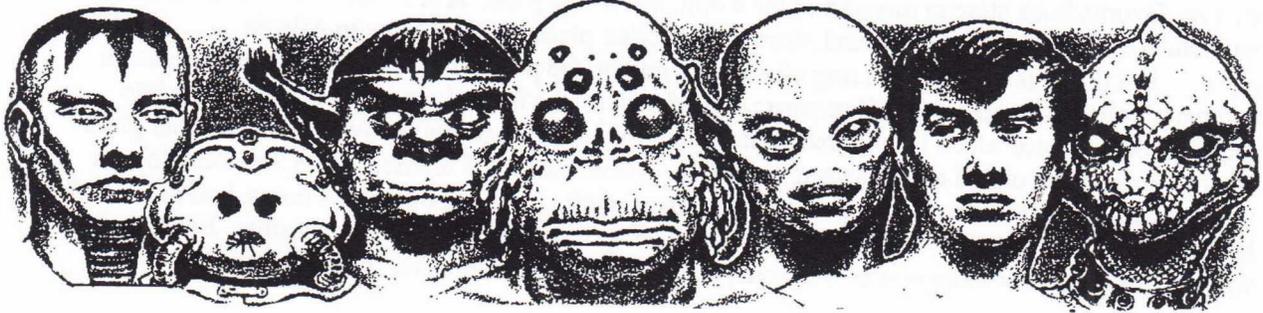


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SPIRITUS MUNDI 190

A SFPazine for SFPA #228 by

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Gunfire.

I was hauling photographic equipment from New Orleans to Atlanta, and there were nine hard hours of interstate behind me. When I pulled up outside my destination for the evening, my first impression was that I'd fallen into paradise. The house was gorgeous, the woods surrounding it deep and green and lovely. But those *were* gunshots popping off from behind the house, and more than anything they assured me that I'd come to the right place.

I rang the bell. Here came Hank Reinhardt.

Hank is Hank and Hank's house is ... Hank's house. A marvelous place built to his specifications, with a huge basement where swords can be forged, axes can be thrown, enemies tortured and prepared for the pot. The walls are bedecked with swords and axes and shields. Outside, ten acres of virgin woods, for privacy, and the occasional target practice. (That had been Hank's daughter I'd heard, firing an AK-47 at a milk carton. Hank and I found it later, she'd peppered the thing.) Paradise? Very nearly. But the master of the domain was still the same old wolflord. He took his house guests – me and a Brit fella – out to dinner, hoisted Fifi with Toni and Katie when they came over (Toni is married to him; remember, she has the right to be there), and of course, spread the horse poo wide and deep with me.

"Girls are constantly coming up to me at cons," the wolflord exulted, "trying to feed me drugs!" "Yeah," I said, "*Viagra*."

It was the first night I'd spent away from Rose-Marie since we married. Aside from that, it was great to be there.

Peddling the photo equipment, the next morning, near Hank's old house in Atlanta, was almost pleasant, and certainly it was surprisingly successful. The guy at KEH (the only outfit buying such stuff in the whole South, if you believe it) found all but a few items in excellent condition and paid us top dollar. (What he couldn't take, he said, would probably sell well on E-Bay, and it has.) I left there with a check thin in size but thick in content, and I could count the morning an almost untrammelled success. (Is there such a thing, I wonder, as a *trammed* success?). But "almost" must be the term. The photo place was

right across the street from the site of the old Book Nook, where, on one day of blessed memory, I found a pre-release hardback of **Blue Mars** and the paperback which completed my Stoker Award collection. It was my favorite book store in this part of the world, and it was gone. A bummer – aside from an early strip show or two, which I never found, there was no other place I wanted to hit in Atlanta.

So I drove about the city's ring of suburbs, finding the proper bank so I could cash the camera company's check, a proper post office where I could convert the intimidating wad of greenbacks into money orders, a place where I could trade a shredded tire for one that was nearly new, and another place where I could dump old oil and replace it with fresh. Then, home. I'd listened to one Sherlock Holmes tape heading north; I listened to another on the journey south. I was gone about 36 hours, half of which I had my foot on the gas. The trip paid our rent for June and made DeepSouthCon possible. But *Gawd*, was it exhausting. For more reasons than one, that night, Rosy's face was a shining light.

It's almost deathly quiet around St. John Parish during the summer, but we are an island in the midst of chaos. Big and ugly doin's are going on in other courthouses about southeast Louisiana. Two of our local judges have gotten themselves thoroughly immersed in deep doodoo, and while the dilemma of one is almost amusing, in a sadistic, vengeful sort of way, the other case has the whole profession in the area – including me – stunned.

Judge Sharon Hunter, in Orleans Parish, had the most feminine courtroom at Tulane & Broad – purple drapes, an attractive fragrance in the air – but also the most incompetent, threatening and chaotic. Hunter knew little of criminal law when racial politics got her elected, and even less of judicial organization. Or human relations. Because she was so abusive to her staff, she went through court reporters like I go through Kleenex. Her trial transcripts, essential for appeals, had a sorry habit of getting lost, misplaced or never done. At least a dozen convicted felons, including murderers, had to be given new trials because no transcripts were available. The situation grew so serious that the state Supremes appointed a former judge to oversee the administration of her court. In June, they took the unheard-of step of bouncing Hunter from the bench.

I'd feel sorry for Sharon, were she not, in a phrase, crazy and abusive. She covered up her lack of judicial knowledge with hostility and bluster. She is the only judge who has ever fined me for contempt of court. I'd told her face to face that I couldn't be in court the next day. The next day, she fined me a hundred bucks for not being there. But – she and I got along, which is more than can be said for another former SFPA OE who practices law in Orleans Parish. *Him* she once threw in jail for 13 hours.

If things work out as they might, and Sharon Hunter is forever lost to the bench, few are the attorneys who will mourn the fact. But many are the attorneys rocked and reeling by what's going on in my former milieu, Jefferson Parish.

One Jefferson judge, Ronnie Bodenheimer, has been arrested by the FBI. Ronnie had been a most impressive A.D.A. in years past, smart, tough, effective, yet approachable and friendly. I cheered when he defeated a hack politician for his judgeship. He had been one of the prosecutors in the Joel Durham "Mickey D" case I've written about, and the last time I saw him, in early June, I asked him if he'd mind an interview, since I'm interested in writing about it again. He said sure, even though unbeknownst to me, he was up to his beard in his own evil.

Ronnie owned a marina which had become, neighbors said, a center for drug sales. Oxycontin, they said, was readily available at Bodenheimer's bait shop. The FBI, tapping his phones, overheard the judge plot with an employee to plant narcotics on a particularly noisome critic. The old slammeroo came down hard and fast on him after that. His arrest stunned Jefferson and must have crushed him; they say the Feds had him on suicide watch. Quite so: imagine falling so far and so hard. (Poor Dennis Dolbear is aghast that a guy he's known since college, and counted as a friend, has been exposed as a criminal. "You never really know anybody," says he.)

The reason the FiBbles were after Bodenheimer had to do with a larger investigation, into the bail bondsman who dominates Jefferson justice as does no other unelected party. Literally, no one gets out of jail before trial in that parish unless Bail Bonds Unlimited writes the ticket, and its owner has judges in his pocket. Ronnie – goes the scuttlebutt – is only the first judge to go. I hear that at least three others are

under the gun.

I will observe these matters with *enormous* interest.

DeepSouthCon

If we had DSC '02 to do over again, we'd have blown off the special showing of *Windtalkers* we attended Thursday night and headed for Huntsville at once. The movie only established that super-graphic war movies have become a cliché. Hammy acting and an emphasis on explosions over Army codes and Navajo culture doomed the film, and I was surprised World War II lasted as long as it did; the Japs seemed such rotten shots. Anyway, we might not have made it all the way to Rocket City, Alabama that first night, but we would have been there earlier Friday, and the convention would have seemed longer. That was its only flaw: it didn't last long enough.

Huntsville impressed us as, beat from the 450-mile drive, we hauled in – the upright Saturn V looming over the Space & Rocket Center, the pleasant, small-townish downtown, and the convention site, a nice Hilton adjacent to an inviting civic center (which held wrestling Saturday night). Perhaps the good vibes we got from the city were projections of my utter ecstasy at getting to the DeepSouthCon. It had been Far Too Long since fans had filled my eyes.

Everyone seemed to show up at the same time. I immediately spotted my dear friend Susan Stockell, from Nashville, and others, all arriving simultaneously with us. At con registration, we found that my memory of buying Rosy a membership last year was pure senile delusion, and she had to shell out \$40 to join. She was number 270 – clearly, however busy it seemed this Friday afternoon, this would not be a very big con. But who cared? It isn't the crowd, it's the people, and the people were there. The Hugheses, Sheila, Dengrove, Mike Rogers, -- aged perhaps 20 minutes in the 20 years he's been absent from our madness – and the Lynchi, Fan Guests of Honor at long last, bearing us an exquisite wedding gift, a beautiful quilt by Nicki, the LOVE photo Rich took of us in Philly at its center. Really lovely, Nicki – a thousand thanks.

