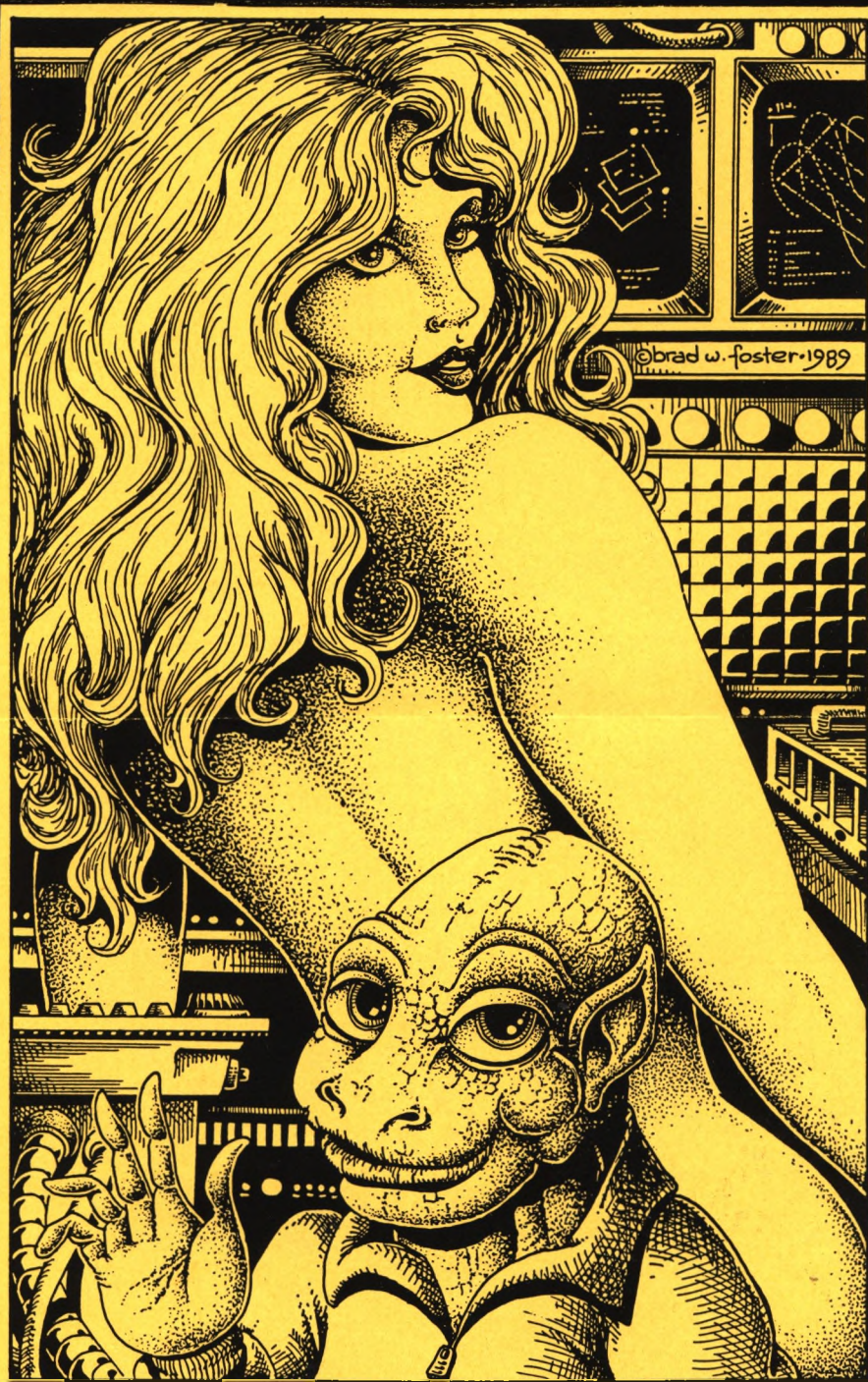


FF70



ROUNDFILINGS

by Mike Glyer

Lunacon Report: The Rise of the House of Escher

Fans filling in my "Brain the Size of a Planet" trivia questionnaire at Lunacon (March 17-19, 1995) said the person "whose selection as a con's guest of honor would do the most to make [them] want to attend that con" was... "Me." (That is, themselves.)

It worked for me -- and thanks to chairman Mark Blackman for inviting me to be fan guest of honor. Even though I don't share Martin Morse Wooster's reluctance to write up conventions that have played host to me, I should point out this probably won't be *Lunacon Confidential*...

Lunacon returned yet again to the Rye Hilton in Westchester County, NY, a few miles from the Connecticut border. Because the hotel's two wings are built into a hillside guests enter its lobby on the fourth floor and without ever changing levels as they cross into the other wing find they've arrived on

its seventh floor. The arrangement is so bizarre that every fan instinctively nicknames the hotel the "Escher Hilton." Everyone else has heard it called that for years but, as Andrew Porter notes, the newcomers believe they invented the name (and have, for themselves.)

Poul Anderson was Lunacon's Writer Guest of Honor, Stephen F. Hickman (Hugo winner for his space postage stamp art) its Artist Guest of Honor and Graham Leathers its Featured Filker. One reason it was my pleasure to be part of this slate of guests is that when I joined fandom 25 years ago I believed I was Poul Anderson's number one fan, (a claim already staked by Sandra Miesel, the unsurpassed Anderson scholar.) I enjoyed remembering those days of discovery.

Lunacon's beautiful program book, graced by two full-color Hickman paintings, was designed by Dennis McCunney. I thumbed through it to find Craig Miller's satirical introduction to me and saw a picture of me standing next to the "Filthy Pierre boards" at a Worldcon. I supposed it was taken at Winnipeg and I thought, you know, I'm aging pretty darned gracefully. The photo of Poul Anderson was another matter -- Poul wouldn't look that fresh-faced even if he used Grecian Formula, and I doubt he does. Andrew Porter had supplied both photos from his files and told me to look more closely at my right hand. I discovered I was holding copies of the 1983 Worldcon's daily newzine!

The weekend's *leitmotif* involved the picture of a different long-time fan. Someone painted a very lifelike portrait of past Lunacon chairman Stu Hellinger with his face haloed by a dartboard scoring grid. The artist mounted alongside it a plastic gun that fired rubber-tipped darts. East coast fans rapidly bid up the painting. Rick Katze formed a NESFA consortium of fans contributing several dollars apiece. Other major clubs hurried to post their own bids. The Hellinger dartboard reportedly sold for \$100 -- to one of his ex-girlfriends.

Convention program participants weren't notified until a week before Lunacon about their schedule and the panels to which they were assigned. I suspect even with more notice I still would have reprised my Loscon game show "Brain the Size of a Planet", something like tv's *Family Feud* in which people score based on their ability to match audience survey responses to different questions. I borrowed the idea from Armadillocon, and even without Pat Cadigan to play host it's still great fun. Panelists at Lunacon were Ben Yalow, Craig Miller, Sharon Sbarsky, Perianne Lurie, Robert Sacks, John Hertz, Rick Katze and Eva Whitley Chalker.

[[Please turn to page 4]]

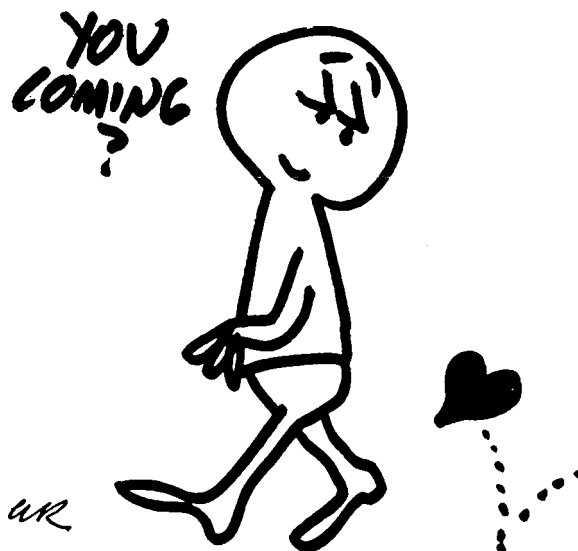


Editor Finds New Rocket Silo: P.O. Box 1056, Sierra Madre, CA 91025-4056

Giving our marriage a fresh start in a new apartment required Diana and I to spend many hours culling our respective stockpiles of precious fannish souvenirs. We ruthlessly sorted out duplicate paperbacks. I turned over 18 cartons of fanzines to Bruce Pelz. Diana chose the furniture to send from Missouri in her friends' pickup truck with the desperate precision of the pilot in "The Cold Equations".

Now it's all here in Sierra Madre, a surprisingly self-contained community on the eastern edge of Pasadena with an incredible view of the San Gabriel Mountains. (This year's siege of rain and wind has paid dividends by clearing out the smog). So, faneds, please register this change of address. If you got the e-mail with the residence address please switch to the post office box now.

Milt Stevens helped move me into the old place in 1981. It didn't take very long to load my few pieces of furniture, a mimeograph and half-a-dozen bags of then-recent fanzines into a van borrowed from Bruce Pelz. This move took two communities of helpers: the ones on the L.A. end included Joyce Sperling, Lynn Maudlin and Karen Miller -- and my mother, who chauffeured the Hugo rockets...



ART CREDITS

Brad Foster - Cover
Ray Capella - 5, 6
Bill Rotsler - 2,3,9,10,15,19
Merle Insinga - 16
Ulrike O'Brien - 17
Steven Fox - 8, 22

File 770:108 is edited by Mike Glycer at 145 E. Sierra Madre Blvd., Apt. 10, Sierra Madre, CA 91024 -- three blocks from where *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* was filmed, for you cinema buffs.

File 770 is available for news, artwork, arranged trades, or by subscriptions -- which cost \$8.00 for 5 issues, \$15 for 10 issues, mailed first class in North America. Air printed matter service is available for \$2.50/issue.

