

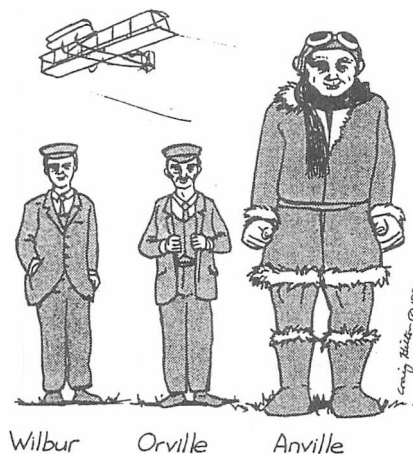
ANVIL 55



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*The least successful
of the Wright brothers.*



*Anvil 55
Double Issue*

Charlotte Proctor & Julie Wall, Editors in Tandem
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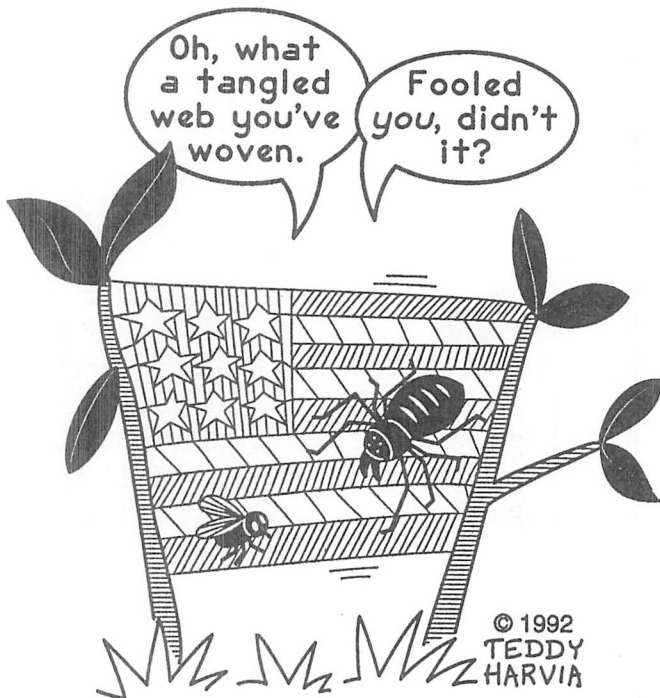
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Charlotte's Web

Whoops! It happened again. 1992 was a busy year in Birmingham, and now it's all over. We lived Life with a capital L. We ran the gamut of emotions from anticipation and joy to fear and sorrow. We held our first annual Jophan Family Reunion; Baby Girl Brayman was born, and nearly lost; Roger Weddall was adopted by Birmingham fandom, for far too brief a time; we attended Magicon; and Pearl Harbor Day was once again celebrated in our midst. The New Year began with a wedding, and Julie nearly went to jail! (See "Off the Wall".)

After several years of female rule, BSFC has undergone a sea change... our fearless leaders for 1993 are both male! Merlin Odom is President, and George Little is in charge of vice. Debbie Rowan is Treasurer in charge of club funds, the 1994 DSC funds, and Jophan funds. Charlotte is keeping tabs on the BBOF (Bring Bob Over Fund). We elected Penny Frierson Secretary, but will continue to have forged minutes if she can't remember (or wasn't at) the meeting.



We drew names out of a hat in December, not for presents but for programs! This was one of our spasmodic attempts to be a real SF club. It makes us feel virtuous to have programs, but in keeping with our casual atmosphere, they are pretty informal, and must not interfere with the social hour.

Julie called the first DSC 32 concom meeting. We got a lot of advance stuff decided, and new, bigger, updated flyers will be out RealSoonNow, and may even be included with this.

Anvil is becoming more and more a Julie-zine. That is to say, if it weren't for Julie ~~nagging me~~ being co-editor, you wouldn't be reading this now.

There has been a lot written in the fannish press about *Zombies of the Gene Pool*, (Sharyn McCrumb, now out in paperback) and all I've read has been negative: reviewers feel the author doesn't like fans and fandom and portrays them in a harsh and unkind light. My first thought was to write a rebuttal. I enjoyed the book, to the point of laughing out loud at a number of the allusions. But I really can't argue with those who say they think Sharyn doesn't like (i.e., have the proper respect for) fandom. Much as I would like to invite Sharyn to one of our fannish gatherings, I don't think she would want to come.

Zombies focuses on a fan group from 35 years back. Since then, two became pros, and the rest either died, gafiated, got on with their lives but stayed in touch through letters or zines or, in one case, never changed a bit. Well, shoot! That's exactly what happens. Sharyn takes a truthful look at how fans look and act, how pros are perceived, how well or badly fans "age" in fandom, and at the types who become fans, and why.

The only thing I can figure is that the truth hurts, and/or somebody has forgotten how to laugh at themselves.

This issue of *Anvil* is dedicated to the memory of Roger Weddall who could laugh at himself, and who epitomized all that is worthwhile, and fun, in fandom.

Who's Spoiled?

— Charlotte Proctor

Laura Elizabeth Brayman was born October 15, 1992. She came into the world plump, pink, pretty, and with a head full of dark hair. Her first weeks of life were complicated and scary but everything is OK now.

At home, for reasons unknown, Laura refused to feed, and failed to thrive. The pediatrician was no help at all. He saw her when she was about a week old, and the worried parents called him daily. He only said try this, try that, and put them off about bringing her in to see him again. (Frank said later that his cats had received better care than his daughter did.) By the time she was ten days old it was obvious she needed help. Frank and Rebecca took her to Children's Hospital, where she was immediately admitted to NICU (Neonatal Intensive Care Unit).

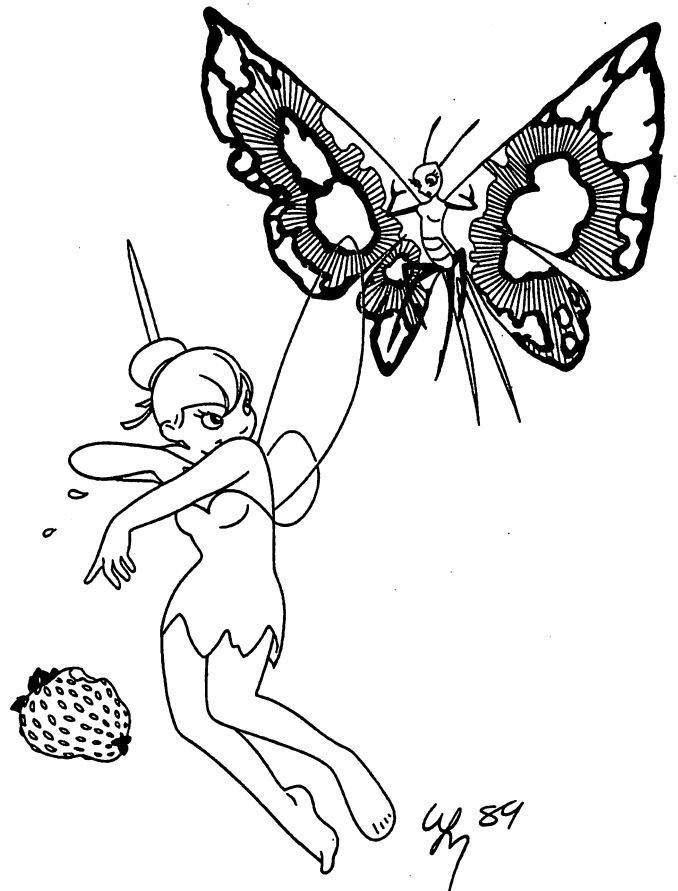
For several days she was given fluids and nourishment by IV, as they worked to rehydrate her and restore her electrolyte balance. Diagnostic procedures were done: blood work, and ultrasound. She began to have seizures, little tics in her face and hands. A CAT scan revealed a Class Two bleed. They gave her phenobarbital for the seizures. This was the crisis period, when we could do nothing but wait.

Rebecca asked me to stay with Erin, help with homework if needed, and give her something to eat. Changing into my Mary Poppins outfit and grabbing my needlework, I went to Trussville. I really lucked out – the only question Erin had a problem with was something I knew the answer to! We went out to eat at the fast food joint of her choice, a big improvement over the last time I kept her when I fed her coke, chips and ice cream for supper. Erin is 12, old enough to know things are wrong, but too young to help, – not that any of us could do much. She did the most she could by being on her best behavior during this time when the adults could not always attend to her needs. Frank's parents and I took what comfort we could in the fact that such fine facilities and exemplary care were available, as they would not have been for our own children.

Little Laura Elizabeth hung in there, and by the next day we began to be hopeful again, but there was still a lot of sitting and waiting. I regaled Rebecca with descriptions of the Halloween costumes she would miss, about how I threw together an Anthony costume for Rhea to go with Julie's Cleopatra, about my Queen Bee outfit being modified (out with the tiara, in with rifle, bandoliers and sombrero), and about Bill going to the party as a cowboy and Linda going as a cow! She passed this along to Frank, who retaliated with the story of the couple on their way to a costume party, he dressed as a horse and she as a cow. Their car broke down and they had to cut across a

field. A bull in the field began to paw the ground, snort, and act in a threatening manner. "Whatever shall we do!," cried the woman. "I'm going to eat grass," the man replied, "but you'd better brace yourself!"

Rebecca took me to see Laura in her glass walled room in NICU. (As she had come from an unsterile environment [home] instead of directly from the hospital of her birth, she was put in isolation.) My credentials established, I visited NICU from then on with impunity. The Children's Hospital in general, and NICU in particular, is a special place. Frank commented that he never saw anyone on the staff who seemed to be having a bad day. Contrary to earlier times, parents and grandparents of sick babies are encouraged to visit, touch, talk to, and hold the patients. One night Frank and I were there alone. Rebecca had gone home to sleep – she was still lactating and needed her rest. Frank gave Laura her bottle, and we were elated that she had taken nearly three ounces. But we were so awkward. He because it was so new and me because it had been so long. The various IVs, catheters and monitors attached didn't make it any easier. We were like Tweedledee and Tweedledum, but we got the job done and Laura back in bed.



Several days later, with all the accoutrements removed, Laura was moved to a room in the Pediatrics Ward. Frank was feeding Laura, when between baby, blanket, bottle, burping, etc. he began to lose it. "I didn't have enough hands," he explained, "so I called the nurse to come help." The nurse came in and exclaimed, "She's decorated you!" Sure enough, baby doo had leaked from the diaper and Frank had to change into scrubs. He called home for the next shift to bring clean clothes, and we all had a good laugh at his expense.

I inadvertently contributed comic relief when I left the hospital on Election Day to go vote, go see Erin and go back to the hospital. First, I stopped at the Birmingham News to tell Jerry that Laura was better. It had been years since I had been in his office, and was surprised to see how much it had changed from a grungy newsroom to something that looked rather like a real office, with cubicles around work stations, high-tech monitors, keyboards and mouse pads. I talked to Jerry, and watched him lay out a page on a page-making program Julie would drool over!

On my way out, I stopped at the rest room. I stepped up into a stall, noting the big Watch Your Step sign inside the door. Upon leaving, my leading foot met thin air from the arch forward, and solid ledge on the heel. It was like walking into an elevator shaft. I pitched forward and the (built in) vanity table broke my fall. I knew I wasn't seriously hurt, but took my time about getting up. By the time I looked in the mirror, a huge goose egg had appeared on my forehead. My glasses were bent all out of shape. I could have sneaked down the elevator and out, but I thought "Why should I not tell him?" I went back through the newsroom to Jerry's desk so he, too, could admire the lump on my head oozing blood. I drew a crowd. Security wanted to call the paramedics, an idea I nixed. The woman in charge of liability insurance claims (on the job accidents, clumsy visitors, etc.) wanted to take me to a doctor. Even though I knew I was going to be all right, I thought it might be a good thing. (Everyone seemed to think I should have a terrible headache but other than being sore to the touch it never hurt at all.) We went to the industrial medicine clinic the News uses where they x-rayed my head, but didn't see

anything... (a little joke, there). I was told my sinuses were clear. I was glad to hear that, but hadn't been worried about them. Then the doctor explained that they were not filling up with blood. I inquired about my recent lens implant, but it had been there long enough to be firmly seated. He checked my neurological signs, gave me a three day pass from work, a list of symptoms for my family to watch for, some Tylenol, and an appointment for the next day.

I drove back to my end of town, first to get my glasses fixed and then to vote. Finally at home I put an ice bag on my head and called Frank to explain why I wasn't either with Erin or coming back to the hospital.

It was at this point that Frank told me the news we had all been waiting for. The Pediatric Neurologist had met with them to say that the EEG and other tests showed no damage to Laura. She's going to be all right! It was a joyous feeling, a relief of cosmic proportions.

The next day, inasmuch as I had to go to the doctor anyway, I went to work. I looked like hell. Blood was draining into the thin tissue around my eye, pooling up in the corners and upper lid. My eye was black and violet and swollen nearly shut, a sight to behold.

"What happened to you?" Vick asked when I brought the mail in. "My husband hit me," I replied. "... Nah, he's not tall enough," Vick countered. (So Jerry needn't have worried. The first thing he had said was no one would believe he didn't have anything to do with it.) Next I tried, "I ran into a door." But Vick didn't buy that one, either. So I had to tell the truth. I hung my head and admitted that I had fallen out of a toilet stall.

(That afternoon at the hospital, Frank's dad suggested I say I had fallen off a bar stool!)

As I write this now, it is January 20, and Laura is fat and sassy and, would you believe, spoiled! She has been to a Pearl Harbor Day Party, a Thanksgiving dinner, a wedding brunch, and a Chattacon! Welcome to Birmingham, to Fandom, to the world, Laura!

Fanzine Reviews

— Roy G. Bivens

Hey, it's almost that time of year again! Baseball season is almost upon us once more. By the time my good friend Charlotte publishes this issue, spring training will be well underway, and I'm telling you, it's been an awfully long autumn and winter without a trip to the ballpark to brighten my day.

One of the best, most entertaining things about going to a baseball game is that there's always more to see than just the game. Those of you who watch baseball on TV aren't getting the full 360-degree experience; when you're at a

game, there's always something going on in the stands to compete for your attention. The game is played at such a reasonable, less frenetic pace that you've got time to enjoy all these mini-dramas as well as what's going on out on the field.

I was at a game like that a year or two ago. I remember it almost too well, because of the line drive foul ball that was hit right at me. I had just about made up my mind to try to catch the ball, rather than duck and cover, when it was snagged with a miraculous one-handed catch by a

large drunken fellow sitting just in front of me. But just as he jumped up to catch the ball, the extra-large paper cup of beer he'd been holding in his other hand overturned down the front of his shirt. Everybody applauded, but I'm not sure for what.

All this goes to show you is that entertainment is where you find it. When I'm talking about fanzines (as I've been reminded that I'm supposed to be doing), entertainment and enjoyment often come from reading publications that have those three qualities so desirable in fanzines: good writing, a controlling editorial presence, and an eye-pleasing appearance. Whenever I come across a fanzine I've never seen before that excels in these three categories, it's enough to make me leap for joy (but don't worry, I'm not holding a paper cup full of beer when I do).

Actually, I've come across two fanzines recently that I really like. The first of these is *Idea*, from Minneapolis fan Geri Sullivan, and the issue that found its way to my door (issue no. 5) is even about fanzines, or at least a fanzine fans convention (Corflu). This issue has a couple of well-written articles, one of them (leading off the issue) Geri's own personal recollection of the convention weekend, and later on, a short amusing piece of faan fiction by James White (of Irish Fandom fame). In between, the writing is unspectacular but competent, from Stu Shiffman, Linda Bushyager, Jeff Schalles, and Don Fitch; in particular, Shiffman manages to put together a "wish list" tabulation for an ideal Corflu convention while making it entertaining to read — no mean feat.

But there's more to *Idea* than just the writing. Geri Sullivan has a visible editorial presence in her fanzine, with introductory pieces to each article, which serves to give the fanzine continuity. She has also elected to use mimeo (which is rapidly becoming a lost fannish art) on fibertone paper as a means of repro; this gives a nice, warm feel to the fanzine, and also allows the use of colored mimeo inks (which is really becoming a lost fannish art). Illustrations have been selected or commissioned that (mostly) complement the content of the articles, which is another nice touch; Geri has even gone so far as to include a photo that was specially screened and reproduced (by mimeo, yet) as a nice supplement to Linda Bushyager's Corflu Guest of Honor speech reprint. Lest you think this is The Perfect Fanzine, I should point out that there are a few things I thought could be improved on (like maybe a sharper blue pencil for the letters column). But not many. This is a pretty good fanzine.

An even better fanzine, however, is *Astromancer Quarterly*, edited by Joe Maraglino for the Niagara Falls Science Fiction Society. The issue I managed to find is number 4, which means this fanzine has only just completed its first happy year of existence. I'll start off by saying that this is one of the best fanzines I've seen, in spite of its newness. You'd perhaps expect that a fanzine still in its first year would have trouble locating good contributions, but not here. So what makes it so good? Well, for one thing, there's strong writing throughout. The lead article, by sf writer Pamela Sargent, is a case in

point. She could easily have sent a xerox of some convention speech, or a dry 'How I Write Fiction' type of reprint from some SFWA publication. Instead, she took time she might have spent composing something for a paying market to write an almost novelette-length article for this fanzine (an entertaining one, too, about giving up smoking).