More SFPA and Southern faces of familiarity appeared – Tom Feller and Anita – the Robes, Isaac in heartening good shape – I handed out **Challengers** to whomever I could, telling all they were making our journey possible; each issue given out by hand represented a gallon of gas. (True – media rate was \$1.33 per copy, and so was gas/gallon.) Speaking of **Chall**, Naomi Fisher reported that Greg Benford, a surprise attendee., had teased her the night before about the photos I'd published of her – not realizing that I'd made her this issue's tributee. She was pleased when she finally worked up the nerve to look.

Our dinner with the van Hartesveldts should have been grand, considering the company, but this would be an unlucky convention for dinner expeditions. We ended up at a tavern “on the square,” by the courthouse, and if that place had been any slower, you could have picked us up there at the *next* Huntsville DSC.

We returned to the Meet the Guests Party, and for such a small con, DSC '02 was loaded with good people. **Chall** pal Greg Benford, author of *Timescape*, *Eater*, *The Martian Race* and many another fine SF novel, was there, and how-you-say-it... quite the happy chappy at the meet-the-guests party. Greg was a boon to the entire convention –charming, flirtatious and fun – he did me the honor of claiming not to know my little story of Lincoln's second inaugural and the presence, thereat, of the entire conspiracy to assassinate him: (I later sent him the photo), and told us a Resnick-esque tale of being paid \$25K simply to read the script for a TV version of *Eater*. I'm in the wrong business. Greg got me to trade a copy of **Chall** to David Hartwell for proof sheets of the next **NY Review of Science Fiction**. I obviously got the better of the deal.

The “accidental” guest list was really pretty awesome at this con. Agent and BNF Adrienne Martine told us anecdotes about Fritz Leiber and RAH, apologizing for the “old war stories” like any trufan. Connie Willis, the Toastmaster, talked at length with Charlotte Proctor about her novel, *Passage*. Because of Ms. Willis' popularity, it's a definite possibility to win the ConJose Hugo, but I'd prefer *American Gods* – *Passage* is overlong and underplotted, and *American Gods* has the virtue of being original and exciting from first syllable to last. I didn't tell her that, of course.

Parties that night included UK in 2005, featuring Vince Doherty in his full Scottish regalia. I was

impressed that an unopposed worldcon bid should still bother to campaign; Vince said they were simply showing respect to fandom by presenting themselves as would any other bid. I was glad they did; I'd been sent a box of campaign stuff months ago and had schlepped it north, so it could be finally put to use.

Saturday began with a panel on fanzines with the Lynches and Charlotte, where I dumped most of the trades I'd received for **Challenger** over the past six months. Quite a lot of fun to show the assemblage the variety of fannish trash that has stuffed my mailbox, to praise Brit perzines and Alan White's art and **Mimosa** and tell the tale on Rich and Nicki about the infamous MagiCon Hugo mix-up.

The Guest of Honor speeches came early on Saturday – 4PM. At first I thought this an unwise invitation to anticlimax, but the awards – or one in particular – made the choice a wise one. This was, of course, Gary Robe's Rubble Award, presented to my beautiful wife Rose, for changing a mere windbag – me – into a *giddy* windbag. Such is the power of love.

Rosy was delighted with the "honor" and made the most of it, although she seemed to appreciate the extra ribbon for her nametag more than the *faux* Krystal's ashtray and Betty Rubble figurine. She told the assemblage that even though she had attended conventions since 1968, this was the first ribbon she'd ever had to attach to her nametag. Certainly she liked it more than the Krystal meal; Rose-Marie does *not* eat red meat. Following a plaint from the Guest of Honor that he couldn't get Krystal burgers now that he'd moved north, she gave him one, and ended up dispensing the rest in crumbled bits to Jesse.

And need I add, she looked beautiful on the dais, and I was prouder than pie of her.

Toni's SFPA party that night was fun, bedecked as it was by large-size cover reproductions of Reinhardt favorite **Planet Comics** (courtesy, I understand, of Steve Hughes), and another edition of the oneshot SFPAn began with **Conglomeration** a thousand years ago – but Allah deliver me from *balloons*. Toni had filled the room with them; they still freak me out. At least the Robettes, rampaging throughout the room, did something *interesting* with them: suspending as many as possible in the updraft from the air conditioner. After chatter and a oneshot, the assemblage embarked on a dinner run, but it was, alas, another case of Honky Tonk Blues...

We ended up at a C&W bar where the band was just setting up. Hardly the best respite for my frazzled nerves, but at least we left before they began to play in earnest. I remembered one Huntsville DSC when, a blinding migraine, I allowed myself to be spirited away to a '50s-style rock'n'roll restaurant, and the pounding drumbeats nearly collapsed my skull. Not quite as fearful an evening this time, thank heaven.

Realizing that I'd left Mib back at the Baen suite, where we'd brought him to see his old pal Bear Bear and meet Fifi, Rosy and I hearkened back there to rescue him, and spent a peaceful period yapping with Toni and Hank. During this time I visited our room, and as she had a wont to do, Jesse got past me, and hauled butt down the hallway, seeking her "mama." Naturally she accompanied us to the night's parties, where all the little gals adored her. Principal among these were Greg Bridges' adorable 3-year-old and the also adorable brunette beauty *Raven Ambrosia*, no doubt of the Huntsville Ambrosias, who blew my mind when she told me she was not 19, but 31. Get this: add 31 to 19 and she's *still* younger than me.

All of interest that remained to the day was a late-night memorial to Meade Frierson. We kept it short. I was surprised by the depth of emotion in the room as those of us there remembered the Cap'n. Shouldn't have been.

The next morning's site selection vote for 2003 was won by Memphis – and easily, despite their March date, the earliest DSC in history. Dan Caldwell's slapdash Charlotte bid had only one advantage – summer dates – but should do better in a year or two, assuming the con becomes a continuing regional as its founder, the absent Irvin Koch, hopes it does. I gave Bridges our check for two memberships, first out of the block as always. But *Rose-Marie* is member #1 in the 2004 DeepSouthCon. I am delighted with my second spot. Next, or was it before?, Randy Cleary was elected SFC President, and let's all voice a hearty hail to the chief for our artistic brother.

The last panel of the con showcased Gary Robe, Pat Molloy and myself, joining Ricky Sheppard in a retrospective of the legend of WigWam Village. It was idiocy of the highest fannish order. Good to see Ricky again; like Mike and Dave Pettus, he had been too long absent from the People.

A last visit through Randy Cleary's handsome Art Show, and a jaunt through the Hucksters Room, where I bought a copy of China Mieville's pretentious **Perdido Street Station**, I traded a copy of **Chall** for a Tarot reading by Dena Bisnette, a cute lady formerly of this city who claimed real psychic power. She predicted travel with a beautiful lady. Safe bet!

And just in case you want to see what DSC *looked* like, well, check out the six pages following my mailing caustics.

As a terrific coda to the DeepSouthCon, the Hugheses visited NOLA a few days later. I'm sure Steve's zine this mailing will regale SFPA with accounts of . the D-Day Museum (and hopefully, the Confederate Museum, practically next door). They had din-din with us and the crew, and were magnificent company, of course. This issue's *Dedication* goes to *Suzanne Hughes* in happy thanks.

Over the July 4th weekend Rose-Marie and I spent the night in the country burg of Thibodaux (Thib-o-doo-wax) (okay, Tib-o-dough) so she could cover a late-evening story for her new reporting job at **The Daily Comet**. I like the little city and I like the newspaper; if it wasn't for the 58-mile commute she must endure each way, I'd be happy for my beloved. But we enjoyed this assignment, covering a DWI checkpoint set up by the state police. They wore reflective vests that gleamed in the night like alien flesh, and did nystagmus and balance tests on various tipsy drivers, forcing many to call relatives to drive them home. Neat show, but the **Comet's** digital camera refused to function and the skeeters ate us alive.

Charged with taking a holiday photo, Rosy scoured the area for a suitable shot. Like I say, I find Thib-o-doo-wax attractive; their library and Cajun museum is handsome, miss-swathed oaks are everywhere, the narrow streets have charm here and there, and the bayou that courses through town brings it the ever-welcome gush of flowing water. No picture ops, though; we ended up photographing a Little League game, of all the middle American horrors. It was impressive, though, for the genuine athletic ability of the 10-year-olds and the splendid rack on the proud mama who gave us the team roster. Not that I *noticed*, of course, with Rosy around.

June 30th, to hearken back a week, was our first anniversary. We celebrated that whole weekend, first with a showing of **The Wizard of Oz** at Nawlins' spectacular Saenger Theater, festooned with statuary and an elegant, wood-paneled lobby – featuring for this occasion huge models of the Scarecrow and Tin Man, complete with projected clouds on the domed ceiling. Long-timers here will recall the Saenger as the site of concerts for the New Leviathan Oriental Fox Trot Orchestra. Now a good print of the 1939 classic followed an organ recital. Joey Grillot sidled up to regale Rosy with the history of the place, neighbor Cindy danced in her seat at seeing her favorite movie on the screen for the first time, and Judy Garland sang "Over the Rainbow". The audience ate it up.

Speaking of eating, Rose and I celebrated June 30th on our own, too. At our wedding, Annie Winston presented us with a gift certificate for Commander's Palace, possibly the best restaurant in this city full of great eateries. Now was the time to use it.