New telephone number:
(818) 355-3090
CompuServe 72557,1334.
Genie M.GLYER

Members of the con had a ball filling out the survey, or in the case of Mordechai Housman, an Orthodox Jew observing the Sabbath therefore unable to write on Saturday morning, having Mark Olson transcribe his answers for him. Mordechai was also having fun circulating copies of his provocative article *Hitler's Crib*, which tries to determine whether religious law would permit time travel and whether it would permit traveling in time to kill Hitler.

Mark Blackman and his committee closed out the con with a group dinner in the hotel restaurant. Before Mark arrived fans had filled in the chairman's table except for the seats saved for Poul and Karen Anderson and Mark himself. But Mark hoped that all the guests would join him -- by the time we'd squeezed together, space truly had met its final frontier!

Rodney, OJ and Newt, Oh My!

On a local radio station with an all-sports format one of the talk show hosts used to open the phone lines every Friday afternoon for fans to call in with "celebrity brush" stories about their encounters with famous athletes. Some calls were very interesting, some were just about meeting Mickey Mantle at the dry cleaners.

When I was preparing this issue I realized there were three unrelated items I planned to write about that were connected by the common thread that they all involve celebrities. Two of them are true "celebrity brushes" because the essence is an encounter with a notorious person -- someone enjoying his "fifteen minutes of fame" due to a temporary burst of unfavorable media attention.

Have you ever been called to appear before the grand jury? I thought that only happened to characters in gangster radio dramas like *The Green Hornet*. Then a few years ago I was called to testify whether an individual met with me at the IRS during the same hours he'd billed to Los Angeles County. Tax disclosure laws are so strict it would have been illegal for me to testify even why the individual was in my office but it was self-evident he was not there on county business and they only

needed me to say we had met during those hours.

The assistant district attorney managed to shoehorn my brief appearance into a very busy grand jury schedule. It was very busy because they were also investigating the Rodney King beating. When I arrived all the officers who beat Rodney King were sitting around the waiting room, in civilian clothes. They were put on hold while I went in and gave my two minutes of sworn testimony. I was in and out so fast that an officer I later recognized as Sgt. Koon wisecracked, "Told 'em you didn't know anything, eh, kid? Stick with that story!"

I wonder if he's out of jail yet.

Of course Rodney King is old hat by now. This week's trial of the century in Los Angeles is the O.J. Simpson murder case. One of our all-news radio stations broadcasts it live and then every half hour airs trial sound bites and a verbal box score about how the two sides did in court today.

Lynn Maudlin, matron of honor at my wedding, knows a woman who's an L.A. assistant district attorney, apparently the only one *not* working on the O.J. case. The friend and her husband asked Lynn to come along and see *Outbreak*, and included another D.A. to even out the party. Lynn mentioned to me that the other fellow *was* working on the O.J. case. Even that little celebrity brush would have been good for no more than "That's nice," and devoting the rest of the conversation to Dustin Hoffman, except the day before I talked to Lynn this little-known attorney had made the day's O.J. headline when Judge Ito reamed him for referring to some inadmissible evidence in front of the jury. You never know where the funnel cloud of infamy will touch down in Los Angeles.

Lately, it's touched down in the middle of the LASFS clubhouse. Self-styled "twelfth-century liberal, just to the left of Genghis Khan" Jerry Pournelle achieved his dreams of fame and fortune years ago, that's not the news. It's not even news that fifteen years ago Jerry met a kindred spirit, a fellow serving in Congress from the state of Georgia. The news is that fellow suddenly has been catapulted to the pinnacle of power as Speaker of the House. Now he holds the pursestrings of myriad government projects. He needs a lot of advice. A Georgia publication revealed that Jerry is one of the people giving that advice.

Jerry scoffs, "All I have is the same phone number of a Georgia congressman that I've had for the last fifteen years." At the same time, Jerry clearly loves the attention and loves the power. Every few weeks he commandeers the stage at LASFS for an update. He tells about his latest dinner with Mr. and Mrs. Gingrich. He details his testimony to Congress about slashing the NASA bureaucracy. He confesses a mild irritation at Thomas Disch's attack on himself in *The Nation* - mild, because he can't help relishing this evidence that an

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sf-writing liberal feels powerless and frustrated after the latest twist of political fate. He brags about the son, now a congressional aid for you-know-who.

Mostly he talks about dispatching 22,000 NASA workers to limbo and changing the mission of the agency from operating a manned space program to creating X-plane programs which perfect spaceplane technology that the government can license to commercial operators. Assuming it works, his idea would make a virtue of the necessity of cutting NASA's share of the budget at the same time it hastens the day of commercial space travel.

I joined LASFS in 1970, fifteen months after the moon landing, and like other fans spent the next few years watching the manned space program wind down to nothingness. For a lot of years, Jerry Pournelle kept rallying fans to believe we could go back into space, that would could go back to the moon, and in fact, these programs could be commercially successful and independent of the government. His 1995 LASFS appearances and latest ideas remain true to the spirit he showed in those times.

Just the same, in 1970 who would have believed that a science fiction writer would someday be asked to advise the Speaker of the House about space policy -- and that his advice would be to demolish NASA!

AND THEN,
POOH SAYS...

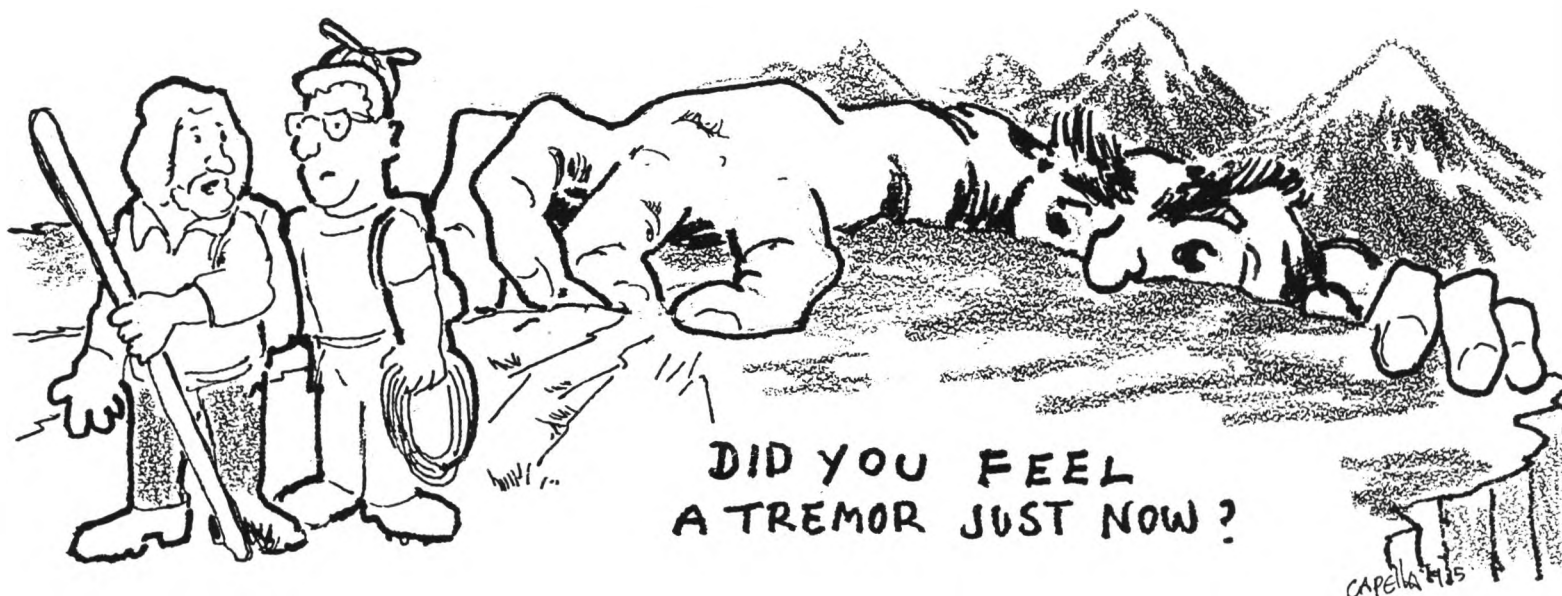


Magic: The Appeal by Drew Sanders

Not interested! That's not something I would find of any interest at all. I know I thought that way about it at one point in time, not so long ago, it seems, so what am I doing here, putting massive numbers of hours and dollars into my newest hobby each week?

I first encountered *Magic: The Gathering*TM about a year and a half ago, at the DeepSouthCon in Louisville, Kentucky, early in June, 1993. Some of the people I was hanging around with were involved in this card game that they described as being "somewhere between a fantasy role-playing game and a board game, but totally self-contained. I sounded vaguely interesting, but I wasn't remotely interested in getting involved in any RPG's.

My second encounter came in February, 1994 in San Jose, California, at CostumeCon. We were scheduled to have dinner with Cheryl Serr, the costumer who created the Beauty & the Beast presentation that won Best of Show at ConFrancisco, and her husband, Don. We had driven the short distance from the hotel to the restaurant, and waited for Cheryl to get Don and their roommates over to the restaurant. And waited, and waited. Finally we decided to go ahead and start, and wondered if they'd managed to get lost between the hotel and restaurant. Eventually they arrived, over half an hour later than expected. It seems that Don and his friend Char (who performed as the clock



in the B&B presentation) had been involved in a particularly hot Magic duel, and they wouldn't leave until it was resolved.

My most meaningful encounter occurred in April, 1994, when I find out that Sue Mohn, a close friend for a number of years, has landed steady employment with Wizards of the Coast who have created a game called Magic: The Gathering™, and were sending teams of employees to a number of different conventions to organize tournaments, promote and sell some of their cards and other products. Someone familiar with the science fiction convention milieu, she'd been hired as their "Convention Co-ordinator".

So, in the waning hours at this year's Westercon, I got my formal introduction to the newest hot fad/addiction. Uh huh. Sue sat me down with a new deck and explained how the game was played, and demonstrated some of the strategies used in building a deck.

OK, the basic rules are simple enough, although some of the mechanics of the game can get pretty complicated. I can do this. Maybe not real well, right away, but I can do it....

