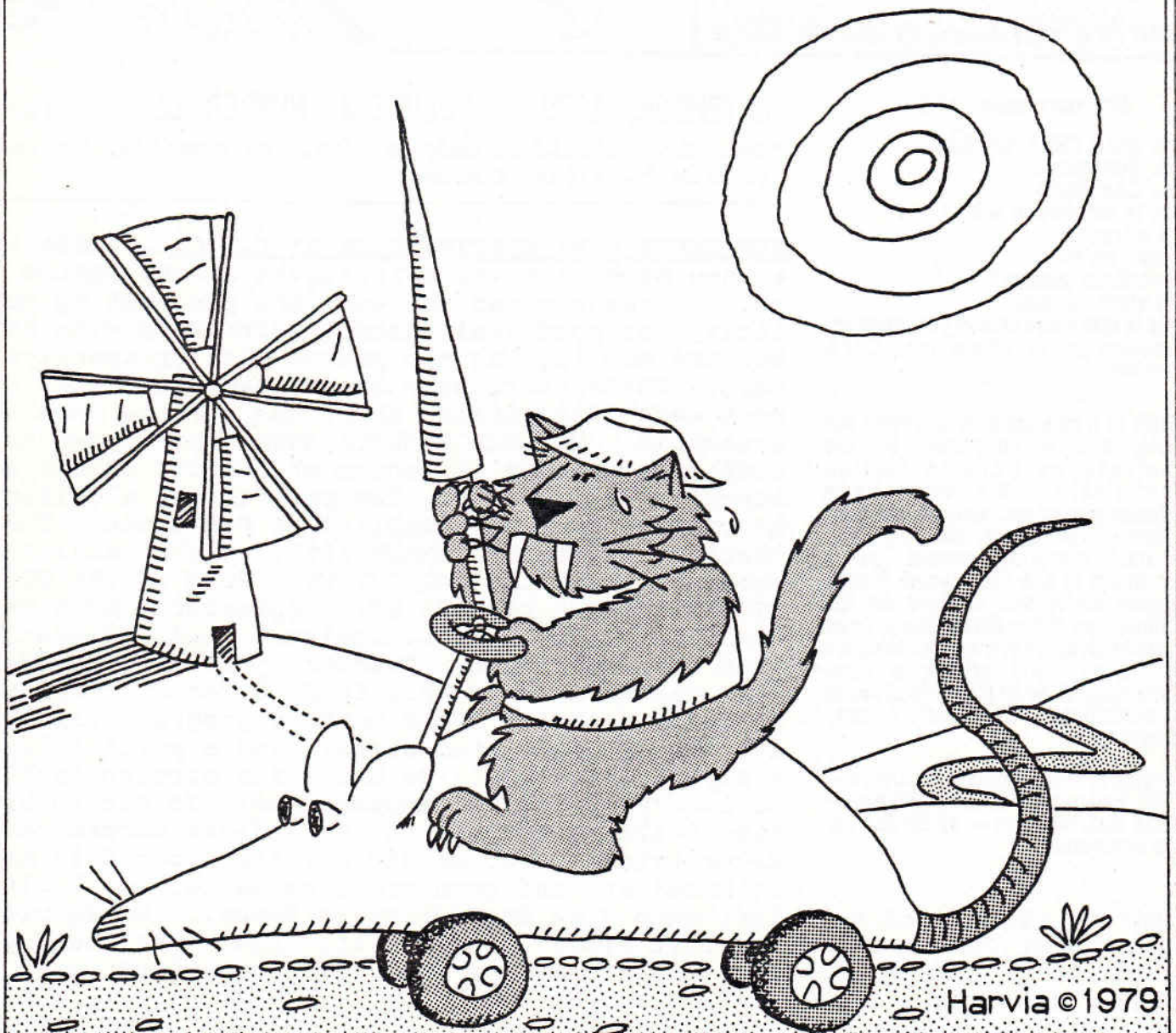


# CHAT



A LEGEND IN HIS OWN GHOOD TIME



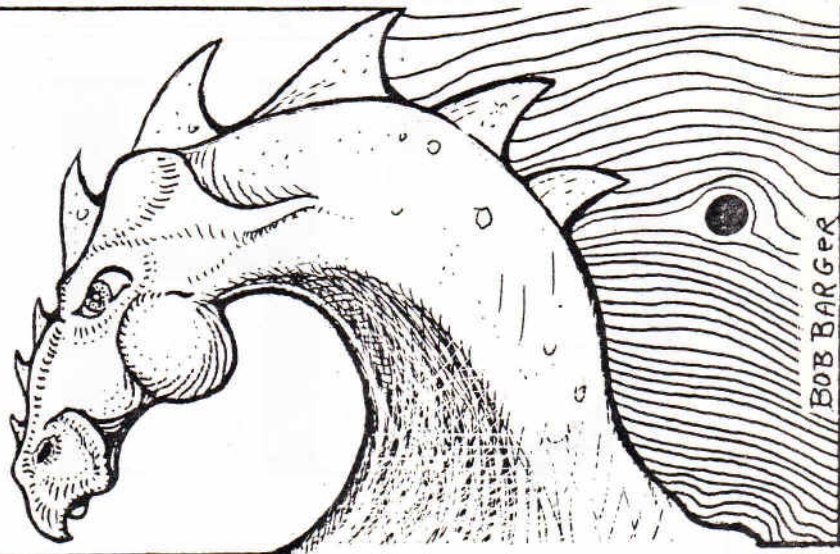
# chat

NEWSZINE of the  
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## Why you receive CHAT:

- ☐ You are a CSFA member.
- ☐ You Subscribe.
- ☐ You Contribute.
- ☐ You're mentioned within.
- ☐ It's a trade.
- ☐ Trade, please?
- ☐ Contribute, please?
- ☐ Art work, please?
- ☐ This is last issue unless you write us, re-subscribe, or attend next CSFA meeting.

**CHAT** is a newszine of Southern fan news, and is supported by the Chattanooga Science Fiction Association. We encourage submissions of art, reviews, articles, letters of comment, and the like. Written material should be a maximum of one page typed. Please include name and address on the submission. While **CHAT** doesn't pay contributors, we provide a forum for fan writers and artists; a complimentary copy of **CHAT** is given to all contributors who aren't already receiving it.

**Ad rates:** Pre-printed flyer inclusion — \$7.50; Full page — \$7.50; Half page — \$4.00; Quarter page — \$2.50; 25¢ per line equivalent.

