talent for description of place. There's always this great sense of fun to her pieces about Oregon and Northern California. Don Bindas' little faan fic has the same sense of setting, and Ken Fletcher's art was a perfect compliment to his text. I remember the first time I really saw the northern lights, lying on a blacktop tennis court in Ely, in a state that could be tactfully described as perceptually enhanced. One side of the sky threw green fire at the other, while the Perseids drew occasional highlights across the field of play. And then James' memories of last September were well done, but even more effective for the memories it awakened in me. Reinconation Too was surely one of the best convention experiences I have ever had, and I was just so glad that our Irish cousins were able to enjoy it with us.

The rest of the issue was impressive as well; Ghu, there's a lot of stuff here! The best parts were those which elicited an ineluctable quality of. . .MplStplness. Victor Raymond's piece, for example, could not be written with Madison or Boston or Los Angeles fans in the starring roles. The closest parallel I can think of is when a bunch of Madison fans drove down to Chicago to see the Cocteau Twins. Actually, I can easily imagine a group of Seattle fans driving hundreds of miles and camping out in order to listen to folk music. . .maybe Minneapolis is the gateway to the Northwestern sensibility. Can one get a double decaf lo-cal latte in Minneapolis now?

I already know from conversation that Steve Stiles' futuristic Icepick Slim cartoon has elicited some controversy, and I suspect he would be pleased to know that. Steve has always enjoyed needling a certain prim element in fandom; I was just looking at his post-event cover for the Corflu IV Outworlds 50, and found myself making loud snorking noises at the line "I spit on the Masons, and you can tell that to Red China!" What it has to do with anything, I don't know, but it made me laugh. I would hope that everyone involved would retain a little perspective on the issue; it would be a shame if the only fan-art apolitical enough for a clubzine featured big-busted mermaids and furies in snowmobiles.

I appreciated the fact that Rick Gellman's book reviews take a certain amount of time in considering each book. I don't think he needs to spend as much time on plot synopsis, but I hardly want to discourage anyone who avoids dismissing a book in three paragraphs, which seems to be the industry standard.

How to take advantage of your pipeline to Sao Paulo fandom...I confess, this just defeats me. The issue of how to integrate the exceedingly sercon wave of fans from Europe, South America and Asia to the hopefully more balanced approach of established fandom may need to wait for the Brazilian Burbee, the Thai Tucker and the Wallachian Willis. Without such pioneers in our own fandom, we might never have started having real fun, and thus survived all these decades as a subculture. I suspect that new, serious fandoms will have to make this cognitive leap for themselves as well.

On the other hand, maybe every country needs to have a fan like Jim Young in the American Embassy! I have this image of the Marine guards outside the compound tapping their toes to the distant sound of "Louie, Louie," wafting along on the Moscow wind. I heartily approve of Garth's salting the lettercol with material such as Jim's note; after all, a lettercol is supposed to entertain, as well as foster discussion on the issues raised within the zine, and he seems to have a solid handle on that fact. How sublime, for example, to imagine what Teddy Harvia's fanzine collection must look like, and what kind of competition there will be for them when he no longer has use for them!

Ted White  
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Steve Stiles tells me, in bewildered tones, that the Political Correctness Squad has lept upon him with cries of moral outrage on account of his comic strip on page 11 of your Regularly Scheduled issue of Rune (#84).

I am amazed. And appalled. It's hard to see how anyone—even stereotypical black pimps (and I've known several in my jailhouse days)—could be offended by Steve's strip. Here is one Vote Of Confidence in Steve, who is one of the best and funniest fan artists alive. Anyone who knows anything about Steve and the life he has lived will find charges of racism against him absurd and laughable. Anyone who makes such charges against Steve is a boob and an ignorant fool—and more likely than not the true bigot in this situation.

[ *Actually, the only complaint I got was a phone call—but it was a Real Loud One, the kind where you hold the receiver at arms length and it's Still Too Loud. This person declined to write a letter, and in fact has since apologized. I think Political Correctness is a many sided thing, and awareness of the problems that PC is meant to address is far more important than ignorance of them.* ]

Ruth Berman  
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Thank you for the copy of #84, which I enjoyed, especially such Ken Fletcher cartoons as the angstimal moaning Lovecraftianly and the cute recombinant Judy Garland type toon heyganging. (Another particularly striking cartoon is Reed Waller's theory of the percolative Origin of Blog.) In the non-comedic artwork, I especially liked Peggy Ranson's tender mercouple.

Andrew P. Hooper's comments on "Why Johnny Can't Timebind," and the mention of Cyril Kornbluth's "The Marching Morons" remind me that one of the problems with timebinding is that there are always disagreements over choices. "The Marching Morons" was an influential story when it came out, but it hasn't lasted very well (The Space Merchants by Pohl & Kornbluth might make a better choice). It suffers from terminal silliness in assuming that a large and complicated genetic effect could be brought about in a rather small number of generations. In fact, intelligence is so complicated a matter (consisting of a great number of various, and not always cooperative factors, and its measurement so easily warped by cultural biases, and its development so heavily influenced by nature factors), that even if it were rewritten to allow several more aeons of breeding time, it wouldn't be very believable that the single factor of birth control (intelligent people know how to get and use it, and so have fewer children than stupid people) would produce a noticeable result. It's also silly (although not terminally so - predicting the future isn't all that easy even for people who go in for making up futures for Fun and Prophet) in not realizing that somewhere along the way (in the next

decade, as it happened), birth control would be made easier, and access to information about it made available to everyone, not just the people who knew how to evade the Blue Laws that tried to keep such information away from everyone.

Sheryl Birkhead  
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Neat llamaesque cover...The melting RUNE masthead inside is mine and no, don't bother to say so nextish—isn't worth the trouble) [ *there are 3 or 4 more just like it in the file, and I bet they're your's too* ] —interesting and august (urm. I guess that's january ...) group of artists gracing the pages! Thish has a "softer", looser, more relaxed tone to it—issues do vary—as the personalities show through.

Terry's piece reminds me of the Christmas I spent in Florida while I was in High School. I had an "aunt" living there who had been asking us to drive down one year and we finally did—sliding in from snow and ice just in time for their hottest Christmas day in a loonnnggg time. This meant that we all went swimming on Christmas Day. I distinctly remember stepping out into the water...gazing out at the horizon, luxuriating in the 80degree (plus) temperatures—and then looking down. World class record at exiting the water in one BIG hurry. Once the heart rate had dropped down to where it might be counted, I took another look at what had sparked such energy. It was the remains of some kind of fairly big shark—right up to behind the dorsal fin...so that at first (quick) glance, it looked like a whole shark lolling up towards the beach. That was the end of my swimming in "natural" water—think I'll stick with tame swimming pools.

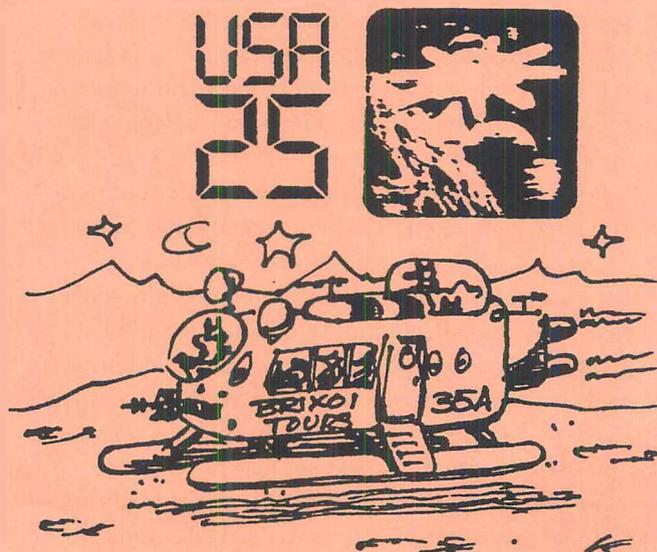
Clients are always reluctant (that's gently put to mean—NEVER mention it) to admit that they might have a problem with fainting around the sight of blood (or even without the blood—and THOSE are the challenging fainters). Many veterinarians are taking to having technicians hold animals for examination and various procedures—it is safer done that way than mopping the owner up off the floor (or patching the holes poked in walls where falling heads contact masonry). I have to admit that seeing one diabetic owner go from a normal healthy color to absolutely sheet white (and it seems to be a unique color—and it IS very white) in a split second does wonders for anxiety levels. I even had one owner keel right over (only hint was a dull klunk) while I was clipping hair from her dog's leg—not a drop of blood or any cut in sight so I was not prepared for her collapse. And—of course—they are always very surprised and vow that it has never happened before. I wonder if the experience is the same in

a pediatrician's office? [ *This editor is noticing a trend here—has anyone else noticed that Garth's fainting piece has brought in some truly wonderful medical stories from our readership?* ]

Not being a real artist—I didn't stop and think about actual sizes of artwork—I blithely went ahead doodling—letting work take on its own life and spreading out to whatever size it felt like. Then, one day, I tried to learn how to mat (still okay—I could make a mat any size I wanted. Then I went to a professional framer and couldn't understand what all the excitement (and expense) was about when all my pieces weren't "standard"—and then I went to a craft store and tried to buy mats and found out...or tried to buy a few cheap frames and found out even more strongly that the weird sizes were not exactly brilliant moves.

For the first time in my life I actually took a book to a con in the hope of having the author autograph it—STAR SURGEON by James White. The main catch was that I had no idea what he looked like and I was only at Magicon for a short period. I heard the rumor that he was sitting in the audience of some panel and I zipped (well, slowly) back to the Peabody to get the book—then back to get a signature—when I realized I STILL had no idea what he looked like. Sigh. I spent the rest of the day carrying the book around and hoping, in vain, that I might somehow find the man and get him to sign...Sigh, of such things are dreams made. Oh well, it was a nice idea.

KLARN keeps up its reputation—nice and fun to read/look through—the bat looks as if it is flashing. You are choosing just the right amount and quality—great stuff. [ *Sheryl—come to the L.A. worldcon next year and we will make sure you are properly introduced to the esteemed Mr. White. (And I don't mean Ted!) Promise!* ]



Ben Indick  
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Well, continuing my loc [sorry for the interruption] , I did retire, sent to Egypt (just before the bullets & the quake, In Sept. 1992) then went to the hospital for removal of my prostate, which was cancerous. (All seems well five months later. I liked it so much there I went back two months later for hernia surgery! Enough Already!)

Rune 84 keeps up the good level. Thanks. The foldout by Schima is grand. The folks at the Smoking Music Party look nearly human. The Klarn Rays are funny. I'm sorry Garth had so much trouble after giving blood. I recall once, a half-century ago, at an army physical, a big guy in front of me keeled over from a finger puncture! It's a very individual thing. I had to give three units of blood (at weekly intervals) prior to the prostate operation (for my own use. That's how it's done now, to avoid transfusions of unknown blood.) I was unbothered. (They used two of them during the surgery. Left with one, post-op, the surgeon said, "Give it to him anyway." I was on IV and said "my veins are stuffed as it is!"