We ate like gods: quail for the lady, a hearty slab of beef for me, and Bananas Foster (prepared tableside) for us both. Awesome. After chow, we toured the elegant old restaurant, including the patio where my family had eaten the only other time I'd been at Commander's, 35 years before. It was an encounter, and glorious.

But Rose-Marie suffered a disappointment, and it was my fault. She wanted a photo, and I wouldn't go for it – I was uptight about appearances. To make up to her for the idiotic tightness of my sphincter, I'm getting a Commander's cookbook, autographed by our waiter. And me, with the sincere promise that my selfishness will never get in the path of an evening's perfection for her, again.

It has been a difficult year, but the best of them. We had terrible money troubles and problems – that continue – with Cindy. But we overcame them – and here is Year Two of what I pray will be the rest of Time. Heaven bless you, my *belle* Rose.

Originally this issue's cover was to feature – as promised last time – my mother-in-law's shower curtain, but that's a color shot and I can't afford such froth this mailing. Next time, maybe. Instead I raid my stock of old art and shoot another of Jerry Collins' venison fantasies to the fore. I wonder what Jerry's doing these days. I'd be very disappointed if he was doing art for the NRA. Interior art – a ripoff from a party ad from the DSC, and patriotic sticker prizes from various bags of Cracker Jacks.

We've spent our time eying nonsense at the movies, but some of it has been good nonsense. Nothing wrong with **Men in Black II**; as deep as a (flying) saucer but fun. We enjoyed **The Crocodile Hunter** more; Steve Irwin, who wrestles and rescues voracious crocodiles for a living, is a certifiable maniac, but we both enjoy his Aussie lunacy. Just don't ask me to take his job. I get the heebie-jeebies when our cat walks on my chest at night. **Reign of Fire** has recently opened as this deadline blooms, and *oh*, is it *ace*. I haven't enjoyed an SF adventure movie as much since **Aliens**. A London drilling rig opens a chasm in the earth, releasing a dormant fire-breathing dragon. Within 20 years, it and its progeny have wiped civilization from the surface of the world, leaving pockets of stubborn survivors bent on outlasting the beasts. Into their midst rolls, at the head of a ragtag tank column, "the only thing worse than a dragon" ... an American. Though played by the normally insufferable Matthew McConoghayhayhohoheehee (notice how cleverly I cover up the fact that I can't spell his name) (*McConaughy*), he is just what they need, a proactive, aggressive hunter, stalker, and killer, brutal, effective, and unconcerned with other people's fears. (Typical yank, in other words.) His team's efforts to slaughter the plug-uglies, and his eventual, inevitable team-up with the leader of the Brits, are thrilling to watch. Grand special effects, too. Rosy made me admit that **Reign** probably won't take the #1 spot on my Torcon Hugo ballot away from **The Two Towers**, but it's something we can nominate without shame, fo' sho'.

Speaking of worldcon, we have *still* not made a final decision about ConJose. Money is desperately short, but dammit, even if I don't win a Hugo, and of course I won't, *not* appearing might jeopardize my chances for *next* year ... but can I possibly justify spending three thousand dollars we haven't got in a period when climbing out of debt should take priority? But what *fun* it would be! *Aggh!* You'll know when I know – probably, after the *next* deadline (which is safely *after* the worldcon).

I'll let this be it for my natter, this time; **Challenger** will have to hold my shock and horror at the traffic death of a St. John reserve deputy whom I'd seen *minutes* before the truck whacked him, part of an article concerning my ever-evolving feelings about cops. As for **Chall**, I've received a cover rough, some LOCs (I need more! please!) and one article (from Benford) for the next issue, which is planned for December. Later today I think I'll send a note to a fellow I hope will contribute to a piece on Joe Green's Apollo parties. It'll begin, "Dear Sir Arthur ..."



MAILING
CAUSTICS .
SFPA 227



The Southerner #227 / Bruce Pelz / Jeff Next mailing, unless you do it, I'm going to list all of your Rule 4s since you became OE and take a guess at the sense they're supposed to make. ## Well, consider this a *chide*, because indeed, DeepSouthCon was an inspiration, which y'all would have known *had you made it*. In all seriousness, it was far too short an event – it should have begun Thursday. ## The page of praise to fandom pillar and great person Bruce Pelz is very nicely done (Rose and I want to know how you got the photo to come out so clearly). Here's a meaningless factoid: Bruce is the first casualty among all the people who have put out SFPA mailings as OE or EO. Meaningless indeed – what matters is that the world, and our fannish part of it, is much the less without him.

Away from Home with the Armadillo / Liz My sympathies on the demise of your stepfather, a champion of our species. ## It is painful to admit this, but it is past time that I faced facts and admit the truth about myself to myself: I am *not* a hard-boiled nihilist -- I'm a rank, shameless sentimental slob, a hopeless sap for a gloriously silly romance. **My Big Fat Greek Wedding.** It's a Windex-drippin' hoot. Schmaltz worked less well with **About a Boy**, but Rose-Marie liked it.

Variations on a Theme #12-13 / Rich I really enjoyed these issues. the little bio you give of Johann Sebastian Bach reminds me of the famous comment one music scholar made, when asked what music should be included on the record sent

into space aboard **Voyager**. "The works of Bach," he replied, "but that would be bragging."

Ah, Jekyll Island – two fine DSCs and reconnecting with *la belle Rose* ## You're absolutely right! To know America, cross it on its back roads. The Interstate is almost as far from the country as the airlines! ## As for your latest potscrad diary from eastern Europe ... Apollo 13 flew, sort of, in 1970, *thirty-two* years ago, not twenty-two. You must be a true son of the '60s – you lost a decade! (And jumping forward to your *contretemps* with another SFPAn ... be glad the decade you've lost was the '70s!)

The fact that Budapest's subways are unafflicted by graffiti makes me wonder – and perhaps Toni, a scholar on the subject, can inform us – what graffiti says about the society in which it appears. Does it follow from a repressed underclass, in a divided country? Or is it merely a sign of disaffected youth – and if so, why doesn't Budapest show it? ## Why does Poland have such good chocolate? Why does Belgium? Something about the milk? ## Ah, you've got me whistling the theme to **The Third Man**. That film is the way Vienna will live in history. Prague, on t'other hand, will be hailed forever as the city which gave the world Martina Klicperova; you describe the only metropolis worthy of her. She's mentioned that Astronomical Clock; I'd love to see that. Gad, I envy you these trips! ## Especially at such incredibly cheap railroad prices! \$50 for a roomette! They don't even have roomettes on Amtrak anymore! You either ride next to the epileptic wino in coach, or pawn your house to afford a compartment. ## A very nice eulogy for Bruce Pelz – and a neat photo of the man with

Harry Warner and Rosy's buddy Peggy Rae Sapienza. Kind of strange to see Hagerstown hermit Harry in the company of others ... ## C'mon, the *Seiun* Awards take longer than five minutes! Let's get an answer to this: someone take a stopwatch to ConJose. Surely it's more like five *hours*.

Tyndallite Vol. 3 No. 101 / NORM Can anyone tell me if **Enterprise** has been renewed? Not that I've ever seen more than a few minutes of an episode, unfortunately not the shower scene. **Smallville**, according to its producer, ex-SFPAn Mark Verheiden, *has* been renewed, and I hope they keep the show going long enough to change its name to **Metropolis**. ## Do you read enough French to scan Verne in the original? If not, why are you suspicious of the translations you have on hand? And wouldn't they be better than nothing? ## Any tribute I could write to Ray Lafferty would be inadequate. Now that **Challenger #16** – my attempt at a Lafferty tribute – is out, I admit I feel it disappointing, in that it concentrated on how much fun the author was to be around, and failed to praise enough the depth and scope of his literary genius. ## I repeat, your arguments that Verne's *Nautilus* are not science fiction would make a juicy **Chall** article. Just collect your comments from past **Tyndallites**, we'll work them into a usable piece. ## Our friend, Rebel-winner Pat Molloy would love all this railroad talk. He's a nut for the rails.