(bearing right) and turn left onto Vine St. (which is 1-way). Go 2½ blocks. The Student Center is on the left side; look for its sign. The meeting room is on the ground floor, near the information desk. For questions, call Mike Rogers (266-0298). (NWL)

## 1979 HUGO AWARDS

NOVEL - *Dreamsnake* / Vonda McIntyre  
NOVELLA - "The Persistence of Vision" / John Varley  
NOVELETTE - "Hunter's Moon" / Poul Anderson  
SHORT STORY - "Cassandra" / C.J. Cherryh  
PRO EDITOR - Ben Bova  
PRO ARTIST - Vincent DiFate

FANZINE - *Science Fiction Review* / Richard E. Geis  
FAN WRITER - Bob Shaw  
FAN ARTIST - William Rotsler  
DRAMATIC PRESENTATION - *Superman*

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SEPTEMBER, 1979

VOLUME 2 NUMBER 12

ISSUE 24

"Everything should be made as simple as possible, but not simpler." - Albert Einstein

SEPTEMBER CSFA MEETING BACK AT U.T.C.....CSFA held a "new member" meeting in August at the Jaycee Tower. It was a mixed success; the pre-meeting publicity was good (well done, ~~Median~~ Mike Rogers!), but the meeting was not packed with prospective members. While there were one or two interested people, most were just curious about the strange people who assembled. Various members gave short speeches on different aspects of fandom while soft drinks and munchies were served. The program was a collection of vintage cartoons supplied by Ken Scott. The next meeting will be SEPTEMBER 15th, at the usual fall meeting place, the LOOKOUT MTN. ROOM in the UTC STUDENT CENTER at 7:30 PM. September's book is *A War of Shadows* by Jack L. Chalker; A.J. Bridget will lead the discussion. October's book will be *To Your Scattered Bodies Go* by Phillip José Farmer / discussion by Julie Wilhoit. This month's program will be an auction of SF-related items; see a partial list in a separate article. We had a fun auction last time, so come prepared for another one. To get to U.T.C., take I-124 to the 4th St. exit (last before Tenn. River bridge). Go on 4th St. for about 8/10 mile to Mabel St, and turn right on Mable. Go 2 blocks



HUGO AWARDS (cont)

GANDALF (GRANDMASTER) - Ursula K. LeGuin  
 GANDALF (BOOK) - *The White Dragon* / Anne McCaffrey

CAMPBELL AWARD (NEW WRITER) - Stephen Donaldson

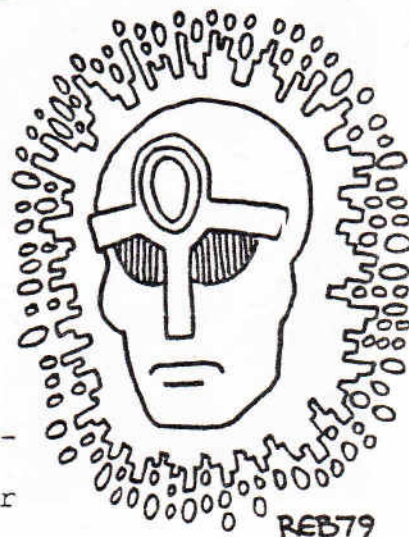
1981 WORLDCON - Denver (Clifford Simak, C.L. Moore Pro GoHs, Rusty Hevelin Fan GoH, Ed Bryant MC)

NORTHAMERICAN ART SHOW/MASQUERADE WINNERS....The winners of the 1979 North-American art show are: Paul Lehr for "Jaws III" in the Humor category; Jon Jay Muth for "Death was the Kindest Thing He Bought" as the Judge's Choice; Val Lakey for "Tales of Gorgik" in the Fantasy category; Miller Green for "Kzin" in other media; Vincent Di Fate for "Double Star" in the Science Fiction category. Mary Jean Lynott won Honorable Mention for "George in the Box". The Art Show Judges were George Scithers, Jack Chalker and Joe Mayhew. The awards certificates were made by Anne Trembley. The winners of the 1979 NorthAmerican Masquerade are: Mike and Carol Resnick, who won "Best of Show" for a skit based on a Henry Kuttner short story from a 1938 Marvel Science Stories. Other winners were: Laurie Mann, Daughter of Blob, for most Unnatural Act; Ann Chancellor, Delivev Ormorv, the weaver of Spinweb, for Most Beautiful; Lawin Lee Zamore, Tren Lee Organa of the Jedi Knights, for Best Star Wars; Mary Lynn Skirvin & Chris Cloutier, the Vatican Death Commandos, for the Most Heretical and Pythonesque; Jim Webb, Anubis, for Best Fantasy; Raymond Heikes, Abraxiz the Time Traveler, for Best Alien; Paula Dale, the Witch of a Winter's Night, for Best Presentation; Judy Low, Lady May--Pinlighter's Partner, for Most Authentic; Mark Roth, Luke Skyturtle, for Best "Solo" Turtle; Charlie Stafford, a Jawa, Honorable Mention; Todd Johnson, Captain Pausert, Honorable Mention. A full NorthAmerican report will be in the next CHAT. (NWL)

CSFA AUCTION UPCOMING....Yes, we've got another money raising auction ready for the September CSFA meeting. Rules are as last time: cash or check is acceptable, as is credit from regular CSFA members. There are some interesting items this time: a set of color NASA photos of the Voyager-Jupiter encounter, an autographed copy of Marion Zimmer Bradley's book *Endless Universe*, a huge computer poster of Mr. Spock, fanzines, prozines, books, T-shirts, artwork, and much more. Save your pennies. (DL)

ONE-LINERS....Peg Campbell, widow of author/editor John W. Campbell Jr., has recently died; we hope to have more details soon. // Sharon Webb's story "Itch on the Bull Run" that appeared in the July *Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine* will be reprinted in the Fawcett anthology *Space Mail*. // Kelly Freas has resigned as editor of Starblaze Edition books effective in mid-September, when he will have fulfilled the terms of his contract (i.e. edit 12 Starblaze books for the Donning Co.). // Larry Niven has sold *The Patchwork Girl* to Ace Books. // John Barry, who received an Oscar for his work on *Star Wars*, has died at age 43 of spinal meningitis. // Withdrawn from the Hugo balloting were James Tiptree's *Up the Walls of the World* and Michael Moorcock's *Gloriana* in the Gandalf (book) category. Both would have finished third in the final voting. // Word from the Noreascon Two committee is that there will be no Gandalf (book) category in next year's Hugo Balloting. // Total Seacon membership was 5079, with 3199 actually attending (over half were Americans). // The breakdown of the 1981 WorldCon site selection balloting (from Seacon) was: LA-130; Seattle- 320; Denver-453. After eliminating 55 votes for non-payment of membership fee and 17 no preference ballots, Denver had a clear majority over

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REB79



The Noel Party accelerate toward Pluto, under orders to recon-probe the Colony of Gnostics Terrorists there. On Earth, terrorism wreaks havoc which seems to herald a CIVIL WAR! Independent colonies among the outer planets are aligned in several outlaw groups, but only long-avoided PLUTO has taken credit for the destruction of the Terran Union Cathedral (along with the REST of Salt Lake City), assassinations across Earth, and mysterious ACCIDENTS throughout civilized space...