Time shift forward to two months later, where I find myself thoroughly involved with the Friday night free-for-alls among the hard corps gamers, and busy helping the handful of recent converts with their new decks. I play every Monday night every Friday night, and as often as possible on the weekends. How did I get this way?

Let's stop here and explain a little about how the game works: one purchases a "starter deck" of 60 cards for about \$8. This usually includes mostly common cards, along with a couple of rare cards and a few uncommon ones. Each deck is different. One then buys another starter deck, or a couple of "booster

packs". Each booster pack contains fifteen cards, usually including one rare card and two uncommon ones. In this way one customizes one's own competition deck.

The presumption behind the game is that each player is a wizard in a multiverse known as Dominia. Each wizard has at his command access to a number of spells that summon creatures, enchantments, and other sorceries to use in driving the opponent from his area. These spells are represented by the various cards.

All spells are powered by mana. Mana is derived from land. In order to cast a spell, one must first have sufficient land from which to derive mana in order to cast the spell. Building a Magic deck becomes a fascinating challenge of resource management, trying to determine the proper balance of spells with land to fuel them. To further complicate the mixture, magic comes in five various colors, and one must have an appropriate kind of land to fuel a given color of spell.

The problem comes in trying to limit the size of the deck one plays with. There are so many useful spells that it's impossible to use them all, or at least inadvisable. Random distribution can put all of the cards one needs to get to in another part of the deck, and if one is playing with a lot of cards in the deck, that could mean that a player could go several turns without drawing a useful card. In that amount of time, an opponent can deal a great deal of damage.

Current Tournament rules demand a minimum of 60 cards in a deck. The more successful players tend to be those who have found ways to limit the size of their decks to between 60 and 70. The hardest part of deck building turns out to be trying to figure out which cards not to use; there are so many attractive choices.

One of the most famous sports adages is that on any given Sunday, any given team stands a chance to beat any other team. This is equally true in Magic. Any deck stands a chance of beating any other deck, particularly when one is having trouble drawing enough mana to power the spells that one has drawn. Many of the problems caused by mana starvation can be fixed by the design of the construction of the deck -- one limits the number of colors one plays, usually to no more than two, and sometimes to only one color. One tries to include a mixture of spells that include both very powerful ones that take a lot of mana to cast with ones that only take one or two mana to cast. These spells may not be devastating, but they are often quite useful in prolonging a player's existence in the game.

Each of the colors of magic has spells appropriate to a theme:

- o Red is the magic of War and Chaos
- o Green is the magic of Growth and Regeneration
- o Blue is the magic of Illusion and Control
- o White is the magic of Protection and Healing
- o Black is the magic of Death and Entropy

While it may be possible to get a spells with similar effects in two different colors, mostly each color of magic has its own distinctive "flavor" of spells. Red tends to have more spells that are more directly effective against one's opponent (as opposed to an opponent's creatures), for example, while white tends to have the best selection of defensive spells. Green has the best collection of powerful monsters, while blue has the best assortment of spells to disrupt the spells one's opponent has cast. Black has the most effective spells against one's opponent's creatures, as well as regenerative capabilities it shares with green. Part of the fascination of building a deck is finding the kind of spells consistent with one's outlook on life and the game. There are also certain combinations of cards that are extremely effective together. Building a deck is a constant challenge of playing to find out how useful certain spells or creatures really are, and then discarding the ones that don't work (or are at best minimally useful), or trying to find more of ones that do. Due to the high number of cards in play (close to 900) it's impossible to put together a "perfect" deck, and there are an indefinite number of trade-offs between cards and colors so that each deck almost takes on a life and personality of its own.

All of this addresses collecting cards strictly from the strategic point of view, of building a powerful deck, but there are collectors of magic cards who never play the game, and who, in fact, shudder at the mere concept of shuffling and playing with these collectable works of art.

And in fact the cards are quite often utterly collectible for aesthetic reasons having nothing to do with their use in game play, because the publishers of Magic: The Gathering™ have selected a wide variety of artists and styles in the various

cards. Fine art, carefully rendered, cartoons, and abstract images all are represented.

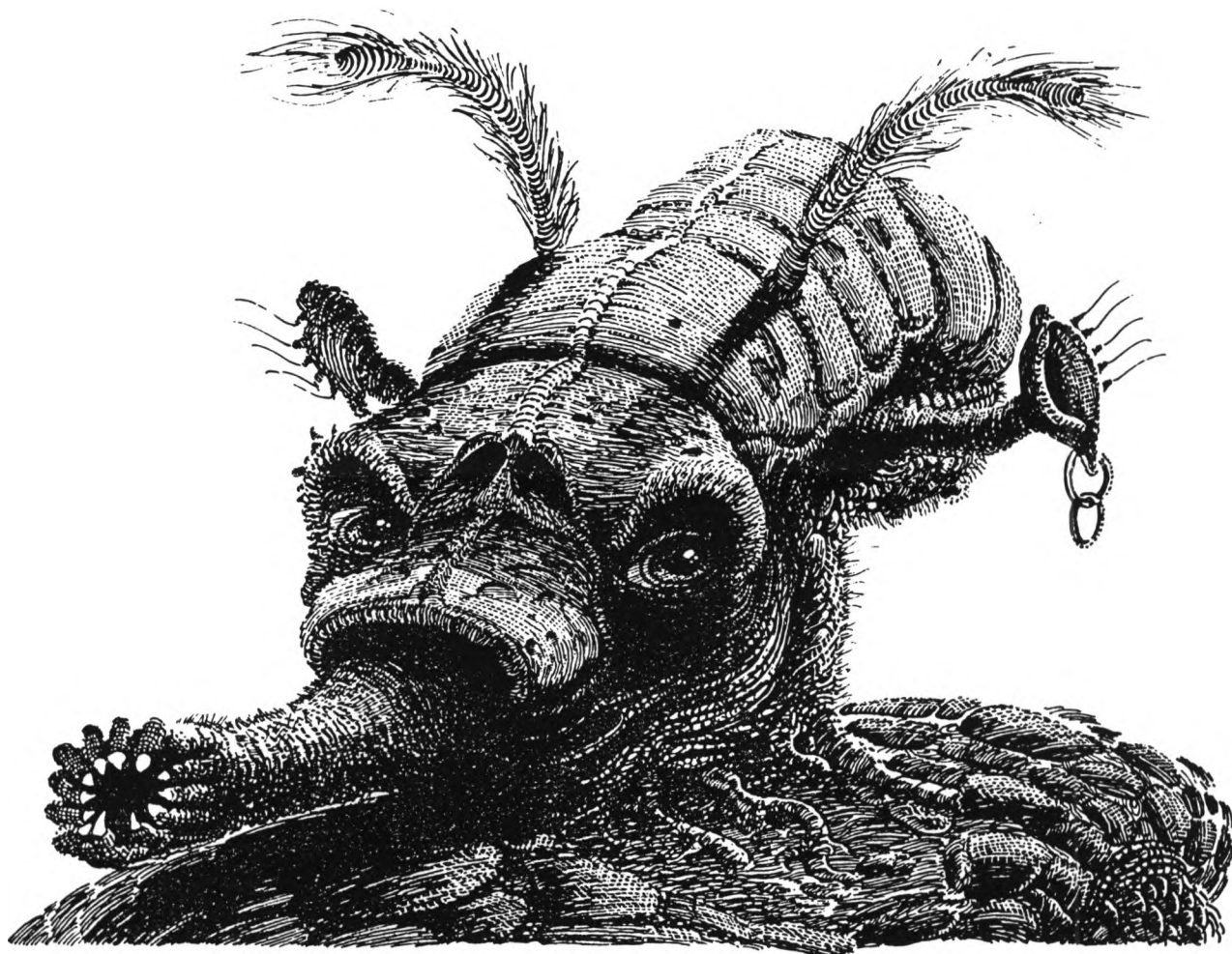
Artists who have done art for the cards whose names might be familiar to fans include Phil and Kaja Phoglio, Dameon Willich, and Rob Alexander. Other artists whose work is collected just for art's sake include Quinton Hoover, who tends toward a style closely resembling stained glass.

In one masterful design concept, Richard Garfield and his teams of play-testers (the group I encountered in Louisville seems to have been one such, since the first decks weren't published until September of 1993) have developed a marketing ploy that appeals to several fannish instincts at the same time -- the collectors mentality and the game players mentality.

The appeal crosses several lines. The game seems to be as popular with females as males, and is playable by all ages. I got into a Tournament at the San Diego Comicon, where my first round was against a 12-year-old who promptly proceeded to eliminate me from the Tournament in two straight games. But I set out to explain the appeal that the cards have, and I'm afraid I've only explained the mechanics of how the game is played and what the challenges are that confront anyone who gets started. None of this really explains the charm of the time spent sorting through the supplies of cards, trying to evaluate which card would be more useful most of the time. None of this can convey the feeling of triumph one gets when a particular combination works up to expectations or when a carefully devised strategy succeeds, or the disappointment when you learn that your opponent was prepared for that gambit and you have to devise another way of avoiding imminent extinction. None of that can illuminate the joy one experiences when trading for a card that can go into play, which in combination with another card, can have a devastating effect on an opponent, or just in determining that a particular combination can have that effect.

What can compare to the sensation I get when I rip open a new pack and find a rare card within that I've never seen before? Certainly nothing I could write about in a magazine intended for a family audience.

All of this leads one to only a beginning understanding of the appeal of Magic: The Gathering™.



News of Fandom

GARY LOUIE RECOVERING FROM STROKE

Gary Louie, a Los Angeles fan well-known for organizing the Hugo Awards exhibit at recent Worldcons, suffered a micro-stroke on the evening of January 26. The stroke's early effects were barely perceptible: fatigue, and slight drooling out of the right side of his mouth. Next morning when a co-worker asked him a question Gary found himself unable to answer, trying several times to say something and failing.

Gary returned to work on February 13 and his doctors tell him to expect a full recovery in the near future. The illness will make him forego a trip to the Glasgow Worldcon, but expect

to see him at the Portland Westercon. He can be contacted via e-mail at: G.Louie3@genie.geis.com.