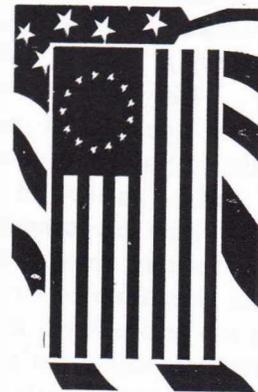
The New Port News #203 / Ned This DeepSouthCon was the first you've missed since DSC 2 ... and this was #40! Shame to see such a string go snap. ## Your cover reminds me that I look forward to **Reign of Fire**, as its previews look ace. Eat lead, dragon! ## You mention your collection of Jules Verne and remind me how I amassed mine – a large number of obscure paperbacks I recently unearthed during one of Rosy's re-boxing orgies. Along with a lot of other wonderful stuff, they were given to me by a guy named Tom Granvold during my senior year at Berkeley. He was just tired of them, he said, and I certainly didn't mind. Tom subsequently married my girlfriend, and I'll leave it to him to say which of us got the better of the deal. ## Speaking of Verne, there's a good **Challenger** article in debunking the physics behind his space

cannon and other gadgets. Consider that a spectacularly broad hint. ## Of course, I know zippo about physics, but if you *really* define "cold," I'll bet you get a condition that *implies* super-conductivity. (My ignorance dances about the room.) And thanks for the word that aluminum wiring, such as surrounds me in this house, corrodes worse in the sub-tropics. These *are* the sub-tropics. ## Whether or not the 9-1-1 date was chosen at random (not that Schlosser's kid had anything to do with it), I know some people who were very glad indeed that another date wasn't chosen. Greg Benford said at DSC that he'd flown Boston-to-SanFran on September 10th. So did Edward James Olmos, of **Miami Vice, Stand & Deliver, American Me**. Perhaps most terrifying ... instead of going to worldcon, two weeks prior to 9-1-1, Tony Lewis' divine daughter Alice Naomi flew to an *anime* convention, in San Francisco, from Boston. Too damned close. ## Not that we weren't perversely lucky anyway. Had Atta Boy and his fellow shitbags struck later in the day, after more folks had come to work, and lower on the towers, blocking off more floors ... we lost 3000 people that day; we could have lost ten times that. ## This "fluidics" business is interesting – thanks for telling us that it would be impervious to an E.M.P. There's a solid, or fluid, S.F. story there. ## **Smallville** a "sitcom"? You gotta start watching TV with the sound *on*, Ned. ## **Young Frankenstein** does annoy me. I find Mel Brooks' broad humor easy to get plenty of. I know he's your cousin – same last name, a sure tip off – but he can't get me to crack a smile. ## What's the *story* (get it?) on those Malaysian skyscrapers and its unusable floors? Is this like the basement in the Alamo? ## Ah, **The Wicker Man**. Christopher Lee sings, Edward Woodward burns alive, and Britt Eklund dances around naked. Top *that*, **Citizen Kane**!

Twygdrasil #76 / Richard Well, boy with the beanie, how'd you like DSC? Wasn't this your first? ## It's good that the murder of your associate's daughters has been solved, but disturbing that gangbangers were behind the killing. It should come as no surprise that I blame the rise of the gangs on the right-wing resurgence of the 1980s. Reaganism, coupled with the clumsy excesses of ardent liberals,

affirmative action and the like, brought a new acceptability to an old evil, segregation. All efforts to consolidate this society – good as well as stupid – went out the window in an orgy of Republican wedge politics. The underclass was again isolated and condemned, re-ghettoized and forced into a corner. And we wonder why drugs and the gangs that control them took hold there? I hate the casual acceptance of violence prevalent in the black community. I can't blame people who fear it. But dammit, we *caused* it, and now we are supposed to expect the underclass to pull itself up by its bootstraps with our contempt and fear resting on its neck. Bah. ## Vonnegut appeals to depressed college students -- 12-year-olds aren't as interested in impressing one another with their sangfroid -- and, with **The Sirens of Titan**, to me. Written before he lapsed completely into his pretentious coma of cynicism, it's simply wonderful. ## Great quote: "Our entire war against terrorism has been a total success except for its object." Watch. We invade Iraq just before the midterm elections. Never mind that the real reason for the battle would be to correct Bush Sr.'s most egregious mistake – after his failure to support the democratic revolution in China, that is – Our Boys would be in harm's way, and criticizing their airheaded Commander in Chief will be damned as unpatriotic. Watch. ## Speaking of judges, the idiot who tried to declare the Pledge of Allegiance unconstitutional really hurt the judiciary in its duty to serve as a check on legislative and executive excess. Who can take seriously court attempts to provide due process on accused terrorists, over presidential whim, when a jurist makes such a silly decision. Why do I think it silly? I believe it's what we call *res judicata* – a decided thing. The recitation of "under God" in the pledge is just the same, to me, as allowing a Christmas tree on the lawn of City Hall – it doesn't "entangle" civic government with any specific faith. Kids who don't want to say the Pledge don't have to, so their rights are protected. It isn't an issue worthy of court time. All it really is, is another Republican wedge; *the people can't trust the courts, so pay no attention when the courts try to keep us from ignoring the Bill of Rights*. It's a sorry age. ## Nathan's hot dogs are *delicious*. 'Nuff said. ## Actually, Rosy loves road trips, and is far more anxious to

drive to ConJose than I am. ## Yes, an investigator testifying as to what would-be witnesses told him *is* hearsay. *But*: it's allowed if the witnesses have made themselves unavailable, which the two guys in the trial I mentioned had done. That case may come back on appeal ... and by the way, that guy drew the max for his attempted second degree murder: 50 big ones. ## Indeed, bad James Bond parodies were everywhere in the late '60s. I understand that Mike Meyers' Austin Powers satires, on the other hand, are pretty good; I knew I blew my nephew's mind when I told him that the hero and the villain were both portrayed by the same actor. ## Bill Clinton? Oh yes, the eight-year nightmare of peace and prosperity that preceded the current wave of aimless war and constant scandal. Thank God the grown-ups are back. ## The only thing you have to remember about Ray Lafferty is that he was a conservative Irish Catholic with the wildest – yet kindest -- sense of humor on the planet. ## Sneaking in mention



of a sponsor's product during the program was called *payola*, and indeed, **Mad** talked about it a lot in the late '50s. ## Talking to kids is considered good practice for talking to juries: both venues emphasize compelling conversational style over grand rhetoric. ## Speaking of buying videos, I mention somewhere trying to E-bid for the special Emmy videotapes of **Smallville**. No chance, they were going for bigger bucks than mine. And yes, thanks to our sale of some of Rosy's camera equipment, I've discovered E-Bay, and even purchased three items – all books. To wit: a copy of the first edition of **Past Master**, an autographed fitness

book by the sainted James Scott Connors, and uhh, a textbook of *moral philosophy* that was popular when I was in college, Dr. Theodore Mark's **I Was a Teenybopper for the CIA**. Found the e-dress for that underrated thespian, at least in some of her movies, Victoria Paris, too. Heh. ## I really hope that George Lucas ages Annakin Skywalker a decade or two before he morphs him into Darth Vader. The kid in **Attack of the Clones** was a pimply dweeb. Hey, here's a question: if C-3PO worked on his farm in **Attack**, why didn't Uncle Owen recognize him in **New Hope**?

Trivial Pursuits #101 / The Ellison Webderland Experience / Janice Truly heartfelt words about George Alec Effinger. I know you'll miss him terribly. At first, as you know, I disliked the obituary I sent you from the local newspaper. It mentioned not only George's ills but his addictions, and seemed 'way out of line. Reading here, for the first time, some details about his unfortunate parentage, I'm impressed by all he did to overcome a beginning worthy of a Charles Manson. Instead he became the George we knew, a brilliant and creative and positive guy. His character deserves every tribute. ## You speak most truly when you lament that the Internet robs us of much of the value of old-fashioned pen-&-ink correspondence: from the computer screen you get damn little personal sense of the fella or lady writing to you, clues from his or her handwriting – and unless you're like Rosy, and save all your I.Ms and e-mails on disc, what's been said is all too easily lost. And time do pass so quickly ... ## If you liked **Amelie**, and why not, then you've got to see **My Big Fat Greek Wedding**. Choice beyond words! ## I love the Dave Barry column you ran about the Olympics, because he focused on one of my favorite moments of the Games – the Aussie skater winning Gold because everyone in front of him simply fell down. There's a lesson in that, but damned if I can say what it is. ## Cindy Snowden's landlady is a disappointment, all right, but at least the Arabic social workers who placed her there are still trying to help her. Two problems: Cindy has a head like a brick and insists on finding her own place, not that she ever finds one she can possibly afford, and refuses to even discuss places in

neighborhoods where she might have had a problem 20 years ago, and ... these Arabs mean well but don't know caviar from camel shit. One lady jumped me at the post office and told me how desperate the situation with Cindy had become. That very night, her boyfriend accosted me at a bookstore and assured me all was daisies and buttercups. All I know, if a hurricane hits, or a movie she might like opens, I'll go get Cindy; but the buck stops there. (Yeah, I know: fat chance.) ## An interesting juxtaposition results from the misplacement of your page header at one point: "Evidently in court, [Anne Perry] was found to be under heavy GUY". Assure Ms. P that I have lost weight. Speaking of youthful murderers, you noticed that poor Leslie van Houten – looking as dry as sand and 15 years older than she is – got turned down for parole again. ## A site selection ballot for 2005 sits in my desk at work, ready for mailing. I suspect I've voted for a winner. ## A Rick Norwood quote from *decades* past: "A good man is never without a stamp." ## **Ellison Webderland** is, of course, this mailing's Best Bit, and you have my solemn promise never to reveal its existence. There is no excuse for Harlan's touchiness – hardly the first time he's gone off on a whack about some utterly meaningless "slight," such as this nonsense with Langford – but in the old boy's favor, I must note that no one "does" paranoid hysteria with more style. Yes, we've seen imitators, in SFPA and elsewhere, but for sheer linguistic creativity and nervous verve, HE is it. Be honored, apa; we are in the presence of a master ... who should forget such silliness and write more stories.