ALL RIGHT... ORBIT IS SET! WE'LL BE DOING A LOT OF G'S AS WE ZOOM AROUND PLUTO, SO BETTER GET INTO GELL-SUITS! ANYBODY PICKING UP ANY PROGRAMS FROM THE COLONY STATION?

JUST ANOTHER POEMIC ON APOCRYPHAL GOSPELS THEY'VE "FOUND!"

Speed INCREASING, THE SPEEDING INDEPENDENT RESEARCH SHIP BRISTLES WITH SCANNERS... EVERYTHING FROM TEEVEE TO DOLPHIN RADAR VISION.

WAIT A MINUTE!

YEAH-- I SEE 'EM, TOO, FRED!

WELL, HEH--!

IS IT TACTICS TO LET THEM CATCH US?

IF THE LATEST NEWS BULLETINS FROM EARTH, WHICH ARE A GOOD TEN HOURS OLD, ARE TRUE, THEN I FIGURED THEY'D SHOOT AT US, AT LEAST...!

-- BUT THOSE ARE HIGH-TEST BUGS AND THEY'RE PUTTING US IN TOW!

I DON'T THINK SO--

HOLY NED!

IT'S CHARON! DIRECTLY IN OUR PATH!

THEY'VE MOVED PLUTO'S MOON?!

CONTINUE 0...



ONE-LINERS (cont.)

the other two bids on the first round by three votes. // Sally Rand, long time fan and schoolmate of Robert A. Heinlein, died in California on August 30 of heart failure. She was 75. // Andy Purcell is organizing a summer convention in Huntsville for next year. It'll be called MidSouthCon; guests are Kelly Freas, Bob Tucker, and (probably) Fred Pohl. Andy is also launching what appears to be a strong bid for the 1981 DeepSouthCon for Huntsville. // Louisville fans John and Lynne Harris are expecting their first child in April. // Alabama fan John Campbell has moved to Chattanooga for a teaching job at Hixson High School. Welcome! (COA next month, after he finds an apartment). // Ted White is the new editor of *Heavy Metal* magazine. He's also Guest of Honor of next year's DeepSouthCon in Atlanta (ASFiCon). // The new official editor of the Shadow SFPA (for Southern Fandom Press Alliance waitlisters) is Deb Hammer Johnson. // Speaking of SFPA, OE Alan Hutchinson is stepping down as OE after two years of it. The only announced candidate for the post is Guy Lillian III (so far). // CSFA attendees at September's meeting will have a chance to look over the four issues of the *NorthAmerican Nebula*, the daily newsletter of NorthAmerican '79. We'll have a few copies there. (DL)

**AT THE CO-OP**

by Perry A. Chappelaine, Sr.  
Authors' Co-op Publishing Co.

Subsidiary of Authors' Co-op, Inc.

Rt. 4, Box 137

Franklin, Tennessee 37064

The 30th consecutive annual Midwestcon occurred June 22, 23, 24th, 1979 at the Holiday Inn (Holidome) on route 75 between Cincinnati and Dayton, Ohio, the usual low \$5.00 registration fee with all the vodka, bourbon and Scotch desired (and no beer, hurrah!)

Eva Chalker will already have covered major conference points, so I'm going to write about things personal to me and Authors' Co-op.

Not part of the conference, but present, were Don, Sally and Brenda Vance Tsavatewa, Indian Silversmiths from the village of Moencopi on the Hopi Indian Reservation in Arizona. Apparently Tsavatewas (daughter, wife, husband) travel extensively displaying wares at sites similar to the Holidome. I noted the daughter and wife did all the work and was about to approve of this old Indian tradition when Don Tsavatewas explained that his heart condition prohibited his labors. Ah, yes, Don, in which case why the chain smoking?

Their mailing address is National

Association of Trailer Owners, P.O. Box 1418, 2015 South Tuttle, Sarasota, Florida 33578.

As to the convention, well, it was organized relaxicon and free-running, which was fine, and the way that Lou Tabakow and son Phil Tabakow design it, both of whom are fine, personable people.

First fandom, dinosaurs, "old-timers" meet at three locations: Midwestcon, Westercon, and Lunacon. They nominate writers who deserve recognition for the first fandom awards, and the final decision is made by those dinosaurs attending the Worldcon. At this year's Midwestcon George O. Smith (who was also present) got the nomination.

I met George O. Smith, congratulating myself on getting to shake his hand before one or the other of us died. He is an active, mentally alert gentleman in his seventies who apparently tweaks and chases women more than some younger fans, which is also all more than I can say for myself, being neither alert, active, in my seventies, or the tweaking kind.

With George were four others of pure delight: Lynn and Jim Hammond, a daughter and son-in-law to the beloved, deceased John W. Campbell, and John's grandson, John Campbell Hammond, and John's granddaughter,

Margaret Katherine Hammond.

I also met Lloyd Arthur Eschbach who published more than fifty titles under **Fantasy Press**. Lloyd has also been published as a Sci-fi writer in 16 different magazine titles, and few people remember him as a writer. He is writing again, thank goodness, and I'm looking forward to his works.

Also it was my pleasure to meet Dr. Charles L. "Doc" Barrett, the very gentleman who started Midwestcon. He has a sci-fi collection that perhaps is among the largest in the world. Greencastle Press recently micro-filmed portions of it for academic use and I understand they charge \$1,000 for library purchase of that small portion.

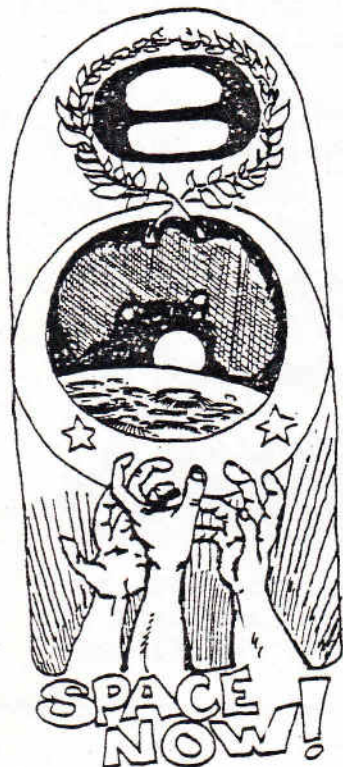
There were in attendance, Beatrice Taylor, Mr. & Mrs. Dave Kyle (who is writing Doc Smith Lensman yarns), Doc Smith's daughter and son-in-law, Mr. & Mrs. Trestrail, Edward Wood (an oldtimer who looks younger than most fans), Dale Tarr, who suggested Anlab to John W. Campbell in olden days, Bea Mahaffey (former assistant editor with Ray Palmer on *Other Worlds*, Pat Stichtenath, Bea's sister, Roy and Deedee Lavender, Betsy Curtis, and many other durable first fans, including the ubiquitous Wilson Tucker.