Other articles, by lesser-known contributors, are nevertheless equally well-written, and even the fanzine's regular columnists stand out: Leah Zeldes Smith writes a fanzine review column similar to (and maybe even better than) this one, zeroing in on a select few fanzines rather than trying to keep up with everything that's come in the mail lately. Sheryl Birkhead has a column that also reviews fanzines, but is (refreshingly) centered on fanartists and their artwork.

For historical buffs, this issue of *AQ* had two items of interest — a 40-year-old reprint about the 1952 Buffalocon science fiction convention and a collection of Jay K. Klein's photographs of various awards and award winners from the 1960s, '70s, and '80s.

And this brings me to the other strong point about *Astromancer Quarterly* — its appearance. Unlike *Idea*, this is not an inexpensively mimeo-produced fanzine; far from it, in fact. Some real money has gone into the production of this zine, with desktop publishing layout, numerous photographs (not just for the Klein article), and multi-color offset reproduction. The result is really eye-pleasing.

I like this fanzine so much, I can't even find much to criticize in it (if I don't watch out, this will turn into a kinder, gentler fanzine review column, and I'll be voted out of office). One thing I wish Joe would cut out, though, is blowing up out-of-context quotes from various writers in the letters column into advertising-like blurbs. This gets annoying fast; just because it's possible to use technology to do this sort of thing doesn't mean that it should be done.

I'm afraid that's going to wrap things up this time. Once again, I've managed to procrastinate my time away, thinking about baseball instead of fanzines. Say, maybe we can combine the two — there ought to be some kind of market for a set of fandom trading cards! I can see it now: "Okay, I'll trade you a 1948 Walt Willis rookie card for a 1970 Bob Tucker and a 1953 Forrest J Ackerman. No, I don't want any 1992 Charles N. Brown's; there are thousands of them out there." The mind boggles...

Issues Reviewed:

- *Idea* (Issue 5 / April 1992/reviewed) from Geri Sullivan, 3444 Blaisdell Avenue S., Minneapolis, Minnesota 55408-4315; (no availability info listed).
- *Astromancer Quarterly* (Issue 4/November 1992/reviewed) from the Niagara Falls Science Fiction Association, P.O. Box 500, Bridge Station, Niagara Falls, New York 14305; available for \$2.00.

The Old Ironmaster Goes to the Dogs

– Buck Coulson

Most fans seem to be cat people, but I've always favored dogs. Possibly because I've spent most of my life in the country; dogs don't really fit well in towns. My first memory involves a dog; it must have happened when I was 2 or 3 years old. Dad had a setter he hunted with, and she was in the house for some reason. I don't know how I got the idea for riding, but I decided I wanted to ride and climbed on old Nellie. She promptly sat down, and I slid off on the floor. For some reason I thought this was hysterically funny, insisted on telling everyone about it, and have remembered it ever since.

We moved to Silver Lake when I was 5, and lived on the edge of "the Park", a resort area of summer cottages. It was a dumping ground for pets; people would come up "to the lake" for a week or so, bringing the pet, and then go home without it. A German Shepherd wandered into our place the summer I turned 13, and we fed him and I named him Bing (I have no idea why, at this late date.) Dad was willing to feed him until it turned out that Bing had no interest at all in hunting, but by then he was my dog and we kept him anyway.

I have no idea how it came about, but Bing and I worked out a game of tag. There was an ornamental wire fence between our yard and the barn lot, which ended at the garage. From there, 3 or 4 strands of barbed wire ran back to a normal farm fence, and kept the cow in. I would walk through the gate in the ornamental fence, and shut it before Bing could get through. He'd race around the garage and go under the barbed wire, at which point I would step back through the gate. This would go on for several turns, but eventually had to stop; Bing had more energy than I did, and I knew what he'd do when he caught me. So I'd make a run for the back porch. If Bing caught me before I got inside the house, he'd bite. He never broke the skin, but he'd rake his teeth along my arms and raise welts. As I recall, I had welts on my arms most of that summer. If, however, I got into the house before he caught me, I won. I could leap inside, slam the door shut, and then immediately step back outside, and Bing would wait to be petted. It definitely wasn't a trick he was taught; I never wanted to get bit, but it was a challenge. Just once I told a friend about the game, and he wanted to try it. I warned him, and was a trifle disgusted when Bing put him halfway up a light pole in the barn lot. I told him the game was over and he was safe, but he wouldn't come down until I shut Bing in the garage.

Once when I was walking through the Park area with Bing, a man in a cottage stopped me, and said that every

morning Bing came down to their cottage and played with their baby. He remarked on how gentle the dog was. Bing definitely knew how to adjust his behavior to the age level of his companions.

Only the rich boarded dogs in the 1940s, so when we went down to my grandparents' home in Southern Indiana for Thanksgiving, Bing stayed behind. Dad may or may not have arranged for someone to put out food, but Bing moved on; he'd been abandoned before and knew how to get along. I've always wished him well.

Then there were the Cocker Spaniels sent by distant cousins in North Carolina. The first, Smokey, was hit by a car when he was a year old, so they sent two the next time, Bruce and Dixie. (Our son Bruce delights in telling people he was named after a favorite dog.) We did take them with us on trips, and on a trip to my aunt's home, they discovered stairs. Our home was one story, but my aunt had two stories, and the dogs spent the entire visit trotting up and down the stairs. It kept them busy, at any rate; one never knows quite what a dog will find amusing.

Our house was about 3/4 of a mile from the center of Silver Lake, the town. It was a good long walk for groceries, so normally we drove in, though Dad or I might walk in if there wasn't too much we wanted. One winter I had the bright idea of using sled dogs. I fastened a cardboard box onto my sled, hitched the dogs up to it – they wore harnesses instead of collars, which made things easier – and we went in town. Rather surprisingly, everything worked fine. I had a leash attached to one dog's harness, so they couldn't go chasing cats (though they tried), and the only problem was where the sidewalks in town had been cleared of snow. But few of them had, and we made several trips that winter.

They of course went hunting with me. Once I was out with friends, and one of my friends shot a rabbit. I could see down a hill; it was wooded, but not thickly. The dog retrieving the rabbit went behind a tree and came out without the bunny. The friend didn't see the dogs until they got closer, and said, "I guess I missed it." I went down and retrieved it, with the dogs acting terribly surprised that it was there. I'm still not sure if they were hiding it for themselves or planned to bring it to me once I came along; they never did anything of the sort when I shot game. In fact, once I turned around to yell at one of them who was trotting at my heels instead of getting out in front, and discovered that he was carrying a dead quail in his mouth. I hadn't even realized I'd hit it, and

the dog was looking very reproachful after having carried it for at least 5 minutes, perhaps longer.

The only time they refused to retrieve for me was when I shot a duck while I was near the lake shore. Silver Lake got quite cold in November, and usually froze over at some point in the winter, and they weren't getting into that cold water. I told them they were water dogs and to get busy, and they said you shot it, you get it. I had to walk around the lake, back to the house, get the keys for the boat, and row across the lake to pick up the duck. I wasn't about to leave it; anything Dad or I shot was meat on the table, and needed. The dogs were quite happy to get in the boat with me and ride across the lake... (The boat was always locked because people who came to resorts in the 1940s would steal anything not nailed down.)

Of course, I liked other people's dogs, too; any dogs. I was a trifle surprised once when we went out to an orchard whose owner had an old St. Bernard I'd petted the year before. This time the dog jumped on me, and since I was only 6 or 7 years old, knocked me flat and started licking my face. I was highly annoyed, but couldn't do much about it, and threshed around until I got out from under him. Never thought of being afraid; dogs wouldn't hurt me. Eventually Dad came out with the apples and told me this wasn't the same old dog; that one had died, and this was a puppy. After that, I tried to stay away from puppies that were bigger than I was.

I've stepped into two dogfights. The first time it was because the owner of the other dog was about to step in with a club, and I didn't think he was going to be hitting his own dog (though, now that I'm older, I realize that he might have been going to do just that.) Anyway, I went in barehanded and separated the dogs with no trouble; I suppose I was 14 or 15 years old then.

The other time Dad and I and our dogs had gone hunting with a friend and his dog, and the dogs got into a dispute over just whose rabbit that was, anyway. (This time, the Cocker Spaniels were definitely the aggressors.) I waded in, gloved-handed, and the friend's dog clamped down on my wrist. Then he looked up to see what he had, since it obviously wasn't dog, and it's the only time I've ever seen a dog look appalled. He'd never intended to bite me; I'd petted him and played with him and was a friend. He backed off immediately, and the fight ended. Forty years later I can still visualize that "oh, my God!" expression. I carried the scar for several years but eventually it faded. At the time I handed the rabbit to whoever had shot it, and we went on hunting.

One of the smartest dogs I've ever encountered was a big Doberman-sized hound that belonged to a coon-hunter who lived some way down the road. One day as I prepared for a hunt with the Cockers, the hound came over to join us. Since coon hunters aren't fond of dogs that chase rabbits, I tried to discourage him, but he didn't discourage, so he went along, but stayed by me instead of going out ahead to scare up game. Finally, my dogs started a rabbit and I shot it. The hound went over,

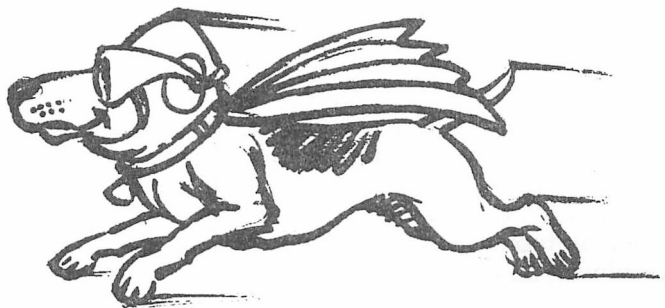
sniffed the rabbit, decided that's what we were hunting, and went on ahead. A few minutes later, he barked "Treed", and when I came up, he'd cornered a rabbit in a brushpile. A dog who knows that humans hunt different specific animals, and waits to find out which one we're after this time, has more reasoning abilities than some humans I've met.

Our current dog is Severian, and is mostly Labrador. Possibly entirely Labrador; we got him out of the animal shelter, and the owners who put him in the shelter said he'd wandered into their place as a stray puppy and they kept him about 6 months. If a lake resort isn't handy, city people will just drive out in the country and turn loose unwanted pets. Mostly, these dogs either starve or go after livestock and are shot by farmers, but now and then one is lucky. Sev weighs 65 pounds now, but in size he's no bigger than a hound I had as a boy who weighed around 40 pounds. I think Sev is just packed tighter. I got him because the doctor said I have to get exercise and I figured if I had a dog to walk I'd exercise, and if I didn't I'd put it off. I get plenty of exercise, and doses of excitement, too.

Try hanging onto a leash while your dog is busy whipping 3 other dogs who rushed him. Mostly, the dogs around here stay well away from Sev after the first fight, but now and then there's a newcomer to the area, or, as happened with the three at once, two dogs who have been whipped bring in a "hit dog" and try again. His prey has gone as high as a couple of German Shepherds, but so far I've kept him away from the bulldog down the road a couple of miles.

Mostly I'm amazed at his appetite. We take him in town with us, and when we go to a shopping center north of town I walk him. The place has a supermarket, a discount store, and a McDonald's, and Sev likes to tour the grounds looking for edibles. Okay, when he finds part of a hamburger or a few French fries, that's pretty normal. But when someone had dropped nearly all of a chocolate sundae on the pavement and Sev ate the ice cream and then licked up the chocolate syrup, I was a trifle surprised. When he discovered an apple pie that had evidently been damaged in shipment and discarded out behind the supermarket, and ate the entire thing, I was amazed. I've had other dogs eat pie crust, but none other that would eat baked apples. He also ate about a pint of melted chocolate ice cream once.

One of the nice things about dogs is that they're never predictable.



Sunday Morning with the Bomb Squad

– Gary Rowan

My wife Debbie and I like to go to estate sales. We don't like yard sales because yard sales are often junk sales, while estate sales have NEAT STUFF. The best estate sales around Birmingham are in the Mountain Brook area, because rich people have the best NEAT STUFF.

This is what led us to the Cahaba Heights area on a beautiful, cold Saturday morning, waiting in line to be admitted to the large, slightly rundown home of a former business executive, now deceased. The late homeowner had been in the steel industry and, judging from the stuff that was being sold, was a well traveled man. I was there for the books that had been advertised, while Debbie was there for the old clothes and fabrics.

The books weren't much, mostly pop theology from the 50's and old copies of the Social Register, so I wandered back into one of the downstairs bedrooms, where there were old slide and film projectors, screens and other male type stuff. (There is always a room at estate sales set up this way.) After looking at some nondescript junk, I saw it. An artillery shell. It appeared to be a slightly rusty 3" shell with a brass fuse. Bolted to the side of the shell was a copper plate engraved with the words, "Souvenir of the dinner to the members of the British inspection staff by the Westinghouse Elec. & Mfg. Co. Pittsburgh PA April 10, 1917."

I thought about this for a few minutes. Nobody I know has an artillery shell. This was a totally unique curio; one reason that I go to these things in the first place. Finally, Debbie said "Buy the damn thing, it's a piece of history." So I paid my twenty bucks and took it home.

The next morning, I went into the dining room, where I had put the thing. I picked it up, thinking that I would find a place for it on the bookshelves in the den. That's when I first noticed that it had a distinct 'gurgle.'

I immediately put it down very carefully and went back to the bedroom where Debbie was sleeping peacefully. "Dear," I said, "the shell gurgles."

"What?" came the sleepy response.

"You know, the shell we bought yesterday. I picked it up and it gurgled at me." By this time she was awake. She knows that I can be alarmist at times, so she slowly got up, put on her dogs, gave me a 'you better not be shitting me this early on a Sunday morning' look and headed for the dining room. I stayed in the bedroom. She was back in a minute, much wider awake.

"You're right. The thing gurgles," she said.

We had a short discussion about our problem. I could not believe that anyone with a brain would have given a live shell as a presentation piece, but you never know. Rich people can be quite strange at times. A quick look at Ian Hogg's book *Artillery* was little help, but half remembered stories told by a great uncle gassed in the Great War (he survived, totally disabled, and lived into his late 80's) seemed to indicate that some really nasty stuff is loaded as a liquid into shells. Mustard gas, for instance.

Finally, we were at the end of our rope, so we did what everyone in our group does when they have problems with arms and armament – we called Jerry Proctor. Charlotte answered. It was a little early and at first she thought I was talking about a sea shell, but I finally got through to her what my problem was. Unfortunately, Jerry was still asleep, but his son-in-law Jerry McKnight was there, and he was put on the phone. More explanations and discussion. It was finally decided that it would be best if I called the bomb squad and let them handle it (literally).

I made the dreaded call. I explained my problem to a bored sounding dispatcher and he said that someone would come by and look at it. We waited. A few minutes later, he called back and wanted to know exactly where my house was. Since we live on a well known suburban street, this helped our confidence level a lot.

After a few more minutes had passed a green and white Jefferson County Sheriff's car pulled into the driveway. A large, burly looking deputy got out of the car. He called to me from the driveway, "You the guy with the shell?"

"Yes, come on in," I said.

He slowly ascended the stairs and asked me where it was and I led him to the dining room. He looked at it and his eyes grew wide. "Damn," he muttered, "it looks like a real one... where's your phone?" He called someone. "Steve," he said, "you or Otto better get out here quick, this guy has the damndest looking shell and I've never seen one like this." Silence. "He says it gurgles." More silence. "No, dammit! I didn't shake it, that's what you guys get paid the big money for!" He hung up and said, "An expert will be here to look at this thing in a little while. I'm going out to the car to work on the report." And he went.

Debbie came in. "What's going on?!"

"I dunno, I guess the bomb squad is on the way."

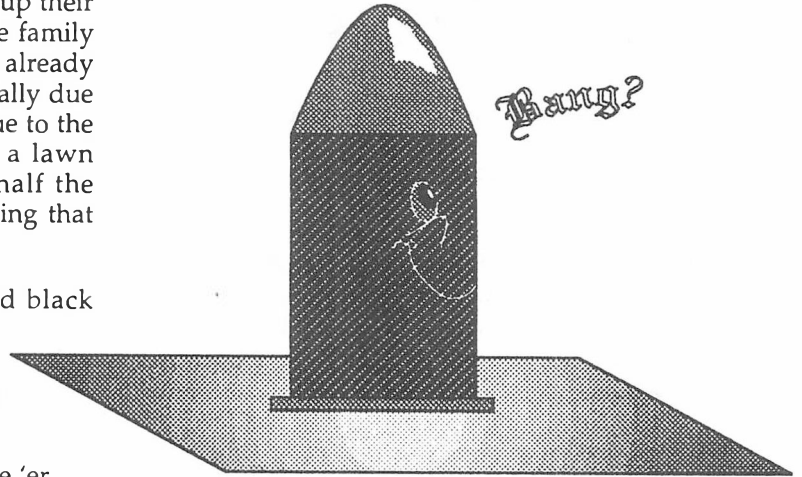
We waited for about fifteen minutes before a green and white van pulled up and parked in the front yard. Written on the side of the van were the words 'Jefferson County Sheriff's Department Explosive Ordinance Disposal Unit'. As luck would have it, he pulled up just as the large family two doors down was loading up their minivan to head for church. The teenagers in the family showed a lot of interest as they drove past. I'm already considered one of the neighborhood kooks, partially due to the Halloween parties I throw and partially due to the incident several years ago when I picked up a lawn mower, lifted it over my head and threw it half the length of the yard. The fifteen minutes of swearing that preceded this feat guaranteed an audience.