It didn't help, they give it to me along with the IV of dextrose/saline.

Andy Hooper as always is excellent. However, nothing good in SF has been written since Stanley Weinbaum's death. Rick Gellman indicates other possibilities. Janet and I had a great Pacific Northwest trip a few years ago. There was no con going on, however, so unlike Jeanne Mealy our rapture was perforce modified.

Brian Earl Brown  
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I'm not sure which is more embarrassing, that this is the scheduled September, 1992 issue, published in February, 1993, that I'm only getting around to locating it in July, or that there hasn't been another of Rune since. None the less, we march along.

I'm surprised, astounded and even a little confused that you guys have taken any comments of mine on layout and design seriously. Like I know anything about it.

But as for ragged right vs. justified type, I think it's just an artsy-fartsy affectation. With a desktop publishing program with a good hyphenation dictionary and justifies between characters as well as between words you don't get those rivers of white-space running through the text the way you used to with older, less sophisticated word processors. When you can do it right, I think justification does look better. But if this all we have to talk about, I

think we're in the wrong fandom. [ *Agreed. Truce. Actually, you're right, rag text is artsy fartsy. But why run illos or worry about ffi ligatures if you aren't going to go all the way and be artsy fartsy with the right margin? Actually, in some circles, justified type is truly artsy fartsy.* ]

With all the talk about there possibly being a fanzine renaissance going on, Andy Hooper's comment that getting a fanzine every 2.53 days, and it being quite enough, bears some consideration. There are a lot of fanzines put out each year but how many of them actually engage one's interest? Considering that perhaps one-sixth of the fanzines Andrew anticipates getting in 1992 could have been Instant Messages which, if he's like me, ends up in the pile unopened, let alone unread, makes the numbers sound a lot less impressive. When fans complain about the lack of fanzines they are really talking about the lack of the really-good fanzines that nobody ever seems to be doing.

Andrew then goes on to say that fandom is getting a little vague and wishy-washy because for so many people reading science fiction is nothing special and so fandom is— for them—nothing special. To the extent that fandom served a need for early SF readers to find community and self-esteem, it follows that fandom becomes unnecessary as SF becomes legitimate, and —like the communist party—should be expected to wither away with time. Maybe not in our lifetime, but soon thereafter. Is it worth saving? As an alternative to other means of finding community and self-esteem—politics and religion, yes.

Overall you have a nice selection of art, particularly the strips from Steve Stiles and Ken Fletcher.

Algernon D. Ammassa  
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Brooklyn, NY 11215  
Most of my thinking lately has been oriented to the theatre—acting theory, literary form, scenography, and so forth on into more ephemeral themes, such as the value of ritual. I am uncovering some ideas about theatre that border

on the mystical, and most of my writing lately has been very speculative meditations based on plays I see and texts I read. Somehow I just don't see it as faanish material. I read mostly non-fiction these days, so my book reviews would probably be of limited interest. If I'm wrong, or you are particularly desperate for material (as intimated in the



latest RUNE), I would gladly write and will entertain suggestions as to subject matter.

Garth's account of his first experience donating blood reminds me that I am long, long overdue for a checkup. I was, for most of my years, a proud and punctual patient, hiking from my parents' home in East Providence up the hill to Pawtucket Avenue every summer for a complete physical. It wasn't the same doctor every year, but whichever doctor it was, he was sure to have an office on Pawtucket Avenue. (My first doctor retired to Hawaii without telling anyone. My second doctor died in a burning windmill along with a cadaver he had brought to life. My third and present doctor, Louis M. Damiani, is kind and thorough; unfortunately, his office is run by a gorgon who at some point in her life was deeply hurt by someone who looked very much like me.) Every year, the doctor poked and prodded and said "Hmmm," complimented me on my exemplary health, slapped me on the back, and submitted his bill to my mother.

Now things are different. For one thing, I have to pay the quack myself. For another, my health has become less exemplary. I've never been seriously ill in my life, except for one unfortunate incident of alcohol poisoning in 1989; but there are more things that can go wrong, more things to check for, more dangers. When I was a kid, I was invincible. Now I'm a mess: bad teeth, clinical depression, spinal headaches, a sluggish colon. There is little reason to feel as confident as I used to on my ritual march to Pawtucket Avenue.

When I was a kid, the nurse could come at me with anything: scalpels, hyperdermics, syringes, harpoon guns. I drew the line only at watching her stick me with her needle. I preferred to look away. Then, when I was fourteen, I began feeling faint every time they took blood. I remember the first time very clearly—it was at the Roger Williams Hospital in Providence. I put my head between my knees and asked for water. An orderly watched me closely while I drank it down—perhaps to observe the effects of the local water on my complexion, or to admire the shade of blue I had turned, or perhaps he was noting my resemblance to that bastard who hurt Dr. Damiani's secretary.

I am not aware of any trauma I've ever suffered in connection with the doctor's office, and yet every year since then the blood test has turned me into jelly. Soon, I began experiencing the sickness even during the routine exam. One year, while Damiani was checking my ears, I flopped backward onto the table, leaving him shining his light and poking his Q-tip into the air. "Come back here," he said. I could not reply.

Anxious as I am, I have no choice: I must heave myself up out of torpor into the doctor's waiting room. Poor health is looked upon as an indiscretion, socially. And at any rate, it seems silly to have spent all this time and money at two different universities, building up my mind, but neglecting my body. They are not separate or distinct; they are one. A starving Algernon can remember great ideas, but never generate them.

Jeanne Mealy (cont.)  
on *Rune 84*

La, la, la llamas, why'd it have to be llamas...Legalize llamas, not lutefisk! The cover is very mystical with those dignified beasts looking off into the distance. You just know they're thinking very deep thoughts.

List of people who collated *Rune 83*: I thought John and I helped with that one at Garth's place. It's beginning to be lost in the mists of time, though. [ *you may have forgotten to sign the sheet, which is what my overloaded memory requires me to go by...notes, notes, always take lots of notes in life.* ]

Delays in the *Rune* publishing schedule, hmmm, Jeff? I'd say you came up with some pretty good reasons for it. It's hard blowing a logic board—what? Your computer did that? Well, people do that too.

Terry Garey's piece on finding a shark on her front porch was amusing and great fun to read. Probably due to the odd carrot she consumed at the party beforehand. And sad, of course—Terry has the guts to tell the whole story, even if she doesn't like her part in it. In her defense, 3:20 a.m. is not a good time to make important decisions. While I've never been faced with a shark on my porch, similar situations have been tough to deal with. I practice capture-and-release with all manner of bugs and an occasional bat that finds its way in, but there have been exceptions and I feel bad about them. Maybe some more-experienced fan will write in and tell us what could've been done. Then we'd all know what to do, in case something like that happens to us (and it probably will).

Garth certainly knows how to get the reader's attention. "I haven't passed out in years" is a VERY catchy first line. The rest of the article is riveting in Garth's engagingly low-key way as he rambles on about other times he's fainted, what it was like to almost give blood for the first time, and how it came about that Robert Heinlein wrote him a letter and wanted to meet HIM. Heinlein even worked in the scientific reasons for why people faint and what happens when they do. Whatta guy (both of them).

Amusing cartoons by Steve Stiles on pages 10-11. I like the spin he put on trips into the past (company goes bankrupt, strands tourists in all sorts of interesting places).

USA  
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And let's hope his vision of employment in the 21st century is equally fictional.

"Once Within a Frame"—Glenn is right. Minnesotan fans think of the joys of Minicon when spring is near. To be honest, though, I'd rather read about more of Minicon through Glenn's eyes than what it takes to frame an odd-sized piece of art. Ah, well. I'm sure it opened a few eyes, which is for the best.

"Manitoba Gumbo" was an engaging little tale of UFOs, the northern lights, a magical bus (hmmm), a red-haired dame named Jere (hmmmm), a con named ReinConation (hmmmm), and a few fellows who know how to play good music (hummm). Great typeface for the title and excellent choice of Ken Fletcher's illo for depicting the sense of wonder.

Thanks to Peter Larsen for reviewing a few zines. More, more!

[ Peter? ]

"Why Johnny Can't Timebind": Ah, Andy Hooper—fandom's resident worrier about the essence and future of our network of friends and foes. He does manage to put his finger on a few key points: fanzines roll out despite the moans of how few fanzines there are, there's a generation gap between old and new fans and a blurring of the line between fandom and (ghasp!) mundanes. I think it's OK for fandom to change, and also believe there's enough people out there who'd love to find out about fanzines and fannish history and fanspeak and all of that. It's not that hard to make these elements accessible at conventions. Contact can be made via the prozines and books and computer connections, too.

One small point: it might've been good to start the article with a simple definition of timebinding and why it's fun. Who cares about what a bunch of people did years ago, here or thousands of miles away? What does it mean to me or you? Personally speaking, I found it amusing, intriguing, encouraging, and inspiring. And boring at times. Sometimes I'd be impressed by good writing and art; other times I'd know that I could do better (and would try to do so). Getting to know some of the locals who were around for the beginning of MinnStf and the Twin Cities' fanzine empire was fun, too. While working at an 'alternative' newspaper, I'd work fannish references into the classifieds and wonder just who was catching them.

Clever cartoon by Lawrence Tisch on page 18 (restroom doors for women, men, and Rune). I don't think it was properly credited, though.

[ you are right, thanks for pointing that out. Sorry, Tisch! ]

Thanks for excerpting James White's ReinConation con report from Idea. I'm sure Geri was flooded with letters and phone calls requesting that issue. It's a collector's item.

A fold-out illustration, wow! Very impressive, and skiffy too.

"Winnipeg Folkies on the Loose"—I've heard a lot about the Winnipeg Folk Fest from fans and mundane friends, so it was fun to read Victor's account of the trip. The scenic trip version was a bonus, but I'm glad to have the vicarious experience of 75 mosquito bites rather than being there myself. Nice reviews of some of the performers, the food, the atmosphere of the campground, and the role of the RCMP.

[ the last Winnipeg Folk Festival I went to I got Lyme disease—we think. I had something suspiciously like The Bruise, but the Winnipeg health department claimed they had no recorded cases prior to mine. I took way too many antibiotics but I never fainted. ]

Enjoyable book reviews by Rick Gellman. His rating system works well. When do we get to hear about Rick's own book, Doctor Knowledge's Handbook of Stuff You Should Know?

[ I suggested to Rick that he start off with short informative pieces like you see in Readers Digest, so look for his book excerpts there first. ]

"A Secret Master of Fandom Imparts A Little Wisdom to A Neofan Editor"—jeeze, doesn't this qualify as the longest-titled cartoon in fannish history? Besides that, it was instructive and amusing. Thanks to Teddy Harvia.