IRELAND TOUR OFFERED

Fans on their way to **The Scottish Convention** may be interested in Ron and Val Ontell's pre-convention tour of Ireland. The package of 10 days in Ireland and two days in Scotland is highlighted by tea at Anne McCaffrey's "Dragonhold" and dinner with Anne and Katherine Kurtz. The tour will visit the Blarney Stone, the *Book of Kells*, the Waterford Crystal Factory, the Guinness Brewery, Limerick, Galway, Donegal, Killarney, Kerry and, in Scotland, the Edinburgh Tattoo. The price will be between \$1500 and \$1700, depending on the exchange rate, and includes hotels and two meals a day. Ron Ontell can be contacted at American World Wide Travel, Box 3248, Wayne, NJ 07470, phone (800) 869-2171.

DOWN UNDER FAN FUND WINNER ANNOUNCED

Forty-four years after co-hosting the infamous party in Room 770, Roger Sims, together with his wife Pat, became the 1995 Down Under Fan Fund delegates. Pat and Roger won by a wide margin. The two Cincinnati fans will receive DUFF

funds to attend Thylacon, the 1995 Australian National Convention, June 10-12, 1995 in Hobart, Tasmania.

Their tenure as active fans dates back to 1962 for Pat and 1949 for Roger. Roger publishes what may be fandom's oldest and most irregular fanzine, *Fantasy-Scope*. Pat keeps Roger in line, runs great parties and con suites, writes occasional fanzine articles and is the mainstay of the Cincinnati Fantasy Group and Midwestcon.

Dick and Leah Smith, current North American DUFF Administrators, say Australasian fandom can expect one of fandom's friendliest and likeable couples.

The Simses plan to travel in Australia and New Zealand for about 2-1/2 weeks. They hope to meet as many fans as possible during that time. They have rashly promised a trip report by the end of 1995.

1995 DUFF results

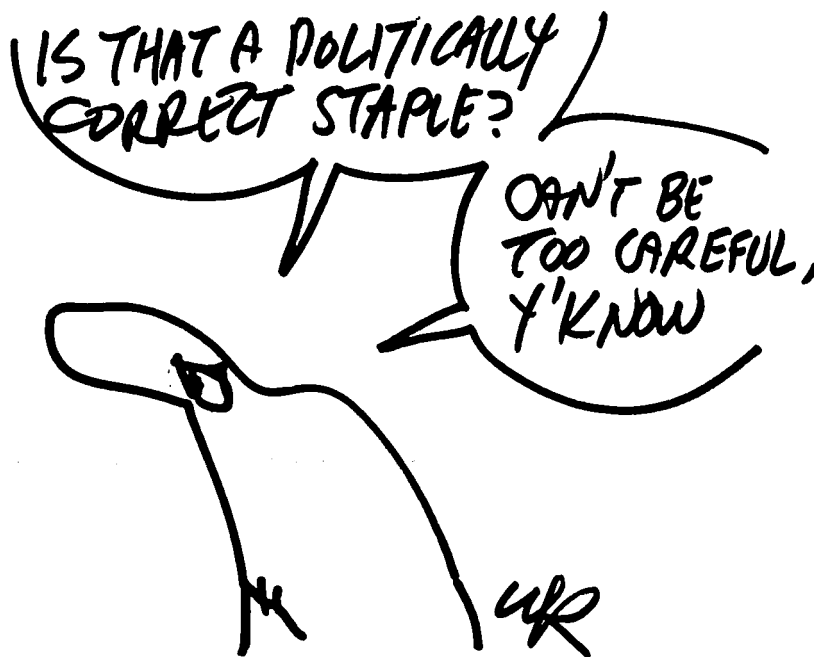
	First Place Votes		
	AUS.	N.A.	TOTAL
Pat & Roger Sims	8	82	90
Nancy Tucker	10	33	44
Lucy Schmeidler	7	12	19
No Preference	4	11	15
Hold Over Funds	3	0	3
Write-ins:			
Fred Ecks	1	0	1
Teddy Harvia	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>
Total	31	141	173

Pat and Roger Sims will eventually replace current DUFF administrators Dick and Leah Smith (410 W. Willow Road, Prospect Heights IL 60070-1250). The Australasian Administrator remains Alan Stewart (Box 222, World Trade Centre, Melbourne VIC 3005 AUSTRALIA). Contact address for the Sims: 34 Creekwood Square, Cincinnati OH 45246.

TAFF TRIP REPORT PUBLISHED

British fan Rob Hansen, the 1984 Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund delegate, has printed his TAFF report. Copies are available for US\$5, plus postage. For one copy with postage, that's \$6.50 by sea mail or \$7.50 by air mail.

Checks for US dollars only should be made out to 'R.Hansen'. As a by-product of finishing this marathon, Rob has liberated \$500 donation to TAFF from the coffers of SCIFI (the folks who brought you the 1984 Worldcon)(and darned if they aren't doing it again).



UP ALL NIGHT

Several fanwriters wonder "why there aren't any all-night parties at conventions any more?" in *Thyme 101*, the latest issue of the Australian newzine. While they haven't utterly disappeared from North American conventions fans often post online about what a hard time they had finding an open party after 1 a.m. at a con they recently attended.

Are late-night parties at cons fading away? If they are, how many agree with Aussie fanwriter Terry Frost's answer: "Sex.... [The] possibilities are less these days. We've been cowed by Grim Reapers, social disapproval, social-control education, political correctness and myriad other forces that throw doubts and guilt on our honest, natural and uncomplicated lusts. Don't think I'm advocating *not* playing things safe.... But lust, for me at least, has always had the ability to instill a benign outlook on the world, alertness and an ability to stay awake for unseemly durations."

CONFRANCISCO SURPLUS FUNDS CHARITABLE GRANTS

After an initial round of pass-on funds to Worldcons other profits of the 1993 Worldcon, ConFrancisco are being distributed to charitable causes. Grants amounting to \$3,000 were voted by the con's parent corporation in October.

ConFrancisco's surplus was approximately \$24,000 (on revenue of slightly over \$800,000). Half of the surplus was shared among the 1994, 1995 and 1996 Worldcon committees under the terms of the pass-along funds agreement. The latest round of grants included: \$500 to Clarion West; \$500 to the

World Science Fiction Society Mark Protection Committee; \$500 to High Hallack; \$500 for the Christine Valada Photo Gallery Project; \$400 for Fans Across the World; \$250 to the Susan Petrey Clarion Scholarship Fund; \$250 for APA:WSFS (administered by Massachusetts Convention Fandom, Inc.); \$100 to Congregation Sha'ar Zahav (in memory of Clint Bigglestone, a senior ConFrancisco committee member who died in 1994.)

Kevin Standlee of ConFrancisco announced these grants at SMOFcon in Burbank, CA. Additional grant requests will probably be considered at the group's April 1995 meeting.

SKYLARK AWARD

Mike Resnick received The Skylark Award at Boskone from the New England Science Fiction Association (NESFA). The Edward E. Smith Memorial Award for Imaginative Fiction (the Skylark) is presented to someone who has contributed significantly to science fiction, both through work in the field and by exemplifying the personal qualities which made the late Doc Smith well-loved by those who knew him.

Sharon Sbarsky reports that the Award was announced Saturday night at Boskone by Esther Friesner, and included the traditional warning from Jane Yolen about proper displaying location of the award.



© BABYLON 5 DOCKS IN CHICAGO

Report by Ross Pavlac

Babylon 5 held a reception at Planet Hollywood in Chicago on February 16. I arrived at 5:30, when the doors were opening. The central area in the restaurant had been reserved for the Babylon 5 reception. The \$30 admission got me a Babylon 5 boarding pass, identical to those sold at cons (with Sheridan still listed as commander!)

People began to trickle in, mostly typical SF fan type persons rather than Planet Hollywood's usual yuppie crowd. Chicago fan Randy Kaempfen was already there, having heard about it from the local grapevine. When I asked him to track back the original source, it turned out to be me! Nice to be on the start of the rumor mill rather than the receiving end. My wife Maria arrived, and joined us at the table I had reserved in prime location before the big screen. We were joined by Scott Merrit and his girlfriend.

The ticket included a hot h'ordeurve buffet, which turned out to be surprisingly generous. Large trays were festooned with orange slices, melon, grapes, etc. A large veggie tray had zucchini, squash slices, etc. There were chips and salsa and sour cream and dip. Best of all -- the waiters would bring trays around to the tables and offer Buffalo wings, pot stickers, and mini-pizza slices. Delicious!

If you wanted beverages there was a cash bar, or you could order from the bar. I was disappointed at the lack of good micro-brewed beer. Killian's Red and Sam Adams was the closest that was offered. Kind of surprising, considering the yuppie emphasis of the place. I would have at least expected Baderbrau.

As we were sitting and munching on spicy chicken wings, a man in his 40's sat down at the table and began nattering at us, talking about how expensive this thing was and how people would actually pay money to see J. Michael Straczynski and how he wouldn't pay good money to see himself! For the first 10 seconds I thought this might be some truly obnoxious fan but after the initial shock of the rapid-fire patter I realized this was Straczynski himself!

Straczynski in person is extremely warm and friendly and outgoing. He went around the room, stopping at each table to chat. I was very impressed with how much he enjoyed mingling with the fans and talking with us about the show. Not at all what you often run into at cons (e.g., Shatner). Big brownie points for Straczynski, say I.

The organizers called for attention, then introduced JMS and the actors who play Sheridan, DeLenn, and Ivanova. The manager of Planet Hollywood presented them with Planet Hollywood jackets and hats, and Straczynski presented Planet

Hollywood with one of Sheridan's leather flight jackets.

Then it was time to see the current week's episode on the big screen. I had forgotten how much fun it is to see an SF film for the first time with other hard-core fans of the film you are watching. We cheered at all the appropriate spots, and gasped when Kosh made his comment to Boxleitner towards the end of the show. The organizers fell down a bit here, as the turning down of the music in the rest of the restaurant so we could hear the episode wasn't coordinated well, so the first several minutes of the episode were drowned out by schlock rock.