A short, wiry guy wearing a t-shirt and faded black fatigue pants got out of the van. He hollered, "You the guy with the shell?" I nodded yes. The uniformed deputy got out of his car. "Steve, I ain't never seen a shell like he's got."

Steve shook my hand and said, "Let's go in and give 'er a look." We went in. Steve looked at the shell and said "Damn, I ain't ever seen one like that either." He studied it some more. "It doesn't seem like it's live, but you did say it gurgled, right?" I said yes. He picked it up and slowly rocked it back and forth next to his ear. He gave a thoughtful look and suddenly shook it vigorously. "Yep," he said, "it gurgles." He said he would take it back to the range and 'crack it open'. I told him he could do whatever he wanted to with it, but if it were inert, I would like it back. He laughed and said, "If it's not inert,

there won't be enough left to bring back." He hoisted it to his shoulder and walked out.

He stood outside and talked to the uniformed deputy for a few minutes, (with the shell on his shoulder all the while) and then left. I told Debbie, "Well, that's the last we'll see of that for a while."



POSTSCRIPT: Steve came back two hours later with a disassembled shell. He said he got curious and went ahead and cracked it open. It was filled with water, the fuse was inert and I had a nice souvenir. He showed me how to reassemble it. My neighbors think I'm a bigger kook than ever; some of them have become very respectful of me, while others give me strange looks and drive past faster when they see me in the yard.

How Do They Say It?

It's Zesty and zingy,
Is the name of Vinge;
And a Cheerful ring,
Attaches to Vinge.

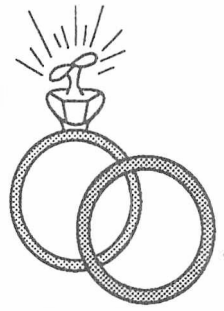
But something so dingy,
In the sound of Vinge;
And surely they cringe,
At the mention of Vinge.

— BoSH

Riley-Zielke Nuptials

Announced

...those whom Ghu has joined together...
let no fan rend asunder



Linda L. Riley of Birmingham, Alabama and William H. Zielke of Chattanooga, Tennessee were united in marriage at high noon on Friday, January 8, 1993, in a private double ring ceremony in the Jefferson County Courthouse. Judge Marvin Cherner officiated. The bride was attended by Julie Wall, Maid of Honor. The bride's sister, Cindy Riley-Jones, was chauffeur and official photographer. The groom was attended by Charlotte Proctor, Best Man. The bride's mother, Mrs. Minnie Ann Riley, witnessed the ceremony.

The bride was lovely in a dropped-waist street length frock of ivory shantung, accented with a floral print pleated skirt and trim in the same print. Ivory shoes, and a antique lace handkerchief borrowed from her mother completed her ensemble. The bride carried a small Missal in High German and Latin that had been a wed-

ding gift from her Greatgrandfather Lienhardth to his bride. The bride's corsage, of small white orchids hastily thrown together with greenery and ribbon by the florist who had got the date wrong, arrived after the ceremony had concluded. "It's the thought that counts," the bride said.

The groom, handsome in his herringbone tweed suit adorned with rosebud boutonniere didn't look nervous at all, and only jumped the gun on the "I do's" once. The best man couldn't get the ring box open, but the groom could, so that was all right.

After the wedding vows were exchanged, the wedding party adjourned to their private dining room at the Bottega Restaurant for luncheon. In attendance were Rebecca Brayman with her daughter Laura, Penny Frierson, Wade Gilbreath, Debbie and Gary Rowan and the wedding party.

After toasting the bride and groom, the Asti Spumante flowed, well, like champagne. The bride's cake, white with lemon filling, was decorated with delicate multi-colored icing flowers, and sprigs of faux non parils. The bride dined on quail with fig stuffing, while the groom choose salmon. The hostess (the erstwhile Best Man) never got her plate, which allowed her to walk Laura who wanted to know what all the fuss was about.

The bride and groom enjoyed a short wedding trip to Chattacon, after which they are at home: she in Birmingham and he in Chattanooga, until her transfer comes through.



Photo by Cindy Riley-Jones

Sequelia: We've Been Here Before

Creating a new fictional universe must be an awful lot of work if one goes by the frequency with which modern SF writers are returning to universes they invented for prior books. Or maybe it is a matter of the charm of the familiar. There are characters and settings we would love to read about again because we know them so well after the first book. It is like meeting old friends. All of the books I am reviewing this issue return to characters and worlds used in prior works.

— Patrick J Gibbs

A sure Hugo nominee for Best Novel of 1993 (the Winnipeg WorldCon) is *The Gripping Hand* by Larry Niven and Jerry Pournelle. One of the most interesting alien contact books ever written was Niven & Pournelle's *The Mote in God's Eye* (Simon and Schuster 1974). In that novel we met the Moties, the only alien race encountered by humans in the far future universe which forms the backdrop of the many CoDominion books of Jerry Pournelle, the latest example being *Prince of Sparta* (4.99 Baen Books, March 1993) by Pournelle and S.M. Stirling.

The Moties are a most distinctive race in SF literature. They are divided into separate biological forms, each serving a different function. Master, Mediator, Engineer and Warrior, after millions of years of evolution, are superbly adapted to their roles, but the race has a fatal flaw: Moties must breed or die. This has resulted in tumultuous population pressures, wars and cyclic destruction of civilization on the Motie home world, which is in an isolated portion of the galaxy settled by humans and under a blockade by the forces of the Empire of Man.

The story picks up twenty-five years after the events in *Mote in God's Eye*. Kevin Renner and Horace Bury are back from the first book. Kevin Renner, no longer on active duty in the Imperial Navy, is working with Magnate Horace Bury. They are secret agents for Imperial Naval Intelligence, vigilant for signs that the Moties are infiltrating human space. The plot thickens when they discover that a breakout by the Moties is imminent. If successful, no human world will be safe. I want to avoid giving you many more plot details so as not to ruin it for you. Get both books and enjoy. This is hard science fiction at its best.

Lois McMaster Bujold reportedly said at the Orlando WorldCon last fall that the 1991 Hugo for her novel, *The Vor Game*, was given to the book that the fans loved and that the 1992 Hugo for *Barrayar* was given to the book that she loved. *Barrayar* is a prequel of sorts to the saga of Miles Naismith Vorkosigan, the hero of *The Vor Game* and other Bujold novels. It recounts the events surrounding the poison gas attack on his mother, Cordelia Naismith, and father, Count Aral Vorkosigan, which resulted in mutagenic changes to Miles (while in utero) almost crippling him and giving him a stunted growth.

The novel is Cordelia's story. She is an offworlder, educated as a scientist, experienced as a starship commander and successful in battle. Now she is married to the nobleman who was only recently part of the opposing forces. When Aral is named as Regent during the minority of the Barrayan Imperial Prince, Cordelia is ensnared in the Machiavellian politics of a militaristic, paternalistic society.

Barrayar has a military tradition that is reminiscent of 19th century Prussia with a mix of the machismo of Latin America. Cordelia is determined to fit in with this as a loving wife to Count Vorkosigan. Reactionary forces attempting to overthrow Count Vorkosigan won't let her. They find out that it is fatal to get in her way. I thoroughly enjoy Bujold's series. It is a 90's revisiting of the themes explored in Poul Anderson's *Flandry* series. Start with *Shards of Honor* and enjoy.

One of the first SF novels I ever read was *The Incomplete Enchanter* by L. Sprague de Camp and Fletcher Pratt. The Harold Shea stories, later collected in *The Compleat Enchanter*, are the epitome of fantasy in the tradition of *Unknown*, a magazine started by John W. Campbell in

1940 which almost did for the fantasy side of modern SF what *Astounding* did for "hard" science fiction.

Harold Shea, as most of you already know, is a psychologist who discovered that one can travel to parallel worlds using a syllogism-mobile. That is a method of reciting the logical statements which contain the necessary postulates supporting the structure of a fictional universe. *The Incomplete Enchanter* began with a visit to the world of Norse mythology.

Now, about 50 years after the original stories, L. Sprague de Camp has collaborated with Christopher Stasheff to bring us *The Enchanter Reborn*, a collection of five novels written by de Camp, Stasheff, Holly Lisle and John Maddox Roberts. The latter two wrote stories based upon outlines from de Camp and Stasheff. We go from the Land of Oz to the mythic universe of Vergil's *Aeneid*.

The quality of the stories is somewhat uneven, but overall superior. There is a relatively minor continuity problem in the last couple of stories, but all in all, the book is a welcome development. The Harold Shea stories have always been pure enjoyment with mind-expanding visits to fiction universes we might never have seen otherwise. The plot line of *The Enchanter Reborn* is left hanging at the end, so we should be able to count on some more stories.

I can recall at the 1980 WorldCon in Boston, the Brits were all excited about a SF humor award nominee, *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*. Very few Americans knew what they were talking about. It was a few years later that the first book in the Hitchhiker series was published on this side of the Atlantic. Eventually the BBC radio scripts were expanded into a trilogy: *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, *The Restaurant at the End of the Universe*, and *Life, the Universe and Everything*. Even later Douglas Adams wrote a fourth book in the series, *So Long and Thanks for All the Fish*. It was a real surprise to learn that a fifth book in the "increasingly inaccurately named Hitchhiker's trilogy" was being published.

Adams has apparently decided to bring matters to a close. In *Mostly Harmless* the author takes on the job of making some sense out of parallel universes and how to move his characters among those universes. Adams is not as interested this time around with the satirical potential of his story, although there is a fair amount of whimsical insight into the foibles of modern society. I thought the book was about the scope of individual freedom.

Arthur Dent finds that he cannot lose himself in a Polynesian style culture where he has achieved godlike status as a sandwich maker. He also discovers he has a daughter he has never met before. Trillian appears on the scene in at least two parallel worlds. When last seen she was in an escape pod from a stolen starship. Ford Prefect returns to the headquarters of the Guide only to find that it has been subjected to a hostile alien corporate takeover.

Zaphod Beeblebrox is nowhere to be seen, which suggests that another book in the "trilogy" may still be written. As usual with Adams the quips and humor are going at a breakneck pace. I found some fascinating philosophical speculations implicit in some of the novel. I would like to go through the book a second time to see if there is any truth to the matter. At the very least the book shows off Douglas Adams' tremendous wit. If you liked *So Long and Thanks for All the Fish*, you should enjoy this book.

That's it for now. With any luck I will be back next time to write about the Hugo winners and nominees.

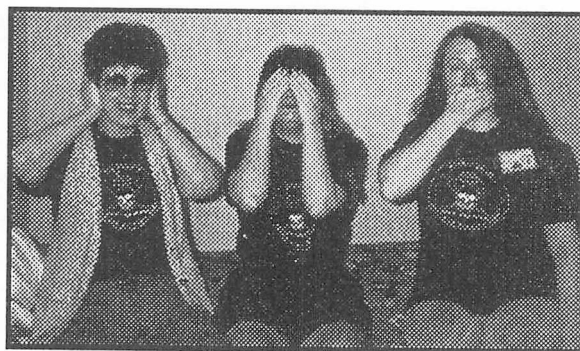
Patrick Gibbs, Critic in Residence, February 26, 1993.

Books reviewed:

- THE GRIPPING HAND by Larry Niven and Jerry Pournelle (PocketBooks 1993, 401 pp., \$22).
- BARRAYAR by Lois McMaster Bujold (\$4.99 Baen Books 1991, 389 pp.)
- THE ENCHANTER REBORN (\$4.99 Baen Books 1992, 296 pp.)
- MOSTLY HARMLESS (\$20.00 Harmony Books 1992, 277 pp.)



Anvil Editorial Policy
Demonstrated by Charlotte, Julie and Linda
Photos by Steve Richards



Many thanks to everyone who helped with this of *Anvil*. Particularly to the members of the Birmingham Science Fiction Club who, unbeknownst to them, are going to collate the sucker at the April club meeting. Thanks also to modern technology as well as corporate and personal donations.



Birmingham 3

DeepSouthCon 32

Hosted by the Birmingham Science Fiction Club

Guest of Honor

Lois McMaster Bujold

ToastMaster

Mike Resnick

Fan Guest of Honor

Bob Shaw

Artist Guest of Honor

TBA

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Room Rate: \$59 (1-4 fans)

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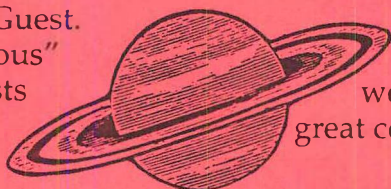
\$20 thru DSC 31
(June 6, 1993)
\$25 from June 7, 1993 thru
August 1, 1994
\$30 thereafter & at the door

Birmingham, Alabama

August 26-28, 1994

In the tradition of Cons gone by, the Birmingham Science Fiction Club brings you a Weekend-Before-the-WorldCon DeepSouthCon. As we have done every time we have held the DSC, Birmingham will host its con in August. Drop by on your way to Winnipeg, or if Canada is too far to go, come and visit us instead.

Our guests this time (as always) are top-notch, Hugo-winning and all around good folks. Guest of Honor **Lois McMaster Bujold** doesn't get to this part of the country very often and we are honored to have this charming and talented woman with us. **Mike Resnick** was in town a couple of years ago and we are delighted to have him back. Mike is our Toastmaster, and you can usually find him holding court in the consuite 'til the wee hours of the morning. By popular demand, we are bringing back B'hamacon II's GoH, **Bob Shaw**, this time as Fan Guest. We'll see if we can get a little "serious" science out of him! All of our guests are very accessible, and yes, we'll have autograph tables, too.



Our venue is the Radisson Hotel Birmingham, site of the last DSC in Birmingham and always a favorite of fans. It's centrally located between Downtown and Southside (see map next flyer), a fact which has given us some interesting ideas for programming – including a few field trips.

This will be a DSC you older fans will recognize...and one everyone will enjoy. We'll have all the traditional things, including a 24-hour ConSuite, Hearts Tournament, Huxter Room, Masquerade, Art Show, Video Room, and the Rebel and Phoenix Awards. Wade Gilbreath introduced the Dance to Southern Cons at our last DSC in 1981 and we'll have two in '94.

Just to prove that we're not just a bunch of old farts, we'll introduce some new stuff this time, too. After all, we don't hold cons often, usually it's just parties and family reunions. We stay pretty relaxed that way, so we're ready to give it our all and throw a great con! Ya'll come!

Committee

Julie Wall, Debbie Rowan, Gary Rowan, George Little, Merlin Odom, Sue Thorn, Adrian Washburn, Charlotte Proctor, Penny Frierson, Don Reynolds, Linda Zielke, Bill Zielke, Kevin Shaw, Rebecca Brayman and the rest of the club.

Dealer's Room Info

Tables \$50 each. Includes 1 (one) membership per table. Limit of 2 (two) tables until May 25, 1994, then first come, first served. Tables are 8 (eight) feet long. No selling out of hotel rooms unless Dealer's Room is sold out. For more information, contact George Little at the address below.

Register today!



B'hamacon III Registration
c/o Debbie Rowan
P.O. Box 94151
Birmingham, AL 35220-4151

Please provide the following
information for *each* membership.
Make your check payable to
Deborah Rowan.



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FAN NAME



ADDRESS



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☐ Art Show ☐ Dealer tables ☐ Masquerade ☐ Volunteering ☐ Advertising

☛ Please include a SASE for all info requested.

*POSITIVE ID REQUIRED AT REGISTRATION

Barrayar. And after all, most fans couldn't finish a novel as complex as *The Summer Queen*.

I'm happy to see that you (Julie) have taken on a large share of the production work. I hope that her contribution will keep you (Charlotte) interested in the 'zine for a while longer.

Mike Glicksohn, 508 Windermere Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M6S 3L6, CANADA

It seems to me that in a moment of regression to unadulterated fannishness at MAGICON I promised to exclude at least this issue of *Anvil* from my announced retirement as fandom's second best letterhack and naturally as a Canadian (and cute to boot) I am duty bound to follow that promise. This despite the fact that I've already filed away a good two inches of other fanzines with nary as much as a LoT. (That's "letter of thanks", of course.) But please don't thank me; it's the least I can do for two – yes, I said two – such cute southern belles. (But as for future issues, well, that's anyone's guess. You may end up wasting your postage...)