Klarn Rays 2: Neat, fun. Don't use up all the illos! [ Don't worry, there's enough art in these files to last well into the next century. The biggest problem is figuring out what hasn't been used by previous editors—people seem to

*have used stuff and put it back in the folder over the years...if you see one come around again its because of the dreaded worldwide problem of misfiling ]*

What, no Barbarian's Guide to something? Go after that Sue Grandys—I KNOW she's got a few more articles in her. Accuse her of being too civilized. Carry on, you fine fannish folks! [ *Alas, we lost Sue and quite a few other old club mainstays several years ago in the blowup over the dry Minicon con suite. We tried to get rid of the obnoxious drunken teenagers and instead lost some good fen. Sigh.* ]

P.S. Obscure-Fannish-Reference: Did you see in an issue of this year's TV Guide that Edward R. Murrow's middle initial stands for Roscoe? Hmmmmm.

[ *No, but I think I'll post that on the net in rec.arts.sf.fandom where there is a discussion of fannish ghods going on at the moment.* ]

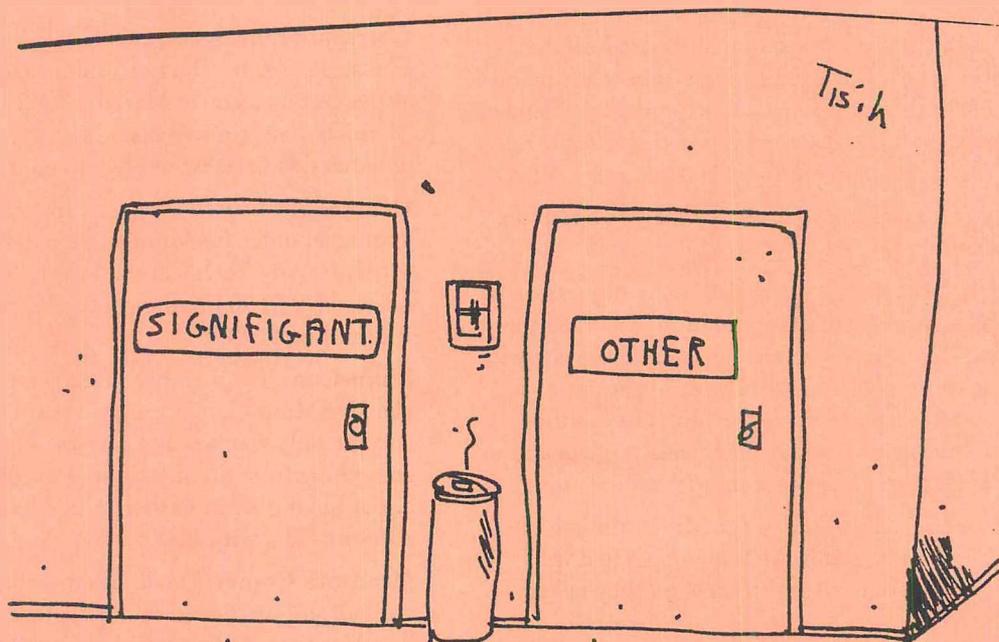
Andy Porter  
PO Box 2730  
Brooklyn, NY 11202-0056

I am amazed and fantasted—and somehow depressed—because, after so many years in fandom, I am reduced to writing you what is essentially a form letter. I thank you for your fanzine, which I've tried to read and appreciate. Alas,

the rising tide of paperwork that comes with publishing Science Fiction Chronicle means that my fannish pursuits—reading fanzines, doing letters of comment, contributing my own small artwork, etc.—takes a back seat to working on the issue. Every month. Since 1979 (that's only 160 issues of SFC so far (and, of course, 44 issues of Algol/Starship, about 250 issues of Degler!/SF Weekly, numerous apazines, and cetera...). And, presumably, every month for another 160 or so.

Anyway, I thank you for sending me Rune 84. Where people were was bizarre and I read lots of the issue when I should otherwise have been working on SFC.

We Also Heard From (WAHF): R. Laurraine Tutihasi and Harry Andruschak and undoubtedly some others who got misplaced in the last 2 years. Like, shouldn't there have been a letter from Harry Warner in here? Let's add in a new category: We Probably Also Heard From (but misplaced the letters): Harry Warner Jr., Walter A. Willis, Dave Romm, Mike Glicksohn, Kay Drache, Dean Gahlon, Polly Jo Peterson, Mitch Pockrandt, Martin Schafer, George Leroy Tirebiter (who is listed in the New Orleans phone book), Ambrose Bierce, and Caspar Hauser.



## **MN-StF Board Meeting**

27 January 1993

Persons present: David S Cargo, Dean Gahlon, Kay Drache, Eric Heideman, Dwayne Olson, Margo Bratton, Don Bailey, Joyce Scrivner, Jonathan Adams, Jan Appelbaum.

**Correction to previous minutes:** The bibliography project is the **Creeping Whacko** Bibliography Data Base, *not* the Creepy one. Sorry Martin and DDB!

**Diversicon:** Eric reports that it is going well with 83 registrations as of this meeting. They have pledges from several groups amounting to about \$400 and he would like direction as to when they should stop asking for pledges. Some discussion and related questions around this subject ensued.

**TOTU:** Eric reported on issue 11 of **Tales of the Unanticipated** and announced that he had recruited Tess Kolney as ad manager.

**Charles DeVet:** Dwayne Olson approached the board about fronting a project to publish a short story collection by local author Charles DeVet. The board looked favorably on the project but suggested other possible funding sources that Dwayne should investigate first.

**OTML:** The board discussed whether or not they should add E-Mail addresses to the MN-StF directory. After discussion it was decided that David will talk to Scott about producing an E-Mail supplement. There was also discussion about the problem that there seems to be a program glitch getting names added from the Minicon list into the One True Mailing List. A discussion of whether or not the OTML database needs to be overhauled followed.

**Pool Party:** Jan and Paige Appelbaum offered to host the annual Pool Party at the Radisson and Jan came to the board to request \$250 for the event since past experience has shown that the pool party is much more expensive than a regular Mn-StF meeting. The board approved the request.

**Paper Folder:** The paper folder will be mail ordered for \$170 plus shipping.

**Corresponding Secretary:** There was some discussion of problems with Mn-StF mail dissemination. Kay read the job description that she has written and will discuss it with Jerry. The board then discussed the idea of getting a copier for the secretary to help in the job. They authorized David to investigate used, refurbished copiers and to spend up to \$500 to get a desk top model for the club.

**Laminator:** The board discussed the Minicon Registration request to get a laminator for Minicon so that we can make our own badges. After discussion they talked themselves out of it.

**GoHs:** The question of what past guests of honor are to be comped at Minicon came up as a board question

because it comes up every year in the Minicon committee. After discussion the board decided that the official policy is that (only) past writer guests of honor are to be given automatic complementary memberships.

**The next meeting of the Board will be Monday February 22 at 7:30pm at the home of Joyce Scrivner, 3212C Portland Avenue in Minneapolis.** (Draw nigh all who have business before this court. . .)

Minutes taken by Margo Bratton (*Thank you, Margo*) and transcribed by Polly Jo Peterson

## **MN-StF Board Meeting**

22 February 1993

Persons present: Dean Gahlon, Martin Schafer, Kay Drache, David S. Cargo, Polly Jo Peterson, Beth Friedman, Joyce Scrivner, Tony, whose last name escapes me at the moment.

Looking at last month's minutes, Polly had not yet gotten around to correcting Creepy to Creeping on the Bibliographic Data Base project. She has done so now.

**McKnight Foundation Grants:** David brought up a piece in Dave Wood's column of the Sunday Star Tribune about \$300,000 worth of grants that the McKnight Foundation is making to non-profit small press publishers to get new works out. Polly will contact Dwayne Olson about this program and the board says that it will publish Dwayne's DeVet collection (see last month's minutes) under the *Rune Press* imprint if Dwayne would like to do it on a non-profit basis and apply for one of these loans.

**Paper Folder:** The paper folder should arrive this week in the mail and should cost about \$185.

**Corresponding Secretary:** Kay has written a job description and spoken to Jerry about it. Dean will talk to Jerry about getting a key to Margo so that she can pick up Minicon mail and will discuss with Jerry after Minicon whether or not he would like to continue.

**Office:** Polly floated a Victor idea about investigating getting an office for Minn-StF and Minicon in, say the University Tech Center. When David said that such offices cost \$150 per month the board's reaction was a resounding "NO!"

**Minn-Con:** Jonathan has investigated whether or not we can give Minn-Con money to cover their loses last year and the only way we, as a non-profit can do it is by buying something from them. Martin will talk to John Brower about buying an ad in their program book so that we can support them with \$100.

**Minn-StF Copier:** David has investigated new and used copiers and has found that we can get a Xerox 5220 Desk Top Copier at Office Max (which lists around \$1000) for around \$500. The \$90 cartridge makes 2000 copies, which means that copies are about 4 1/2 cents each (not

figuring in the cost of the copier itself). David was authorized to get a check form Carol and get a copier and a case of paper.

**Documentary Radio Project:** Jerry Stearns has asked Minn-StF if they would like to help sponsor this project and after discussion the board decided to give \$1000 to the project. (see Polly to peruse the proposal).

**John M Ford Poetry Chapbook:** Beth Friedman requested that the board authorize money to print a chapbook of Mike's poetry in conjunction with his appearance as "Interesting Guest of Honor" at Minicon. After some discussion of the issue (There is no poet laureate of Minn-StF) the board authorized up to \$500 with the proviso that the books be priced to break even when 75% have been sold.

**Minn-StF Meeting Stipends:** Since the change in meeting stipends from \$40 to \$50 apparently did not get passed on to Carol, she is requested to write checks (\$10) to anyone who has hosted a Minn-Stf meeting since the change was made (on August 25). Martin will talk to her.

**Shockwave:** On the philosophical question of whether Shockwave is automatically a part of Opening Ceremonies at Minicon, the board allowed as that although they *expect* that Shockwave will be a part of Opening Ceremonies, but they don't require it to be so. That decision is the prerogative of the Minicon committee.

**Art Show Panels:** The proverbial design for the Noreascon Art Show panels have arrived. Giovanna and Ellen are studying them.

**Next Meeting:** The next (and last for *this* board) meeting will be on **Monday March 15 at the home of Joyce Scrivner, 3212C Portland Ave in Minneapolis at 7:30pm.**

## **MN-StF Board Meeting**

April 1993

(as hastily scribbled and tardily transcribed by Mitch Pockrandt)

This meeting was held at 7: m at the house of Elizabeth LaVelle and Mitch Pockrandt , 3739 Pillsbury Ave, Minneapolis, MN.

