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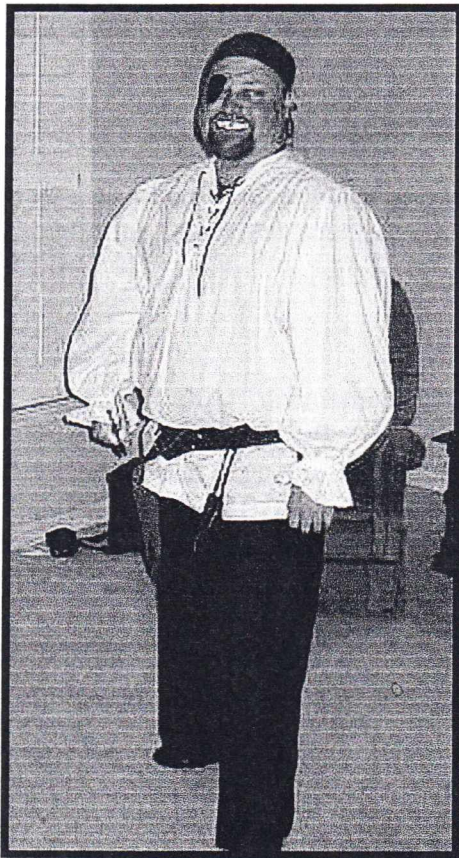
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RANDY RANTS!



Howdy folks! Time flies. We gained an hour this season, yet I'm even further behind than ever, as usual. As you can see from the photo, I dressed up as pirate for a Halloween party. I did not get any booty though. I also had some friends over for a board game night. We had three groups of folks playing. We played *Risk* (Board Game), *Illuminati* (Card Card), *Gloom* (Card Game) and *Nightmare* (VCR Board Game). So I have some social life.



Since last time, I've got a new release of my product at work out. I have started on the next, which has enough scoped out new features to take many man years to develop. Since there's only two developers and code complete is in March, it's not looking good for features or schedules.



I ran the Con+Stellation Art Show again. The total membership for the convention this year, which ran from October 7th to October 9th, 2005, was about 221. This art show consisted of 265 pieces (including prints but not 22 donated charity pieces) from 14 artists, displayed on 19 panels and 3 tables. The mail-in participation was from 11 artists. The print shop had 3 artists participating. There were 62 pieces sold for a total of \$1812 (not including \$438 raised for the Red Cross Disaster Relief Fund). Thus, for non-charity items, the average sales price was \$29.23 per piece. The average total sales per selling artist was about \$181.20. The most sales for a single artist was \$929 and the lowest was, unfortunately for 4 artists, no sales. We had 16 pieces that went to the Saturday voice auction. The convention went well enough, except I had to do a two hour conference call with the ASFA (Association of Science Fiction and Fantasy Artists) board at the dead dog party. I even fought off a squirrel invasion into the art show via a hole in the ceiling. I got award a special button for it.



I attended the Florence Renaissance Festival again with some friends. It was pleasant enough but not as interesting anymore due to been there and done that syndrome.



I'm doing this issue from scratch using the Dell Dimension 4100 (866 Mhz Pentium III) computer that I bought from work last April. I've finally got it set up with Windows XP and Office 2003, upgraded it with cheap used and/or heavy rebated keyboard, mouse, DVD, CD-RW, 250 MB ZIP, 80 GB hard drive and dual 21" flat screen (not flat panel) monitors. I gave a computer system to my old officemate and friend, Eddie Ironsmith, for his kids. He was up for a visit from Texas. Now I only have 11 working computer systems left. I've put 7 in storage as I was tired of the clutter in my study. I still need to get DSL. Dial up modems are too slow. Connecting to wireless networks (for free when I can) on my laptop has spoiled me.



I've ripped about a third of my music CD collection. My goal is to rip them all. I continue to acquire CDs from thrift stores and yard sales. It's been a while since I've bought a CD at full price. I've made some mp3 CDs for my office stereo system that I got for my 15 year award at Intergraph. Only 27 more years until I can retire!



I hope everyone has a happy and healthy holiday season. Since I did not do mailing comments last time, let's just get to then now. ☺



SEPA 247 MAILING COMMENTS

Ned Brooks, *The New Port News* 223

► Computers: I'm down to 11 computers now. I have four setup for personal use. I have one in my bedroom for entertainment (TV, old games, CD music, etc.). I have my old main one in my study for entertainment (TV, not so old games DVD, CD music, etc.). I have the one I'm making my main work system in my study also. And I have my laptop portable entertainment and work. I want to keep a few for tinkering with. The rest I'll sell or give away eventually.

► Poison Ivy: I sprayed Round-Up on my poison ivy and it seemed to do the trick. ✓

► Attic Fan: I'll probably spring for professional installation in the early spring.