I'd already seen Wade's version of "Irish Gothic" but it's still an amusing pastiche. I think he gets closer to Walt than to Bob but the intent is obvious and the result is droll. And it makes a fine cover for a fanzine that has such close ties to the worlds of IF!

The main thing that piqued my curiosity in Buck's column this time was his mention that the Joe Sanders' book about fandom is still theoretically alive. I wrote a chapter for that book, so long ago that I can't even remember if it was six years, ten years or even longer, and I almost dread the volume finally appearing. It'll be a complete revelation to me to read what I had to say 'way back then and I can only hope that I still mainly agree with the thoughts of that very much younger version of myself.

I'll still not sure I understand the ending of *The Hemingway Hoax* and in a very, very small way I helped to write it. I was lucky enough to read the manuscript as it was being written, then read it again in final draft form. I didn't understand what happened at the end and sent Joe a series of questions in the hopes of clarifying things for myself. He then re-wrote the ending, incorporating some of the things I'd talked about, and when I read the new and final version it seemed to make more sense to me. But to even attempt to explain it to anyone else I'd have to re-read it again and I haven't the time or the energy to even consider that. As I recall, though, the protagonist, after being killed several times and re-appearing in parallel universes, actually goes back in time and becomes Hemingway, thereby setting in motion the events that finally lead to the action of the whole book.

I also agree with Patrick that the third volume of the Ender series was the weakest of the three. I was also disappointed to discover that it's really not complete in

itself and we don't really know what happens to its various plot lines until at last the next volume appears. That annoys the hell out of me and makes me feel the writer has cheated me which is hardly what an author wishes a would-be fan to feel.

I've never actually seen an issue of Bill Danner's legendary *Stefantasy* but it doesn't surprise me that the locs are edited severely. The time and effort required to hand-set type would make keeping the page count to a minimum a top priority.

By coincidence, the thing I was doing up to a few minutes of reading *Anvil* 54 so I could at least pretend to loc it was watching *Dead Again* on my cable network. It was certainly enjoyable, although I wouldn't rate it in the same class as *Thelma & Louise*. The real coincidence here is that I don't watch all that many movies (I've seen one in the theatre all year, *A League of Their Own*, which I highly recommend) so I'm surprised that I've actually seen all three that Julie mentions. She's obviously a woman of refined taste in addition to being cute as a button!

Somehow I have a hard time imagining Buck telling a friend that he liked their book even if he didn't. He'd be tactful about it, I'm sure, but if he didn't like a book I think he'd find a gentle way of saying that. (And that may be the only time I ever write a sentence with the words "Buck" and "gentle" linked positively together!)

Although I haven't seen Boyd in a long time I did know he was still around (but wasn't aware he was still active, if just in FAPA.) I simply used the past tense as a way of reporting history, much as I might write "Mike Glicksohn was a letterhack in those days."

As complimentary as Tony's comments about ghod's using up all the essence of letterhack on Harry and me might be, they are obviously inaccurate. With Lloyd taking over for me and his wife Yvonne occasionally supplementing his efforts, it is obvious that ghod still had it's two Penney's worth to put in.



We Also Heard From: Sheryl Birkhead, Harry Andruschak, who asked that a copy of *Anvil* be sent to a fellow LASFASan; Ben Schilling, letting us know where he is; Joe Zimny, requesting a copy of *Anvil*; Irv Koch; Lloyd Penney; Patrick J. Gibbs; Diana Stein; Teddy Harvia; Tom J. Fulopp, requesting zines; R. Laurraine Tutihasi; and a Valentine .from Neil Rest.

won the pennant this year. I did try to support the Eastern League franchise and in fact there could have been a noticeable dent inflicted on fanzine fandom if a bolt of lightning had hit a certain spot in the grandstand on several evenings when Dick and Nicki Lynch and Sheryl Birkhead and I attended games there.

Eva Hauser's paragraphs about the visit to Stanislaw Lem were intensely interesting. It's sad that he became old and infirm just at the time when he would have been better able to visit other nations and meet the science fiction people whom his stories had impressed in translation.

I have a horrible feeling that I've done irreparable damage to my hermit reputation by some of the things I've written in the loc. Oh, well, people have said worse things about me than that I'm actually a closet globetrotter.

Andy Hooper, 4228 Francis Avenue North, #103, Seattle, WA 98103

Thanks for *Anvil 54*. I love this cover! It's one of the best of the year. I always look forward to getting your zine in the mail, and after your claims of retirement a few years ago, I always fear each issue will be my last. Guilt has finally worked enough on me to get me to write a LoC; I hope we'll go on seeing *Anvils* for the foreseeable future.

I see that Buck Coulson cannot resist the urge to squeeze off another round at Wiscon and the women who attend it. His laundry list of the female fans that he can remember from the fifties does absolutely nothing to refute the basic assertions made by Susan Wood, Jeanne Gomoll and others, that fandom before the early 1970s was dominated by men and men's perspective. I can name a whole lot more women in fandom in the fifties, and before, than Buck cares to do in his piece, and some of them were among the most important writers and editors of the fan press of the era. No one could refute that they were. But it's a telling point that Buck's concluding remark on the subject has to do with the competition for the attentions of those women. I think that's the level on which fannish males welcomed women into fandom. Once they started to assert their own agenda, things weren't quite as pleasant.

On the other hand, I guess I agree with Buck's implication that feminism within SF fandom itself hasn't had that much impact on the number of women in fandom. Societal forces which exceed even the impact of *Star Trek* have led ours to be a more sexually integrated interest group. Perhaps now we might start to think about why 98% of all SF fans are white...

Then I see this little note from Eva Hauser, recounting Poul Anderson's characterization of Joanna Russ. It's an image of Joanna that I've heard a lot of people sharing, so for better or worse, I thought I might add a dissenting voice. I live about six blocks away from Joanna now, and have been to six or seven parties with her in the past 9 months. At each occasion, she has impressed me as a

very friendly, open person. I have been a part of a number of conversations that involved her, and I have yet to see any evidence of this close-minded, immovable persona which is often attributed to her. I don't know, maybe it's just that the people I hang around with don't have many ideological points in common with Poul Anderson. I'm rather fond of his daughter, though; Astrid was very kind and helpful to all of us during the Clarion West workshop this past summer.

Roy Bivens remains as engaging as ever in his fanzine comments. I especially like the fact that he chose to review a number of fanzines that I haven't seen commented on before. Alas, you have to feel sorry for the fan editor who decided to publish amateur science fiction. There's so many pro and semi-pro outlets for fiction today that only the very inexperienced writer is liable to submit fiction to a fanzine. The only really good piece of fan fiction (as opposed to faan fiction) I've seen this year is "Beyond Time and Face," by A.R. Morlan, which appeared in the August *Astromancer Quarterly* (#3).

I take exception with Roy's assessment of Bruce Pelz' postcon pactsarcds as being "for completist collectors only." Bruce is supplying an essential psychological service to fandom with his pactsarcds; by sending little jaundiced capsule reviews of conventions we can't go to, Bruce cures us of the jealousy we would otherwise feel at not having attended.

Bob Shaw's piece was, as always, wonderful. I think his greatest skill may be in the way he is able to illustrate the emotional context of his character's actions and ideas – and that's sometimes all the harder when you are writing about yourself. Bob's work is a perfect example of how the least compelling incident can become great fan writing by incorporating it into a well-illustrated personal context. The news that he is going to be your (fan) guest of honor makes it even more attractive to try getting down there. Since we're not planning to go to Winnipeg, I think it might actually be possible.

Jeez, you only managed to beat out Brumcon by 36 votes? Didn't anybody try to point out that Birmingham isn't really considered to be in the south of England? Oh, I see... this was done just for fun. Sorry.

Patrick Gibbs' series of thumbnail sketches of the Hugo winners was just too late and too short to be of that much use, but I admire him his courage in admitting that he didn't really understand *The Hemingway Hoax*. Not having read it, I can't do anything to illuminate it for him, but it is refreshing to see a reviewer who doesn't pretend to know everything. Say, I have a prejudice to confess to as well; I despise the novels of Orson Scott Card. So I'm sorry that Patrick was probably disappointed, but I was awfully glad to see that *Xenocide* didn't win the Hugo. I had mixed feelings seeing *Barrayar* win the award, but I figured it was inevitable. It was such a fine novel compared to *The Vor Game*, so much deeper in characterization and better integrated in plot than last year's fix-up, that I figured fans who had been impressed by the latter would be blown completely away by

trash, which I now keep as a spare. It's remarkable what folks throw out. A trashcan bike usually needs no more than a little cleaning and its tires inflated. I found a woman's bike recently and gave it to a friend. It's just as well I find them whole, because I lack Dainis's skill at assembling them, Frankenstein fashion, from dead parts.

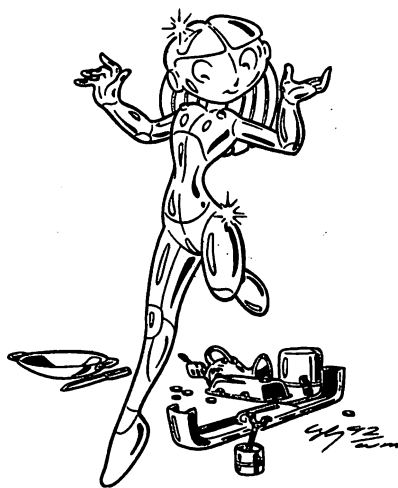
Harry Warner, Jr., 423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, MD 21740

I trust that the successful eye operation continues to give you constantly better vision. This makes three fans I know of who have had vision repaired by means of operation which would have been science fiction when I was a boy: both Arnie Katz and Ben Indick had laser surgery in recent months. It bears out my belief that medical science is the field in which science fiction has made more progress to coming true than any other branch of science during the years I've been reading science fiction. I can't remember many stories in the old days that postulated organ transplants, resuscitation of the dead by heart restarts, artificial hearts, and scores of other futuristic achievements before the end of the 20th century.

Buck Coulson is right when he suggests there were more females in fandom than today's more radical feminists are willing to believe in. I can testify that Leslie F. Stone is a woman because she lived in Hagerstown for a while and I paid her several visits. Anyone who is interested in learning lots and lots of information about Lilith Lorraine (whose real name was less glamorous: Mary Maud Dunn) will find 22 pages of biographical information, data on her publishing enterprises, appraisals of her poetry, and other miscellany, written by Steve Sneyd, in the current issue of Langley Searles' *Fantasy Commentator*. (I doubt that his publication is available for the usual, and it costs five bucks a copy and is worth it from him at 58 Highland Circle, Bronxville, NY 10708-5909.)

Margaret Wells lived in western Pennsylvania, but her husband, Basil, became better known as a fan and a pro writer. However, another possible femmefan mentioned by Buck, Lynn Bridges, was definitely male. He was a very nice guy who has mysteriously been omitted consistently from reminiscences of fandom in the late 1930s and early 1940s. We corresponded and he paid me a visit while he was serving in the army during the war.

I wish I could remember the name of the female fan who made it possible for me to become the only fan to have published issues of the same fanzine in seven decades. She sent me some stories that were too long and too inferior to publish in my genzine, *Spaceways*, so I started a hektoed all-fiction fanzine, *Horizons*, published its first issue in late 1939, and after a couple of years switched it



to a perzine in FAPA where it still reposes.

I don't think the identity of the oldest person active in fanzine fandom has been definitely settled yet. Besides Bill Danner, there is another octogenarian who is still publishing fanzines regularly, G.M. Carr, who was the enfant terrible of fandom around the middle of the century but has calmed down considerably by now. I'm not certain of her exact whereabouts in the 80s, but I'm sure she holds one fannish record: I've never heard of anyone else in fanzine fandom who has like her observed a 60th wedding anniversary.

Otherwise I thought "Roy's" column was less objectionable this time in the sense that he or she didn't emit too many harsh remarks behind the mask. I could quibble about the

claim to living in such a small town. I can remember when Hagerstown couldn't spare anyone to be the town drunk so several residents needed to take turns. The streets were so narrow that the town got into a squabble over the state's request to put a yellow line down the center of the main street, the mayor and council ruled that there wasn't room for it.

I both laughed and sorrowed at Bob's column this time. Laughed because that's the inevitable result of reading Shavian fanzine material, sorrowed because it reminded me of the old days when I could go shopping. Since inflation has sent prices up and collapsing interest rates have sent my retirement income down, I've been forced to rely on secondhand sources. At least, there's an element of the unexpected when purchasing used merchandise that doesn't hold good in the stores where you can guess without looking approximately what the price tag on each item will be. My biggest coup in the summer just concluded was the purchase of a box filled with 45 L-750 Beta videotapes for \$3.15. Apparently the manager of the establishment thought nobody still used Beta VCRs. Not so. I think I've found the perfect rejoinder to people who scoff at my faithfulness to Beta and tell me I'll run out of tapes to record on. This haul, coupled with a backlog of blanks I'd built up in the past few years, should keep me going for at least five or six years. By the time I run out of tapes, one of three things will almost certainly have happened: I'll have died, or I'll have become so infirm I'll be living in some sort of retirement facilities without enough spare space to keep a videotape collection, or high definition television will have taken over and there will be new types of VCRs to match, using entirely different formats of videotapes.

Lloyd Penney might feel amusement over the fact that Hagerstown is now a chattel of Toronto in the baseball sense. The local franchise in the Eastern League, which was a Baltimore Orioles farm club, is no more, thanks to a still mysterious complex of politics and economics and stadium improvement mandates. So now Hagerstown has a franchise in the South Atlantic League, which people who know it well call the Sally League, stolen from Myrtle Beach, S.C., which is a Toronto farm club and

people who thought they could exploit the new world for fame and fortune. This goes for not only the early Charter holders but for all the late 19th century immigrants as well who left their homeland for a new start over here. This country is filled with the genes for blue sky optimism – the best field for suckers and swindlers. Just look around, Americans are obsessed with getting a free ride. They want it if they can get it and are obsessed that someone else is getting it when they can't. America is a nation of wannabe sharks. Of course most of us never amount to more than chubb...

P.S. Great looking issue.

Darrell Schweitzer, 113 Deepdale Road, Strafford PA 19087

My first impression of *Anvil 54* is that – maybe I haven't been paying attention and you had every right to question-mark me – I remember the previous issues being mimeographed, and you got such excellent results with desktop publishing that this issue surely rings the death-knell of the mimeographed fanzine. (As if rising postal rates hadn't already.) I remember when there used to be silly arguments to the effect that a fanzine couldn't be really fannish unless it were mimeo, on twilltone paper. Linda Bushyager got the best of both worlds with *Duprass* – computer typesetting, a page-maker, then the whole page electrostencilled and run off on the traditional A.B. Dick, on twilltone. But I've never had any particular affection for mimeo per se, and if you can get such superior results by other means, well, those hand-cranked Gestetner and A.B. Dick machines in various fannish basements will have to be carted off to some Museum of Ancient Fannish Artifacts, along with a couple trays of hecktography glop, just to show modern fans what it was like. A friend of mine once had a perfectly functional Gestetner mimeo which he no longer had room to keep. He couldn't sell it. Despite wide connections in fandom, he couldn't give it away, since mimeos are notoriously difficult to ship (I once did send one through the mail, back around 1970, but that was a small machine and a long story), and so, alas, he had to junk it. I still have a Gestetner 120, a hand-cranked machine of about World War II vintage, the very one Gary Labowitz used to run off N3F publications on over twenty years ago... and I wonder if I'll ever use it again.

On another matter, I appreciated Buck Coulson's remarks on women in SF before the advent of *Star Trek* and feminism. To explode the various myths – also to explore the subject more thoroughly – I've always wanted to see a solidly historical anthology of SF by women from the period prior to 1960. Some of the names would be familiar. Early work by Carol Emshwiller and Kate Wilhelm. Half-forgotten names like Mildred Clingerman, Margaret St. Clair (whose best work actually appeared under the byline Indris Seabright) Mary Elizabeth Counselman, and Katherine MacLean, whose work I hope is still remembered.

There were indeed women in the SF magazines all the

way back to the very beginning. I don't feel like checking it right now, but I believe the first story by a woman in *Amazing* is in something like the fourth issue. The Gernsback magazines in particular are filled with stories by forgotten women writers, most of whom have Victorian-sounding triple names like Claire Winger Harris and Sophie Wenzel Ellis. (Ms. Ellis also wrote for the Clayton *Astounding*.) Gernsback, indeed, published pictures of his authors, so there was no attempt to hide their gender. In fact, complete gender equality was achieved. The women's work was fully as terrible as the men's. The standards were, even when compared with other pulps of the same era, fantastically low. Most of the writers were amateurs with only a passing acquaintance with even the rudiments of storytelling. Gernsback either couldn't tell or didn't care, and neither could or did his readers.