Frequent Flyer / Tom Good to see you guys at the con. I enjoyed your account of the River Stages Rock Festival, though it inspires a bite of regret: I didn't take Rosy to this year's Jazz Fest, and she would have enjoyed the music and crowd and color. Next year, we'll hit at least one day. ## Harry Potter slash fiction? Oh my aching God ... ## I disagree that the original **Rollerball** had any quality to hold up. Pretentious and aggravating movie. **Death Race 2000** was much better. ## A real gripe with the new **Time Machine**: Jeremy Irons' mutant king, or whatever he was, mentioning the destruction of the Moon ... from 800,000 years before. Wells'

point in placing his story's action so far in the future was to erase all trace of current events and reduce humanity to its basics – a socialist dichotomy, in his view. No one would know of such an ancient event. Besides, Jeremy Irons was wasted and silly in that idiotic makeup, and that's sacrilege against one of the best actors of our era. ## *Great comment about Weekly World News.* Can I quote it? ## The problem with *Tora x 3* was tedium. Without the envelope of a personal story, Pearl Harbor makes for dull cinema. **From Here to Eternity**: still the best treatment of 12-7-41 on film.

Confessions of a Consistent Liar 77 / Arthur Before he died – of course – Joe Mayhew pointed out that *Fan Artist* was the Hugo category where new fannish talent could break through to recognition. Certainly it provides the most unfamiliar names. ## “7th graders would mostly not appreciate a stripper.” Well, not so sure; a naked older woman (say, college) would embarrass and baffle most kids that age, but those more deeply into puberty would probably gawp and giggle. “I don't know where the line should be drawn” ... How about, somewhere where *mothers* wouldn't hear of it. ## “Hmm,” says Hlavaty. “Beauty marrying the chrome-domed Beast: Why do I have this feeling of déjà vu?” HAW That line *had* to be stolen. ## Sharp words about the First Fandom Awards and their occasionally verbose presenters. A lot of fans go their whole lives without recognition – so when the chance comes to expound before an audience, they forget how it feels to sit through such blarney. Fortunately, my speeches, especially the long ones, are always a joy to listen to, so I have no such problem.

Peter, Pan & Merry #43 / Dave Please, please pass along our sympathies to Kay on the death of her brother. Awful. Thank heaven the car wreck didn't add too hideously to her woes. ## My favorite SF bit on **The Simpsons** involved Martin's pledge that as class president he'd fill the school shelves with “the ABCs of science fiction – Asimov, Bester, Clarke!” “What about Ray Bradbury?” “I'm aware of his work!” ## I must admire the flawless logic with which you extrapolate the likelihood that werewolf fleas can – or rather cannot – transmit the infection. Such

a relief. ## Hmmm ... I don't know where the design of the Rebel battle flag came from. Maybe the Confederate Museum knows ... ## A “pencil or pen could be a nasty weapon ...” Indeed, anything can be a deadly weapon, and qualify someone using it as an armed robber or an aggravated burglar. It all depends, in the legal parlance, on *the manner used*. ## Non-citizens aren't specifically *un*-included in Constitutional protections, which as far as we liberals are concerned *includes* them. Citizenship isn't mentioned in the Bill of Rights: they are the rights of human beings, not simply Americans. ## A recent technothriller close to the quality of **Fail-Safe, The Sum of All Fears**. No, who am I kidding. **Fears** was very good – I loved the James Bond character – but **Fail-Safe** is epic. It was the movie's bad luck that it should come out practically simultaneously with the even more wonderful **Dr. Strangelove**. ## I suspect an equipment failure of a stupendous sort in the Soviet space program – the capsule called Zond, sent – allegedly unmanned – on a translunar trajectory shortly before Apollo 8. I don't think it was unmanned. I think cosmonauts died on that ship, in a reckless attempt to beat Borman, Lovell and Anders to the Moon. In fact, given a few minutes' checking of dates, I might expand this particular conspiracy theory to include the death of Yuri Gagarin. Hey, it beats thinking the phone company shot JFK! ## If I'd kept up my LASFAPA string from when I first joined – in mlg 3, 1976 – I'd be III there too! ## Hobbit slash fiction? How about one starring Galadriel and Goldberry? *That* I'd read! ## Come to think of it, “lips like split sausages” would sound pretty good to Homer Simpson. ## A straightforward battle between Sherman's army and Joe Johnston's Confederate troops would have been as destructive of human life as his sadistic March to the Sea, but it could never have caused the century of bitter schism that followed Crazy Tecumseh and the Reconstruction, about which the less said the better.

Revenant #12 / Sheila Glad you enjoyed Jazz Fest! Next year – in fact, next time and every time you come to New Orleans – give 482-7083 a ring-a-ding, and we'll nosh. ## Speaking of Jazz Fest, the times I attended, I enjoyed Jerry Lee Lewis, Waylon Jennings, and of course the

New Leviathan Oriental Foxtrot Orchestra. They want me back, they should book Nanci Griffiths. I'd burrow my way under the fence. ## The GRE was the first of many indications I received in life that I'd wasted my undergraduate years – not that I didn't value my Berkeley education; I just never let *school* interfere with it! Anyway, I strutted into my GRE with my 3.8 major GPA and drooled out like a ruptured zit. I knew so damned little of what was on the test. "George Satayana?" I asked the wind. "Who the #%#@ is George Satayana?" Anyway, best of fortune with your grad school efforts. ## Nice words on Effinger. I remember one time I joined a group of local writers in the bar of a con hotel – Roger Lovin, just before his incarceration for child pornography, was holding court, belittling Hank Stine when he showed up ... George was there, too, a choir boy in that company. Yeah, a good guy, of which there are too few on this world. ## I never heard of this BBC radio version of **LotR**. Was it ever commercially released? I borrowed a version from Dolbear for a west coast trip once – I passed a truckful of pigs just as it went into a description of orcs – and wonder if it's the same one. Indeed, the film of **Fellowship of the Ring** was forced to leave out a great deal, such as the explanation of why Galadriel's rejection of the Ring fulfills her life. So ... everybody read the books again! Do people still check them out of your library?



Offline Reader Vol. 1 Issue 28 / Irvin So what's the story on this continuing Carolina convention for which Caldwell bid on the DSC?

I don't get any of the investment stuff – except that Rain Man has been proved right when he said "K-mart suuuccckkkks" -- but conventions and DSCs, them I understand! ## I never knew that Myriad had its own convention! Does it still adhere to the every-six-weeks schedule it had when I was a member, in the very earliest '70s?

Oblio No. 140 / Gary B. Rotten shame about your cousin – pancreatic cancer is a rough way to go, and 51, less than what you and I have already, is far too young an age to take it. Mortality doesn't hesitate to rear its ugly head at any time, of course, but seems an awfully familiar countenance now that we've reached middle age. Aren't cousins neat, though? I value mine, honky desert rats though they are, because however long it is between visits out west, I know the high Mojave is still home. ## **Spider-man?** An enormous success, certainly the year's best fantasy so far. Consistent and coherent – and therefore superior to the original **Superman**, a mess of a movie made by committee – and damned exciting. Now – will **Daredevil** live up to it? ## Yes – bowdlerize the photo of the track star, whose short shorts were strained to the limit by his, uhh, athletic exertions. Better to color in a shadow than embarrass the poor kid, and better for the effect you want from the photo, too. There's a picture of Pat Cash leaping in joy after a victory, that shows more than exhilaration peeking out from his shorts, embarrassed the poor Ozzie when it appeared, but it probably also got him a lot of dates. ## Have you noticed that whenever Bush's polls dip, or one of his daughters gets her knickers into a knot, John Ashcroft will pop up with another warning that more terrorism is imminent? We'll see a lot of that as the elections approach. Keep the people terrified, stay in power. ## "All Turks look goofy." I'll tell Faruk! (I wonder which team *you* backed in the World Cup final.) ## Since an *intervening party* was the *cause in fact* of the deaths and injuries at the World Trade Center, I doubt most suits against its architects or the airlines will get anywhere. They should sue Osama bin Laden, and hope he shows up for trial. ## Perhaps you saw that cops closed down the **Girls Gone Wild** balcony at the last Mardi Gras. Protesters anxious to condemn the tape series' offensive sexism had packed the street below so

full that walls were collapsing from the pressure. I ~~narrowly avoided arrest~~. ## "I always thought [Charles E.] Spanier was straight out of Robert Crumb's imagination." HAW! Inspired! ## How is comics fandom "mutating"? Is "Our Favorite Guy" still famous? ## No, the reason the Pentagon plane didn't get as much press as the other flights is because the video isn't as good – if you can call that hideous, horrifying, unspeakable nightmare of a scene at the World Trade Center "good." Had the killers hit *only* the Pentagon, we'd still be as upset, but we wouldn't have the same images racking our memories. Speaking of which, did your paper note a 6-1-1 baby boom? ## Dolphins fans should thank the Saints for Ricky Williams *after* the season, not before. He's a player with amazing potential; let's hope Miami can tap it the way New Orleans never could. ## I disagree about the Lex Luthor character on **Smallville**. He's a fearfully damaged and dangerous young man, but he has a vulnerability to him, a need for human contact and friendship, for which he finds the possibility of satisfaction in Smallville with decent people like the Kents. At least part of the fascination the series holds for me – and it's my favorite hour on TV – is how it harbinges his awful future. As he said to young Clark the other week, "Our friendship will be the stuff of legend." Oh *yeah*. I sent our boy Mark Verheiden, a producer on the show, a fan letter, praising the respect **Smallville** shows the Super-legend ... infinitely superior to the smarmy and badly-acted **Lois & Clark**. I *didn't* ask Mark if young Clark would someday meet a neurotic kid who'd lost his parents to crime – rich boy named Bruce Wayne – or if ace reporter Chloe Sullivan would someday change her name to something simpler ... like, Lois Lane. But I bet both things happen. ## I somehow doubt the producers of **Lois & Clark: The New Adventures of Superman** will have problems selling tickets. CHRISTMAS MY BIG BLUE BUTT! **NOW!** I WANT IT **NOW!!!**

George's Zine / Poulette I believe in you. Indeed I do. (Nice seeing you at the con, George!)