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## WHAT'S YOUR SQ? (SPACE QUOTIENT)

COMMENTARY BY ANDY ANDRUSCHAK



Here are the answers to last month's quiz, for those who bothered to try.

- 1) HEAO-1, the High Energy Astronomical Observatory, was a sky scanning X-ray telescope. It seemed to detect a background X-ray radiation. One possible interpretation was an intergalactic hot plasma. Score 5 points if you got the name correct. Score 10 points if you also mentioned that it was a scanning device.
- 2) HEAO-2, the second X-ray telescope, has been dubbed "Einstein". It found that the radiation detected by HEAO-1 was just a lot of Quasars. Interesting, but not an intergalactic hot plasma. Score 5 points for naming HEAO-2 and 10 points for naming "Einstein".
- 3) International Sun-Earth Explorer Three. Score 5 points for naming the spacecraft. Score 10 points if you mentioned that it is actually in a halo orbit around the L-1 point.
- 4) *I* know the answer. So does anybody who follows the ESA program. Most of you don't. Nyah nyah. 10 points.
- 5) Three USSR spacecraft have been announced as having landed on the moon. 10 points.

6) "Splav" is the electric furnace on SALYUT. 10 points.

These last three were easy so that most of you got *something* right. ((Ed. note: In *who's* opinion, Andy?))

50 points Why don't you write Nicki Lynch that science column?

45 points Not bad.

40 points Slipshod research.

35 points or less Tsk tsk.

5 points or less Go edit *Analog*.

Next month I will examine the deeper implications of the mis-interpretations of the HEAO-1 findings. For it is very disturbing that a magazine with a circulation of *Analog* should have printed those two articles.

Oh, yes, Dick Lynch, on hearing of my article asked "What about *Sky and Telescope* and *Scientific American*?" Well, what about them? All they do is reprint, in edited form, what you will read in the three magazines I suggested last month. And very likely get a few facts wrong. Like the intergalactic hot plasma.

## AT THE CO-OP (cont)

A truly great delight was meeting with Steve Simmons and his wife, Ruth. Nashville people will remember his visit, coming from California long ago, and his dating and corresponding with Susan Stockell. Steve was one of my earliest fans and then a strong friend, and we corresponded extensively. I've always thought highly of him, and so did Robert Moore Williams who was visited by Steve before Bob's untimely death.

The Chattanooga contingent was missing from Midwestern again, but not Nashville, represented by: John Hollis, Ken and Lou Moore, Marge Ericson, Anita and Charles Williams and sister Cecilia, and also Dan Caldwell and Fran Bray, trailed by Pat James.

Pat Malloy and Gary Robe, from Bowling Green, Kentucky shared expenses with me.

Marvin Barkely chatted, and we renewed acquaintance; Larry Propp wore

his Africaner (I think that's what it was); Cliff Amos with Donna Gilbert and Mary Lou Moore (Cliff wearing his cute little American civil war hat) did the Scottish Highland fling, to the tune of *Rocky Mountain Horror* (or whatever they were drinking).

Martha Beck from Indiana (husband attached) persistently waved at me through her room window.

*continued on page 8*



CHAT INTERVIEWS CHATTA CON 5 Goh  
CONDUCTED BY MIKE ROGERS

# Joan D. Vinge

**CHAT:** Your novelette "Tin Soldier" is a strange and haunting love story. I'd be fascinated to learn what led you to write it.

**Joan Vinge:** I'm glad you liked "Tin Soldier". It seems to be a lot of people's favorite among my stories, and it's really one of my personal favorites, too. That's a little ironic in a way, because it was the first story I ever wrote with a *serious* intention of writing and finishing something. My husband Vernor, who is also a writer, had been encouraging me to take my writing seriously; before "Tin Soldier" I'd only written bits and pieces of things. I really didn't know whether I'd be able to finish anything I started.

But then I got the seed of an idea from the song "Brandy"; I got the idea for a story that would capture the beauty and mystery of a life in space. In "Brandy", it's a man who goes to sea and leaves the woman behind; when I remarked to Vernor that it would make a good space story, he suggested that I turn it around and make the woman be the one who leaves the man. I did, and then began to think about what would happen -- how the relationship *could* happen -- if the ships were slower than light. As I began to think about the characters, I began to get very attached to them -- especially Maris, who remains one of my favorite people; I think that was probably a large part of my being able to finish the story, when I hadn't been able to finish anything before. As their relationship developed, the parallel with the Hans Christian Anderson fairy tale struck me. I wove that element in with the others, and the result seemed to give the story almost the feel of a myth. If it goes on being people's favorite story, I won't be too sorry; it's a very special one to me, in a lot of ways.

**CHAT:** You write "hard" SF, but your stories always revolve around interesting people and the problems they face. Do you consciously try to do this, and how do you decide what to write about?

**Joan:** Yes, I do consciously try to write about characters who are interesting and real -- characters have always been what really "makes" a story, for me. I like to read about people I can identify with and learn from, and I like to get into their heads by writing about them, too. I like to write science fiction rather than mainstream fiction because I love the opportunity to explore the unknown, instead of simply making one more copy of the "real world". But in order to write

about alien worlds and have the story be emotionally satisfying to me, I need to relate the unique situations to people, and explore how the situation changes or affects them.

**CHAT:** So you wouldn't want to write a story where the characters are background scenery for the ideas, as in, say, "Look, Mommy, the sun's blowing up."

**Joan:** Right. God forbid. Story ideas come to me from all different directions -- starting with a character, a picture of a place, a line from a song. Once I have the initial inspiration I start doing background work -- figuring out what the physical setting or alien world is like, what sorts of cultures have developed there, and so on. I also think about what main characters I'll need, and how their societies will affect them as individuals -- also whether they fit in or are misfits in their culture, what kinds of benefits it's given them or what kind of handicaps, in the case of characters like Shadow Jack and Bird Alyn in *The Outcasts of Heaven Belt*, and how those things influence the ways they relate to one another. At that point it's usually the characters who dominate over the action in my mind as I begin to write, although, of course, the basic plot exists for getting them from A to B, hopefully, for a good reason. What really excites me is the possibility of making the reader discover something they'd never thought of before, or look at something in an entirely new way, because of the way the characters in my stories act and react to things which are very alien to our own experience. Communication -- between me and my readers -- plays an important part in what I write.

**CHAT:** The *Biolog in Analog* that accompanied *The Outcasts of Heaven Belt* stated that you received a degree in anthropology from San Diego State and that you have worked as a salvage archaeologist. What else have you done?