But the contents of these magazines are fossils, occasionally to be dug up and put on display, but never living literature. So the women were fossilized along with the men. Actually, the only magazine in our field's history which was almost exclusively male was the Tremaine *Astounding*. The only female contributor was C.L. Moore, and, indeed, she could be hidden by her initials. (Of course she didn't use that byline to hide the fact that she was a woman, but to hide from the boss at the bank where she worked that she had another source of income. She started in *Weird Tales*, where female bylines appeared frequently. But, if there really was some sort of prejudice at *Astounding*, the initials must have been awfully convenient.) Then, when John W. Campbell took over, *ASF* once again published female bylines, if they happened to be attached to stories the editor liked.

I enjoyed Bob Shaw's piece, but confess that I find his inability to bargain slightly incomprehensible, at least on an emotional level. I've always enjoyed it. I am good at it. Sometimes it doesn't even involve deceit. I have working relationships with some book dealers on the basis of, "If you'll honestly let me know what you intend to charge for this, I'll let you have it for half that." But I suspect I may have an Arab camel-trader somewhere in my ancestry, as I am a first-rate haggler, and, as I've grown older, I've also learned how and when to get the desired effect by not haggling.

But if Bob had such qualms of conscience about that bicycle, there is a more honorable way. My friend Dainis Bisenieks used to have a curious hobby. He picked up pieces of bicycles he found sticking out of people's trash, or lying in gutters. Before long he had enough pieces to assemble many bikes. Before he became more preoccupied with child-rearing, he used to spend quite a lot of time tinkering with found bicycle parts. His basement resembled a bike shop. Twenty or so shiny, new-looking bikes, plus racks and drawers and shelves of every conceivable part. You could custom order a bicycle to any specifications. I had him build me my first ten-speed, of unique and conservative design – a ten-speed touring bike, with fenders, all made of salvaged parts. I then bartered and bargained for it... and some weeks later I found an entire, serviceable 10-speed bike in someone's

George Flynn, P. O. Box 1069, Kendall Square Station,
Cambridge, MA 02142

Thanks for *Anvil* 54. It's been a while since I've seen one of these. (I guess I must have failed to respond at the wrong time. I never did understand those codes...) Fairly interesting throughout, and nice layout.

Interesting that Buck Coulson implies he can write filksongs to order. I have a fair number of (minor) filksongs to my name, but I've never been able to do that – I just started writing when the inspiration came on me (which it hasn't done for quite a while), and worked as fast as I could before the well ran dry. And speaking of Buck, how come this is the first I've heard of the re-issued *Yandro* that Mike Glicksohn mentions?

And speaking in turn of Mike, is it OK if I respond to Julie's challenge to him "to find a typo in this [issue]?" Let's see, there's "I went to the first of the paid of addresses" on p. 10; "rock and roll numbers become now only famous but forgotten" on p. 16; and the mention of "Greg Turkish" on p.17. (Does the fact that pp.15-16 are bound backwards in my copy count?) Well, this is what you get for sending a copy to a proofreader. ((Touche' jw))

"Birmingham is in the south of England"? Nah. The south of Britain, yes.

((George also explained about halma pegs.))

Brian Earl Brown, 11675 Beaconsfield, Detroit, MI 48224

It's great to see an issue of *Anvil* again. I hate to think how long it's been since the last, though I'm sure it's been a lot less time than since the last issue of my fanzine. I loved Wade's cover and back cover. The front cover is really a hoot though I wonder what Bob Shaw thinks about not being the one holding the pitch fork? With drawings like that I wish Wade would do more fanart than he does. ((So do we.))

I'm glad to hear, Charlotte, that you're recovering well from cataract lens replacement. It's great and even marvelous that they are able to do such surgery let alone that it has become commonplace and routine, but I have to admit that the thought of anyone coming close to my eyes with a knife gives me the willies. I'd hate to think what traumas would wait if I had awakened during the middle of the operation. I know it's better than going around blind for the rest of one's life and all but... I guess I'm just glad that it isn't something I have to think about any time soon. Curious that you have to carry a card around listing your implanted lens. I wonder why? ((I probably don't have to carry it, but they gave it to me, so I do. Readers in the medical field could probably explain why it should be carried, if there is a reason. I would hazard a guess that if one were in an accident or taken ill, it would be good to have not only one's health insurance card but one's spare parts list [pacemaker, intraocular lens, porcine heart valves, silicon breast implants, steel and

teflon hip joints, steel skull plates, etc.] handy.))

There were more women science fiction writers during the first decade of SF magazines than during, I suspect, the next three. I mean, I haven't done a statistical breakdown of this but Leslie Stone, Amelia Reynolds Long, etc. were not just rare women writers but were, at least for Stone, popular writers. I think it had a lot to do with the fact that the Munsey magazine group was publishing a lot of science fiction and fantasy in the pages of *Argosy All-Story Weekly* during the 'Teens and Twenties alongside westerns, mysteries and romances. *Argosy* was a magazine for the whole family so the SF presented there did not come with the 'boy's stuff' attitude that the later strictly SF pulps developed. So women writers, reading *Argosy*, felt free to write about the odd and the different, travel to other planets and so on, and sold to *Amazing* because it was an available market. At least that's my theory.

Bob Shaw isn't alone when it comes to feeling outclassed when haggling over prices. I'm in the same boat as he is and I suspect we're not alone. Buying a new car is particularly traumatic because you know you're supposed to haggle but how do you tell someone who's not only selling you a car but financing it for you, too, that their prices are too high. And what *IS* the right price and so on. I've always come away from a car buying session feeling like a chump, the world's biggest sucker. A couple of dealerships locally have noticed this fear of car salesmen and instituted a radical no-dicker price policy for their cars. One can only hope it works.

I've also worked the other end a few times – had a huckster table for a couple of years, and worked a garage sale for charity. Behind the huckster table I often found myself sizing up a potential customer, trying to guess how interested they were in something I had that was not marked and setting a price accordingly. From time to time there would be somebody interested in something I'd have been glad to get rid of for fifty cents but sensed I could sell to them for five dollars. And sometimes they'd bite and sometimes not. Then other times I'd be glad to get rid of something for fifty cents and later learn that it was really worth ten times as much.

But the garage sales were amazing. This was for charity so we were getting donations of new stuff from stores that couldn't sell them – torn boxes, maybe some dirt, whatever. We were given some children's blue jeans, not factory seconds as far as I know, and marked them down to \$2 each. I don't know what they sold for in stores, maybe in the \$15-20 range. The markdown was incredible and yet we'd have people ask if we'd come down a little on the jeans! Perfectly good children's blue jeans for \$2 and that's not good enough? I swear, sometimes I think America was colonized by a bunch of swindlers and scoundrels... Wait a minute – it was.

That, by the way, is my favorite theory for what's wrong with America. Think about it for a minute, allowing for those brought to this country as slaves, America was colonized by transported prisoners, religious dissidents and

names to the point of being able to put a face or age to them. Since Ortlieb has a baby instead of a college age or older son or daughter, he does sound like a tweener.

I will continue this investigation into the old and moldies by rereading more *Anvils*. I definitely feel reassured that I am not the only old fart who attended a convention in the 50s. I guess, in reading *Anvil*, with all those wild tales of out-of-control conventions, parties verging on drunken orgies, and muscle-feeling at strip joint outings, I received the wrong impression.

Now I understand. This is not a group of irrational, sex driven, irresponsible 20 year olds who have no values of tradition and intellect. This is a group led by old farts who really know how to live.

Bob Shaw, 66 Knutsford Road, Grappenhall, Warrington, Cheshire WA4 2PB, UNITED KINGDOM

Your account of your eye surgery will probably cause lots of fans to reminisce about their operations, but I am resisting the temptation to chime in. I don't think anybody would really be interested in my tale about how I lost all ten fingers in an accident involving a hay baler. The tragic thing about it was that my hands would be all right today had I been able to get the fingers to a hospital quickly enough – the trouble was that I couldn't pick them up.

I don't think you should fret too much about having used the F-word while under anesthetic. In these liberalized times the staff of operating theatres are quite used to hearing people mention fanac.

Wade's artwork in this was really outstanding. The taller person in the front cover illo is quite handsome and somehow reminds me of Walt Willis, but the other one looks like a real nerd. I feel sorry for that poor guy, having a face like that. The back cover illo was excellent, too – a piece of real American Gothic. Looking at it made me realize how lucky the people of the USA and Canada are in having a climate which is favourable to timber construction, plus a plentiful supply of cheap lumber. Those factors have led to a tremendous variety of domestic architectural styles, which the individual's taste – often untutored and the better for it – being given a much freer rein than was the case in this country. The houses here pretty well have to be built of brick or stone, and the expense coupled with the limitations of the material deprives us of architectural extravaganzas. There is a terrible sameness about British housing which makes most of our suburbs – especially on a wet Sunday afternoon in January – incredibly depressing.

Cathy Doyle, 26 Copeland Lane #D, Newport News VA 23601

Thanks for the copy of *Anvil 54*, which we enjoyed. The election results have made me so happy that I've begun to write locs again. Of course the fact that I've finally done the Ditto one-shot (after waiting only a year) and

the thought that I might begin to start dropping off people's mailing lists if I don't do something might also have an effect. So I'm fooling around with the computer and trying out new typefaces.

Charlotte, you certainly make it hard to chose a DUFF candidate!! I'm just running around the room in circles between you, Richard, and Dick & Leah. I'm glad you'll be able to see if you win – Penny told us about the operation during the Atlanta party at Disclave.

I enjoyed Bob Shaw's article on bargaining, something I have a really hard time doing myself. After all, doesn't the seller have both our interests at heart? When I bought our last car I actually did do some checking on the prices of new Civics and found out the average mark-up. Damned if the salesman didn't drop the price to what I was willing to pay. I was impressed with me. We then moved on the financing. They tried to write me a loan for 1.25% over the bank's rate. I informed them I knew what Sovran was changing for loans that day, and that wasn't it. The loan became \$20 a month cheaper. I was on a roll. My last small but final triumph was making them take the charge for temporary plates off. After all, I had mine in the rental. I'm still hopeless at selling stuff, however. Bringing it to the local thrift shop is so much easier.

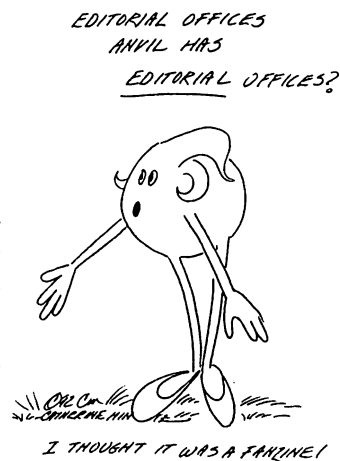
I think that we saw too much of Kim Basinger in the first Batman movie (for my taste) and not enough Keaton. The next movie only made it worse. I just couldn't get interested in the problems of the Penguin. I mean, with parents like PeeWee Herman they probably did him a favor by throwing him in the river! I wondered how Selina ever got to be a secretary to a captain of industry, she was portrayed as smart, but a bit socially inept. Most of your major secretary types don't seem to have this problem.

Ned Brooks, 713 Paul Street, Newport News VA 23005

Good to see you at Worldcon. Much thanks for *Anvil 54*. I love the Irish Gothic cover by Wade Gilbreath! The back cover is great, too.

No, no, that tears it – you won the 1994 DSC on the basis of using the Parliament House. Now we will just have to have a recall election. Radisson indeed... there are damned Radissons everywhere... What a bummer. If they don't tear the Parliament House down by 1994 – which seems quite possible in the decrepit state of the economy – maybe they would turn the utilities back on a let you use it for the con!

((Ned also checked his OED and describes halma pegs.))



went back to the shelves and found some older *Anvils* to see if the evidence was there all along. Sure enough, back in *Anvil 49*, you mentioned that you bought your first NEW car in 1966. That sounded like a parallel to me. (The first year I taught college as a teaching assistant was the first year of *Star Trek*, whatever year that was.) ((Same year – 1966 – jw.))

I bought my first NEW car in 1968. I came out of my master's work, which I finished with the benefit of a big scholarship, with quite a savings account. (Oh boy, was that a different era regarding the value of education.) I had so much saved from the scholarship that I paid half down on a new Camaro convertible.

Then I got married. I bought my next new car in 1990, after I got rid of my husband. Between those years, my ex bought five new cars. He was definitely not into fixing his cars. To some degree, I fixed my own. That seemed normal enough at the time. I am the one with the science degree and was raised by three engineers of assorted varieties. Besides, I had weird old cars like a 1967 Jaguar XKE roadster. I bought it used for almost nothing. Nobody else could fix it. That is probably why I got it so cheaply.

After I read *Anvil 54* and reread *Anvil 49* (the oldest one in my files), I decided you probably are of the "ungeneration". That is a sociology term for those few of us who were children during WWII. You might be a precocious baby boomer. I was definitely "ungeneration". When I was in the fifth grade with 15 fellow students my same age, there were 360 kindergartners about to invade the local school system below us. Needless to say, the community had to expand the school from a three room "school" (three portables sitting on cinder blocks) to a giant building. For one year, before the first wave of baby boomers reached age five, the ungeneration rattled around in the new building with a teacher for every grade.

Wait here a moment. I am going to read "Charlotte's Web" in *Anvil 50* for old moldie hints. Ah, hah! You and 20 year old Tony went out to a strip joint. That was a bit misleading, until you got around to your college-age son in "Charlotte's Night Out with the Boys". In #50, Buck Coulson made clear that he was no child either. He talks about a high school outing to "watch the famous Gypsy perform" and then getting to meet a famous fan dancer "many years later in 1972".

In 1972 I was in Africa. I just up-and-went there to backpack the length of Africa down the east side. I did have a promise for a teaching job, but it did not pan out for wonderful reasons. The officials in Zambia were all at the U.N. in their first powerful action against the White government, in what was then Rhodesia. (Now Zimbabwe.)

Zambia is a landlocked, Black-governed country, but in 1972 was dependent on the railroads south through White-ruled Rhodesia and South Africa. Rhodesia had, several times, punished Zambia for backing the Black Rhodesian rebels by closing its borders to keep Zambia

from getting their goods, especially their copper, to the sea and to international markets.

I arrived in Zambia on the first day it closed its borders on Rhodesia. This was very significant. Land-locked Central African countries were no longer totally dependent on the White ruled south for transportation of goods. Zambia closed its borders on Rhodesia, kept on shipping copper to the coast by way of the American road to the east coast, and kept on helping the freedom fighters in Rhodesia. White run Rhodesia was being hurt by loss of income on their railroads. It was a brave and powerful move on Zambia's part.

When the border guards told me with great authority that I could not get in and why, I broke into a great grin and said, "Good for you. I'm a teacher, but I can go back to Kenya and teach until you are ready for me. If, for these reasons, you cannot use me as a teacher ever, I'm still very proud for you. I hope you succeed in turning Rhodesia into free Zimbabwe."

First the guard was shocked. What in the world was this lily white, Debbie Reynolds type dingy blond doing making political statements and pro-Black African rule statements to boot? After the guard remembered to close his mouth, he checked my papers, which were indeed from the Ministry of Education, Zambia. Since all buses were stopped, he even arranged a ride for me to the Teachers Hostel in Lusaka, the capital of Zambia. He arranged this ride with great gusto and broke more than one law in doing so. He "bribed" a fellow from India to take me. Either the Indian would take me or the Indian would sit outside the border until "Zimbabwe" received black rule. The Indian was "happy" to take me.

I ended up teaching in Kenya rather than in Zambia after all because no officials were in Lusaka to untangle the red tape to place me at a school in Zambia. The Minister of Education for Zambia was at the U.N. I think every official of Zambia was at the U.N. ...No big deal for me not to teach in Zambia. Any American teacher, at that time, could easily get a teaching job in Africa. You had to be willing to accept virtually no pay but great kids who desperately wanted an education. No teacher starved or went without a house, if you do not mind living in wattle and daub. I love wattle and daub. Despite not teaching in Zambia, I really enjoyed the country. I would love to go back there some day. Teaching in Kenya was fine. Everybody loves Kenya.

Another momentary time out while I check *Anvil 51* to see what else is in there which dates a few of us. Just count this as a walk down memory lane. Everybody does it sometime.

Ah, ha! Marc Ortlieb comments he overheard some "younger fans" referring to his quiz team as "old bastards". Ortlieb, more subtly, drops hints that he is a 'tweener', being earlier than the young fans and newer than the "tradition (in Melbourne) stretching back via John Bangsund, John Foyster and Merv Binns". I am sorry to say I do not recognize a single one of those

ments on my cowardice. But no nightmares or abrupt movements while driving a car just because a spider had landed.

I didn't know Boyd Raeburn was in FAPA; I'd have said he was a former fan. I haven't seen or heard anything of him since Torcon II, whenever that was.

No, no, Harry; exorcisms are, properly, only for Catholics, not for Universal Lifers. Sermons on the evils of drink I might do... but don't bet on it unless a payment was offered. However, I am certainly entitled to be called the Reverend Coulson, especially if one doesn't enquire about the objects of my reverence.