Tennessee Trash #47 / Gary R. Quite a relief to see Isaac so hale at the DSC! He percolates right along. One shies from even imagining your

horror when the most dreaded of medical possibilities – *leukemia* – came to mind. What he's been through is bad enough, but the key term is *through*, and hooray for him. ## I envy you seeing Seattle and the house of SFPA. The incarnation of FiFi you brought back was a hit at DSC: still she fills Mib's panda-bear dreams. ##



Your portrait of Hugo Chavez' Venezuela is fascinating and terrible – you go to the *nicest* places! I, too, rejoice that we Americans don't have to make decisions like that family which fled to another country; the 2000 election reduced America to the level of a banana republic, but our secret police aren't as intrusive – yet. (W is ceding presidential authority to Cheney today, while he's sedated – hmm, that could be *every* day – so tonight things might be different.) ## The ghastly news you bring us about Rick Norwood's missing son reminds me of the day I met him. It was summertime, 1977 – or around SM40, as I tell time. Rick & his wife came to ... somebody's house, can't remember if it was Justin Winston's or Dennis Dolbear's. I answered the door. Rick's wife greeted me with "Here, Guy," and handed me a human being. It was the infant James, and now his car has been used in an armed robbery and his own fate is unknown. What a nightmare. Keep us advised, please.

Comments 14 / Steve So great seeing you at and after the DeepSouthCon. Hope Suzanne enjoys her dedication ... and that you guys got to see the Confederate Museum. ## Your printer table and zine workshop sounds like fannish paradise ... but remember, so did a screen Gestetner and a

Selectric II not that many decades ago. Soon, no fan editor would think of publishing without instant 3-D hologrammatical access with a reader-specific virtual reality interface – not quite a fresh pool of jell-O for your hectograph, but its direct descendent. ## Okay, a promise and an offer: we'll organize a group outing on **The Maid of the Mist** prior to the 2003 Toronto worldcon! I've never been on the boat, which puttputts into the very spray from Niagara Falls, so it'll be new to most of us. ## A year or so ago I wrote about my first experience with an Orthodox Jewish funeral. Fascinating ritual, with a surprising number of references to Hitler, whose name was always followed by a Hebrew curse. I took part, helping cover the coffin with dirt before anyone left. I hope my landlady approved. ## Well, I did take some "assets" photos of young female celebrants during this year's Mardi Gras, but somehow, being married to Rose-Marie, I wasn't as awed by their display as in years past. ## My question about Enron: did executives hide the company's imminent failure from its employees, knowing they had been bamboozled into investing their savings in its stock, the better to maximize their own profits when they sold? If so, hang the Republican sonsabitches up by their buster browns. ## Speaking of **Planet Comics**, your display of duplicate covers at the SFPArty was *ace*. ## How very cool that you could read your airplane's flight information on your laptop as it took you across the Pacific. That info would be a comfort, of course, except when the display reads "OH SHIT **HELP!!!!!!**" or the guy in the next seat tries to light his Reeboks. ## As for "getting the full treatment" from airport security, including pat-downs, don't feel bad that you were selected; I understand it's happened twice to Al Gore, the true President of the United States. ## I'm not surprised that there are at least ten ways of hijacking an airliner with stuff already on the plane. But I doubt hijacking will happen again, at least not in this angry era. Anyone causing a disturbance on an airplane these days is likely to be slaughtered by the other passengers. That was true *before* 9-1-1. Remember the poor loon who was beaten to death two years ago by his fellow passengers, and, as I recall, he was merely acting crazy, not even trying to take over the jet. ## Your true and wise comment about not being

able to prevent criminal violence through security reminds me of the silliest thing I ever saw in LASFAPA, and that makes it silly indeed: having people prevent sexual assaults by wearing buttons: *Stop Rape*. I wonder if such political correctness would have had any effect on my client Eddie? Still, the sentiment is nice, although buttons reading *Love Thy Neighbor* would have made as much sense, and as much difference.

All the Stars in the Sky / Fractured Fairy Tales III / Jeff Beautiful cover – it belongs on a poster. Five planets visible in one glance – if you count the one Stonehenge is sitting on! (Nice paper stock this issue, too, by the way.) ## I envy your hosting El Robe on his journey west. The days when SFPAns trooped through New Orleans en route to Mardi Gras or Jazz Fest or Mecca or whatever are locked in the lamented past. ## Hmm ... how could TV programs keep commercial revenue in a technological environment which allows consumers to edit them as they watch? The solution is simple, and has been done before. *Make the commercials part of the show*. Buffy hacks the head off a goblin, then praises her underarm deodorant. It works! ## Yikes! at the Italian car wreck which hospitalized your folks. No doubt your old man was reminded of World War II. ## I believe I've expressed my regrets over Denzel Washington's character in **Training Day** – it's a shame he turned out to be crooked. While I was watching the first part of the movie, the thought kept coming that he'd be a great role model for black kids, a tough cop cleaning the drugs out of his neighborhood. ## I caught the final **X-Files**, very reminiscent of the last **Seinfeld**, you noticed, using the device of a trial and witnesses to rehash and tie up the major plot points. Troubles were many with the show – most of the revelations made little sense to a non-addict like myself, and the Big Deal – the date of the alien invasion – was *no* big deal, probably because we never met any aliens and had no visceral sense of their menace. ## Re my skin problems. They come and go in tandem with internal tensions I can't explain or articulate, but Rosy's latest plan is horrifying: she wants me to go to a dermatologist and have blemishes *removed*. That sounds *painful* – but my choices in such matters

went down the tubes a year ago. ## In preserving old newspapers and books and whatnot, I think it's important to save not only the text of a page but its *appearance* as well. How a book looks can convey as much meaning as what its words read. Tom Collins once started a project at the New York Public Library, painstakingly copying H.P. Lovecraft's amateur publications – and was annoyed unto distraction when a kid beat him to the punch by the simple expedient of xeroxing HPL's pages. I never had the heart to tell Tom that the duplicate would make me feel much closer to the sage of Providence than the transcription, because I would see not only what he meant to write, but how he meant to present it to the world. I trust I am being monumentally unclear. ## I still haven't applied for reciprocity with the Tennessee Bar, and I still don't know why. Rosy's job has made it a much less vital option, but I should still do it. ## As for losing weight, Rosy's estimate is that I'm dropping about a pound a month – which isn't much, but it's staying off, which is the point. About 15 pounds gone since my wedding, I do look thinner than those photos. ## Thanks for the extra copy of Steve's account of June 30, 2001, by the way. Rosy and I treasure it. ## Yes, your efforts to coach Bob Shaw on the proper pronunciation of nominees' names was well appreciated by the attendees of the Confederation Hugo ceremonies. He butchered no names, as poor F.M. Busby did at Iggy. (Sorry, Arthur. Or should I say, Mr. "Hi-la-vatty.") ... But he still forgot to read the nominees for Fan Writer! ## I need a copy of the *Nova* episode about the WTC engineering failures. I want my nephews to have it someday. They were protected from the 9-1-1 news when it happened, but they won't always be children, and they should know. ## My boredom threshold is much too low. I suffered from ADD as a brat, and I think maybe I still ## I'll believe that Hugo voters are making intelligent choices when I see some on the ballot – Marc Schirmeister and Charlie Williams and Alan White in the Fan Artist category, for instance. But I shouldn't gripe; at least Sheryl Birkhead and Frank Wu have gotten some recognition, despite being newcomers to the top 5. ## My guess that the Japanese worldcon will swell to the size of a small state capital is based on reports of 100,000

people at their *national* convention. My prediction is that regular congoers will find themselves an island in the middle of a population explosion in 2007. ## Re car seats – my dad was a lanky 6'4", and liked to pull the driver's seat as far forward as it could go. He practically had his knees in his face. ## I pointed Steve and Suzanne towards the Confederate Museum – which is adjacent to the D-Day Museum – during their recent visit. Was it still there, guys? (One of the neatest buildings in New Orleans.) ## As for whether America should follow the Geneva Convention regarding the rights of POWs in order to safeguard the rights of our own prisoners, well, it seems we're up against an enemy this time which regards Geneva as just another hotbed of infidels and follows sadistic rules of its own. No, we should follow the Geneva Convention because it represents the civilization we're fighting for. Speaking of which, our official treatment of Jose Padilla is a disgrace; he's being kept incommunicado and interrogated beyond all control of law without even the rationalization of his being a non-citizen. The guy is an American, held on American soil, without the slightest concern for due process of law. That the people and the media are unconcerned about him shows how completely Al-Quaeda has triumphed. Their war was never to be fought on open battlefields, or even in the hearts and minds of world opinion. Their target was America's self-worth and self-esteem, our self-value as a nation, and America is exposing itself, by its own behavior, as phony to the core. *If we allow it.*



The Sphere vol. #198 no. 1 / Don Clearly, the Toonopedia is the ultimate accomplishment – so far – of your fannish life. It's too bad not enough Hugo nominators knew about it to put it on the ballot this year in ConJose's special category, but I imagine a mention in **USA Today** o'erwhelms the Hugo in terms of recognition. ## You'd think someone who had known Hank Reinhardt as long as you have would try to work disagreements out with him instead of accusing him of habitual *ad hominem* insults, but it's doubtful anyone here buys that for a minute. You insulted his wife. I disagree completely with Toni about politics, and make no secret of it, but there are more important things than "flinging the last turd," and friendship is one of them.