After the episode, they showed a music video. Set to the music of "Danger Zone" from "Top Gun", it was a 5-minute video consisting entirely of fight scenes and space combat footage. We were all stomping our feet and singing along! YES! I *want* that video!!!!

After the video there was a Q&A session, which was badly marred by Planet Hollywood not having a functional microphone. The noise from the music blaring in the rest of the restaurant made it hard to hear the people answering questions. Then Straczynski and the actors hung around to sign autographs and pose for photos with people. All four were warm and friendly and accomodating. I was very pleased.

I had a chance to speak with Claudia (Ivanova) for a few minutes and told her that my favorite episode was the one where she sat shiva for her dead father. She smiled and said it was one of her favorites, too, at least partly because she got to show a wide range of emotions in the episode.

Those of you who know me (primarily as a literary SF fan) may be a bit surprised at how gushing this sounds, but I was really and truly impressed by all of them. Babylon 5 is a real quality project and this group of people genuinely enjoys working on it, seems to genuinely enjoy the people they work with (Claudia had many good things to say about how wonderful Boxleitner is to work with), and seems to really enjoy interacting with hard-core SF fans. William Shatner, get a life!

NEW NESFA PRESS OFFERING

Zenna Henderson is best remembered for her stories of the People which appeared in *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction* from the early 50s to the mid-70s. The People escaped the destruction of their home planet and crashed on Earth in the desert Southwest just before the turn of the century. Fully human in appearance, they possessed many extraordinary powers. Henderson's People stories tell of their

struggles to fit in and to live their lives as ordinary people, unmolested by fearful and ignorant neighbors. The People are "us at our best, as we hope to be, and where (with work and with luck) we may be in some future."

Ingathering contains all of the People stories, including one, "Michal Without," which has never before been published. (Of the seventeen People stories in the volume, six were previously collected in *Pilgrimage: The Book of the People*, six in *The People: No Different Flesh*, three appeared in miscellaneous other books, one appeared only in magazine form, and one is new to this volume.)

Like so many of her characters, Zenna Henderson was a school teacher her entire life, teaching primarily the first grade, though, at one time or another, she taught all elementary grades and a little high school.

Her first story of the People, "Ararat," was published in *The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction* in October 1952. It was Henderson's second published science fiction story and was destined to begin a series of stories which would last the rest of her writing career. Zenna Henderson's stories of the People are among the most-loved series in Science Fiction.

The NESFA's Choice series brings back into print classic science fiction that is essential to any good collection, but which is becoming increasingly difficult to find as the publishing industry's backlist shrinks. NESFA's Choice books are printed on acid-free paper and bound for durability.

Ingathering (ISBN 0-915368-58-7, 5 1/2" x 8 1/2", xiv+572 pages, hardbound, acid-free paper for long life, cover art by Elizabeth Rhys Finney, \$24.95) will be published on June 1, 1995. It will be available from NESFA Press, PO Box 809, Framingham, MA 01701-0203. Please add \$2 postage and handling per order.

FINAL CHAPTER WRITTEN FOR MERV BINNS BOOKS

Well-known Australian fan Merv Binns continued selling books by mail after he had to close Space Age Books in Melbourne some years ago. Space Age Books was famous among international fans but apparently not enough others to keep it afloat. Now Binns writes regrefully in the January issue of *Australian SF News* that despite the experience and connections carried over to his mail order business, "like everything else I touch it has turned into a lemon. Consequently, I have decided this month to stop trying to sell new books and I will eventually close down Merv Binns Books. My intentions are to fill all the orders I have, if I can, and then sell what stock I have left as cheaply and quickly as I can and finally dispose of my own personal collection to help pay my bills." Binns may continue as a dealer on a small scale "in an effort to pay

for my own reading needs. I have a very ill, elderly father who I must spend a good part of my time looking after..."

Australian SF News for quite some time has appeared as a rider with *Thyme*, but Binns announces he plans to produce one or two issues independently to test its future as a professional publication. Merv, we hope this time it comes out lemonade!

SHARON SBARSKY OUT AT GENIE

Online visitors to the "SFRT3", the fannish message area on the GENIE computer network, lost an excellent host and energetic helper when Sharon Sbarsky was removed as a Category Leader. Sharon explains, "I had some difficulties with signing a non-legal document as a requirement of my being on SFRT3 Staff. When I included a reminder that I was showing the correspondence to my lawyers for advice with the document, I was accused of making a threat." Her online supervisor retaliated by finding a pretext for removing her as Category Leader (over the Worldcon discussion areas).

1995 AURORA AWARD NOMINEES

The fannish nominees for the 1995 Aurora Awards, Canada's science fiction and fantasy awards, given in both official languages, are:

Fan Achievement (Fanzine): *Bardic Runes*, Michael McKenny, ed., *BCSFazine*, R. Graeme Cameron, ed., *From Beyond the Oort Cloud*, Aaron Yorgason, ed., *The Frozen Frog*, Benoit Girard, ed., *Under the Ozone Hole*, Karl Johanson & John Herbert, eds.

Fan Achievement (Organizational): Cath Jackel (*On Spec*, Worldcon & NonCon), John Mansfield (1994 Worldcon), Lloyd Penney (Ad Astra), Yvonne Penney (Ad Astra), Rebecca Senese (*Space Time Continuum*).

Fan Achievement (Other) are: Adam Charlesworth for his reviews on Vancouver's "Ether Patrol" radio show; Catherine Donahue Girczyc, host of "Ether Patrol"; Bob Hadji for contributions to fandom; *The Diplomatic Planetary Handbook* by Capucine Plourde; Robert J. Sawyer for his "Random Musings" column in *OSFS Statement*; and Larry Stewart, as an entertainer (of such note that the Toronto resident has been lined up as Fan GoH for the 1995 Loscon, in Los Angeles).

OBITUARIES

LEE PELTON

By Dennis Lien. Lee Pelton died December 29, 1994 of complications from AIDS. He had been sick since spring of 1993 and had been tested for many things, that included, all

proving negative. In the fall he was retested and the results were HIV positive. While he was in frail health for the last year-plus he had largely avoided hospitalization until recent months and had attended both Minicon (over Easter weekend of 1994) where he appeared on a panel about AIDS, and our fall relaxacon, Reinconation, where he mostly minded a dealer's table and was seen to have difficulty speaking. In mid-November a relapse put him in hospital and trips home thereafter were short-lived. Increasing paralysis robbed him of ability to speak, but for a time he could communicate with gestures during good periods. The last such was Monday night (December 26); he relapsed the following morning. His long-time mate (they were formally married in November) Giovanna Fregni, was with him when he died in the Minneapolis Veteran's Hospital.

Lee's fannish career was spent largely in Minneapolis, with a few years in Milwaukee (where Giovanna then was living) during the late 1980s. He attended many local and other conventions, published issues of his fanzine *Private Heat* plus a sometime apazine in Minneapa, and will be remembered by many as the co-editor, with Carol Kennedy, of *Rune*, the Minn-Stf clubzine, in the late 1970s. Lee and Carol got issue after issue out on schedule and within budget, something virtually unheard-of before or since...

Lee was strong, good at and interested in athletics, an ex-Navy man; seeing him wasting away was heartbreaking. He loved music, science fiction, motion pictures, collecting. Most of all he loved Giovanna. I miss him.

[Joyce Scrivner reports that a memorial service was held at Ericka Johnson and Peter Hentge's home in the Twin Cities area.]

PAT KENNEDY

By Janet and Gary Anderson: It is with great regret that we let you know of the death of Pat Kennedy. Pat passed away Sunday, February 25, a little after noon of end-stage interstitial lung disease resulting from rheumatoid arthritis.

Pat was among the first members of the International Costumer's Guild, and its New York/New Jersey chapter. He served several terms in various offices of both. He was also co-author with his wife Peggy of "The Kennedy Compendium" the first handbook on the running of science fiction masquerades, and they were the co-chairs of Costume Con 7. He was well-known as one of the best emcees for costume competitions, and himself appeared on stage in both serious and humorous entries. But beyond these dry facts, those of us who were fortunate to know him treasure the memory of his delicious dry wit, his twinkling appreciative eye and his calming presence, particularly in the stress of major competitions. He is the first member of the founding circle of the ICG we have

lost, and we will miss him greatly.

Peggy has asked us to post information about his memorial service. She would like as many of his friends as can attend to join her at 1 p.m. Saturday March 11th at Youngs' Funeral home, 11831 SW Pacific Hwy, Tigard Oregon. She asks his friends to come with "Pat stories" to share. Afterwards everyone will go back to the house for more "Pat stories" and appropriate refreshments. Peggy says she has sleeping accommodations for out-of-towners, and would appreciate a call if you are planning on coming at (503) 635-0916. If you can't make it, please write a memory of Pat to be read and send it to Peggy at 62 Touchstone, Lake Oswego, OR 97035. (She cannot be reached via e-mail, so phone or snail mail is necessary).

In lieu of flowers, please send contributions to the Rheumatoid Arthritis Foundation in Pat's name.

[[You can contact the Oregon Chapter of the Arthritis Foundation at 4445 SW Barbur Blvd., Portland, OR 97201.]]

JOYCE SLATER

According to a post on the net by Caroline Mullan, Joyce Slater died Monday, February 27, of a heart attack. She was at home with her husband Ken. She had been discharged from hospital the previous Friday after being treated for a previous heart attack which no one had suspected.

According to Mullan, "Ken says he is well, asks for no fuss and no phone calls please. Please can we let people know why Fantast Medway orders are not being met for the time being."

MARILYN ZELDES

By Dick Smith: Marilyn G. Zeldes, mother of Chicago-area fan Leah Zeldes Smith, died January 22 of complications resulting from breast cancer and diabetes. She was 59 years old.

Mrs. Zeldes, a talented artist and lifelong SF reader, took her then 14-year-old daughter to her first SF convention, Torcon II in 1973, and sometimes did illustrations for fanzines. She was a gracious hostess to many fans who visited the Zeldes home in Oak Park, Mich., during the '70s and early '80s.