Craig B. Hilton, Post Office Box 430, Collie, WA, 6225, AUSTRALIA

It was interesting about your intraocular lens, Charlotte. You're right – a lot of what can be done is miraculous. Julia (Julia Bateman, my wife) recently had her gall bladder out through a hole in her abdomen so small that the stones could only be squeezed through it one by one. The time spent recovering from it is amazingly short in comparison with the original type of operation. And thank you, too, for giving your account to us straight, not yet another medical horror story of wicked and stupid doctors. I've read enough of those to last me a lifetime.

Bob Shaw must be as tender-hearted as I am if he still aches to apologize to that poor soft man for offering £3 for a £7 bicycle. Not many people know the exquisite angst, but I can well empathize.

Julie, I watched *Batman Returns* on video, and I found it impressive but exhausting. What struck me was larger-than-life though it was, it helped to prove the adage that when you try to do a comic book superhero at all seriously, some of the fundamental flaws come into sharp relief, the clearest to me at the time being the following: Batman went forth into Gotham City because he saw a need. The crime rate was high, and he was there to mop it up, from the petty thuggery to the syndicates. No sooner did he come to the city's aid than it became dependent on him, presumably to the continuing weakness of any proper police force. So there's a riot at a public function. What do the authorities do? React with professional officers of crowd control who with proper planning are always inconspicuously on hand for such purposes? No. Save your council budget. Rely on an enigmatic stranger, a one-man brute squad, who had agreed to help out by kicking a few shins when things get out of hand. Great. Me, I'd move to New York.

David Langford, 94 London Road, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 5AU, UNITED KINGDOM

Many thanks for *Anvil 54*. In hope of establishing myself as a smartarse know-all before Mike Glicksohn manages to stay sober long enough to open his Complete Oxford English Dictionary, I rushed the enclosed note on halma to Catherine Mintz... or rather, because of postal weight-

steps, I rushed her a copy on very thin paper and am per-versely sending you the original.

Dear Catherine (if I may), I thought everyone knew what halma was, a board game of Victorian vintage, vaguely related to draughts or Chinese chequers, in which small pegs or 'men' make 'leaping' moves over one another – hence the connection with the Greek word for leap and the broad jump you mentioned in *Anvil*. The *Shorter OED* definition dated 1890 says 'A game played on a chequer-board of 256 squares, by two persons with 19 men each, or four persons with 13 each, the characteristic move consisting of a leap over any man in an adjacent square into a vacant square beyond, or of a series of such leaps. Named also hoppity.' I had an incomplete set about twenty years ago; the pegs were like small crude chess pawns, half or three-quarters of an inch tall. I spontaneously mentioned the game in *Ansible* at the beginning of this year and enclose a copy just to prove it!

I hope the last packet of miscellaneous *Ansibles* I sent arrived (it should have been to number 60).

I just noticed that your zip code is 35206 while I had it as 35026.

Horror! Major violation of US post office rules!

I've been cowering indoors for days for fear of reprisals. (35026 is somewhere in Bessemer, Alabama, where they deny all knowledge of

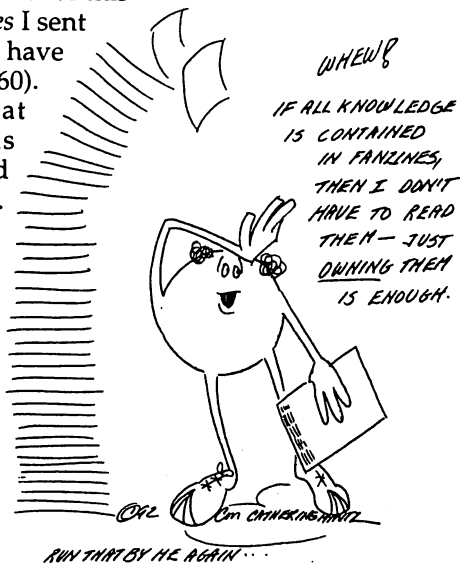
Charlotte Proctor. First class mail stands a chance of being re-routed with a "try 35206" written on it. –cp)

Good luck in DUFF. Having heard from you and the Smiths in the last week or so, I'm waiting tensely to see if Richard Brandt comes up with a better bribe. Ho ho.

Marie Rengstorff, Ph.D., 1815 Venice, South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

Because the doctorate is now finished and a problemed divorce is over, I took greater time to read the last *Anvil* than I took reading the previous ones. I had been treating *Anvil* as a warm teddy bear in the middle of chaos. I appreciated every one, but was not your best reader.

All of a sudden, because of your description of eye surgery, and because I was reading more than words, I asked myself, "Is she, perhaps, of my generation?" So, I



impassioned fashion about any facet of science fiction was like a bolt of lightening. And there were programs on matters of esoteric scientific concern, profiles of notable Fantasy and SF writers, dissections of the Hugo and Nebula awards. I remember hearing about the punctuated equilibrium theory of evolution for the first time at Wiscon, the notion that the dinosaurs were warm-blooded, that I would be able to have the computer that I am writing this on within four or five years time.... my sense of wonder was stimulated early and often.

One day, there was a panel about some guy named James Tiptree, Jr., who was reputed to be a hell of a writer, but about whose identity there was some question. When it was revealed that he was actually Alice Sheldon, the assembled multitude acted like it was the second coming of Christ. I didn't understand the program at the time, but I did take the opportunity to pick up a few books by James Tiptree Jr. I think to this day that they are some of the finest short fiction I have ever read.

And what was that business with all the dead cats? Nobody has ever adequately explained that to me. Nor can I explain why I was so riveted by watching a French animated film, *Fantastic Planet*. I've seen it several times since, and it has seemed rather tiresome. But that first-time was like a psychedelic drug, that led me to stay up all night, discussing existential topics and confronting all sorts of notions of myself and others. I finished the

evening by wandering around slack-jawed in the con suite, putting trash in a plastic bag, as late-night partiers looked at me like I was crazy.

The whole thing was pretty exhausting. I went home after that first convention in a near-catatonic state, which pissed my parents off. They suggested that it would be a mistake for me to do such a thing again. The whole thing had been so bewildering that at first I had been willing to agree with them. But a couple of weeks later, Lynne called to say that we, and indeed many of the gophers, had been invited to have a free dinner at a local pizzeria. This fine gesture was made on behalf of the committee by Dick Russell, who for all of his manifold faults, has always been very conscientious about recognizing the needs and interest of newcomers to the scene.

As we sat in the restaurant, I thanked him for asking me. "Well," he said, "A lot of people thought that you wouldn't be a very good person to ask to be a gopher. But hey, you really worked hard. You made a big contribution to the convention. I was really impressed."

So that was my entry into fandom. And I have seldom looked back since.



The ANVIL Chorus

Shinji Maki, East No. 1 #203, 1-18-4 Higashitoyoda, Hino, Tokyo 191, JAPAN

I'm interested in fanzines in USA. I had published fanzines and one had a regular fanzine review column in Japanese prozine, *SF Adventure*. Mr. George "Lan" Laskowski recommend your *Anvil* to me. Please let me know oversea subscription rate of the fanzine. If you have back issues, please notify me.

Enclosed please find an SASE. Thank you for your time.

Buck Coulson, 2677W-500N, Hartford City, IN 47348

I ended my tooth problems years ago. Ever had 14 teeth removed in one session? It's not pleasant, but it is decisive. Now I may have false tooth problems, but never tooth problems. Eyes have held up. I nearly had to have a toe amputated this summer, but a change in heart medicine turned it pink again; for a time it was a sort of dirty gray.

To argue with Roy Bivens a bit; I agree with him that most fanzine fiction is pretty bad, but... Terry Carr once sold a story he did for a fanzine, with minimal changes; possibly no change at all, but I'm not positive about that.

I've later been paid for a fanzine story I wrote with Gene DeWeese (so far it's had 2 publications in fanzines, and two in hard covers), and for a poem that was also first published in a fanzine and was later included in a paperback and a filk tape from which I received royalties. Neither story nor poem was changed for pro publication. It does happen. A couple of items from Walt Willis' fanzines were later published professionally. It's not likely that any given piece of fan fiction is even close to professional quality, but in rare cases, it is.

Yeah, Julie, the good old days of typewriters and stencils, were when "layout" was mostly finding something to fill out a page when a contribution didn't come out even – and they never did. Back then, editors who mentioned "layout" were suspected of being "artsy" and thus fanishly inferior. I guess it was good training for a would-be writer, since I usually got the job of writing something to fill in the blank space.

Living with a woman who likes spiders – "they catch bugs", Juanita says with glee – does a lot to induce tolerance of the nasty little critters. We used to have large ones – legs spanning a couple of inches – in our bathtub fairly regularly, but I never actually removed one. Instead, I'd yell, "Juanita, get your pet outta here!" and she would come in and remove it while making com-

they would bring the Statue of Liberty to Madison; to fulfill that promise, they had placed a replica of the statue from the nose up, with the hand, wrist and torch beside it. You could look it up. I used to have a picture of us in our Mao caps, standing in front of Lady Liberty's nose.

In the event, most of us took Jan's admonitions very seriously. I showed up on time, before a lot of the committee members; I ditched out of school at noon and rode the bus downtown. I helped Dick Russell, the eternal Madison bureaucrat, unload almost all of the registration paraphernalia. I brought in some art stands. Lynne and Tom Kalil and a few others went with me to help Ken Konkol cut up celery and carrot sticks for the hospitality suite. Then I went back to the main building, and saw this guy staggering in with this huge box of books in his arms. I ran up and practically tore the box out of his hands, and insisted that he let me help bring in his books. Tom and I managed to unload the man's entire van in about five minutes, wondering all the while why the other convention workers were giving us such weird looks as we did it. But Dick Spellman wasn't about to tell us that it isn't standard practice to have gophers unload huckster's cars for them.

The place where kids were most likely to be able to deal on relatively even terms with (relative) adults in those days was at the gaming table. I had been attending the University of Wisconsin Wargaming club for a few years by that time, so I was especially eager to get involved in the much-hyped Wiscon Dungeons and Dragons game. This feeling was compounded by the fact that Lynne and Nevenah had been telling me for months about this new "sophisticated" strain of D & D that the Madison SF club played. They called it "Emersonian" D & D, because it had been developed by Emerson Mitchell, a mathematician on the fringes of the SF club. He had developed complicated functions to bring greater realism to the game, to the point where combat rounds broke down to tenths of seconds.

The game was designed to allow players to enter and leave play whenever they wanted to without disrupting the flow of the game. Briefly, the characters were trying to escape a pocket universe where they had been trapped a generation before by a powerful evil sorcerer. They had a portable dimensional gate that allowed characters to enter and leave the action whenever the player had to go to a panel.

I came in fairly early on the first day, and glommed onto what I saw as the best possible character: Tomar Tolas, the biggest bad-ass magician in the game. It was great. I was suddenly thrust into a position of leadership and trust, with a major role in determining the course of the game. And I could throw a fireball spell that would melt whole glaciers.

All the game masters, and many of the players were adults. They were nice to me, applauded my actions and

decisions, and didn't seem to look down on me at all for being fifteen. This, if nothing else, was what kept me down in the gaming cul-de-sac for several years, when I might well have been getting into con-running, or trying to get published. Receiving the approbation of adults is enough to make any kid do practically anything, and I was no different. The first three years I attended Wiscon, I spent at least two-thirds of the time in that tiny room, trying to figure out how many tenths of a second it took my character to make a mental and physical reaction to having a knife stuck in his spleen.

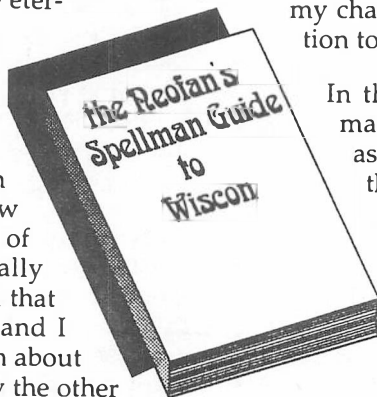
In the end, I (Tomar Tolas, remember him?) made a deal with an undead wizard to remain as his slave, if he would free my family and their friends from the pocket universe. I felt just like someone in a Dickens novel.

Of course, there was time for a lot of other stuff here and there, a lot of it work. After that first experience with the hucksters, word got around that I was the guy to call for lifting heavy objects. And since we had had the fear of God put into all of us at the very beginning, we had the impression that we had to be on call pretty much all the time. So there was a lot of sitting around and waiting for someone to ask us to lift something heavy or chop up some celery sticks. And while we waited, we used to check out the programming, or occasionally the film program (remember when they used to actually show films at convention, instead of just renting a bunch of video-tapes at Blockbuster and slapping them on a big screen outfit? The Wiscon committee debated the legality of that for about six years before they finally just went ahead and did it, which made me think that certain members of the group were getting kickbacks from the projector rental service.)

I remember in particular one program that had Suzy McKee Charnas on the panel. She had just had her novel *Motherlines* published, and there was a very heavy discussion on separatist communities and the overall responsibility of female SF writers to portray viable feminist utopias in order to encourage progressive social evolution. Laugh if you will, but it was very serious stuff at the time, and no one really thought that our Mao caps were there for comic effect.

At one point, Suzy got really upset that someone had had the temerity to compare her work with some alien culture as portrayed on *Star Trek*. She referred to *Star Trek* as being "popcorn" and "pablum" versions of science fiction, and said that she hoped that her work represented much more substantial repasts for the reader. Naturally, this caused the program to degenerate into a general punch-up on the innate quality of *Star Trek*, with lesbian separatists who favored K & S fantasy fanzines struggling to defend their passions to those who saw the show as an unreconstructable tool of the patriarchy.

What can I say? If this didn't speak all that closely to my concerns, the notion that people could argue in such an



Neofan Days

– Andy Hooper

I got a letter from Lynne Morse today. It came all the way from the Netherlands, where Lynne and her husband Roelof Goudriaan live now. She said she finds herself missing old friends these days, and made some reference to our early days in fandom. If I close my eyes and think of her, it is the girl she was at sixteen that I see, and I imagine she can't help but see the boy I was then as well. Funny how our first impressions last the longest.

It's funny that her note should arrive just now, because my early days in fandom had been on my mind even before that. I was set on my reverie by looking at a tape of *Mimosa 3.5*, the live fanzine put together by Dick and Nicki Lynch at ChatCon 13 a few years back.

On that tape, Maurine Dorris delivered a very good-natured and tolerant piece about befriending neofen, and how she always tries to return the kindness paid to her when she was just starting in fandom herself. I responded with a little guilty introspection: Am I ever that kind to fans at their first convention? Do I even take the time to talk to them? It isn't that big a deal, I suppose, I'm no BNF, and my conversation is hardly to be pined for. But it made me remember someone who characterized me as "difficult to approach," and suddenly I could see things just as they were 16 years ago, looking at the problem from the viewpoint of the raw beginner. Everyone was difficult to approach then, whether they were nice or not.

I went to my first convention, Wiscon 2, at the suggestion of Lynne, who was a member of our high school science fiction club. All of us were classic, ill-socialized fan material back then, not many friends, read genre literature all the time, addicted to *Star Trek* (but not *Star Wars*, because it wasn't out yet. Lynne showed me pre-production stills at school one day; we were in a second-floor hallway, and I remember the sound of a Steely Dan song, "Deacon Blue," drifting in from a radio on the front lawn.) Lynne used SF to forge social contacts from the beginning; she and Nevenah Smith successfully fought for the right to attend Madison Fandom meetings, despite being underage. It was hard for some of us to see why that was worth the effort, until Lynne convinced us to follow her lead. Once we, like Lynne, made contact with fandom, there was no thought of going back.

Still, it's hard to remember why we should have felt that way, in the face of the indifference, and often outright hostility, that we received from older fans. We probably would have stayed barred if not for the labor crisis brought on by the early Wiscons.

Wiscon has always been one of those regional conventions which aspires to achieve much more than its labor

pool can reasonably manage. MadStf has never involved more than about thirty people at any one time, and yet has put on a convention which draws between six and seven hundred people for more than fifteen years. Like all con committees faced with this kind of task, the early Wiscon leadership tried to tap into outside sources of labor. And when it came to getting gophers, warm bodies to carry boxes and art show panels and registration paperwork, they turned to the youthful nuisance of Lynne and her friends, and said, "As long as you're here, you might as well make yourself useful."

I can remember Lynne assembling a small knot of us, and herding us onto a bus to travel to the Memorial Student Union building, where we met Jan Bogstad, to discuss our role in the convention and tour the convention facilities. Why Jan should have drawn the duty of gopher orientation is beyond me. She is one of the more unremittingly hostile people I have ever met in fandom, and almost certainly must have spoken against the notion of encouraging teenagers to attend Wiscon as gophers. Wiscon was a very serious thing in those days, and the idea of having a bunch of teenage boys running around the con was the last thing they would have liked.

At the same time, Jan was the chair of those early Wiscons, and believed very seriously in a hands-on approach to the job. As long as we were going to be there, she saw to it that we knew what was expected of us. We were being given a rare opportunity to hear and meet noted professionals in the science fiction field. We were receiving that opportunity at a substantial discount to a normal membership. It fell to our honor to see to it that we earned that opportunity. They had little Mao caps for us to wear so that we could be identified as being convention workers.