**Joan:** Actually, not much worth mentioning, besides writing. Various secretarial jobs, work as a teaching assistant at a junior high school, sales clerking, and covering books and putting cards in them at the public library. The last job was actually fun, because I could look at books while I worked.

**CHAT:** The *Biolog* also said that, unlike the experiences of other women SF readers, no one told you that "SF is for men". Did you get a lot of putdowns for reading SF, and did many of your friends also read SF?

**Joan:** No, I never really got put down for reading SF, surprisingly. I was lucky, I guess, that my parents never

*continued on page 8*



JOAN D. VINGE INTERVIEW (cont)

interfered particularly with what I wanted to read; I was always reading the kind of books that have a back flap listing "other books boys will enjoy", even before I discovered SF. I was always a voracious reader, and discovering SF in junior high school was a major event for me. My father began reading a lot of SF shortly after I did, and buying a lot of it -- I think maybe he discovered it from my reading it -- so pretty soon I was wallowing in the stuff. Most of my closest friends, also female, seemed to have discovered SF independently of me and liked it as much as I did, so I had a lot of moral support that way too. I'm sure a lot more women have always read SF than most people realize.

CHAT: Another of your recent works I liked a lot was "Fireship". The ways that Ring, Yarrow, and ETHANAC interact with each other are intriguing and convincing. Where did the idea for that story come from?

Joan: I think the basic idea came from my husband Vernor, who's really gotten into computers in the past couple of years, and who was interested in the idea of a story about a human/computer symbiosis. I think he had in mind more of a dashing secret agent sort, but I'd been reading a lot of Donald Westlake mysteries right around the time I started doing the story. As a result, I wanted to do something similar, a light, hopefully humorous story about a hapless sort who undergoes the kind of transmutation we all dream of when he hooks up with the computer -- becoming talented, witty, and erudite. And yet he still remains the same sort of vulnerable schnook underneath. Someday I'd like to do a novelization of the story, and work on Ring's triple personality in more depth. "Fireship" wasn't really written to be deep, just to be fun.

CHAT: I presume you were quite happy when you won the Hugo for "Eyes of Amber". What was your first thought when you heard your name called?

Joan: I really couldn't believe my ears. I had convinced myself beforehand that I wouldn't win, and I'd done a pretty good job of it. I had a number of other worries on my mind at that particular time, which I suppose helped distract me. I literally thought about the awards maybe three times during the whole of Iguanacon -- and then just before the awards I saw an odds sheet that had me listed at 40-to-1. I thought, "You don't need to rub it in!"

CHAT: Lord! Thoughtful of them, wasn't it?

Joan: It was funny afterwards. I wish I'd had a bet on myself -- I could have cleaned up. When I actually heard Buz announce my name, I screamed like a beauty contest winner -- people probably thought I was crazy. Which I was, just then, I guess. It was wonderful.

CHAT: Speaking of Hogos, how much has the Hugo helped your career? Is it easier to sell your works now?

Joan: I think the Hugo has helped my career noticeably. Just being able to put it on book covers helps a novel sell better. And I think it helped me get more money for my big novel, *The Snow Queen*, which I sold just after the awards. It's not a sure-fire aid to selling things; I think in some markets more is expected of you because you're supposed to be an award-winner. Overall it's had only good effects, though. Especially in things like being invited to give interviews and go to cons -- suddenly people know me and my work.

CHAT: Much of your early work was published in *Analog*. Was that your plan, or did it just happen that way?

Joan: I think basically it just happened that way. In part, I tended to have a "hard science" slant to a number of stories I wrote, due to Vernor's influence as my technical advisor. That's the sort of story that *Analog* seems to prefer, and Ben Bova liked my work. He'd buy one, so I'd send him the next and he'd buy that too. *Analog* is a good showcase for stories, since it's about the best distributed SF magazine not counting *Omni*, and I'm glad now that I did sell them so many of my stories.

CHAT: What are your writing habits like? Do you try to write regularly? Do you have a plan for when to do first drafts and when to revise?

Joan: My writing habits are steady, in that I try to write every day, but also erratic because I don't always make the same amount of progress. I try to write for several hours a day, but it's extremely hard work for me, especially overcoming inertia at the start of a story, so I frequently don't get more than 2 or 3 pages of rough draft done. I write my first draft in longhand, and type two more before I feel I'm finished with a story. Fortunately, revising the manuscript goes pretty fast. I do my best work at night, frequently after midnight -- I'm definitely a night person.

I don't usually have a strict schedule for when I'll be finished with something -- deadlines make me nervous, and so

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AT THE CO-OP (cont.)

Big Name Fan Shelby Bush duly cussed out this column again, and doesn't want his name mentioned, so I won't!

Other famous pros included Joe

Haldeman and Andy and Jody Offutt, Ted White, Stanley Schmidt, and others.

Bob Roehm wandered about dazed by his eternal soberness. Jack Chalker visited with one or another, and talked and talked, while wife Eva visited and wrote

and wrote . . . .  
I really love that free Scotch!

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Franklin, Tennessee 37064.  
Phone (615) 646-3757.



JOAN D. VINGE INTERVIEW (cont.)

I don't like to sell a prospectus and then have to finish it by a certain time. I'd rather write the whole thing first, if I can wait that long. I frequently overrun my own general estimate of when I'll finish something -- stories frequently wind up longer than I'd expected. As I work on something a snowball effect develops, though -- the closer I am to the end the better progress I make, the clearer the goals are in my mind. I make general outlines, character studies, and backgrounds up before I start writing, but usually the pre-planning is just a trellis that the story spreads out over...so I never know *exactly* what will happen before I start writing. It's more fun that way.

CHAT: Who are your favorite authors? Do you have any preference in the kinds of SF and mainstream writing you like to read?

Joan: I guess my real preference is for good writing, whatever the genre -- although I do prefer science fiction to mainstream because it's more interesting to me when it's well done. I also enjoy non-fiction, especially anthropology. I like a wide variety of authors and stories -- Ursula LeGuin comes immediately to mind, and some of Samuel R. Delany's work, especially *Nova*. I enjoy good adventure stories -- some of Andre Norton's are among my favorites. And I like a lot of the newer writers like Vonda McIntyre, John Varley, Elizabeth Lynn, Diane Duane, Jeff Carver...Actually, there are so many good writers around these days that I don't know where to start, let alone stop. This may be a new Golden Age for SF. My real problem is not having enough time to read.

CHAT: I read recently that you're working on a fantasy novel for Dell. How is that project coming along, and do you have anything else on the stove?