Avatar Press 2.21 / Randy Impeach Cleary! Which is just my way of saying, Congratulations, Mr. SFC President! (Good Art Show, too!) ## Leana's short story has a real punch. Congratulate her for me. ## I must say that I prefer your usual artistic style to the one you use for your figure drawings. And what ever happened to nude models? Funny memory: it's 1973 and I'm at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, a nice school but just the slightest bit stodgy. I walk past the art department and glance in a window at a basic class, a bunch of 18-year-old virgins – they had those at UNC-G – wielding pencils and sketch pads and trying to draw a naked dude sprawled out before them. (He was reading a book.) The poor kids looked so embarrassed; priceless moment. No, I never did model.

A Hand Written Page / mike Uhh ...

Yngvi is a Louse! #76 / Toni It's a disaster for this apa when a long string of mailings-hit snaps, and all the mature rationalization that the value of one's life doesn't depend on one's apa records can't change it. 190 and counting ... ## On to Charlotte's column. I too admire most of the acting work of Russell Crowe, even though he didn't deserve the **Gladiator** Oscar and he's proven himself to be something of a lout. L.A. **Confidential** remains his best (and Guy Pierce's best, and Kim Basinger's best, and *among* Kevin Spacey's best ...) ## We're very interested in DVDs ... if they all come in wide-screen! The

extras really make the package! ## I do indeed recall Sandy Paris, onetime SFPAn, **SM** cover artist, and all-round cutie. Glad to "hear," by the presence of her husband Kevin, that she's still around. ## Great music for your wedding! Where's "Shave'em Dry"? ## Interesting take on **LotR**, as Christian allegory – especially apt to pin Sauron as representative of Despair. Ever read **The Faerie Queene**? The words of divine Una to the Red Cross Knight as he seeks to recover from the mockery of the dragon Despair have brought me away from many a personal encounter with "that foul-mouth'd dragon, horrible and bright". ## Gibbs' argument about Elian Gonzalez – how would we feel if Elian had been a Jewish kid being forced to return to Nazi Germany – makes no sense, as it doesn't include the salient feature of the affair: Elian was being kept from his father. He was returned to his arms. Politics should never have become involved. ## Love Terry Jeeves' zines and his articles. I've urged him on the 2005 worldcon bid as a possible Fan GoH.

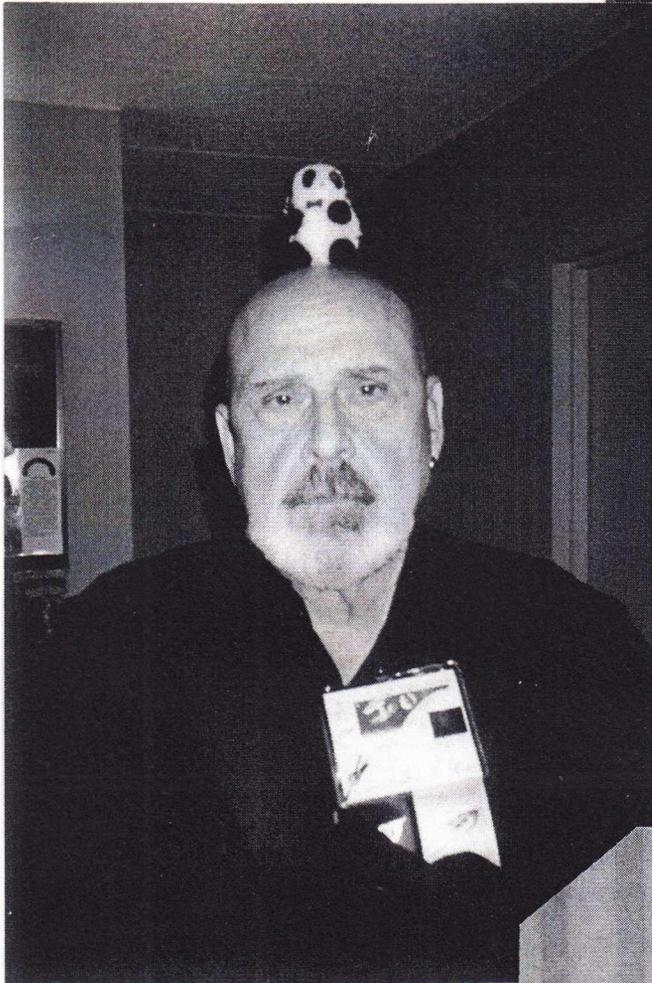
Spiritus Mundi 189 / me I reworked my opening natter about the Effinger memorial into a piece for **Challenger**, and in doing so made the goof that will haunt me whenever I pick up issue #16. I had written a complex sentence about Jack Stocker telling us that Effinger had recovered rights to his stories and was writing again. I tried to simplify it ... and ended up simplifying but half of it. The rest I left unchanged, with the result that the whole sentence now sounds like an early draft of a newsletter at the Alzheimer's ward. Which it may well be. Anyway, **Challenger** #16 is out, and if you want to see it and haven't, gimme a shout. ## That puts a cap on mailing caustics 227, 7-8-02 and 9:58 PM. Snoozit!



DSC 2002!

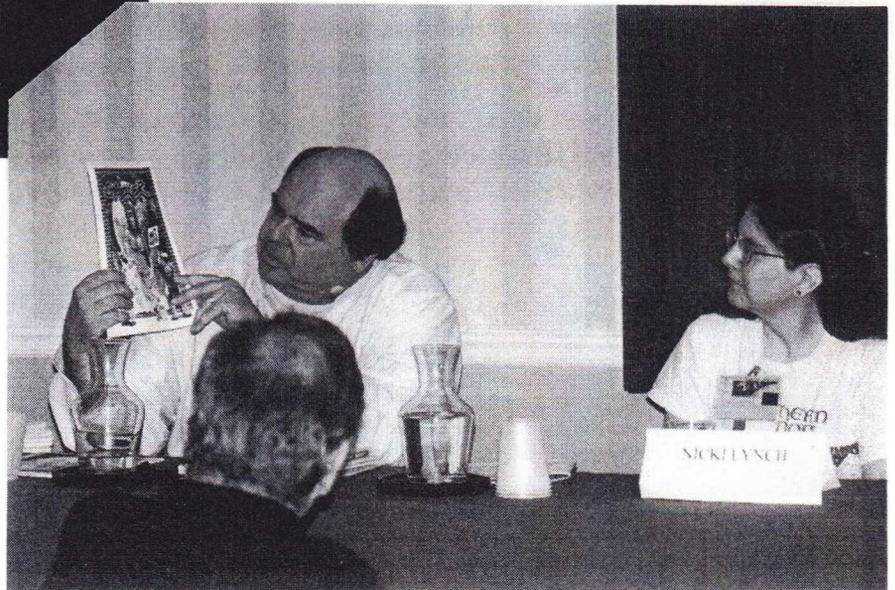
Huntsville Alabama

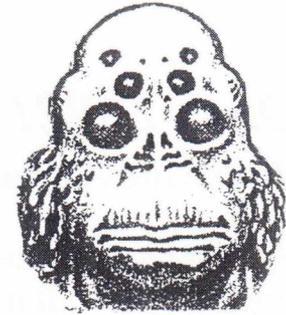
My ladies were an enormous hit at the 40th DeepSouthCon – Rose holds Jesse to right