SUSAN MASKE

Ed Meskys' mother, Susan Maske, passed away February 9. She was a few weeks short of 97 and death was simply due to old age and general failure of the body. She was known to sf fans in New York from people visiting Ed in her home. Susan Maske was born in Lithuania in 1898. She passed away quietly at home where she had been cared for by of visiting nurses and aids. Ed writes, "The support of the health profes-

sionals was wonderful. I could not have handled things without the help of her physician, the three visiting nurses, and the various home health aids. Bonnie, who was here for most of the visits, has helped a number of patients 'crossing of the bar' and was especially appreciated."

MICHAEL RUBIN

By Marc Glasser: Michael Rubin, fan, hacker, filker, gamer, NYUSFS member and APA-NYU contributor, died in his sleep Friday, March 24, at the age of 34 after a lengthy battle with peritoneal cancer.

Funeral services were scheduled for March 29 in Brooklyn.

RICHARD LAWRENCE

By Kevin Standlee: Very sad news, especially to members of the SF Bay Area con-running community: Richard Lawrence, a very active member of the community (including being registrar and head of publications for this year's BayCon) died of a heart attack on April 1. According to Michael Siladi, chair of BayCon '95, Richard complained of chest pains on Friday and went to his local Kaiser hospital where he was held overnight for observation and then sent home. Reportedly he went to bed at 10 p.m. and when his wife Victoria came to bed an hour later she found him dead.

Richard was a fixture in the Bay Area fan community, being an active con-runner and con-goer. His other interests included trains and Civil War re-enactments (and probably many other things about which I've never heard). He was also a volunteer with the Red Cross. Many people are poorer for his departure.

Additional Note by Ross Pavlac: In your obit for Richard Lawrence, please be sure to mention that he was one of the few, the proud, the Rush Limbaugh fans in SF fandom.

I attended the historic Dan's Bake Sale in Fort Collins, CO two years ago, where 40,000+ Rush Limbaugh fans celebrated for a weekend and (unlike Woodstock II) cleaned up after themselves. I gave Richard a souvenir wooden cookie from the Bake Sale, and every time I saw him afterwards he mentioned how much he enjoyed that gift and how pleased he was that I thought of him while at the sale.

Announcement by Victoria Lawrence: The wake will be at 2 p.m. on April 15 at our house. I am asking instead of flowers for donations to be made in his name to the Red Cross. I am still weepy, but I am doing as well as can be expected.

File 770 Guest Columnist John Lorentz

YOU SAY "TO-MA-TO," I SAY "TO-MAH-TO"

The United States is a large country, with a lot of regional differences. It's not surprising that the fan groups throughout the country *also* have a lot of regional differences. In some parts of the country, it's common that weapons are banned from conventions—elsewhere, they're allowed. Dances are common in some places, nonexistent in others. A lot of gaming here, a lot of media events there—there many differences.

It's important for fan groups to realize that there *are* differences—especially when you're trying to attract convention attendees from other parts of the country. You've got to remember that folks flying from Somewhere, USA to attend YourCon for the very first time don't know what to expect.

This was brought home to me at the end of the last Westercon we hosted, in 1990. One complaint brought up in the Gripe Session was that the person didn't realize until the last day of the convention that we were broadcasting the video program to every room in the hotel. Instead of pleasantly watching it in her room, she had been walking over to the crowded video viewing room. We'd thought, "everyone will know about the video in their room; after all, we've been doing it for years at OryCon." And, of course, she didn't -- because she'd never *been* to OryCon.

When you're putting on a convention that will be attracting out-of-town folks, you need to let them know what the score is. Are weapons allowed? Is alcohol? If they're planning a bid party, let them know if -- traditionally -- everyone leaves the convention on Saturday night to watch Rocky Horror at the local theater.

I was (unpleasantly) surprised at the Seattle Westercon last year when I found out at the convention that, as a party host (we were bidding the 1995 Westercon), I was not only expected to register the party, but personally refrain from partaking of any alcohol. There'd been absolutely no warning in any of the progress reports, nor had anyone in Seattle mentioned this when they helped locate us in a prime party location. Indeed, as a committee member (I ran the dealer's room), I'd never been told of this policy. I enjoy sipping a beer while I talk to people -- and we'd brought six cases of Oregon beer to share with people.

This is even more important where you are hosting a large traveling convention, such as Westercon or Worldcon. These conventions have a long history, with a lot of tradition. Yes,

you want to include the things that work well for your local convention—local color is one of the things that make these conventions so much fun to attend. *One of the Chicon V progress reports told us that the Hospitality Suite would be "just what you expect from a midwest convention". Having never been to a midwest convention, I wasn't sure what this entailed. Taffy pulls? Cow-tipping contests? Nude jello wrestling?*

But you also need to remember the things that make these conventions what they are. This means that there are awards to administer and present. There will be site selection contests (which also mean bidder site tables and program slots for the bidders to make presentations). And you need to plan for an area for tables for groups who are bidding for Antarctica in '99 and Chico in 2001. And there will be bid parties. And some of the groups will want to rent suites. And... The list goes on.

And remember, just because you do things *differently* at your convention, that doesn't necessarily mean it's the *better*, or (worse) the *only* way. Conventions have evolved doing things the way that works for them, but other people do things differently. OryCon is one of the few conventions in the Northwest that bans weapons (real or pretend), and opens the dealer's room only to paid members (both things that are automatic at many East Coast conventions, but uncommon out here), yet we have virtually no restrictions on alcohol at parties (other than the common-sense items of checking for legal age, and not serving to people who are intoxicated), and dances every night. We also have nearly no security problems. So it's working for us.

On the other hand, other Northwest conventions are significantly tighter on allowing minors attend their conventions in order to cut down on problems and liability issues. It seems to work for them.

Someone asked me very seriously this summer whether we were planning on having 'rock dances every night' at next summer's Westercon. "Probably," I said. "Oh, you *can't* do that," he replied, "it's not right." Why not? After all, not only does it give active people a place to go in the evenings but it's quite popular with a lot of our committee members (even those whose heads show a few gray hairs). And we're renting the equipment for the whole weekend, anyway...

There are very few 'right' and 'wrong' ways to run conventions. Some methods may work better for some groups; but other methods work elsewhere. Never quit looking elsewhere for ways to improve your convention.

++ John Lorentz ++



RUSTYCON SCUTTLED

Rustycon has been held every January for the past twelve years in the Seattle area. If lacking Norwescon's fame, Rustycon apparently draws the same party-loving fans as all the Pacific Northwest conventions and has now achieved a notoriety the others have avoided by being canceled in progress by its committee.

Rustycon 12 was held January 13-15 at the Hyatt Regency Bellevue in Washington state. Drew Wolfe, who worked security at Rustycon, posted online that the con was shut down due to major vandalism. "Phones were taken from elevator lobbies, holes burned in carpets, wallpaper ripped, a \$60,000 art piece was damaged, etc. The last straw for the hotel was when the chandeliers in the elevators were damaged."

The result, explained the committee in a letter released after the con, was that, "Early Sunday morning, the hotel's General Manager requested that the Convention Committee curtail some of Sunday's scheduled events, so that convention could 'wind down' earlier in the afternoon and have our members start clearing out of the hotel ahead of schedule. The hotel did *not* 'shut down the con' -- the Concom did. We chose the cancel all Sunday events except the art show and the Convention League meeting. This was more than the hotel's General Manager asked for, but we believed it was appropriate and necessary: To make it *absolutely clear* to our members and to the hotel management that we were taking these problems seriously. To reduce the chances of further problems with the hotel and with non-Rustycon hotel guests."

The committee officially blamed the damage on a few unknown individuals who may not have even been registered as convention members for the vandalism.

Ruth Sachter wrote online, "Ghosting has been a problem at the local Puget Sound cons. Rustycon, at least recently, has been very club oriented. ...A mixture of costume, media and live role-playing groups were holding meetings/parties there and the practice was that folks coming for them weren't necessarily registered con members." The committee states that to reduce the problem of non-member "ghosts" at Rustycon and other Seattle-area conventions most of these clubs are adopting a policy that club members attending club event held at a local convention must register as members of the convention. Constar, The Camarilla, Clan Burnout, M.I.D., the NW Science Fiction Dealer's Association, the Fantasy Alternative, the Order of St. Chiros, the Elan, and others have subscribed to the new policy.

In John Lorentz' opinion, "I find it ironic that several of the groups listed as supporting the needed changes to Rustycon have also been griping at OryCon for because we *do* require badges to get into any of the convention space, including the dealer's room. Despite that, I'm glad to see that there's widespread support for the needed changes. They're even discussing banning *weapons* -- sounds like they're moving more towards OryCon all the time.)

According to the con committee, Hyatt's management claimed \$3,847 of damages to hallways and function space, including: \$515 for telephones stolen or damaged (on seven different floors); \$300 for cigarette burns and other damage to carpets (five different floors and elevator); \$300 for holes in leather chairs (4th floor); \$525 for damage to ballroom wall coverings; \$300 for crystal chandeliers damaged, with parts pulled down, in two elevators; and \$1,147 for emergency repairs to rebalance an elevator apparently damaged by people jumping up and down inside. They also complained that con members had damaged their rooms; the Hyatt Regency may pursue those individuals for restitution.

The hotel management changed after the initial solicitation of the Rustycon business, reports Ruth Sachter. "When the new folks got a close look at the crowd they panicked. Bellevue is a very yuppie area and the hotel is part of a downtown office building complex. The management was turned off by the con's appearance from the start based on the vibes John and I got. ...Sunday morning we headed out of the room with a load of stuff on our luggage carrier to take to the car. First thing we noticed is that by every room on our floor are the missing hotel services books including the usual postcards and stationery, the hard cover area guide and the potted plants that apparently had been removed in advance from the party floors. We were not happy."



Another Bid Sheratoned

Smaller than a megaton, but big enough to blast your bid out of existence: that's a sheraton....