Joan: Probably the book you read about is *The Snow Queen*, which will be a Quantum hard-back and a Dell paperback. It's loosely based on a fairy tale by Hans Christian Anderson, but the actual novel is really science fiction. It has an underlying mythological structure, though, based on my reading of *The White Goddess* by Robert Graves just before I started working on the book. I hope that aspect of the book will appeal to fantasy fans as well as SF fans. The book *feels* like a fantasy to me, although it's based on SF concepts. I hope that it'll have something for everyone, actually -- I think it's the best thing I've ever written, and I'm really

excited about it.

I'm essentially through with my work on that book now, and I've just finished a sequel to my story "Media Man"; the two stories together will make one-half of a Dell "Binary Star" book. Next, I'm going to be doing a dragon story for Orson Scott Card's anthology, and then probably working on a fantasy novel. I'm always trying to branch out.

CHAT: What advice would you give to new writers trying to break into the field?

Joan: I think Heinlein's Laws are the first thing I'd tell anyone who wants to start a career as a writer: (1) Write, (2) Finish what you write, (3) Rewrite only on editorial command once you've got the story written the first time, which may require 2 or 3 drafts...

CHAT: Did Heinlein put in the part about rewriting before submission, or is that Vinge's Corollary? Some people have thought Heinlein meant that a writer should only do one draft.

Joan: I suppose that's Vinge's Corollary -- but I expect Heinlein would feel the story should be finished by the *writer's* standards before it's submitted. There seems to be as many different ways of writing a story as there are authors; for some one draft is all they need, for others it's just a beginning....

And (4) Keep sending it out! The last rule is one of the most important, I've found; editorial tastes vary, and I've managed to sell just about everything I've written eventually. If it doesn't sell immediately, don't despair, especially if you get some positive feedback from editors.

Something else I would recommend that struggling writers do is *read* the magazines and anthologies they are trying to sell to. Different ones have different emphases, and you might as well save your postage by avoiding markets that are obviously wrong for your story. I also recommend trips to the library to find books that tell you how to prepare a manuscript, and to look at *Writer's Market*-type books. They tell you the basics about publishing -- the editor's name, for example -- which can help you "look knowledgeable". And while it's a good idea to send a covering letter, don't make it a long one. Chatty autobiographies usually make an editor suspicious of your professionalism. Beyond that, all I can say is "Write a lot." The more you write, the more you learn about writing, and the better you'll be at it.

CHAT: Thank you, Joan Vinge.

## LETTERS OF COMMENT

George "Lan" Laskowski  
47 Valley Way  
Bloomfield Hills, MI 48013

Thanks  
for the men-  
tion of *Lan's*  
*Lantern*. Jack

[Williamson] said that he was pleased with the interview that you had done, and was delighted to have it reprinted. He was also extremely touched by that issue of

## EDITED BY NICKI LYNCH

LL dedicated to and all about him.

The Wallheim interview was very well done, and quite informative. I did know that he was responsible for the first SF anthology, but I didn't know that it had been published in 1943. I thought it

*continued on page 10*



## MORE LETTERS OF COMMENT

George Laskowski (cont.)

was around 1947/48. I also learned something new about his novel writing; didn't realize that *The Secret of the Martian Moons* was his first one. I remember reading that way back in grade school--and it helped me foster my interest in SF.

I don't think that Perry has to go very far to see that fans are already bringing much of the letters of comment, fanzines, and contributions to hand out to people personally at conventions. I do that with my fanzine. It cuts down on a lot of the postage I have to pay, even though I do have a bulk mailing permit. It just makes good sense to do something like that.

Maybe Perry's suggestion about the Nebula Award might be a good idea. I shutter to think of the consequences for the first couple of years, but that might make the writers a little more cooperative with the voting--and it might lend a little more truth to the other kinds of awards that are being given of late. I do understand his point in doing something like that; it will prove embarrassing to SF authors in general, and hopefully spur them to make the Award more meaningful.

Sharon Webb's article was very good and informative as well. Her comments on doing such a thing again, having the writers get together for a good critique session/workshop is a good and very valid suggestion. And necessary, as she points out. SF writers appear to be the only ones who really do this in earnest. Nowhere else have I heard of workshop/seminars devoted to a specific genre of literature. Yet this happens all the time in SF, at cons and even in other informal gatherings. Lloyd Biggle is presently organizing such a workshop in late October/early November, just before CONCLAVE IV (GoH: A.E. van Vogt). SF writers take care of each other. There is communication between the authors which is unparalleled in any other form of literature. Mainstream writers who live in the same city never speak to each other, never meet, whereas SF authors from across the country get together regularly.

One correction on Eva Chalker Whitley's letter about the Hugo nominees. Vinge is not the only female author in the short story, novella and novella categories; she forgot C.J. Cherryh's "Cassandra". C.J. is a woman--and a very pretty one, I might add.

One question. Recently, at a local fan club meeting, a neo used the term "sci-fi" and was immediately booted. Later she asked me why fans are so vehement about it, why they dislike Forrey Ackerman so. I was quite hard pressed to come up with a good answer. Can anyone out there come up with one?

(( First, I hope you realized and said that it is not Mr. Ackerman that is disliked, he is very liked, but the TERM is disliked. It is not a case of "Love the person, love the term; hate the term, hate the person" in my opinion. SF fans have disliked the term "sci-fi" due to outside forces that have made it a put down, not fandom or Mr. Ackerman.

Be thankful you don't enter hurried art shows, most of them are judged on slides rather than actual work and only if the artist knows about it and pays fees. At least with the Hugos and Nebula the person can judge the actual work, if they wish. Awards have no intrinsic, or inside, value; the value is put upon it. So it is dependant upon the recipient rather than the physical object.

Some mainstream authors do have contact with other authors in their city and state. There are also clubs where they meet and talk.))

YOU CAN ALWAYS TELL THE NEOS...  
THEY COME TO A CON TO TALK  
ABOUT SCIENCE FICTION... HEHEH...



Irvin Koch  
1870 Dresden Dr. NE, B9  
Atlanta, GA 30319

An Atlanta  
fan who had sent  
check(s) to  
Ohio Riva-Con

had them returned. Apparently this person would have had a membership #1. The last letter from the con included a note "con cancelled". In view of the Hayworth's previous heavy reliance on local publicity, the total lack of such in this case, the highly effective campaign waged against them by Louisville-area con organizers, and the extremely notable poorly done national publicity, it may be assumed this was neither a fraud nor a hoax. It may be concluded it was an outstanding example of how to do things wrong, make enemies, and get wiped out. The problem anyone had getting in contact with the RivaConCom, the lack of notification of any other hotel to those paid up, and the lack of ANYONE showing up, reinforces this.

The person Perry Chapdelaine wants is Mike Walls, formerly grant writer for the Indian tribe in Mississippi. He has recently moved to, and married to, Gloria Evens, Memphis. If I have his name wrong, SFC Roster (not suppliment) has her address correct.