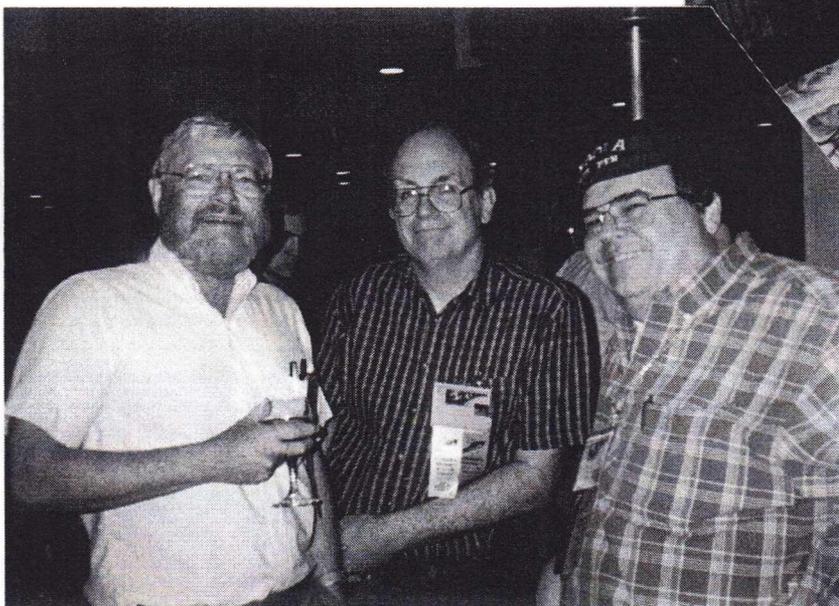
Stouthearted and baldheaded,
Mib joins El Reinhardt

Also baldheaded, I try vainly
to sell the crowd on *Challenger*,
while Nicki Lynch gazes on





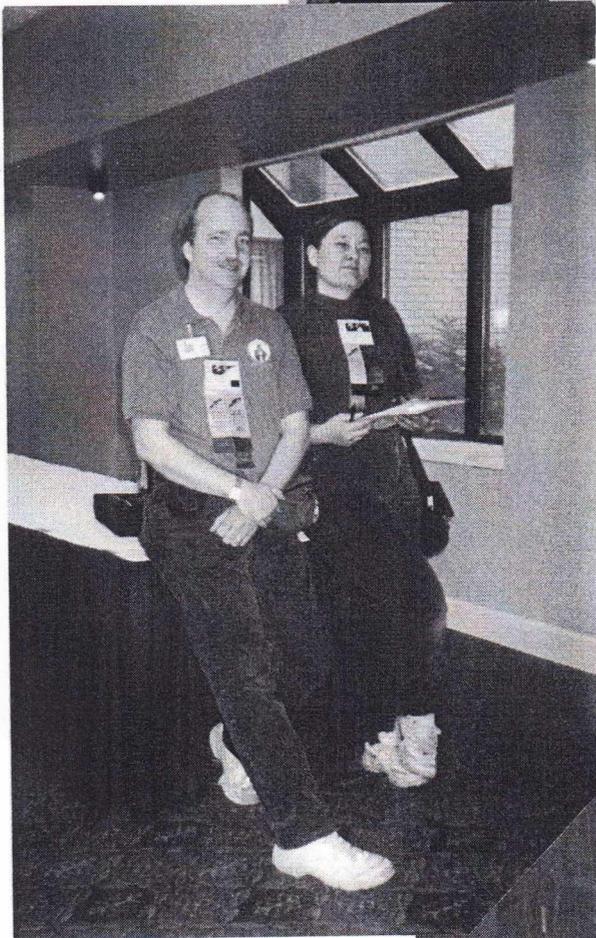
Jesse eats it up as Fred and Mary Ann van Hartesveldt and Roberta heap adoration upon her. Right, Rosy admires a nifty quilt adorned with our photo, a wedding present by and from Nicki Lynch.



Three buckos of the S.F. world, Greg Benford, Rich Lynch and yhos.



Flanked by Rebel winners **John Collier** and Brother **Tom Feller**, Pro GoH and *Phoenix* winner **Allen Steele** chats with **Dan Caldwell**



To left, Huntsville's own **Pat Molloy** and **Naomi Fisher** ...

And below, the Fan Guests at this DSC, **Nicki** and **Rich Lynch**





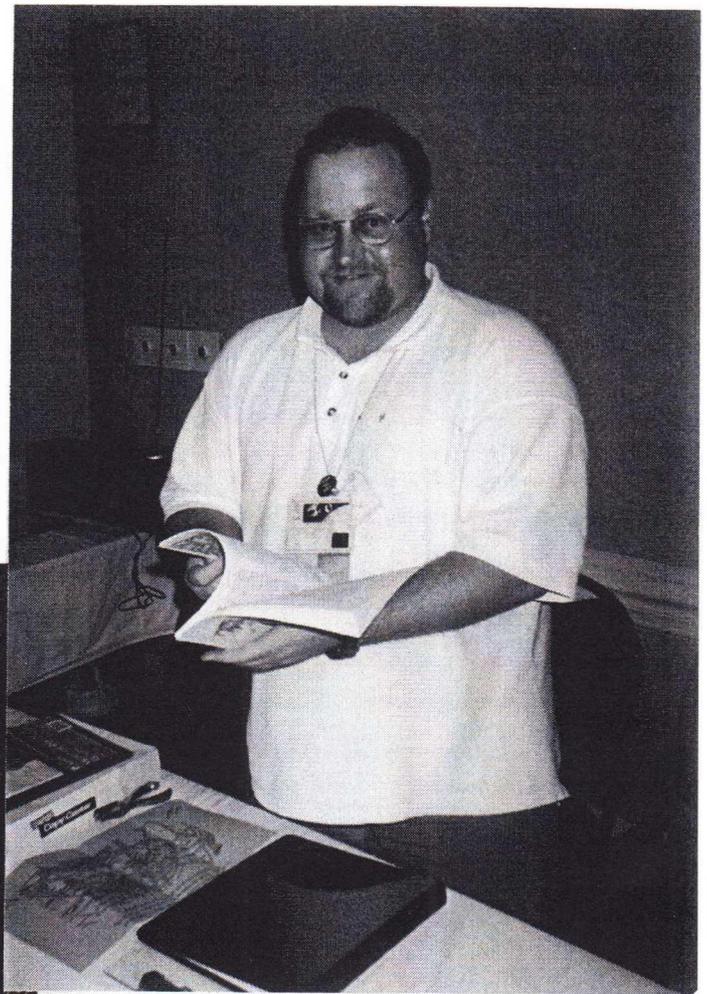
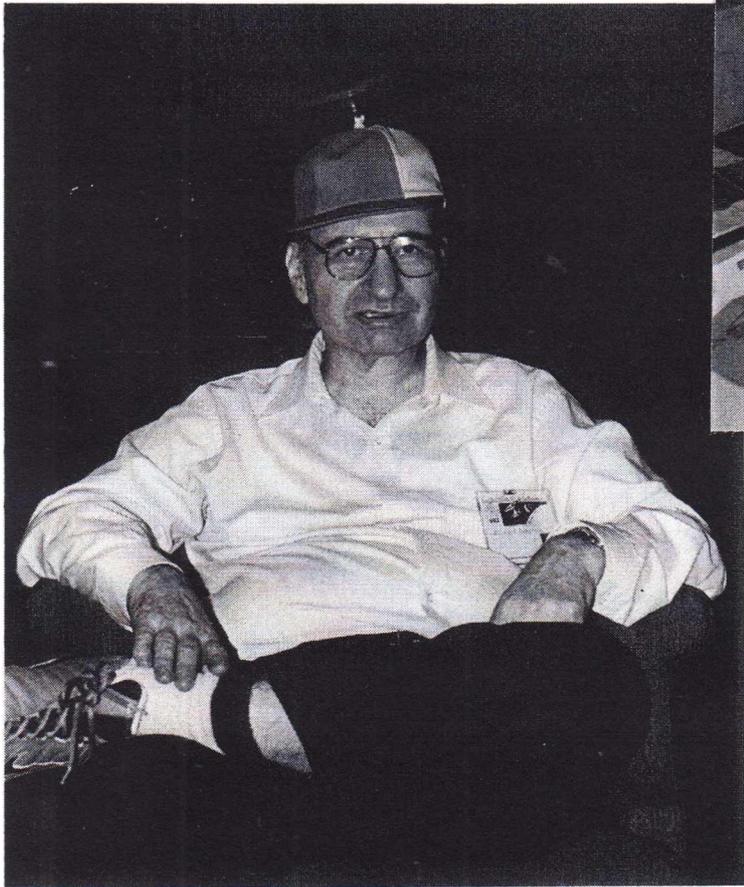
Isaac Robe studies balloons in flight, suspended over the air conditioner at Toni Weisskopf's SFPA party. Below, Mike Rogers reappears at DSC, unchanged by the 20 years since he was last among us! Who can name his zine?



Bear Bear joins FiFi before a raft of *Planet Comics* covers. The middle one, said Hank Reinhardt, was his first S.F.

This year's Southern Fandom Confederation meeting brought yet another SFPAn to glory – Randy Cleary was elected the new SFC President!

Below, Rich Dengrove sports a fannish beanie.



To right, Julie Wall examines her *Rebel Award*, given for the three great years she gave SFC as its president.





I *told* her she'd be famous – and at her first DeepSouthCon as Mrs. Lillian, Rose-Marie wins the *Rubble Award* for turning a “windbag” – me – into a “giddy windbag”! It was the highpoint of DeepSouthCon – her first “nametag ribbon” -- and quite a first anniversary present!



In exchange for a copy of *Challenger*, one-time Orleanian **Dena Bissette** tossed me a terrific Tarot. *You will take a journey with a beautiful lady ...*
All true, every word! See you next year in Chattanooga!