Louis Epstein, chairman, announces that the New York in '98 Worldcon bid is folding. He explains, "The Sheraton New York, in implementing its previously announced option of eliminating its exhibit hall (would have been used for the Art Show), is unmaking its advance bookings and opted to withdraw from our package [reducing its commitment to 400 rooms, instead of 1100 rooms plus all their function space.] Combined with the Hilton that simply isn't enough, though the Hilton tried to interest us in going with the Park Central. [The Park Central could only offer 300 rooms and function space that couldn't replace the Sheraton's.] So the dream package

we had been advertising will no longer exist. There will be no New York in 2001 bid, and not likely 2004... it's too foggy to see what either the facility situation or the WSFS bidding rules will be after that."

Epstein admits there has been a paucity of support. And, "Changing plans at the very last minute is not worth a fight for the pewter medal with Niagara Falls and None of the Above."

Bombs Away

Mike Kennedy's report of Chattacon XX (January 13-15, 1995) quotes Paul Cashman's story of the con's most bizarre incident. "Apparently a fan had attended parties on Friday night and was drinking out of a long tube marked with a fluorescent radiation symbol sticker. The fan dropped the tube in the parking garage across the street from the hotel when he was leaving. Anyway, it was found the next day by mundanes who called the police, who called in the fire department, and the bomb squad. After a few hours of blocked streets and not allowing anyone near the garage, they used a cherry picker to remove the drinking tube from the site. Khen Moore and some other people tried to explain to them what it really was, but apparently [authorities] didn't feel that they could take the chance. Their explanation was that they could detect radiation on the thing; I believe that is common with fluorescent paint. Anyway, it was interesting. ...It reportedly made CNN and McNeil/Lehrer, mostly because Al Gore had been in Chattanooga that Friday and, well... cops being cops..."

Kitchen Sink Division Gets New Chef

Drew Sanders has taken over L.A.con III's events division, called the Kitchen Sink Division. He succeeds Bruce Pelz, who resigned from the committee on January 1. (Elayne Pelz continues to head the Administration Division and handle the con's finances.)

Finish Line Nears for '98 Bids

The Baltimore in '98 bid is clearing the decks just in case they actually win this darned thing. Bidding committee, The Pirates of Fenzance, have elected Peggy Rae Pavlat Convention Chair. Perianne Lurie reports, "She beat out a relieved Covert Beach, whose campaign speech was something along the lines of 'I guess I'd do it, but Peggy Rae would do it better.'"



[[If you follow Harlan Ellison's video column on the Sci-Fi channel you know he recently touted three "little cons" to be far more fun and substantially truer to the spirit of the sf community than big, greedy, impersonal cons like... Westercon. (Thanks, Harlan!) Probably unaware of Ellison's tv advice, this year's Westercon chairman John Lorentz attended one of the conventions Ellison recommended, Potlatch, and filed this report with his local clubzine. Both the Potlatch report and the Boskone report that follows are reprinted by permission of the author from Pulsar 197.]]

Potlatch 4

Oakland, CA - February 10-12

Report by John Lorentz

Potlatch is one of several similar conventions that have started in recent years. At the heart of them is a desire to return to the "old days" of conventions, where the gathering was small and quiet enough that one could spend the weekend in organized discussions and informal conversations with friends on a number of topics, including (even) science fiction. The emphasis at Potlatch (like Readercon [Boston] and Fourth Street Fantasy [Minneapolis]) is on literary science fiction and fantasy.

This year's was no exception. The weekend was filled with programmed discussions, "Algonquins" (informal discussion groups with a specified topic) and much-used tables and conversation pits, as well the presentation of the Tiptree Awards (they're usually given out at Wishcon). There were about 180 people attending, many of them friends (even more so by the end of the weekend). The convention was held on

the waterfront in Oakland's Jack London Square within easy walking distance of several restaurants and shops. It was a pleasant location and a pleasant weekend.

However... The last couple of Potlatches (which are the only ones I've attended) also had an air of literary elitism (approaching snobbery) -- that is, instead of "We're talking about literary fiction because that's we like," the message has been "We're talking about literary fiction because it's better than the rest." Last year, in Seattle, the theme was that "anything that sells well obviously can't be any good and there is no reason even to discuss those works," insulting some of the very people who were instrumental in starting Potlatch. This year, some of the programming seemed to be planned with the intent of making it as obscure as possible.

This doesn't have to be the case. Fourth Street Fantasy has done a good job of prompting serious discussions in a way that encourages, rather than discourages, participation. It's hoped that Potlatch 5 (being held in Portland, in February, 1996) will be a little lighter in tone and less stuffy. I hope so. I'd hate to see a good idea like Potlatch end up being simply a gathering of self-proclaimed cognoscenti.

[[Lorentz will have every opportunity to fulfill that prophecy since he will be running the Hospitality room when Potlatch comes to Portland's Imperial Hotel next February.]]

Boskone XXXII

Framingham, MA

February 17-19, 1995

For the sixth straight year, I headed back east for Boskone, a

Boston-area convention. In early years, it was a chance to see Ruth and visit with friends. Now, it's a chance for both Ruth and I to head east and visit friends.

Boskone seemed to have another successful year. Memberships were up slightly, and our third effort at editing *Helmuth* (the convention's daily newsletter) was the easiest so far. (It was interesting to be printing the Sunday edition of the newsletter, describing the two fire alarms that occurred earlier that evening and have the third alarm go off while the printer was running. There were the usual fan tables for the upcoming Worldcons (and our Westercon) and the bidders for future years. There were the usual parties each night by the bidders. There was the usual plethora of solid programming -- far too much to see it all. And there were the friends from all over North America and Europe, gathering to converse and plan the myriad upcoming conventions. Boskone often doubles as a committee meeting for all the upcoming Worldcons.

However... Boskone in 1995 was virtually the same as Boskone in 1990. One word for this lack of change might be static. Another (though it usually carries a more negative connotation than fits here) is stagnant.

Many aspects of Boskone are done the way they are simply because they've been done that way for years, even though the convention has changed drastically since the "winter Worldcon" days of the 1980s. Average attendance has dropped from 3,500 then to around 800 now -- yet there are still nearly as many committee positions as in the past. There is a perception that no new people are coming to the convention, just the same regulars from years gone by. True, it's not a totally-accurate perception: I talked to someone that was attending a convention for the first time, and was having a great time. But it is a widely-felt perception nevertheless. They did finally return gaming to the list of Boskone events but that's mostly because many of the NESFans (NESFA being the club that produces the convention) have become addicted to Magic.

Boskone is one of my favorite conventions, because I know many of the people involved and have been on the committee for several of them. The amount of books available from the dealers is second to none for convention of this size. And it's a great place to get together with friends. But it's not really a convention that's readily accessible to newcomers. The membership rates start out high and stay there. If you bought a membership at this year's convention for 1996, it was \$30 - for a convention that will probably be about \$40 at the door next year. So most attendees wait until a few months before the convention to purchase their memberships. There's a lot of effort and money put into the Committee Den (actually the place to hang out for anyone who knows about it) but the open-to-the-con-attendees-in-generalCon Suite ("Hospitality" for those of us who are West Coasters) bounces around from location to location during the weekend and gets minimal

support. And the hotel is a long ways out in the suburbs.

I understand the reasons for much of this. The committee would love to get back into Boston proper but the hotel situation in the Boston area is such that there aren't many choices for them right now. And there are worries that they may return to the explosive growth that resulted in Boskone being nicknamed the "winter Worldcon" and almost did them in.

These worries have, at times, approached paranoia. There is nothing to indicate that they will start gaining hundreds of new attendees if they made the convention a little friendlier but many of them aren't willing to try.

Meanwhile, the average Boskone attendee is getting older and older. While OryCon, a convention with similar philosophies to Boskone (a wish to become a somewhat more literary convention, and a disinterest in attracting people who just wish to "Party!") is continuing to attract younger folks as both attendees and committee members. Boskone isn't. I just hope that they will loosen up a little pretty soon, before they simply fizzle away...

[[Editor's Note: I'm sure there were also 1995 Boskone enthusiasts -- if you send me your report I'll present all views.]]

The Irregular Alcoholic Jell-O Dept.*

By Chaz Baden: In issue #106, Eric Lindsay asks about schnapps Jell-O. Well, I don't have anything for peppermint schnapps, but I do have a few other recipes with other wild combinations.

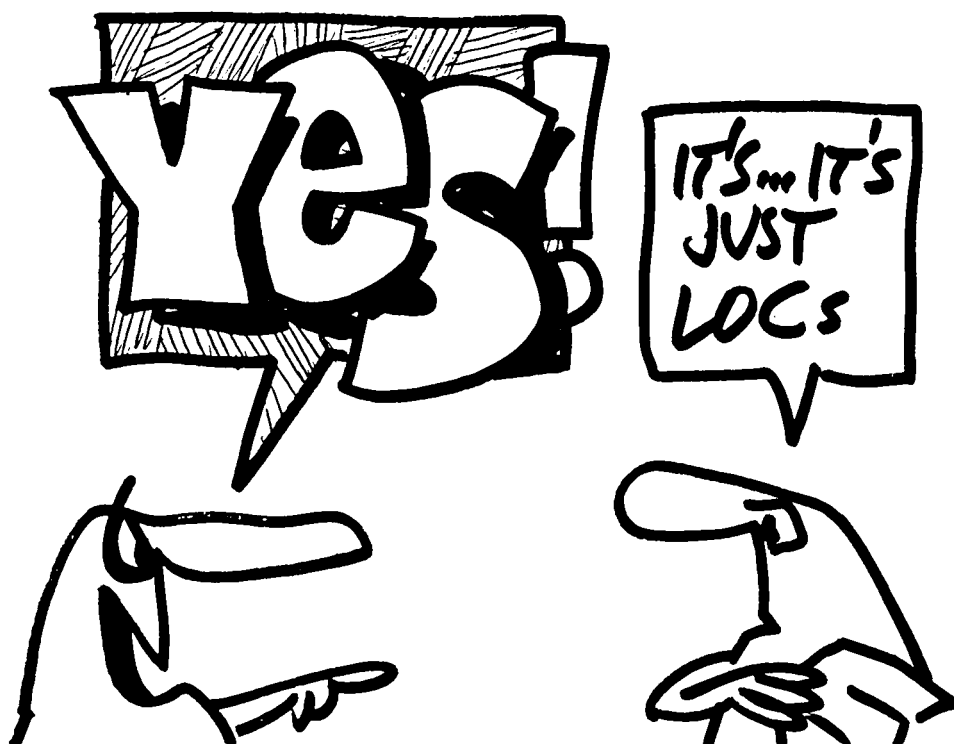
Wendy Dustman's Strawberry Banana Margarita Jello Shots: 1 large package strawberry banana Jell-O, 2 cups boiling water, 1 cup cold water, 1/2 cup Cuervo Gold tequila, 1/4 cup Triple Sec, 1/4 cup Lime Lizzard Schnapps. Dissolve the Jell-O in the boiling water first, then add the cold water and let it cool to room temperature before adding the booze.