It must have been excruciating for her to put up with all the foolish things we did and said. We toured through the convention facilities in the Wisconsin Center, then walked to the Madison Inn, the convention hotel. It was numbingly cold, as it was that entire winter. Perhaps it is the effect of time that makes me think this, but it seems to me like the winters in which those first three Wiscons were held were especially harsh.

Those were the days when student government had fallen into the hands of the Pail and Shovel Party, pranksters dedicated to having the best time possible and misusing as many funds in the process. From the huge picture windows at the back of the Wisconsin Center, we could see a huge plywood and canvas sculpture that the Pail and Shovel had commissioned and placed on the frozen surface of the lake. They had promised that if elected

Going To WorldCon) Proctor make her entrance. Jaws dropped, just as she had intended when she threw her bag in the car and caution to the wind early that morning.

She joined us in drink, but didn't stay long after hearing of Roger's struggle with registration. "We'll just see about this," she declared and marched off to rescue our Aussie Without Portfolio.

It was one of the nights that Roger was staying with me that he told me about the cancer. I didn't know much about this particular kind, and he seemed so unconcerned and he was so full of happiness and life that I really had no idea how serious it was.

We went on talking about other things and he mentioned how so many fans he knew seemed so fascinated with the past and fannish history. We agreed that a proper respect for the past was in order, but that generally, rehashing it all the time got to be a bit of a bore. He said that we should form an anti-history group. As a charter member of FAP (Fans Against Programming), I jumped right in and said, "We can call it Fans Living in the Present."

"FLIP!" Roger exclaimed!

We made plans for buttons and a newsletter and FLIP became our secret watch-word for the rest of the con.

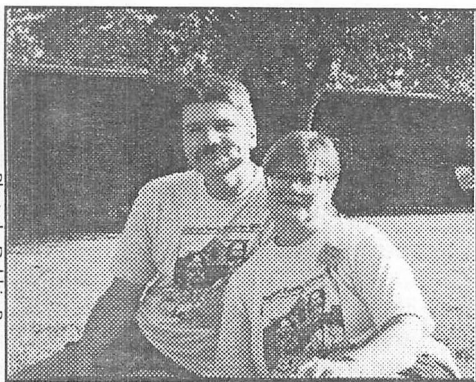


Photo by Debbie Rowan

FLIP Founders

It was most gratifying to see the spilled drinks, dropped jaws, and stunned expressions when I arrived at the Peabody Hotel. Julie, Bill & Linda were in the bar (where else?) in the lobby, facing the door, so my entrance was most dramatic. They told me Roger was having trouble getting registered (no one seemed to know what a DUFF winner was) so I went to the convention center across the street to register myself and

help him out, if necessary. But I needn't have worried, Dick & Nicki Lynch were keeping Roger company, and he finally caught Edie Stern who did know what a DUFF winner was.

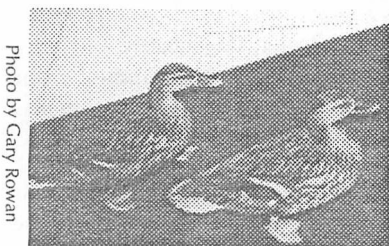


Photo by Gary Rowan

Peabody Ducks

Roger had been stay-

ing with Julie, et al. during their sightseeing, but now that the convention was upon us, he wanted to be closer to it. The room the convention had gotten for him was too far away to hoof it, so I spoke to Worldcon Atlanta, Inc. in the person of Penny Frierson. She decreed that 1992's DUFF contribution would be in the form of a room for Roger at the Peabody. I shared expenses for the nights I was in it.

Roger was so popular that the Birmingham crew didn't see a whole lot of him after that. Charlotte and Julie took him for a midnight swim at the Peabody and Julie went to lunch with him and Teddy Harvia on Labor Day. Penny took him to Silver Springs one day.

I left early Sunday morning, tiptoeing so as not to wake Roger. He called me at home the next day and berated me soundly for sneaking off and not even saying good bye. But I always have been chicken. I wouldn't even write to him after he went back home because... well, I didn't want to address the question of his illness. I ignored it, hoping it would go away. Julie wrote to him though, and I'm glad she did. We both got little thank you notes from Roger.

The next couple of months passed quickly – a baby shower for Rebecca, then Laura's birth and subsequent illness (see elsewhere thish), and the arrival of my "inheritance" of four German nut dishes and one antique music cabinet.

When the call came from Dick Lynch telling me Roger had died, I felt nothing so much as anger and betrayal. My magic hadn't worked. Being an ostrich had not prevented Roger's death. Another of Roger's friends called from Australia. She wept, and told me that Roger, being Roger, had stayed cheerful to the end. Heartbreaking. Julie came to my house that night. We talked about Roger a long time. Then we called everyone in Birmingham who had known him. The Jophan Family sent flowers.

At the Pearl Harbor Day party two days later, Birmingham fandom raised a toast to Roger, and to the good times we shared. Hear, Hear!!

Footnote: This seven foot picture was taken at Epcot on the first day of our Disney adventures. Roger's foot is the third from the left, or, the third from the right, depending on how you look at it.

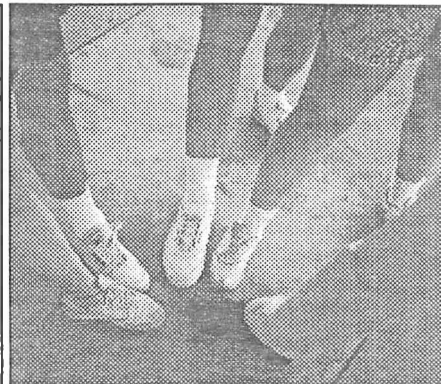


Photo by Linda Zielke

Photo by Linda Zielke



Gary Rowan waits for Roger to show

get out of bed. Bill said, "We're going to have to beat her butt to get her up."

Roger had a different approach. He sat on the edge of the bed and began to kiss Linda's derriere through the sheet. Linda has often told people "Kiss my ass," but this was the first public incident, where someone actually did. At this point, Linda thought it would be the better part of valor to get up. She shooed the others out of the room and soon we were off to pick up Gary and Debbie.

Photo by Debbie Rowan



Bill & Linda

At DisneyWorld Roger continued to get lost, and also was chastised several times by the Disney Police for opening doors that said "Cast Members Only." After the start of one ride, the train ground to a halt and the omniscient voice of the Disney Police came over the loud speaker, informing us that the ride would not move again until everyone had their arms and legs inside the cars. Looking around for the offender, Bill and Linda glanced backward to see Julie hiding her face and pointing at Roger, who was trying to look innocent.

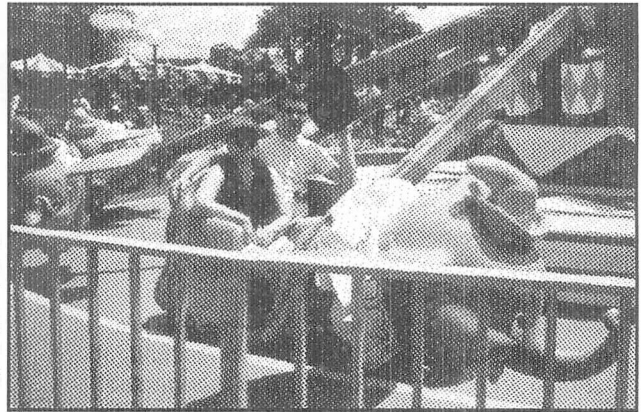
While in line for Big Thunder Mountain, Roger and Julie took advantage of the square dance musak to do a little jig. This allowed a gap to form in the queue. This, too was frowned upon by the Disney Police. The voice came over the loud speaker, instructing us to keep up with the party ahead of us.

While many people enjoyed Space Mountain, Roger found it to be such an ordeal that he knelt and kissed the carpet when we got off. Perhaps he sympathized with the astronaut who, after experiencing the ride, said it was easier to go to space.

Julie was determined to ride Dumbo. Roger agreed to accompany her. Sensible people got ice cream and Cokes and waited in the shade. For 42 minutes. Roger and Julie were the only two adults in line who didn't have a child

with them. Linda took pity on them and brought them a Coke. As they advanced in the line, Julie declared that she must ride the Dumbo with the PINK hat. They let others go ahead of them in order to do so. Many pictures were taken, as the others had nothing else to do.

Photo by Bill Zielke



Fearless Dumbo Riders Wave to Their Public

After Dumbo, we were all tired and cranky from a hard day of fun. We wanted to go back to our hotels and a nice, tall, cold drink. But where was Roger? The question was asked mildly at first, and then with increasing urgency of tone. The question became "WHERE THE HELL IS ROGER?!?!?" Gary and Bill were dispatched to look for him while the women sweltered on the curb. Gary found him. Then Bill was lost. We found Bill, but lost both Roger and Gary. Finally we all converged on the main square and made our way to the ferry and air conditioning.

After a shower and a nap, Bill and Linda and Julie and Roger went to the convention center to register for WorldCon. The three Americans had all their papers and receipts, as Americans are wont to do. Roger had nothing but his learner's permit and that cute Aussie accent as identification. He bet us that he, being the DUFF winner, could get through the registration line faster than we could. We were dubious, but sent him off to the V.I.P. registration.

Linda got through first. It took three minutes (lines were short at the time). Julie and Bill followed in rapid succession. An hour later, Roger was still waving his arms and gesticulating at the various members of the MagiCon staff who were called in to make a ruling on the subject. It seems no one there at the time had ever heard of DUFF. Or at least didn't know that Roger was the winner and was supposed to be taken care of. Finally, a member of the board was located and Roger was hustled off to the nether regions of the convention center, for what we weren't sure. Interrogation, perhaps. We caught him and told him that we would be waiting in the Peabody bar when he was released.

The three of us went across the street and settled in at a table in the lobby. We were quenching our famous, near Shavian, thirst, when a familiar figure sauntered in the front door. It must have been fate that led us to the very spot where we could all plainly see Charlotte (I'm Not

Roger disappeared on Friday afternoon at Jophan and we went looking for him, only to find him in his room, talking into a tape recorder.

"What are you doing?!" we cried.

He explained that he had to dictate notes for his trip report while they were fresh on his mind.

"How detailed are these notes?" we wanted to know.

"Very."

"You're not going to tell everything are you?"

"I reckon it's my duty."

Whereupon we began to toss the hotel room, tickling Roger without mercy, looking for the tapes from the three days previous, which included the drunken orgy in the blacked-out Chinese restaurant the night before.

We never did find those tapes. Hopefully maybe no one (who knows us) ever will. But we thought that there were parts of Roger's trip that needed to be told, if only so we can read them later and remember our dear friend.



Photo by Patrick J. Gibbs

They put us on the Marquee!

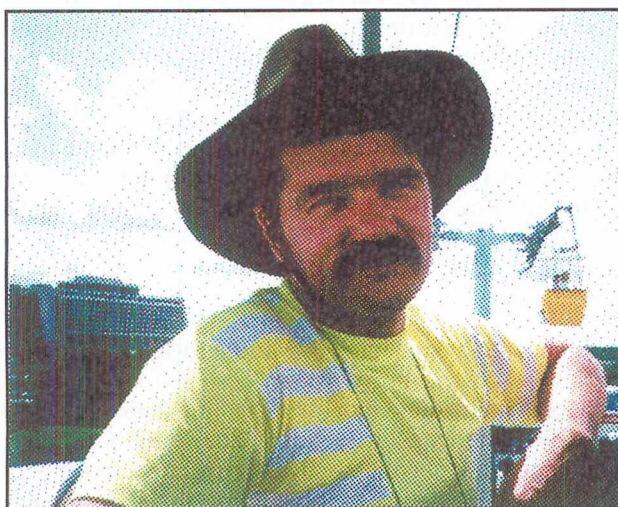


Photo by Linda Riley-Zielke

Kissin' Cousin



Photo by Gary Rowan

Roger Robot

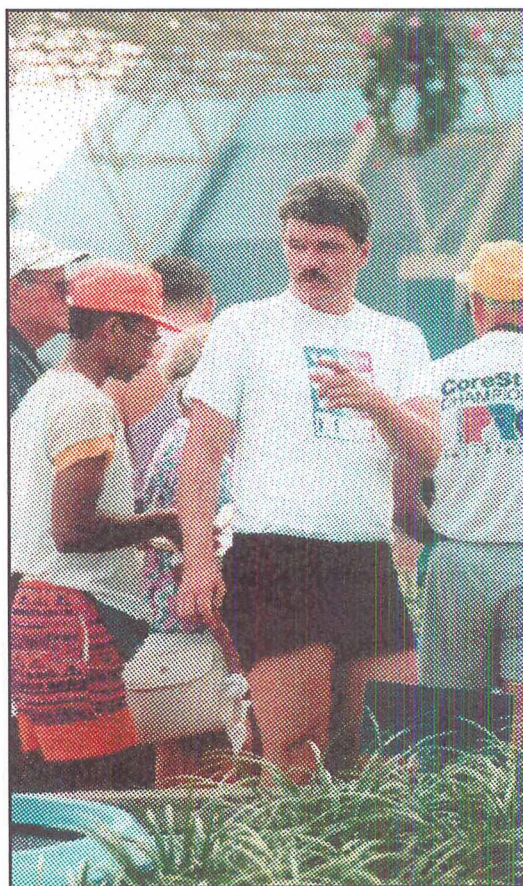


Photo by Linda Riley-Zielke

Lost Roger

Indeed, the four who left town earlier, did leave very early. At the crack of dawn, much to the distress of Julie and Roger. This after an entire weekend of Bill trying to make the departure time earlier and Roger and Julie trying to make it later

It was a fun trip, nevertheless, with Roger regaling us with his famous stories of adventure in Egypt.

For miles we had seen billboards for the Cafe Risque, each successive shocking pink sign showing an even more scantily attired, well-endowed bimbo. Soon Julie had to go to the bathroom, as she often does - this trait having earned her the title of "Peanut Bladder." Bill, who insisted on driving the entire trip, said, "We'll stop at the next exit."

We pulled off at a gas station, and Julie went hurriedly into the ladies room. At this point, I said, "This is the exit where that Cafe Risque is. It's supposed to be off to the right on the other side of the freeway."

Roger and Bill both said, "Let's go. It'll take Julie a while."

I said, "But what if Julie comes out and we're not here?"

The guys said, "We'll be back before she comes out."

So, off we went, Bill taking a hard left, me screeching, "This is the WRONG way!" Since I am female, they paid no attention. "There's nothing but a swamp and a bird sanctuary this way," I warned.

"We'll just go a few more miles and see." Bill said.

When we reached a large sign that said "Wildlife Sanctuary." I said, "This is not the kind of wildlife you guys are looking for."

There was an abrupt about-face. We peered out of the windows as we sailed past the gas station, headed in the other direction, but there was no Julie. (*This was because I was locked in the bathroom.*)

There, on the other side of the freeway, right where I had predicted, was the Cafe Risque in all of its tawdry glory. We came to a screeching halt and all leapt out of the car. There were photos of all the "waitresses" on the walls outside, decked out in the best of Frederick's of Florida. While we perused the pictures, an actual waitress came out and swayed to her car. Bill and Roger were mesmerized by her heels and skirt, which were both very high. My comment is unprintable.

A tourist family with a six year old male child pulled up in a van and took photos of the Father and Son in front of the Marquee.

The guys discussed going in, but I put my foot down, saying, "We have to go get Julie." So they settled for taking pictures (with the camera that later

turned out to have no film in it).

Meanwhile, back at the gas station. I had finally freed myself from the restroom (I am not making this up) and was frantically scanning the surrounding area for any sign of a cranberry Taurus. Alas, this was to no avail. I went inside the gas station and had a brief conversation with the attendant who informed me that no, he didn't know where my friends had gone. I bought a soft drink and went back outside to wait.

An indeterminate amount of time later, the wayward car came speeding back to the gas station. As Julie climbed gratefully into the back seat, an unrepentant Bill said, "What took you so long?"

We arrived in Orlando without further incident. Since Roger couldn't get in touch with anyone on the WorldConCom who could tell him if he had a room this early (it turned out that he did not), he stayed with us, in the spare bed in Julie's room. This space was originally intended for someone else who couldn't make it. We had tried get Charlotte to come, but she kept insisting that she wasn't going - she was too tired. So the bed was free and Julie was happy to have someone to split the cost.



Debbie Does Disney

We contacted fellow B'hamsters Gary and Debbie Rowan and made arrangements to go to Epcot with them the next day. They mentioned a Mexican restaurant named Casa Galliardo, so we went there. There was a drink special called a coyote. If you drank a blue one, you got a blue coyote figurine, sporting a bandana, sunglasses and purple shorts. Since the ingredients of the drink were potent, it

sounded like Linda's kind of drink. But when Roger saw the figurine, he he had to have one, too. To amuse himself while waiting for the drinks, Roger absentmindedly pulled the chain on the Budweiser sign next to us, flashing it on and off. To amuse herself while waiting, Linda told Roger, "You are supposed to howl like a coyote when you get this drink." So, of course, Roger did. What started as a duet ended as a loud and lusty solo by Roger. The light fixtures shook and others in the bar turned to look.