Attending were: Dean Gahlon, Martin Schafer, David S. Cargo, Mitch Pockrandt, Lynn Litterer, Mark Richards (Kay Drache is ill with a nasty post-Minicon flu virus.)

The agenda constructed at the start of the meeting consisted of:

**Mark Richards:** Storage Locker request

**Lynn Litterer:** Books for Kiev request

**Minicon** concerns

**Lief Pihl:** Letter request for OTML info

**DSC:** Art Show Panels Update

**DSC:** Photocopier

**DSC:** Paper folder

**Martin:** Funerals

**Set next meeting**

**Lynn Litterer:** Books for Kiev

Lynn and Victor have 24 boxes of used books for Kiev fans that they would like to ship (or otherwise resolve) before they move to their new apartment at the end of May. The original money allocated to this project has been spent on shipping about nine boxes of books already.

The options of what to do with the remaining boxes are:

-send all boxes to Kiev now

-send some boxes to Kiev now, and store the rest in the locker for the next plea for books.

-send some now, give the rest to local charities.

We decided to do the first option, send all boxes to Kiev now. David S. Cargo will talk with the treasurer (Carol Kennedy).

**Mark Richards:** Storage Locker request

Mark reports that the storage locker is in a state of chaos now that Minicon just moved into it last week. "We need shelving!"

Mark has priced some modular wooden shelf units. 24-inch deep, 8-foot wide shelves will cost about \$80 for four shelves.

We ok the cost of the shelves. Mark volunteered to coordinate building them by scheduling a work party on a forthcoming Saturday to be decided.

**Lynn Litterer:** Minicon concerns

Lynn has suggested that the board should begin to formalize an outline of what Minicon "ought" to be doing. Such an outline can be used. as guidelines for creating and evaluating proposals for future Minicons.

This could also be a description of the decision making responsibilities within the process of creating a Minicon:

Which decisions are the board responsible for? Which decisions are the chair/executive responsible for? Which decisions are the department heads responsible for? This could be a means by which the board could provide a more detailed "policy" while still leaving the "implementation" in the hands of the convention committee(s).

It could help provide an understanding of where the liability for various problems would fall. Which ones have to fall onto the board? Which ones should stay in the realm of a department head running a department? Which should fall in the lap of the executive/chair?

This would provide an aid to the continuity of skills and knowledge of Minicon through subsequent years.

Lynn will write down more details of her ideas and present them (or mail them) to the board in the future.

It was noted that the only concern that the board has with the current committee involves making sure that the 1995 Minicon proposal process is started in mid-July and August as currently planned

David S. Cargo: Paper Folder

The MinnStf paper folder for machine folding of mailings has been bought and received for \$184.95. The treasurer can reimburse David now.

David S. Cargo: Photocopier

Well, we mentioned it again. If something else happened here, Mitch missed it.

David S. Cargo: Art Show Panels

The are now in the storage locker. But we would like to know: Did they meet our expectations? What changes need to be made for next year? (Lights?)

Martin Schafer: Funerals

Given that we find more deaths surrounding us all, we might want to establish some sort of policy for sending flowers to members or relatives of members.

We could have a standing ok for the treasurer to pay \$30 for flowers to a funeral on the word of any board member without having to call a board meeting.

We could do nothing. But this is coming up more often and is not likely to go away any time in our future.

Would this necessitate an account with a florist?

No decision recorded at this time.

Lief Pihl: OTML Info request

Lief has sent a letter to the board outlining his request. Read it for details.

In brief, Lief would like a copy of the Minicon registration program to help teach himself FoxPro database handling. He would also like a sample data base of the registration database and the OTML database.

Our major concern over his request is the violation of data privacy. With respect to the OTML (One True Mailing-List), David S. Cargo is willing to create a massaged OTML data set which does not contain any "real" data.

Concerning registration data:

If Lief is willing to help enter data for the At-the-Door attendees of the Minicon just past, then David S. Cargo will be willing to provide him with the FoxPro source code schema, and a similarly massaged set of registration data which contains no real information to violate our data privacy concerns.

Mitch Pockrandt will talk to Lief about this and will talk to Joyce Scrivner (registration) about Lief volunteering to

help. It should be noted that registration is NOT to give any data or program to Lief. Anything Lief receives must come from the massaged data created by David Cargo.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Monday, May 17th, 1993 at the house of Dean Gahlon and Laura Krentz. In general, future meetings will be held on the third Monday of each month at a place to be decided at the prior meeting.

## **MN-StF Board Meeting**

17 May 1993

Persons present: Leif Pihl, Joyce Scrivner, Eric Heideman, Jennifer Wolter, Margo Bratton, Polly Jo Peterson, Dean Gahlon, Martin Schafer, Mitch Pockrandt, Kay Drache, David S. Cargo

Joyce has had help inputting about half of the data she needs to enter from Minicon and hopes to get the other half done soon.

She (Joyce) would like to host a **Mpls in 73** party at Confrancisco since Geri is not going. The board decided to table the discussion until the June meeting when they hope to have final Minicon 28 profit figures.

Eric checked in with the board to make sure that the previously agreed upon schedule of getting a **Tales of the Unanticipated** out this August in time for Confrancisco was still okay and it was (is).

Eric and Jennifer also came to report the amount that **Diversicon** raised from other fan organizations which the board agreed to match one for two. (*I forgot to write down the actual figure. Sorry. PJP*) They were instructed to get a check from Carol. They also want to borrow a coffee pot from Minicon parties and some of the art show panels. They were instructed to contact Dave Romm (quartermaster) and Giovanna or Ellen (Art show experts) for these items. Rental on the art show panels is \$10 and it is BYOCT (bring your own cable ties). They also checked in about the ad in the **Diversicon Program Book** to which MN-StF is entitled. Charles is supposed to be creating this and Dean will make sure that he is.

Dean will also check in with Charles regarding a cryptic letter from US West and the **Yellow Pages**

Joyce asked if we were interested in being listed (free) in a Fan Directory and the board said that this would be okay.

The **MN-StF Copier** for the corresponding secretary has not been purchased because David and Carol have not been able to get together.

The board would like to get a treasurer's report so that they can rough out a budget for the year.

There was a general discussion of **between-Minicon** issues including keeping track of people who repeatedly

bounce checks off of Minicon, and getting people from the Minicon registration data base to the OTML without losing them. Martin passed out a treatise on problems with Minicon which board members were supposed to read and send him comments upon by the end of the month.

Leif came and brought up concerns about the MN-StF Camel (the computer). Did we want to update to DOS 6 and get a Foxbase upgrade? The board decided that we should perhaps wait until they work the bugs out of 6 before we purchase it and that we should not upgrade the Foxbase unless the upgrade had features that we need. The manuals and original diskettes are missing. After discussion they decided that the upkeep of the camel is the responsibility of the VPDP (upgrades, documentation and source diskettes) and the person who has possession of the machine (back-ups). Mitch will call Scott and DDB to find out where the responsibility has been and where the documentation is.

Next meeting will be **Monday June 21, 1993 at Mitch's** (3739 Pillsbury Ave in South Mpls.)

Quote of the day: "Kay is not stupid, she is just ignorant".

Respectfully submitted by Polly Jo Peterson

## **MN-StF Board Meeting**

**21 June 1993**

Persons present: Eric M. Heideman, Myrna Logan, Karen Schaffer, Dean Gahlon, David S Cargo, Mark Richards, Mitch Pockrand, Kay Drache, Polly Peterson, Martin Schafer

### **Membership Secretary**

Myrna wanted to know what are her duties as membership secretary. These include:

Make sure the sign-in book gets to MN-StF meetings

Get the bulletin board to meetings (Quartermaster Dave should locate this)

Collect Minicon public meeting lists since these count as attendance for voting qualification.

Send address corrections from the sign-in book to Scott for update of one true mailing list.

It is nice to give people notice when they have close to but not quite enough meetings to be eligible to vote so that they can reach eligibility.

Arrange that the annual vote for the board happens including: setting up the nomination and voting meetings run the election by contacting nominees to get their assent to run and by creating and mailing the ballots so that the vote can happen on time.

Have a computer at the election so that the ballots can be counted

### **Eric Issues**

Eric reported that Diversicon was a financial and aesthetic success and gave the board a program book and copy of the fan groups guide to put in its archives.

Eric discussed the timetable and subsidy to **Tales of the Unanticipated**. He reported that his landlord paid off on some 185 issues that were water damaged when a pipe broke in the apartment above his. After discussion the board gave the go ahead for him to plan on the next two issues of TOTU for August and just before Minicon next April. Rates will go up to \$4 (\$5 mail order) and a 4 issue subscription will be \$15.

### **Mpls in '73 at ConFrancisco**

Karen Schaffer reported on a proposal to host a Mpls in '73 suite that will be arranged by Geri Sullivan but hosted by Karen. In addition Joyce would like to do a poster-sized blow-up of pictures of the very first Mpls in 73 party held after we pulled out of the contest. The board was also asked to contribute to a similar suite at Westercon run by Suzle Thompkins. The board appropriated \$250 to ConFrancisco, \$19.73 to Suzle, \$73 for Don Fitch and \$73.19 for Joyce providing she still wants to do the project.

### **Mark Issues**

Mark spent \$65 to get shelves for the MN-StF storage locker. He has gotten all of the foodstuffs off the floor and needs lots of copier paper boxes to organize the rest of the stuff. It was suggested that we might want to bait the space against vermin.

Mark approached the board to purchase at least one more cash register so that the art show can have its own. It was pointed out that another at registration would be nice, too. The board is in favor of getting two more cash registers, but needs to see a treasurer's report so that they can write a budget for the organization and see what they can fund. This will also allow them to tell Minicon what income target they have.

### **Charles Issues**

Charles got the Diversicon ad in.

Charles was going to call the woman about the cryptic yellow pages letter we got

Charles wanted a clarification of the sense of the board on how the next Minicon committee will be chosen (*see attachment*)

### **Bills Bills Bills**

On the issue of unpaid/extremely late paid bills by Supercon and Minicon the board directs that all bills are to go directly to the Treasurer before they are copied to the departments. The board was informed that for Minicon 29, all parties supplies will be cash on delivery to help us get our reputation back together.

### **MN-StF E-Mail Address**

David discussed setting up a MN-StF E-Mail address. After discussing whether or not this is a good idea (will it be another place to lose information? Who will read it? etc.) David will set it up and be the mail reflector. He will talk to John Ladwig about it and Dean would like to also have it reflected to him. They will pass on information to Denny and Marianne for Einblatt and the Hotline.

### **Copier**

It has been purchased and is at Don and Margo's for use of the corresponding secretary. It cost under \$700 with taxes and paraphernalia.