► Electrical Incident: At work, they've cut down all the Bradford pear tree's that lined the parking lot. It seems like we were losing one or two a year to storms anyway. I guess they decided to not wait before the rest were gone. Better losing your modem than your computer. I hope you have a good surge protector on your system now. ✓

► Deck: Put in a hot tub! ☺

Jeffery Copeland, *The Fake Yorker*

► CD Burning: My Dell Dimension 4100, 866 Mhz Pentium III, burns CDs at 52x (as fast as my CD writer supports) with no problem, even while I do other

moderate tasks (like word processing). Any modern cheapo computer now-a-days should be able to do even better. You can get computers with just a CD-ROM. My workplace does not allow CD writers as baseline equipment. I guess they are afraid people would "misuse" them at work.

▶ Howard Hughes: My new conspiracy theory is that the government used him as front to break some of the control of the mob over Las Vegas. In fact, he probably died years before his hotel and casino buying spree in Las Vegas.

▶ Scarlett Johansson: Amen Brother! I'll have to rent *In Good Company* when I get a chance.

Norm Metcalf, *TYNDALLITE* Volume 3, Number 121

▶ Service: I think Robert A. Heinlein's *Starship Troopers* idea of voting rights being granted to those who serve is not too bad an idea, if the service could be expanded to non-military options.

Richard Dengrove, *Twygdrasil And Treehouse Gazette* #96

▶ Theophrastus Paracelsus of Hohenheim: Did you know that Sir Isaac Newton did extensive alchemy experiments during his lifetime? Apparently, he suffered much disappointment in this area as they never did amount to anything despite all his efforts.

▶ Chair Sleeping: A close family friend spent many years sleeping at night in his recliner. I guess he was like you. I've sleep in mine a few times but only for naps while nodding off watching TV.

▶ Randy B. Clear: Am I not clear? Or was this a typo?

▶ Forgetting: What annoys me most is when I get up to do something and forget what I was going to do by the time I enter the room to do it in. Usually, I remember but it takes effort. ("Oh, I got up to get a pencil.")

▶ Cool covers!

Guy Lillian, *Spiritus Mundi* 209

▶ Katrina: I joked with Hank Reinhardt that God's wraith was finally unleashed on New Orleans because the last "good man" had left the city, referring to you. He laughed. Seriously, it's hard to fathom the scale of the tragedy.

▶ Insomnia: It's rare when I get a good nights sleep but usually it's due to my poor planning and scheduling and self-control.

David Schlosser, *Peter, Pan & Merry* #63

► I.Q. Tests: I read that while men and women have the same overall average of intelligent as a group, men tend to have more results in the low end and the high end than women. That is, there are more male geniuses and dunces than female. It's only the really smart females that can tell the difference.

► Knife Fight: *Cut to the chase* is my motto.

► Waco: So, government caused the death of 80 people, many of them children, indirectly or directly, but holds no responsibility what-so-ever according to the government itself. I can rest easier, now that my faith in the government has been restored.

T.K.F.Weisskopf Reinhardt, "Yngvi is a Louse"

► First Scan: So you've been just cutting and pasting all the stuff you've put in your zines up to now. Scandalous! Color touches here and there. Fancy!

► 40!: Prepare the way wizen sage.

Jeffery Copeland, *The Fake Yorker*

► Microsoft: Hi Jeff, Intergraph employees get a "Microsoft employee discount" at the Microsoft employee web store. I got Office XP for \$70. How much does a "real" Microsoft employee pay (if you're allowed to tell)? ☺

► Liz's Knee: I hope it heals in time to tend to the roses again next summer.

► Pundits: I try to avoid pundits of all sides. I rather have news and make up my mind (or not) myself. When I get in to political discussions with people who start attacking "my side's" pundits instead of my side of the issue, I'm just amazed. (i.e. Al Franken is "better" than Rush Limbaugh). Usually, even if I recognized the pundit's name, I'm not sure of which "side" they are on. "So and so says this..." just does not cut the mustard with me as a valid rebuttal.

► Middle Eastern Extremists: I read somewhere that a Homeland Security official says there's a fifty percent chance of a nuclear bomb attack by terrorists in American within the next five years. Maybe, it's time to buy some land well away from populated areas and become a off-the-grid type of person. Sigh.

► *Boondocks*: Have you seen this animated show, based on the cartoon strip, on *The Cartoon Network* yet? Can't say that I've found it very funny but maybe that's due to being a right wing white male. ☺



FINAL COMMENTS

I hope 2006 brings us all health and prosperity and maybe a little happiness. 2005 has been a hell of a ride for the world and some of us here. Personally, I can't complain. I had my Gall bladder removed. I've not gained ALL my weight back that I lost last year. Had fun at several conventions. I'm making more money and have lots of hobbies to keep me distracted from being alone. I've enjoyed time with friends and family. I did some fannish illos. I went to Vegas!



These are actual seed packets that were given out at Con†Stellation. The movie was pretty cute.