## STILL MORE LETTERS OF COMMENT

David Thayer                      The other three  
7909 DeVille Dr.                  fannish ghods are  
Ft. Worth, TX 76118              not, as you spec-  
                                         ulated, "bheer",  
"cons", and "zines". According to Rob-  
ert Jackson's *Little Dictionary of SF Fan Terms*,  
the first fannish ghod is Foo Foo, the  
second Ghu, and the third Rocsoe. Ghu  
is the most often mentioned, but the or-  
igins of all are obscure. Because CHAT  
is being illustrated in his own namesake  
fanzine, I doubt that the fourth fannish  
ghod will be so easily forgotten.

My fanzine *NebulousFan* has been called  
"fannish" before, but never "bozoid".  
Is that step up or down?

((I would consider it a step up.

That sounds like a handy little book; wish I  
had had one when answering the letters!))

\*-----\*

Wade Gilbreath  
4206 Balboa Ave.  
Pinson, AL 35126

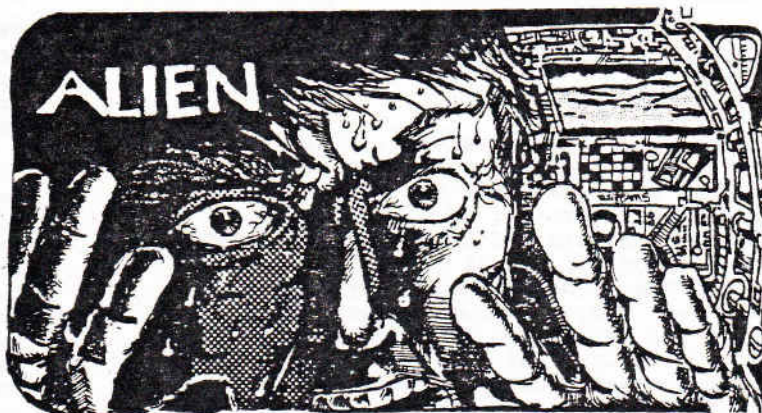
Thanks for the  
August issue of  
CHAT. The high-  
light of the issue

is the strong letter column. I know from  
my experience with ANVIL just how much  
that helps.

One point. Julia Wilhoit claims, in a  
bit of critical overkill, that she objects  
to *Alien* because it was done by committee.  
"The producers of *Alien*...called in about  
two dozen writers and told them to make  
a monster movie." No way Jose, er, Julia.  
According to an interview with Dan O'Bannon,  
one of *Alien*'s creators, in the latest  
Rocket's Blast Comic Collector, he and  
Ronny Shusett were out of work in Holly-  
wood when they wrote the script to *Alien*  
( obviously not a corporate committee  
effort). O'Bannon further said that when  
the *Alien* script was seized by Twentieth  
Century Fox as their 1979 SF blockbuster,  
substantial rewriting was done by David  
Geiler, one of the producers. However,  
when Geiler left the project shortly be-  
fore shooting, the whole thing was re-  
worked. According to O'Bannon, "By the  
time we got done, it was maybe 80% of  
what the original draft was."

Julia further states as fact her as-  
sumption that, again, "they" designed  
the monster by committee, and she im-  
plies that the design of the wrecked alien  
ship was influenced by Mayan stelleria  
carving. The truth is the production de-  
sign, particularly the alien spaceship  
and the monster, are the inspired work  
of one man, Hans Rudy Giger. As for jer  
Mayan theory, on one but H.R. Giger can  
profess the inspiration fo the alien space-  
ship, but from my long standing interest  
in Myan art and archaeology, I think she's  
off base. The similarity is, at best,  
superficial. The misleading and erroneous  
statements that Julia uses to support her  
point are irresponsible.

I am perhaps carrying this a bit too  
far, but even without knowing the truth  
of the matter given above, *Alien* struck  
me (as viewed between parted fingers) as  
a very strong, cohesive effort with very  
little of the disjointedness that Julia



saw. I will agree with her, though, that  
Signourney Weaver's portrayal of Ripley  
as a strongly competent, un-masculine  
protagonist was right on the money.

(( Funny how different people can see different  
ideas in the same thing. Julie said "the "space  
jockey" ... is inspired by the Mayan carving  
that so intrigued Van Danikin" not that the  
ship was a Mayan design. That is a different  
thing. She mentions a specific reference,  
not a generalization. I see inspiration by  
many influences in Giger's work, such as the  
Northern Renaissance, especially Hieronymus  
Bosch, and 20th century artists such as Picasso,  
Dali, and de Chirico. I'm not saying it is  
a direct "steal", but inspiration. After  
all, art by it's nature is eclectic.  
Interesting points.))

\*-----\*

Brian Earl Brown  
16711 Burt Rd., #207  
Detroit, MI 48219

You should get  
Bob Barger to do  
a dragon for the  
cover of CHAT's

sometime. Not only is he good, but his  
dragons would go a long way to getting  
rid of all the trools and trolls that in-  
fest this zine, as evidenced by the cover  
this time.

Like your new colophon. Very profes-  
sional looking.

"2063AD"--curior and curious. I just  
wish it didn't take so long for the com-  
plete story to be serialized.

Nicki Lynch wonders if TV will ever  
give fans the same sense of wonder that  
they got from reading? Oh, probably not,  
if only because in most cases the ideas  
that can be done on TV are very simple  
compared to what can be developed in a  
book.

Harry Andruschak plugs three weekly  
magazines for the since enthusiast. I sub-  
scribe to SCIENCE NEWS and it's certainly  
one of the most enjoyable magazines I've  
ever subscribed to.

Julia Wilhoit started it off with her  
comment "The producers of *Alien*...called  
in about two dozen writers and told them  
to make a monster movie." As Roy Thomas  
has frequently haranged comics fans, fans  
shouldn't make guesses about things they  
don't know, such as how a certain comic  
book or film came about. STARLOG #23  
has a long article on *Alien* in which they  
interviewed Dan O'Bannon, co-writer of the  
story and I believe was finally given sole  
credit for the screenplay. He says, and

Letter continues on page 12



LETTERS OF COMMENT (cont.)

Brian Earl Brown (cont)

you can find this on page 24, that the work on *Alien* began in 1975 when he was crashing with co-writer Ron Shussett. They began re-writing an old story of O'Bannon's entitled *Star-Beast*. O'Bannon's intent (page 21) was "I grew up on all the old horror movies and scary books there were and with *Alien*, I just wanted to see who frightened I could make something, without a lot of violence and gore." The script was peddled around until 20th Century Fox agreed to produce it.

There was no "two dozen" writers. There was O'Bannon, a close friend and later one of the producers did a rewrite that O'Bannon was trying to get disbarred from having screen credits because this last person's contribution was insignificant.

Julia's idea of an *Alien* T-shirt sounds like something we'll be seeing later this year. It's too much a natural to ignore.