### **Medical Issue**

On the issue of two child care workers who were exposed to hepatitis at Minicon, the board directs that they should be immediately reimbursed for their medical expenses related to getting tested and then Minicon should pursue reimbursement from the parents' insurance.

This brought up the need for a medical alert field in the Minicon data base. This brought up a whole discussion of what information should be in the institutional memory (the OTML) such as troublemaker flags and the ability to pull out separate lists for different departments (registration, ops, life support). People in the know need to get together and create the policy and information.

### **Minicon**

The board will discuss over riding issues around Minicon at its next meeting.

**The next meeting of the board will be Monday July 19 at 7:30 pm at the home of David Cargo and Judy Cilcain**

### **Minicon Committee Selection**

The next exec for Minicon 30 will be selected by the execs from the last two Minicons (28 and 29 consisting of the Grand Triumvirate [Margo Bratton, Polly Peterson and Victor Raymond] and Charles Piehl) who will consult past department heads and other knowledgeable people

Anyone can put together a proposal to run Minicon and take it to the board, but the board will look most favorably on a proposal coming from the mechanism that they (the board) set up, i.e. the above-mentioned committee.

The board expects that the above-mentioned committee will solicit exec members by distributing volunteer sheets to the community

### **MN-StF Board Meeting**

**19 July 1993**

Persons present: Kay Drache, Martin Schafer, Mitch Pockrandt, David S. Cargo, Dean Gahlon, Polly Jo Peterson, Mark Richards, Rob Ihinger, Kevin Metheny, Christina Mastro.

### **Financial Report**

Carol and Jonathan had a disc crash and were unable to print out the full report, but tell us that :

Our outstanding balances:

IDS	\$7400
Savings	\$1400
Checking	\$5000+

Carol knows of no outstanding MN-StF bills and few outstanding obligations.

She has closed the 1992 Minicon books as follows:

Expenses	\$16,545.45
Income	\$15,303.48

This income figure includes about \$5,000 from Minicon 26 (1991) but does not include the approximate \$13,000 earned at Minicon 28 (1993).

Martin reported that the Supercon II books are closed and he has a check for \$74 surplus from the account to give to Carol.

After discussion the board decided that it needs \$17,000 direct profit from Minicon and Polly and Mark will report this to Charles and the Minicon committee.

The board needs a list of past expenses and categories so that they can set up a budget for the year.

### **Copier Report**

The copier has been purchased and set up at Don and Margo's for her use as corresponding secretary. David has been reimbursed by Carol.

### **Coffee Pots**

Polly reports that Mythcon would like to borrow the coffee pots. Permission was given and she was requested to return them to the storage locker promptly.

### **Medical Flags on Minicon Registration**

Following up on the discussion from the last meeting, Kay decided on reflection that there is a privacy issue here. People may not want possible access to that information by all and sundry. Kay suggests that, as in any medical setting, Minicon personnel should assume that they should protect themselves as if there is danger in every emergency case. In the case of child care, we cannot refuse care to any child because of (for example) Hepatitis B, but we can ask them to provide the information on our forms. The board suggests that we remind members of the con that we have Emergency Medical Technicians and invite them (members) to give the EMTs any medical information that would be important in an emergency.

### **Minicon Issues**

The rest of the meeting revolved around Minicon issues. The board authorized payment to Rob for legal work he has done.

Next Meeting will be at Toad Hall, 3444 Blaisdell Ave in Mpls at 7:30pm.

## **MN-StF Board Meeting**

16 August 1993

Persons present: Kay Drache, Dean Gahlon, Martin Schafer, Mitch Pochrandt, David S Cargo, Polly Jo Peterson, Joyce Scrivner

The meeting began with a discussion of **Minicon issues**.

The board has and will continue to discuss issues around this year's Minicon with Minicon chair Charles.

The person upset with us for overcharging him for registration was found to have paid up a bounced check and art price from a previous year rather than having paid for a current registration, and therefore did not pay his Minicon 28 registration twice. The board expects him to pay up any late check charges and would like him to apologize to Joyce for his obnoxiousness before he is given another membership to Minicon.

The board would also like it if the Grand Triumvirate and Charles would get on the exec selection process for next year.

Report from ReinCONation is that the liquor distributor they were trying to get beer from wanted to have proof of dram insurance before they would sell us beer. It is the understanding of some board members that we have been able to bill the liquor through the hotel in the past in order to have their dram insurance cover this. We need to talk about this to past hotel liaisons and party heads

The board then discussed its budget as follows:

**Total "fixed" expenses**                      **\$11,925**

Based on this we should not spend more than \$3,000 on any new "neat ideas". So far we have spent about \$650 on such ideas and the board is friendly to purchasing two new cash registers for Minicon.

Joel Rosenberg suggests that we consider purchasing a heavy duty two wheel truck with a furniture strap to help the MN-StF movers in moving heavy appliances. The board authorized Joel to spend up to \$50 to get such a moving aid.

**The next meeting will be Monday September 20 at David Cargo's Whisker's Ranch.** The main agenda item will be Martin's Policy Statement on Minicon, which will be either confirmed as is or discussed in order to move it out of its present limbo.

## **MN-StF Board Meeting**

20 September 1993

Persons present: Kay Drache, David S Cargo, Dean Gahlon, Martin Schafer, Mitch Pochrandt, Thomas Keeley, Scott Raun, Don Bailey, Margo Bratton, Polly Jo Peterson

## **Corresponding Secretary Issues**

Margo wanted to point out that we had more than \$90 worth of postage returns from PR#1 and we should do something to reduce this amount. John Wirsig may have a connection to help with this problem.

Margo also wanted to know what she is authorized to throw away and what she should do with stuff that comes in the mail (the four color photo sneaker offer, an offer for a MN-StF American Express Card, catalogues, you know all the usual stuff) that is not obvious as to to whom it goes. It was suggested that she use her judgement to throw away junk, make a file of stuff that people might be interested in (and say bring it to MN-StF meetings) and that we should write to the mail preference service and get them to stop whatever junk mail they can.

Margo finally asked if she should be keeping a log of what the MN-StF copier is used for and this was deemed a good idea in order to find out what it is being used for.

Kay will get Margo a copy of her job description.

## **OTML**

What Scott and Thomas think is happening to the One True mailing list is this: Scott is handling it until all of the Minicon 28 changes are entered and then Thomas will take over except that Scott will continue to do the formatting of the directory because he has the better printer capability. (In fact Thomas has no printer and doesn't need one except for MN-StF and Minicon stuff. David has a printer that might work for Thomas.) They expect this changeover to happen by the time PR#2 needs labels around Thanksgiving. So far Scott is getting get-me-on-the-list requests from Myrna and they (Scott and Thomas) will let her know when the change-over occurs.

The board is clear that there should be only **one** One True Mailing List and that people with specialized lists such as Supercon and ReinCONation registration lists, Minicon programming participant or dealers lists and Einblatt should get that info to the OTML so that it is all in one place and usable by other people who need it.

## **MPLS in '73 at I-Con**

The board approved the usual \$73 for Raymond Banks to have a Mpls in '73 party at I-con.

## **Supercon**

Victor Raymond sent a proposal to do Supercon III with the encouragement of some of the members of PFRC. The board was willing to approve the \$250 request as an opportunity for outreach.

## **Ministorage**

Kay thinks that the annual rent is probably due, that it will go up and she will call the lady from Ministorage and get a check from Carol. (David says he knows something about Cargo-handling) Polly suggested a storage organizing

party so that we could get the shelves assembled and the locker organized quickly and will less work for any one or a few individuals.

### **Paper Folder**

David reports that Denny reports that the *new* paper folder has died. David will get the warranty info from Denny and will see what can be done.

(The meeting broke up without setting a location for the next meeting which will be Monday October 18 at 7:30 pm.)

Polly Jo Peterson

Secretary

## **MN-StF Board Meeting**

18 October 1993

Persons present: Dean Gahlon, David S Cargo, Martin Schafer, Mitch Pochrandt, Kay Drache, Polly Jo Peterson, Joyce Scrivner

### **Pictures**

Joyce showed off blown up (that is, poster sized) pictures from the first Mpls in '73 party after we pulled our bid for really wanting a worldcon here. Joyce asked to reimburse Chuck Holst for the tax which brought his costs for making the enlargements over the \$73.19 that was originally approved. The board approved paying him the difference and Kay left Carol a message to that effect.

### **Job Descriptions**

Kay has given Margo the corresponding secretary job description but Dean has yet to get the membership secretary description to Myrna. He will do so.

### **Mpls in '73 at Orycon**

Joyce requested funds for a Mpls in '73 party at Orycon the weekend of November 12-14. The board approved them. This was added to the list of things to tell Carol.

### **Storage**

Kay reports that storage went up only \$2 per month to \$78/month and the annual payment is due Nov 1. She called, guess who? about paying it.

### **Nate and the Benefit**

Nate and friends are holding a benefit for Erin McKee and her friend who had a lot of money and materials stolen after ConFrancisco. He requested that he be able to use the MN-StF bulk mailing permit to send out flyers. This would not be legal (using it to benefit one of our members) so the board suggested that he send the flyers in Einblatt, which is sent first class anyway. After consultation with Nate on the phone, this was agreed to and Kay volunteered to write the flyer. Polly will call Marianne about putting it on the Hotline.

## **OTML**

David has had a crash of a partition on his hard drive which has caused him to lose the OTML software. If he cannot find a backup somewhere, he will have to rewrite it. He may reorganize the OTML while he is at it. He is talking with DDB.

Meanwhile, the Camel (ie, the registration computer) did not have a working clock that is necessary for reconciling the registration material with the OTML (or something like that. He can't make a date comparison with the OTML to see what addresses are more current). David will work on this. . . Kay would like them to create documentation for the program while they are at it.

### **Minicon 94**

Polly reports that the committee has only one bid and the deadline is passed. They will report at the next board meeting.

**ReinCONation** will be Sept 9-11, 1994.

### **Next Meetings**

The November meeting will be Thursday Nov 18 at Joyce Scrivner's, 3212C Portland Ave in Mpls.

The December meeting will be at Dean Gahlon's on Monday Dec 20. (3553 Pleasant Ave S, Mpls.)

**Quote of the meeting:** "For peace of mind, resign as general manager of the Universe."

## **MN-StF Board Meeting**

20 December 1993

Persons present: Mitch Pochrandt, David S Cargo, Dean Gahlon, Martin Schafer, Laura Krentz, Polly Peterson, Scott Raun

**Quote of the Meeting:** "Oh Shit! It's Christmas *this week.*" Mitch Pochrandt

**Rumors:** Dean heard that the Old Guard (of MN-StF) didn't like the way things are going and that is why we have this con in Duluth. (!?)