The main theme of the Epcot trip was Roger wandering off. See pictures. One time he went off with a German tour group, scrunching down to blend in, wearing his Croat T-shirt and listening attentively to the little blond Disney guide. Much to the relief of the Germans, Linda reclaimed him with a terse, "Roger!"

Epcot was also the venue for the now famous picture, taken by Gary Rowan, of Julie's rear end which was later blown up and mounted for a game of Pin the Tail on the President's Ass at the BSFC Halloween Party.

Continued on page VIII

individual reading a book to a bunch of forest creatures, some identifiable by species and some not. Roger was impressed – that folks could get so upset over something so obviously harmless. He took pictures.

We were both exhausted by the time we got to Julie's. After we had eaten, while Roger was entertaining the troops, I stretched out on the floor and Merlin (bless his heart) rubbed my back, and my right arm and shoulder that was giving me fits, and it was wonderful. Roger said later he was so jealous!

The next day, Thursday, was a day off. It stormed all day, and our power was off for hours so we read by lantern light, and did some errands. Roger tried to reach the Magicon committee member in charge of room reservations, but only talked to answering machines!

The first annual Jophan Family Reunion was a rousing success! The hotel never questioned that we were a legitimate family. When guests (who had mentioned Jophan when they made their reservations) checked in, the clerk showed them on a map where their room was and said "Your family is in the upper courtyard." We had t-shirts with Irish Gothic (*Anvil* 54's cover) on the front and all our names on the back. Saturday the hotel put "Welcome Jophan Family" on the marquee!!!

Milo's is right down the street from the Jophan motel, and has the best burgers in town. Bill and I decided to go pick up some for supper. We asked Roger if he would like us to bring him one. "I reckon I'd like to go with you," he said.

"Well, OK," I told him, but you'll have to sit in the back with the dummy. (I had brought a manikin, or rather the top half of a manikin with a Mickey Mouse hat, to put in the con suite. Why, I'm not quite sure, but nonetheless there was a naked dummy with her hand in the air in the back seat of my car.)

Undeterred, and indeed with a suspicious enthusiasm, Roger went to the car with us. No sooner than we had gotten seated that I heard odd sounds coming from the back seat. It sounded sort of like the cartoon character, Pepe Le Phew, courting the cartoon kitty.

"Bon soir, my chérie... tu est beautiful, just beautiful. Come away with me to ze casba... Oui, oui, my little chickadee... we go to ze 'amburger 'eaven...."

"Roger! What on earth are you doing? Get your hands off my dummy!"

"Au contrair! La petit dummee, she loves me! She will follow me to the ends of the earth, won't you, mon petite chou-chou?... Why do you not speak to me? Ah, you are so overcome with love that you cannot!"

The dummy, of course, didn't say anything, nor did

she fight off Roger's roving hands. Bill turned into the drive-in lane. Surely, I thought, Roger will stop this embarrassing display.

Surely you jest, he thought back.

The enthusiastic murmuring continued unabated. "Dummee la douce! Dummee ze beautiful!"

The girl at the drive-in window filled our order, glancing nervously at the activity in the back seat. I tried to appear as though nothing was out of the ordinary and we drove back to the Family Reunion, sweet nothings wafting from the back seat all the while.

The annual BSFC auction raised a lot of money for DUFF, and for the club. Saturday night we walked to the Chinese restaurant next door (Table for 47, please), where we thanked Cousins Steve and Sue Francis for being our Relatives of Honor, and Kissin' Cousin Roger for coming so far.



Lobster Woman (AKA Linda Riley-Zielke)

Sunday night the Lynchi, Roger, and I went out to eat and then to my house where we sat and swapped fan-nish tall tales. Jerry came through on his way to work, but stopped long enough to bring out his FAL (an assault rifle - the "gold watch" he got for 25 years service at the News) and put it in Roger's unwilling hands. Dick came to attention, sitting on the edge of the sofa, elbows straight and hands on knees. He looked poised for flight, but I knew he wouldn't leave without Nicki, who was huddled back in the sofa corner, sort of behind Dick. Roger was the most subdued I had ever seen him.

Afterward he said "It was like someone had put a snake in my hands, a deadly snake!"

Monday morning, real early, Roger left with Julie, Linda and Bill, on their way to Florida, to the worldcon and various amusement parks, about which they will tell. I stayed home and recuperated. By Wednesday I was feeling antsy. I packed a bag, put it in the car and waited to see what would happen. Sure enough, early Thursday morning I leapt into the car and took off for Orlando.

He had just gotten off the phone with the police. It seemed that they had been cruising by, saw the van, and ran the plates. It further seemed that the rental place had previously reported this particular van stolen, had found it (an employee borrowed it without authorization) but never bothered to inform the cops. So the cops had towed it to the impound lot.

At first, I was relieved. The cops had stolen the van. Then I began to think. What if, six days earlier, when my sister and I had run out of gas on the interstate in this same van, what if some cops had stopped to help us and

had run a routine license plate check? What if those weigh station attendants had called the plates in?

My sister and I would have **BEEN IN JAIL!!! IN MISSISSIPPI!!!** I would've had to call Charlotte for bail money. Who knows what would have happened to all that equipment.

Needless to say, I'm never letting a salesman rent a van for me again. And the service guys are still giving me hell. I did get a mobile phone out of the ordeal.

Forged DUFF Report

– The Mafiaettes

As Charlotte said in her column, we are dedicating this double issue of Anvil to Roger Weddall. In Birmingham, only Charlotte knew him before he came to visit us last August, but by the time he left, we all loved him. I was at work when I got the call from his friend Geoff in Australia, telling me that he had died.

I left the office immediately. I had to go see Charlotte. As I drove, I thought, "We'll have to write his trip report for him - at least the part we know." Charlotte had already heard and she agreed.

"DUFF ROGER WEDDALL DIES, COMPLICATING NEW RACE." This headline from Science Fiction Chronicle really pissed me off. As if Roger knew he was going to die and therefore shouldn't have accepted DUFF. As if DUFF were more important than this man's life.

Although I wanted to do this report from the moment I knew, I have to say that it hasn't been easy. Not just trying to keep from being maudlin or sappy, because Roger would've hated that, but the actual structure was difficult. The three of us, Charlotte, Linda and I, all worked on parts of it, together and separately. Some stories are individual and in first person; some, necessarily, are group stories and in the third person.

To stave off some of the confusion inherent in a narrative that changes voices so often, I've devised a type scheme that I hope will help. I, Julie, am speaking when the type is italic. Charlotte, of course, is bold. Linda is sans serif (Avant Garde to be exact). The omnipotent voice of third person is the regular Palatino Roman that the rest of the zine text is in. Sort of a Royal "We".

We'd been anticipating Roger's visit for months, and arranged for him to get here in time for the Jophan Family Reunion, the week before MagiCon.

Tuesday before the Reunion I flew (actually I drove, but kinda fast) over to Atlanta to pick up Roger. We hadn't seen one another in 7 years but, as Julie put it, I'd know those dimples anywhere! We drove back to Birmingham and on to my house for a byob (bring your own barbeque) supper.

I took Roger to the Huntsville Space and Rocket Center on Wednesday and explained on the way about the German rocket scientists who came to the US rather than to Russia after WWII and how the military decided to put them in Huntsville, Alabama. The town wasn't quite sure what to do with their foreign speaking residents, and the German community set about settling in.

Werner von Braun had better things to do than cut grass so he cemented his front yard in and painted it green. The Germans formed an Astronomy Club, which was open to all. They raised money for and built, with their very own hands, an observatory. Dr. von Braun was President of the club. By the time we lived there in 1966-8 von Braun was Honorary President, and the first Vice President was the working president. Jerry was science writer at Brown Engineering (now Teledyne-Brown), one of the support contractors for the space program. We went to the observatory, and were once actually in the same room with von Braun!

Roger ate up all the history, laid hands on all the "hands on" exhibits, and was the tallest kid in line at the zero gravity ride! He bought mucho souvenir stuff for DUFF while we were there, including Rocket Center coloring books, with certain fans with small children in mind. During the drive home from Huntsville, Roger told me matter of factly about his illness. I asked a few questions in the same spirit.

We got back to Birmingham too late to stop by my house and too early to go on to Julie's - she had promised to provide spaghetti for supper. So we cruised through beautiful downtown Birmingham, which is a lot cleaner and prettier than it was in the steel-mill-in-the-middle-of-town days. I told Roger about the steel-mill-in, etc. now being a museum, and he said if it was all the same to me I could just point to it in passing, which I did. But, in Five Points South, our very own little Bohemia, I parked and took Roger to see the Satanic (not its real name) Fountain up close. As fountains go, it's not that big or exciting, but as bad press goes, it looms large. It's just a ram-headed, uh,

We were anxiously awaiting some results from this when, about ten minutes later, a pickup truck pulled up behind us. A man and a woman got out and came around to the driver's side. They wore uniforms that said "Mississippi State Law Enforcement Tax Commission" on them. Perhaps it was just because we were so happy to have what we thought were rescuers, and were rather giddy with relief; but they seemed very officious. They wanted to know if we had told a truck driver that we had run out of gas. We admitted as much. They tried to peer into the van and asked "How many people did you stop?" I told them that it was only the one. I didn't tell them that I would've stopped more if I could have, just to improve the odds of someone actually helping us. It didn't seem that they would have approved of such methods. It turned out that this pair had only come to check out the trucker's story. They hadn't brought a gas can or anything.

Finally they seemed to accept our story at face value and said they would send a service vehicle and they went away. Shannon and I sat and wondered about this for quite a while. It wasn't until days later that I realized that the next exit was actually the Mississippi Weigh Station where the trucker would have had to stop anyway. The two uniforms came from there.

Now, we thought "service vehicle" meant "wrecker". So that's what we were looking for for the next twenty minutes. Imagine our surprise when an old, beat-up, red pickup truck with only one headlight pulled over in front of us. A good ole boy, complete with cowboy hat, climbed out, lifted a gas can out of the back and, without so much as a word to us, proceeded to pour gas into our tank. After a while, he said, "Crank her up and see if she'll start."

I did and she would. I tried to pay him, but he wouldn't let me. He said, "I'll follow you to the next exit and make sure you get to the gas station to fill up. He did.

We filled up and headed again for Jackson, one of my eyes glued to the gas gauge. We rolled into town at about 1:30 AM and that should have been the end of the story.

But, no.

This was the Tuesday after Christmas. We stayed in Jackson for a day and a half and left on the afternoon of New Year's Eve. We arrived in Birmingham without incident at about 6 PM. The rental place is a few blocks from work, and I noticed as we drove by that, as I had expected, it was closed. I left the van parked in front of Dixie Type, glad to be rid of it, and drove my car home.

Rhea (who, at Charlotte's request, I must point out is a male) and I went to Linda and Bill's for supper and then to George's New Year's Eve Party. We had a great time, but I woke up the next day with the flu.

On Saturday, I called the rental place and ascertained that they were open, but couldn't summon the

energy, or another warm body to help me go to the office, collect the van and take it back.

Sunday night, I was still miserable and called my boss at home to warn him that I might not make it to work the next day. He told me to stay home.

So I did. I was awakened at about 9 AM by a co-worker, Matt. "Julie, I hate to bother you when you're sick, but do you have the keys to the van? The rental place wants us to bring it back."

Matt came and got the keys and went away. A little while later, he called back. "Julie, where did you park the van?"

Those of you who have never seen the Dixie Type building (the majority of our readers) will fail to appreciate what a ridiculous question this was. There are only so many places to park at my office and 99% of them are right outside the glass door of our department, right where Matt's desk is. Right where I had parked the van.

"What do you MEAN where did I park the van?! It's right out front!!" I'd like to think that it was the flu that took me so rapidly from sleep to hysteria.

"Well, I'll look again, but it's not there."

"OHMYGOD! Do you think it's been stolen?!?"

"It looks that way. I'll call the cops."

"Call me back and let me know what they say." I hung up and thought, "I'll never live this down. If running out of gas wasn't bad enough, now the van, the awful, horrible, loud, smelly, gas guzzling van that I was responsible for has been stolen." The guys in the traditional service department absolutely love to tease me about stuff since I'm a female and always go around and fix people's computers. They would have a field day with this. I couldn't stand it and called Matt back.



Off the Wall

When I came back to Birmingham two years ago, I was looking for any job that would pay money. I started out with the company I now work for, Dixie Type & Supply, as a secretary. The company has sold printing equipment and supplies for 68 years, since before the offset press was invented. The people were very nice, but it didn't pay much, so I started hitting the job trail, yet again, about nine months later. It just so happened that my boss was at that time gearing up to launch an entirely new department based on the Macintosh computer – electronic prepress. I had shown quite a bit of aptitude with the ancient Mac Pluses we used in the office and the IICI (we used to call it the Big Mac) that we used to output the company's monthly newsletter to film on our tiny, bottom-of-the-line imagesetter. He asked me if I wanted to help him start the new department and I did.

Things have been pretty much insane ever since. We hired a salesman and did nearly \$5 million worth of business last year. Much to my surprise, and that of everyone who knows me (especially my chip head friends in Virginia), I have become very good at the technical end of the business that we do. It's a very specialized niche of the computer world, particularly when dealing with customers who want to do sophisticated image retouching and color separations. It's fascinating, and like all the things high-tech, it changes all the time. My boss has a saying, "I'm tired of being a virgin."

We have hired two technicians to help me in the last six months and are in the process of doubling the amount of floor space we take up in the Dixie Type building. I spend most of my time consulting with salespeople and customers, burning in and installing equipment, troubleshooting problems over the phone and traveling to both installations and service calls in Alabama, Mississippi and the panhandle of Florida. I travel a lot.

A few days after this past Christmas, I had to take \$100,000 worth of computer equipment to Jackson, Mississippi for an installation. Seeing as how I couldn't even fit \$100,000 worth of computer chips in my Toyota Tercel, a colleague of mine (the aforementioned salesman) rented a van for me to drive over there.

As long as he was at it, he decided to save the company some money and got the cheapest one he could find. It was very old and smelly and made a horrible racket all the time it was running. As I drove it home that evening to pack my bag, I noticed that it also drank a lot of gas.

My sister Shannon, the perpetual student, was staying with me during her Christmas break. I asked her if she wanted to come with me to Jackson. There wouldn't be much to do but hang around in a hotel room while I did the installation, but I wanted the company for the drive,

and she didn't have anything better to do, so she packed her bag, too.

We hit the road about 7:30, stopped for a bite of supper and then started for Mississippi in earnest. The van only had AM radio, but you couldn't get it loud enough to hear over the din of the engine for it to matter. We contented ourselves with hollering to each other over the noise, trading boyfriend stories and other news and gossip.

We became so engrossed in conversation, in fact, that I forgot to check our gas consumption until we were sailing over the Mississippi state line. Just as my gaze alighted on the gauge, which read E, my accelerator foot hit air. I pumped furiously, but it was too late. We were out of gas. Fighting a rising panic, I coasted us off to the side of the road.

I lost the fight. It was, by now, 10 PM. We were in the middle of nowhere, two women with a van load of computers on the side of the road. I began to moan and wail. "What are we going to do? What are we going to do!?" I'm afraid I wasn't setting a very good example for my younger sibling.

Finally, I calmed down enough for us to devise a plan. We couldn't leave the van, because there was so much valuable stuff in it and because it wouldn't have been safe. So, we turned on the flashers and the headlights, raised the hood and hung a white T-shirt out of the driver's side window. I guess we were surrendering. Then, we made a list of who we wanted to stop. First and foremost, an officer of the law. Second choice was a nice, non-rapist motorist, and third was a nice, non-rapist truck driver with a CB. We would ask whoever stopped to go (or radio) to the nearest service station to bring us some gas.

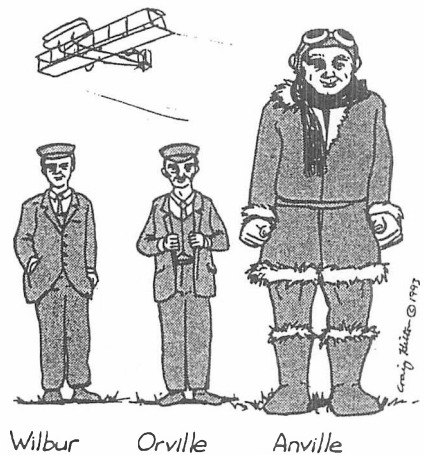
Well, nobody stopped. We had pulled over just after the crest of a gentle hill and people just whizzed by without even pulling over to the left lane in most cases. Half an hour later, we decided to go to plan B. I started flashing the headlights, in addition to the flashers, at each passing vehicle. I tried to spell out SOS, but the Morse code eluded me. After about ten minutes of that, a semi did pull over about 100 yards ahead.

The truck seemed to be trying to back up to us for a while, but finally a large, black man emerged from the cab and strode toward us. I rolled down the window and explained our situation. Of course, his CB was broken. He volunteered to give us a ride to the next exit. We declined and reiterated our request that he go to the next exit and request some help for us. He was very nice, agreed to do so and went away.

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The least successful
of the Wright brothers.



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