Some of Julia's other criticisms--"the smokey 'organic' set, the 'smeared dialog, the non-existent plot' represented, not a lack of one person in charge, but the present of person's total concept of the film, and that person is Dan O'Bannon. O'Bannon co-wrote, starred in and directed the special effects for *Dark Star*, one of the true classics of science fiction movies. The people in *Dark Star* were scruffy, they didn't speak distinctly, the ship was scruffy and they had an alien (which looked like a beach ball with feet) that lead one of the crewmembers on a merry chase through the underbelly of the ship in what was frankly, a rather tense sequence. The parallels between *Dark Star* and *Alien* are just too many and involve basic concepts of how the film should be made for there to be serious doubt that O'Bannon was a major, if not there major contributor to the visual conception of the film. He wanted to direct it, too, but was turned down by Fox. It was O'Bannon who got H.R. Giger and Ron Cobb to do set designs, as well as Chris Foss and Jean Giraud.

The above is directed as much to Roger Caldwell as Julia for his comment that *Alien* succeeds because it was a "director's film". Only it wasn't. Unless Roger is willing to call Dan O'Bannon the director of *Alien*, because it is, from first to last, O'Bannon's film, and not the director's.

Skylab missed Detroit. \*sigh\*

I just finished reading *WE JUST LOST DETROIT* which recounts, among other reactor accidents, the explosion at SL-1 in Idaho Falls that killed three men on Jan. 3, 1961. So don't let any one kid you that no one has ever died from a reactor accident. And I'm sure that at least one person and maybe more have died or been exposed to excessive amount of radiation from accidents at processing plants. I wish I could find my copy of *THE BINDING CURVE OF ENERGY* to check out whether a working A-bomb could be made out of enriched reactor fuel? In any check the man being interviewed wasn't happy about the poor security of even reactor-grade fuel. Fortunately we have

yet to start on a plutonium economy. That stuff just sounds like too much trouble to play around with, especially in the ton lots needs for a plutonium economy.

And Vernon Clark is upset because the Hugo's are nothing but a popularity contest, as if they were ever ment to be anything else. There is no way of getting people to vote for the stuff they've read, or for getting them to vote for the really best work of the year instead of the most popular. And if you want an award given on the basis of merit, you might as well have a committee selected award like the Noble Prize for Literature. (and have people complain about the politics in those elections). I read an interesting list of Americans and English authors never awarded the Noble and another list of obscure Scandinavians who have won the award. It makes one question the "worth" of the Nobel Prize for Literature.

There's nothing one can do for the Hugos, except maybe force the release of the final vot talleys. That won't prevent undeserving books from winning the awards, but it will give some people an idea just how popular a book was.

This year for instance, Marion Zimmer Bradley's *Stormqueen!* didn't make it on the ballot (tho it came in the second 5 most popular books) probably because it does not have a British edition and Britons, this year, made up a sizable portion of the voting population. I personally think *Stormqueen!* and MZB better book and author then some of those actually on the ballot and the only reason she isn't on the ballot is sheer happenstance. A happenstance suffered by all non-English SF writer. So forget trying to make the Hugo's perfect. It can't be done.

((Long Letter, but interesting. Good point about the Noble Prizes and the key word was "basis of merit" and how does one find that except for oneself. Awards are no proof. For example, *STORMQUEEN!* did little for me, I just can't get into *Darkover*, but I have enjoyed her other books. I also didn't find that much that interested me this year in novels. Most of them seemed to be collected stories and expanded short stories, find, but not outstanding. If all else fails, there is always "No Award".

Enriched reactor fuel and reactor-grade fuel are two different things. If there is someone out there who KNOWS, would they please write in? There is a difference between hear-say and truth, but hear-say gets more press.

Several other people have expressed interest in Julie's idea. I know she has already made the *ALIEN* hand puppet.

We shall ask Bob, that is a great idea!

Considering the length of the trips of both crews in *ALIEN* and *DARK STAR*, it was no wonder they looked scruffy!!)

\*-----\*

Vernon Clark  
6216 Janmer Ln.  
Knoxville, TN 37919

The latest *CHAT* seems bland for some reason. Maybe cause I'm in agreement with much of what's said this time around and don't feel much like arguing with anyone. Or maybe I'm in too mellow a mood to argue for the sake of

Letter continues on page 13



LETTERS OF COMMENT (cont.)*Vernon Clark letter (cont)*

argument. I can say that graphics and lay out this time around are excellently handled. In this respect CHAT is becoming one of the zines I wait expectantly for each month. Also keeps me aware what's happening down there.

I hope you bring back the 'BIG E' from oblivion as I found he added a nice balance to the tone of CHAT.

Very insightful and relevant comments by Perry Chapdelaine in regards to Eva Chalker Whitley. His comments are fair minded and display a great sensitivity. I still think, however, that he lost the thrust of my argument concerning pornography. Let me elucidate further.

First, I don't go for pornography that much myself. Most is too unimaginative. Nor for that matter do I relish extreme cases of violence and bloodshed in art/books/cinema, for the same reason that I also find these repetitive and not constructive to the works in question. I do feel however that censorship of any kind whether of pornography or TV violence is non-conducive to an atmosphere of artistic/creative freedom. If we put a limit on anything in the arts we will slowly drift back under the sway of reactionary pre-

ssure groups such as the pro-Christian lobby which among other things seeks to ban pornography, re-institute prayer in schools, etc. I for one don't want those crooks and hypocrites who run the pro-Christian movement via their satellite TV to ever have any say in what I can/cannot look at or read. I feel that there is only one sort of applicable censorship, the same the Bible implies when God gave mankind the powers of free will. Only an individual can and should have the right to censor what he wishes to experience.

I get the impression you feel basically as do I, but I just wanted to clarify and illustrate my reasoning in support of pornography vs. censorship (I do not want it to sound like I run a porno book shop). I hope this clears the matter for all who have read this exchange of viewpoints.

*((I wouldn't exactly call Knoxville 'oblivion', but we will run another BIG E when we get one.*

*I was wondering if it was just me or if Perry sounded as strange to everyone else; now I know it's me.. Time for new glasses.*

*I hope you are not in favor of censoring people who favor censorship! (AR AR AR...humor). Or equating porno with prayer in schools. The only true censor, as you point out, is the person preserving and rejecting or accepting.))*

*We also heard from: David Martin.*

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Artist credits this month: Teddy Harvia - cover; Bob Barger - page 2; Rusty Burke - page 3; Charlie Williams - pages 4 ( 2063 AD, part 5 ), 6, 11; Roger Caldwell - page 5; Wade Gilbreath - page 10.

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NEXT CSFA MEETING:

SATURDAY, SEPT. 15

UTC STUDENT CENTER

LOOKOUT MTN. ROOM

7:30 PM

BIG AUCTION PLANNED!