**OTML:** Scott reported that he has turned over the One True Mailing List to Thomas Keeley as of 7:30pm this evening. Scott talked in a lot of computer gibberish (to your humble servant) about losing entries in interesting ways. . . The ISBAM and DBAM (whatever they are) need analysis. David will get a printer to Thomas.

**LiBraRy:** They realize that the library needs to be moved.

**MN-StF Board Elections:** Board elections will be March 5th. Nominating meetings will be February 5th (Yes, the Pool Party) and 19th.

Polly raised the issue that while the private ballot counting allows candidates not to be embarrassed about how they came out in an election, it also gives them no input about

their standing in the community. After discussion it was decided that since it would be impractical to allow all of the candidates to be present at the ballot counting (Nobody has a room big enough to accommodate everyone plus the tellers) the board will continue the practice of not allowing any candidate to be present at the ballot counting, although one or two interested by-standers may be allowed. The Australian ballot will, however be carried out until all candidates have been rank-ordered and although the list will not be published, it will be available to interested parties who wish to see it. Because of carrying the election out to the end (past the number of board members needed) it is important that the ballot counting be done by computer since continuing the process to the end by hand would be tedious. If for any reason the original count was done by hand and then a computer count was made later the original results announced at the MN-StF Meeting would hold should there be a difference in the results between the two.

**The Paper Folder** David has found out from Denny that the folder, the paperwork for it and the original shipping carton all exist, allowing to return it for a replacement per the guarantee. David will get them all together and ship them off.

**New Year's Party** After discussion it was decided that left over munchies in the storage locker should be dispatched to Susan Ryan's and that Carol (Treasurer) should send her a check to cover expenses that equals the amount that she got last year, believed to be \$100.

**Art Show Panels** World Fantasy would like to find out how much the new Minicon art show panels cost so that WF can pay its half to MN-Stf and close its books by the end of the year. Polly will contact Victor or Ellen (who ran art show and arranged for the panels to be made) to find out how much they were. WF also bought a piece of software to use in programming that Victor is using for Minicon now. The board voted to write \$150 off of the amount of the art show panels to help pay for the software that will become Minicon's.

#### **Supercon?**

**OTML Encore:** It would be useful to be able to generate bar codes with our labels because this would qualify us for a cheaper rate at the post office for our bulk mailings. David (or was it Mitch) will talk to John Wirsig about the canonization of the OTML.

**Next Meeting** will be at Kay's house at 3067 Zarthan Ave S in St Louis Park.

### **MN-StF Board Meeting**

24 January 1994

Persons present: David S Cargo, Kay Drache, Dean Gahlon, Mitch Pochrandt, and Polly Peterson

**Reinconation** will be at the Regency Plaza Hotel in downtown Mpls because the Radisson was already booked for the weekend that the committee wanted. The dates will be September 9-11, 1994.

Kay reported for Eric that **Tales of the Unanticipated #13** will be out for Minicon.

David reported that:

- 1) Denny has not informed him that the paper folder is in the storage locker so that he (David) can send it back.
- 2) He is working with Thomas Keeley on the **One True Mailing List** and has found him a printer.
- 3) He has not yet talked about mailing list upgrading with John Wirsig.

After discussion, the board decided that trying to put on a **Supercon** this year is not a very good idea. Kay will talk to the pertinent people and make sure that it gets into Einblatt.

Polly inquired about to whom the bill for the new art show panels goes (Minicon or MN-StF) and she will send it to Carol as MN-StF treasurer. Polly also promises to have final Minicon 28 figures for the next Board meeting.

The next Board meeting will be February 21 at Cat Whisker Ranch, 1735 Rome Ave in St Paul. Aloha.

### **MN-StF Board Meeting**

21 February 1994

Persons present: David S Cargo, Mitch Pochrandt, Dean Gahlon, Kay Drache, Martin Schafer, Polly Jo Peterson

#### **Miscellaneous Stuff**

Polly reported on overdue bills that have come into Minicon. She will continue to be in touch with David and Kay will call the collection agency about the Great Glacier bill.

The Pool Party had a hotel phone bill of \$30.26. Kay will call the Radisson to see if they can put a permanent record on our file for the Pool Party to have the phones be in-house only, since this problem has occurred every year.

Kay reported on her call to Supercon types last month. They were okay with cancelling it this year and made noises about next year or spring. . .

David says that Denny now has all of the wrappings, literature and parts to the paper folding machine so that we can send it back and get a new one.

Kay reeducated the board on how to get into the storage locker.

Victor requested the use of the MN-StF bulk mailing for BiNet USA because they are in the process of incorporating as a non-profit and haven't gotten one yet. The policy has been not to allow other groups to use the bulk mailing permit except for club-related mailings so the board turned down the request.

We discussed the origin of "Ides", which some months occur on the 13th of the month rather than the 15th.

Polly reported that she did *not* have a financial report from Minicon 28, but would like to get another cash register for Minicon. The board approved the purchase.

The next meeting of the board will be at **Toad Hall on March 21 at 7:30pm** provided that the time works for newly-elected board members. This will be a closed meeting to discuss new officers for the year.

### **MN-STF Board of Directors Meeting**

Monday March 21, 1994 Toad Hall

Attending: Kay Drache (minutes), Dean Gahlon, Polly Peterson, Mitch Pockrandt, Martin Schafer

"White Castle takes VISA now!"

KD will call the Radisson after Minicon to see about **phone lockouts** as a regular feature of rooms we use for pool party, etc.

KD updated board on status of **Great Glacier acct**; 1992 bill has been paid, an additional \$61 would reimburse GG for collection expenses. Carol Kennedy is checking 1992 records before mailing the \$61 to see if we show we paid.

KD paid **bulk mail fee** 3/15/94; don't know when it was actually due, but will now be due 3/15/95.

PP alerted us to per item deposit charges on **TCF Minicon acct**; \$212 @ \$.20 per item over 75 items deposited per day; also fee for cash deposits. Will check into a new arrangement after Minicon.

Mark Richards has purchased a third **cash register**. (NB: noone told Carol Kennedy to expect this check request...)

**MTN.ORG** John Ladwig and Ralph Jensen are involved in this effort. Local cable provider MTN is providing space, MacArthur grant is providing funds, SUN workstations came from somewhere to set up Internet access for nonprofit organizations, possibly up to 3 per org, free or inexpensive. Not for individual member accounts. We will apply. MP plans to be more involved with this. MS will cobble together a brief MN-STF 'bio' for them, if KD can provide info.

DG has many **old MINNEAPAs** from his tenure as OG which he plans to discard to make room for a car in his garage. MS would like a set.

MP talked with Rob Ihinger, who is willing to continue with library work, but not alone. **Library** must be moved before Don and Margo sell their house. We discussed weeding the collection heavily; Margo says it has recieved very little use. Keep RUNE, MINNEAPA, other fanzines, MN authors; have local experts (Denny Lien, Scott Imes, Greg Ketter) look over remainder to tell us which are worth more than the minimum. Would like to have first sale at MNSTF meeting 4/30 or 5/14. Stamp leftovers

with "donated by MNSTF, etc" and ship to our friends in Eastern Europe or Libros por Ninos.

PP suggests (again) that we get labels printed for board members and officers to facilitate the **mailing of minutes**.

We agree we need to give the **Rune** boys a gnudge.

The **MNSTF bulletin board** has disappeared (update; Martin McClure says Margo has it)

DG is going to write out **membership secretary duties**—especially if we give him a call to remind him to work on it.

**Appointment of officers** proceeded apace; discussion, a round of calls, and after the meeting followup calls with the following results:

President: Ed Eastman

Vice President: Charles Piehl

Vice President Data Processing: Thomas Keeley

Executive Vice President: Steven K. Z. Brust

Corresponding Secretary: Polly Peterson

Membership Secretary: Nancy & Martin McClure

Recording Secretary: Kay Drache

Treasurer: Carol Kennedy

Quartermaster: Mark Richards

Lib: Karen Johnson

Rare: Rob Ihinger

Ian: \*

Publications Editors:

Directory: Thomas Keeley

Einblatt: Denny Lien

Hotline: Marianne Hageman

Rune: Jeff Schalles

TOTU: Eric Heideman

\*A third person is needed to help with the library.

### **MN-StF Board Meeting**

**April 21, 1994**

Attending: Dean Gahlon, Polly Peterson, Mitch Pockrandt, Karen Johnson, Martin Schafer, Kay Drache, Rob Ihinger

"Ten minutes is a long time to spend in the bathtub with your cat."

Today is **Polly's 10th Anniversary** in fandom.

**Minicon Treasurers Report** PP has a rough balance of the books for Minicon 29 (yeah Polly!) with approximate figures for the few items still outstanding: may have to reprint volunteer t-shirts and mugs. Bottom line: ~\$20,000. PP will be doing treasury again next year with Mark Richards.

**MTN.ORG MS** got E-mail saying they look with favor on our application and will let us know when they have their act together. DDB suggested MNSTF.org domain relating to this; forwarding some accounts from MTN.org to Terraboard. Question of how much of Minicon's business should be conducted via E-mail; fan questions, contact with Pros, interdepartmental communications. Other ideas involve kinds of archives to keep on MTN.ORG: treasury, fan history (there's a group out there MS wants to contact under MNSTF auspices.) DG points out that Martin McClure wants to know how much we want to invest in this; like how many computers. DDB says this is a wireless ethernet system....

Charles Piehl would like \$40.00 for a **Mpls in 73 party at Demicon**. Approved. DG will take ReinCONation flyers too.

**Corresponding Secretary** issues. Polly wants to buy something easier to carry stuff in: approved. Also is considering a postcard letting people know we got their mail to use for some things.

**Library KJ** and RI discuss; PP would take the MN authors collection but not zines etc; possibly room for file cabinets in storage locker. Greg would look and possibly buy stuff. Rob points out we should ask Denny to solicit space for either whole or reduced collection. What about Joel Rosenberg? Rob will call and see if he would be willing even temporarily. Must get boxes too.

**Old art show panels** need to be disposed of; persons at meeting seemed to have a need for these.

We need to talk to **Kevin Matheny**; erroneous info to hotel and interjecting himself and his opinions into inappropriate situations

**Membership Secretary** DG has prepared guidelines, and discussed the McClure's new system of mailing sign in sheets and collecting COA info on a separate sheet. Polly will talk with them about looseleaf notebook to replace bulletin board.

It is time for another **MN-Stf Treasurers report**; Kay will call Carol Kennedy for an update for next meeting.

Next meeting May 19 at Kays.

### **MN-Stf Board Meeting**

May 19, 1994

Attending: Polly Peterson, Dean Gahlon, Martin Schafer, Kay Drache, Rob Ihinger

Next meeting Monday June 20 at Kay's.

-Mitch Pockrandt has gotten a job in Cedar Rapids, IA. Their gain is our loss, at least for a while.

-Request from Rob Ihinger, Associate Producer, for \$2000 in funding for production of film version of War for the Oaks. Martin proposes a grant of \$1000. Approved. Kay

proposes and it is agreed that we might give them more later if Carol reports a healthy financial picture. We agree to be used as a 501(c)3 conduit for other donors if our legal advisors approve.

Polly reports for Minicon 29 treasury two more large bills, refund from Coke, Carol Kennedy has credit card embosser so we can process art show receipts, need to get refund from three artist paid twice. We raised \$388 for Minnesota Literacy Council.

Mark Richards is holding another storage locker cleanup June 11 at 1:30. He has plans and price list for art show panel storage carts. He is of the opinion that we need more storage space. We are of the opinion that we could weed out some things. Kay and Martin and probably Dean will go and help on the 11th. Polly is hosting the MNSTF meeting that day and will send many helpers.

Joyce Scrivner has volunteered to take the fanzine (and club records) portion of the MNSTF library. She wants to get the Minneapolis bound and Dean will coordinate with her on that. We will want to know how much binding will be.

Polly will coordinate with Denny or another expert (Jan Appelbaum?) to sort out MN authors and valuable material.

Rob Ihinger will coordinate with Don and Margo to get books moving.

Karen Schaffer called requesting \$73 for MPLS in '73 party at Baycon. Approved.

### **MN-Stf Board Meeting**

June 20, 1994

Attending: Polly Peterson, Dean Gahlon, Kay Drache, Thomas Keeley, Carol Kennedy, Don Bailey, & Mitchell Pockrandt and Martin Schafer (via telephone)

Next meeting: 7:30 p.m. on July 18 at Kays.

**Book Sale results:** Don reports that MnStf made either \$350 or \$580, depending on how the register was programmed. Polly and Mark will figure the register out. Don estimates about one third of the material was sold. Polly got the MN connection books, bought one shelf and one MN-Stf owned shelf is going to her. She also placed an ad in the StarTribune for the second weekend of the sale and requested reimbursement of \$13.75. Approved. Don would very much appreciate the remainder being moved by June 30. (They are moving into their new house a week later.)

Carol Kennedy brought an interim **Treasury** report. (appended). She and Polly are exchanging information in order to refine this data.

**Mitchell Pockrandt** called from Cedar Rapids. He would like to remain a board member at this time, and plans to attend the next meeting.

Thomas Keeley can easily add a short list of labels for Kay to send Minicon minutes and even Board minutes. Would like to **mail out labels**; we approve. Would also like to use some **kind of COA confirmation**. And speaking of **printing**, David Cargo has not come through with his old printer, but Thomas can arrange to continue to print at work, if we will pay for supplies. Approved. Thomas now also has access to a laser printer at work, and will take over printing of the **MnStf Directory** from Scott Raun. Thomas will also post card the **MnStf Directory** to find out if people still want to be on that list.

**OTML** is under scrutiny, data trails, who does data go to, how does it get there; we have outgrown our text database and need to replace it. Thomas is wondering about *Paradox* which he is using at work. We need to standardize. Currently we use *Foxbase* for Minicon Registration. The Programming department database is on *dBase IV*, which is more like *Foxbase*. *Paradox* is "raw data" compatible with *dBase*. Steve Bush, who helped Artshow last year, is a *Paradox* programmer and could help us out.

To summarize, our options are: **1)** get another version of *Foxbase* for the the **OTML**, which is most compatible with what we are using in other areas, **2)** get a copy of *Paradox* for **OTML** and see how well our experts can get it to import and export, **3)** standardize on *Paradox* (**OTML**, Registration, Artshow, Programming) and bring computers up to *Paradox for Windows* standard. We will probably need additional helpers for all this work and we will be lucky if we can do it in a year. Approved Thomas experimenting; he will have a preliminary report two months from now.

**Agenda:** we need to decide how **Minicon 31 exec** will be selected, and Don would like a **profit goal for Minicon 30** by the conclusion of the July meeting.

## **MN-Stf Board Meeting**

July 18, 1994

**Attending:** P. Peterson, D. Gahlon, M. Schafer, K. Johnson, R. Ihinger, K. Drache.

**Next meeting:** August 15 at Kays. Starting in September we will go to a 4th Monday schedule.

Rob read a letter from W. Shetterly detailing the status of **War for the Oaks**. Filming will reopen next spring with cast changes and hopefully more financing from a trailer made from this summer's footage.

Karen & Rob reported on the **Library dispersal**; Joyce Scrivner has the archives; the remaining books will be moved from Don and Margo's on Wednesday. Rob proposes that we sell the remainders from previous sales at Diversicon, and volunteers to cover the table. Martin proposes up to \$50 for Rob to do so; approved. Leftovers

to be sold at ReinCONation. (David Cargo agrees to help out with this.) Kay will see to an ad for Diversicon by August 1, to be used as well for ReinCONation.

Polly proposes that in order to bring the stated starting time of **MN-Stf Meetings** more in line with the actual habits of the attendees, we consider changing the official start time from 1:30 to 3:00, subject to feedback from the group via Einblatt. Polly will handle.

Kay reports that Tom Keeley has got the **OTML** up to date as of right now, and is proceeding with *Paradox* investigations. Roadblock in the form of bulk mail label program snafu, which Thomas and David Cargo are fixing.

Profit goal for **Minicon 30**: \$18,000.00.

**Minicon 31 exec selection**; Martin proposes that D. Bailey, C. Ocel, G. Tenhoff and C. Piehl (Minicon 29 and 30 execs) form the committee and decide on the number of persons. Approved; Don agrees.

Don and Margo want to sell leftovers from the last five years of **Minicon art show** at ReinCONation. (Update: Giovanna Fregni agrees with this plan.)

Dean comments that it is time to nudge **Rune** again.

## **MN-Stf Board Meeting**

August 15, 1994

**Attending:** P. Peterson, D. Gahlon, M. Schafer, S. Imes, K. Drache

**Next Meeting:** September 26 at Kay's.

Polly reported on **MN-Stf meeting start time**; the small survey was divided. She will talk to more hosts.

Polly reports that Rob Ihinger says we made \$184 from the **sale of library books** at Diversicon. Polly bought \$10.00 of gas for Don and Margo's van which was used to haul books and shelving to and from the con. Reimbursement approved.

We approved \$200 for Doug Friauf to hold a **Mpls in 73** party at Worldcon.

We discussed the **Minicon 30 Theme**; pretty lame.

Reiterated that **Minicon open meetings** count toward **Voting privileges** in MN-Stf elections.

Scott Imes presented Alex Eisenstein's proposal to take the one time opportunity to display the works of artist and animator Ed Emshwiler at **Minicon 30**, an expensive undertaking which the Board approves of in theory but is not prepared to fund beyond \$1000. Ideally someone would find grant money, check into Minnesota Arts Council travelling exhibition insurance funds, and be willing to serve as a local 'champion' of the project. More details forthcoming.

## **MN-StF Board Meeting**

September 26, 1994

Attending: Polly Peterson, Dean Gahlon, Martin Schafer, Cat Ocel, Kay Drache.

Quote of the Meeting: "I'm Sercon; 50% less Silly."

Next Meeting: Monday, October 17 at 7:30 at Kays. Congratulations to Polly, whose promotion means that fourth Mondays will not always work.

Scott Imes reports on the **Ed Emshwiller** project. He has contacted the Minnesota State Arts Board, the Metro Regional Arts Council, the Walker Art Center, the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, and Resources and Counseling for the Arts. So far he has not found "free" insurance, but there is some interest in the project for 18 months from now. These places are booking their major exhibitions three years in advance. We would like Scott to continue to pursue for 18 months from now. 30 months is not a problem for us but may be for Alex. Minicon 31 Exec must be prepared to deal with a dead artist GoH ("101 Uses for a Dead Artist"....) Cat brought the photostats from Alex of his entire collection. We agree it would be great to share these with more than just the Minicon attendees.

We still don't know if we owe ASCAP money for Minicon 28, 29. (Charles Piehl has gafiated.)

Polly got a letter from a midwest Fantasy organization that wants to trade mailing lists; we don't do this.

Dan Goodman is posting **Einblatt** word for word on the Internet; we will ask Denny to mention this again so people are aware of its wide distribution.

From Minicon minutes; 8.5x11 replacement badges; Bozo TV is now Network 73.

**Library:** Rob sold about \$185.00 at ReinCONation and Don Blyly bought another \$100.00 (Scott estimated maybe half of what was left); remainder are in Joyce Scrivner's basement awaiting shipping to deserving persons or Minicon sales. Kay will call around again to Libros por Ninos, Jerry Corwin.

Polly and Mark are supposed to have a final **Treasury** report for Minicon 29 by October 1; may not have it done by then but will have it for next Board Meeting.

We discussed finding another **Vice President** since Charles appears to have gafiated, tossed around names (DDB? Sharon Kahn?), agreed that choice of meeting space affects attendance at said meetings (witness tiny showing at recent meeting at Ken Konkol's), need someone who is comfortable calling up a variety of people and persuading them to host. Discussed other possibilities for revitalizing MN-Stf; continued to October agenda.

## **MN-StF Board Meeting**

October 17, 1994

Attending: Dean Gahlon, Polly Peterson, Kay Drache

Next Meeting: Monday November 14, 7:30pm at Kay's.  
Agenda: MnStf President; Minicon 31 Exec.

Discussed Minicon; Exec selection, inclusiveness/exclusiveness of group, no author GoH yet....

Kay will follow up on whether Cat has contacted Alex Eisenstein re Ed Emsh.

Kay called around to CARC, followup on disposal of MnStf library (Rob says not much left after Hugos and Dreamhaven bought; Rob will report on income from sales at next meeting.)

Kay will also discuss with Carol Kennedy whether she still wishes to continue as treasurer, concerns about promptness in paying. Polly will get Minicon 29 stuff to her.

Board approved \$73.19 maximum to John Wirsig to cover Mpls in 73 party they held at ICon. Dean will have John call Carol for check.

Gossip update: Charles Piehl is now an Episcopal Deacon.

## **MN-StF Board Meeting**

November 14, 1994

Attending: Polly Peterson, Martin Schafer, Dean Gahlon, Don Bailey, Tony vonKrag, Kay Drache

Next Meeting: Monday, December 19, at 7:30 at Kay's.

Tony vonKrag presented information and requested a letter from the Board to the Carlson Companies regarding the Radisson Plaza Hotel and CC's refusal to negotiate with H.E.R.E. Union Local 17. Tony will draft a letter which we will edit and sign.

Don reported on the Minicon 31 exec process; he recommends a three person Exec of Tom Juntunen, Glenn Tenhoff, and Kay Drache. Approved. Don wants this Exec to commit to having an Exec recommendation for Minicon 32 by the October 95 Board meeting. Approved.

The Pool Party will be at the Radisson in January; approved a budget of \$250.00 with a \$100.00 'management reserve'.

Upcoming capital expenses to consider: 2-4 new air cleaners at Don's Honeywell employee discount price of \$200 each; Parties would like to purchase a beermeister (refrigerated tap) for ~ \$250.00 (Johnson Beverage Supply, Anoka; Palm Bros., Nicollet and 27th; DuLucas, Lake and Minnehaha); Registration is of the opinion that Art Show needs their own computer, perhaps a used 286 (\$600 or less), so that Reg. can enter ATDs at the con, access files, etc.

Polly reports that preliminary figures show a \$28,400 profit for Minicon 29.

Martin and David Dyer Bennet are working on the OTML. MnStf President candidates; Martin will try DDB and Karen Cooper.

Polly brought up the idea of a MnStf survey; Who do we appeal to, want to appeal to? What do people want, what is fun? When do we meet? Saturday? Sunday? Where? Do we have a pool of hosts? How often? Once a month? Bi weekly? Hopefully Polly is taking charge of this. The first MnStf meeting of 1995 will be two weeks after the New Years Eve party.

Other bits and pieces: Denny can decide if he wants to take a 'classified' for someone selling a long run of old Analogs; Fandata club update needs to go in; TOTU is due out in early December to coincide with reading; rumors of Rune have been heard in the distance.

IRS: 'Just Kidding' — we don't owe any money.

Kay will follow up with Alex Eisenstein re: Ed Emsch project.

ReinCONation has a committee Chair David Emerson.

Rob reported on Library sale; bottom line after ReinCONation, Diversicon, Uncle Hugo's, Dreamhaven and personal sales, \$675, which does not include garage sale income & assumes we take cash from the bookstores rather than credit. Thanks Rob!

## **MN-Stf Board Meeting**

**December 19, 1994**

Attending: Polly Jo Peterson, Martin Schafer, Kevin Trainor, Joyce Scrivner, Kay Drache

Next Meeting: January 16, 7:30 at Kay's.

Kevin Trainor would like to do Rune and will send samples of other zines he has worked on and talk to Jeff Schalles to see what the current situation is.

Joyce is willing to host a party in the fan room at Intersection (Glasgow in 95) but needs MN-Stf or Mpls in 73 to sponsor; we would supply any free alcohol, decorations, food. She will discuss further with Doug Friauf and Polly about co-hosting. We approved a maximum of \$500.00. She also wanted to know about displaying stuff from Mpls in 73, MN-Stf and we approved a maximum of \$200.00 for photos, shipping, etc.

Polly showed off the new issue of Tales of the Unanticipated; about 30 people attended a reading at the Hungry Mind, 5 bought issues, next issues are scheduled for August and April 1996.

Dances at Minicon; this is Don's decision; we wondered about billing order; since we have a musician GoH shouldn't they get top billing rather than Boiled in Lead?

Beermeister costs are higher than anticipated; still looking; would Martin McClure be willing to make one or two?

Treasurer Carol Kennedy is stepping down; Jonathan Adams is willing to continue to help with taxes. Joyce volunteered and will check into two signers and details with Carol. This is not a firm appointment at this time.

President position is still vacant; Steve Brust is covering till Minicon and the time of new appointments; Kevin Trainor volunteered for the job.

Jerry Stearns grant request was approved in the amount of \$750.00 to help fund the comic documentary on Sci-fi western B-movies from the 1940s.

Hotel space for 1996 and beyond is a topic again due to the Radisson's remodelling of Mr. C's; Martin says as far as he knows the Hyatt and (old) Holiday Inn (no good suite?) and Hilton and Convention Center combos are the only other options. We will continue to search.

Surveys Polly will colate and we will discuss at January meeting.

## **MN-Stf Board Meeting**

**January 16, 1995**

Attending: Martin Schafer, Dean Gahlon, Polly Jo Peterson, Kevin Trainor, Joyce Scrivner, Kay Drache

**Quote of the Meeting:** "Kay Drache, Speaker to MnStf Peoples" (Polly, after Kay volunteers to call yet another person before the next meeting.)

Joyce brought up two items; first, we discussed **Treasury**, the board's need to talk to Carol before making a final decision, who to get for cosigners, how many checks are written a month (taxes: Jonathan Adams is willing to continue to help,) possibly switching accounts to avoid high fees (but we don't want to create confusion between MnStf & Minicon accounts.) Carol Kennedy will attend our next meeting. Second, Joyce updated us on the collection of material for the Intersection Worldcon display; she is dealing with Lilian Edwards. This display will become part of the permanent Worldcon floating exhibit.

The Pool party meeting on Feb. 18 will be the first nominating meeting for **Board Elections**; the second nominating meeting will be March 4, and elections will be March 18, allowing several weeks for the appointment of new officers before Minicon. Dean will get Martin and Nancy McClure the information they need for election of officers.

Kevin reports that Jeff Schalles says the next issue of **Rune** is ready to go but Jeff is backlogged with work; Kevin has volunteered to help. "Early February" is the collation date. Garth is with Jeff on this; Jeff is still looking for missing Board minutes from 11/92, 12/92, 3/93, 4/93, & 11/93. (Update: Kay supplied 4/93; does anyone have others?) After this issue, we need to talk to

Jeff, and Kevin has volunteered and is eager to be the sole editor or part of a team.

Martin reports a request from Kris Spiesz to purchase a \$350 adapter for Mac to NTSC (TV video) capability; Martin told him we are not philosophically opposed to Minicon making this purchase but we think we should continue to borrow such equipment as long as possible.

Regarding the **Beermeister**, Kay found Tony vonKrag's number and will pass on to Minicon parties; mentioned Martin McClure making one again; space considerations.

We discussed moving the **archives** from Joyce's to Kay's. This consists of moving a 4 drawer file and boxes of material. We will arrange; then Kay will sort and call for missing material. Karen Johnson, Scott Imes, Martin Schafer, and Bev Elmshouser were mentioned as possible sources for stuff. Joyce will organize the Apa 45 material.

We briefly discussed the smoking at Minicon issue.

Polly went over the **Survey** results and we discussed (again) activities, frequency, the president vacancy; we will come up with a plan.

Next meeting February 20 at Kay's; Treasurer's report, MnStf meetings, Rune are on agenda.

## **MN-Stf Board Meeting**

February 20, 1995

Attending: Martin Schafer, Dean Gahlon, Polly Jo Peterson, Carol Kennedy, Joyce Scrivner, Kay Drache

**Treasury:** Carol handed out statements and we reviewed them, noting large difference in income and outgo for TOTU; lack of coherent paper trail for Kinko's account; need to deposit checks promptly and the possibility of giving people like the TOTU editor slips to make deposits directly; need to check into reducing if possible other major expenses like postage meter.

Persons we considered for the new treasurer were Eric Heideman, Joyce Scrivner, and Julie Johnson. After some discussion we agreed to ask Julie, pending approval of the new Board. Carol will continue until then.

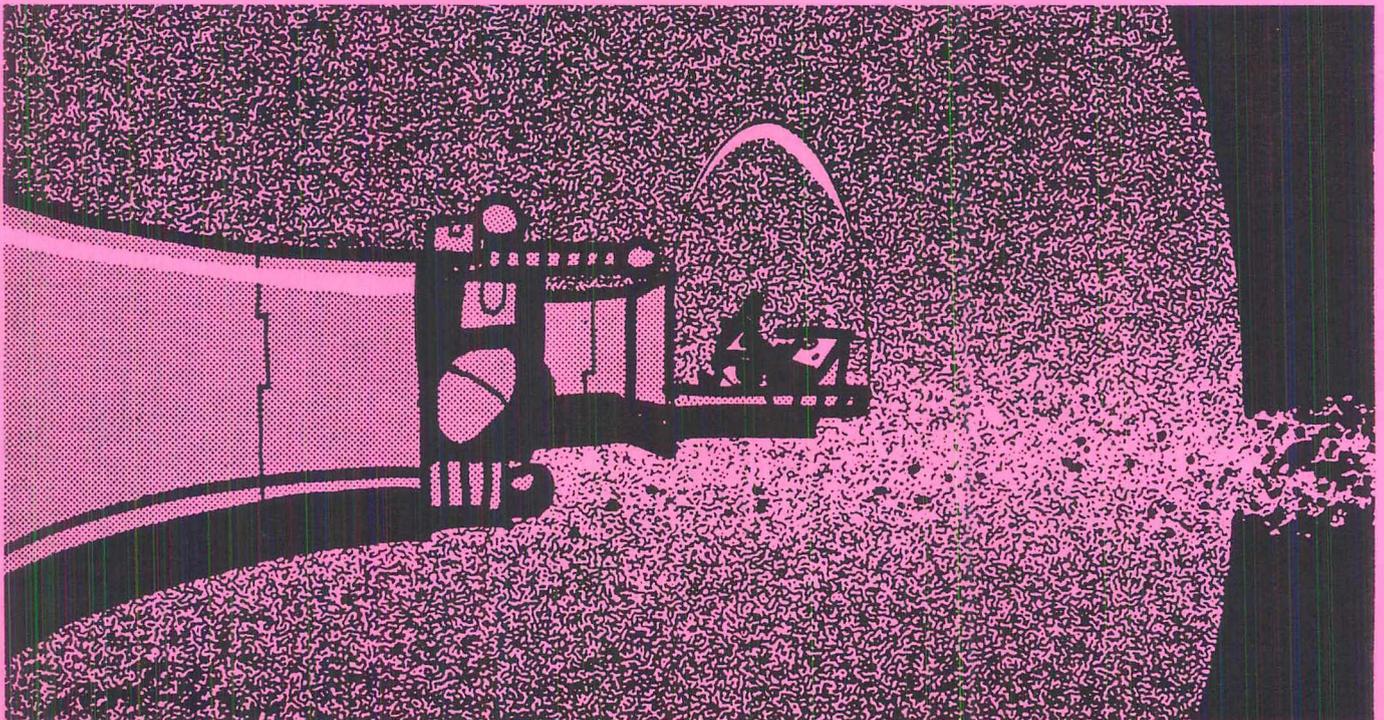
We also discussed MnStf meeting guidelines for behavior, a draft document designed to elicit ways to get more people to host meetings because they wouldn't be responsible for other's children or have to worry about their place getting trashed.

Joyce reported that British fan Bridget Wilkinson is the president of the (fannish) European Union and would be a good person to contact if we wish to send more books to Eastern Europe.

Joyce also reiterated her request for backing for a reprint of the Red Boggs history of the Minnesota Fantasy Society's early years. She will provide details in writing and we approved up to \$300 for this project.

Joyce will also get quotes on binding the Minneapa collection so that project can proceed.

No meeting date was set as the Election intervenes.





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