Wendy Dustman's Tropical Jello Shots: 1 large package of lime Jell-O, 2 cups boiling water, 1 cup cold water, 1 cup Tropical Schnapps (by DeKuyper). Sort of a pineapple-orange-banana-mango taste.

Figmo's Fuzzy Navels: Small box of Orange Jell-O. 1 cup boiling water, 1/3 cup cold, 2/3 cup Peach Schnapps (approx 30 proof). Peach schnapps = 1/3 of volume.

Sandy Goertemiller's Bahama Mama Jello: Large box of Pineapple Jello, 2 cups (16 oz.) boiling water, 1 oz. Coconut Rum (or liqueur), 1 oz. Dark Rum, 1/2 oz. Bacardi 151 Rum (or 1 oz. White Rum), 1/2 oz. Kahlua (or other coffee liqueur), and 12 oz. cold water. (Or, if you've poured the liquor into a two cup measure, just top it off to the two cup line.) **Contact:** C.S.F. (Chaz) Baden, P.O. Box 1792, Redondo Beach CA 90278; Internet: hazel-chaz@netcom.com

Letters of Comment on File 770



WRONG AGAIN, MOOSEBREATH!

George Flynn: Actually, you and Filthy Pierre are both wrong. The smallest North American Worldcon since 1973 was neither ConAdian nor Big Mac, but SunCon in 1977 (attendance given as 2050 on the official listing).

And that should be Wojtek Sjudmak, not Studmak, in the Chesley Awards list.

TRUE FANDOM?

Harry Warner Jr. "Trufandom" is a word I don't particularly like. But there's no generally accepted other way of expressing what Allan Burrows complains about so strenuously in his loc. ("Real fandom" isn't suitable because when spoken to strangers they might assume it's about movie fandom or open reel taping fandom.) However, my preference is for trufandom rather than the specialized spinoffs that have formed in recent years because it's more

varied. The costumers, the filkers, the Trekkers and so on are so wrapped up in their specialties that most of them don't want to talk about or write about or participate in anything else.

Trufans are different: they're interested in all sorts of things, both related to and alien to science fiction. It's something like the way old people often want to talk about nothing but their physical problems and cub scouts spend all their time thinking about sex. Of course, there are a few individuals from specialized fandoms who eventually mutate into trufans and prove to be welcome additions to the field. And trufandom pioneered in almost all the subjects which later evolved into the spinoff fandoms. Fanzines were already publishing filk songs in the late 1930s when I first began to be active in fandom. Costumers were a feature of worldcons almost from the start, the *Star Trek* mania was aided and abetted by a trufan, Bjo, quite a few of the prominent fans in the 1930s were also active in rocketry experimenting and propagandizing, and Forry Ackerman was writing

reams about science fiction and fantasy movies at the peak of his activity in the late 1930s and early 1940s long before he got involved in *Famous Monsters of Filmland*.

I agree with Allan that trufandom isn't what it used to be, but I don't think the attitude of the trufans toward spinoff fandoms is to blame. Rather, it's caused partly by the fact that science fiction and fantasy books and magazines have escalated so wildly in price that most youngsters prefer to get the equivalent on free television or cheap videotape rentals, partly by the decline in literacy that makes it hard for many young people to read written science fiction and fantasy stories.

WORLDCON COVERAGE

Harry Warner Jr. It would be nice to know why there was so much opposition to a filk Hugo. The only cause that occurs to me is the fact that most filk creativity is done with small audiences in hotel rooms so there's no real opportunity for anyone to manage to listen to everything that is particularly good during a given year. Or maybe the proposal involved filk on cassettes which are offered for sale, which would obviate the accessibility problem. I have no interest in filk but I seem to be in a deep minority in this respect and maybe the time has come for Hugo honors.

FLASHBACK ON FILE 770:107

Dennis Virzi: Yes, the new ish made the rounds here this weekend -- I was the fourth to see "my" copy. I kept hearing, "You've four lines" here. Got to read it Sunday night.

Not sure what to think about the *Ansi-file* bits. Eagerly await your take on *Mimosa's Lantern*, however.

Brian Earl Brown: *Ansi-file* was kind

of cute. After hearing all these TAFF winners whine that they're not going to write their trip report because they can't write as well as Langford, it's good to see someone who not only thinks they can write as well as Langford, but in imitation of him as well.

[[Thanks very much, but until I get Tom Sadler's vote the polls remain open!]]

Meanwhile, not only has Alan Stewart returned home from his DUFF trip but he has written two conreports about his trip, DeepSouthCon and the Worldcon. One suspects that the rest of his trip report can't be far behind.

Kathleen Toth's review of Alexander's biography of Gene Roddenberry was interesting and seems to do a nice job of comparing this book against Engels' and other independent sources. It's all rather fascinating but at the same time I am amazed at how much space you've given to two books about a man most fanzine fans never even think about.

Helga Trautwetter: Loved the extra big extra juicy *F770* but I gotta beef with you. The cartoon on page 19 is NOT funny and NOT tasteful. One or the other would be welcome. Both funny AND tasteful would be a miracle.

P.S. Did you change your name to Glyford or did I miss something?

[[Yes.]]

Teddy Harvia: Yes, *Ansible* is amusing reading but it's not something one can get lost in like *File 770*. Hmmm, I don't know if that's a positive or a negative.

[[That's a lot like what Langford had to say about it. Especially the "Hmmm" part....]]

I thought about sending you a hoax Harry Warner loc but couldn't think of enough to say.

Harry Warner, Jr. You shouldn't scare

a poor old fan like that. When I turned the front cover back from your new *File 770* and saw *Ansible's* first pages, I naturally assumed this would be the typeface for all the following pages and I know how long it would take me after reading the entire issue to push my eyeballs back into their normal position. I do believe, though, that your typography fails to equal the minuteness of Dave Langford's newzine, but nobody could blame you for missing to achieve such a difficult feat.

Then I felt relief when I turned back the page and saw easier reading ahead but this was a brief respite because Barbara Hambly saddened me inadvertently with all those descriptions of the Los Angeles County Fair. Hagerstown's fair, once famed through a four-state area and second in my affections only to Christmas, has dropped dead through a variety of circumstances, mainly the stupidity of the people running it, and Barbara reawakened the sense of loss I've been feeling about this deprivation.

All those nice words about Bob Bloch were well-fitted to their fine subject. I can't think of any pro whose passing before Bloch resulted in such an outpouring of evidences of affection and admiration from fans completely unadulterated by reservations about personality or writing ability. I wish I'd known him personally, but I experienced samples of his fine qualities in my occasional contacts with him via the media.

It was good to read Janice Gelb's DeepSouthCon report again. But you could have given SFPA a plug as its original place of publication, because that organization could use a few good waitlisters.

[[How does someone apply to become a member of SFPA? Send me the info and I will run it.]]

Janice Gelb: Just a reminder note that I wanted to have something in the next *File 770* to indicate that the Deep South

Con report you reprinted from me was written for SFPA and never intended to be either (a) a comprehensive con report, or (b) one that I expected anyone other than SFPAns to read.

Lloyd Penney: No word of lie, I'm blushing from the surfeit of egoboo the Conadian pages provide. More about the Aurora Award, several mentions of the fanzine lounge, and Don Fitch thinks Yvonne and I should chair the next Toronto Worldcon. I don't think that'll happen: we know our limitations. Besides, running a fanzine lounge doesn't make us Worldcon chairman material. However, we'll help out with the Toronto in 2003 bid, however far that gets.

...James Gardner capped my evening by telling me that he'd seen my name in a book, Diane Duane's new novel *Spiderman: The Venom Factor*. In it I'm a reporter. Ah, frabjous day, I've been Tuckerized! Yvonne was Tuckerized some years ago in Peter Morwood's Trek novel *Rules of Engagement*, so I've finally caught up.

LETTERS ON FILE 770:105

Elizabeth Osborne: I got issue 105 and found most of the articles rather sad with death, illness and arrests. It was enlivened by Donald Keller's Con Reports, your *Field of Beam's* story, and the article on furry fandom by Taral Wayne. I always wondered where you got your fuzzy covers. I especially liked the cover of *Yarf!* with Santa Claus giving a pre-flight run-through to his reindeer, who are wearing leather flying jackets.

Harry Warner Jr. *Field of Beam's* is thoroughly enjoyable. In my own case, it's particularly good because it's a rare instance of a fannish parody based on a movie I've actually seen and even videotaped. I rarely take the time to watch movies made after 1923 or thereabouts.

I'm inclined to doubt the continued existence of Elvis Presley for a personal reason. I'm one of the very few fans

who suffered through visits from both Claude Degler and George Wetzel. If the fates hate me that much, they surely would have caused Elvis Presley to knock at my door on some occasion in recent years.

...Of course, the big feature of this latest *File 770* is Marty Cantor's narrative. I hope the feminists don't get too excited over the fact that he seems to have been subjected to less criticism for auctioning off three human corpses than his wife endured for disposing of one duplicator which may or may not have been dead.

Brian Earl Brown: It's great to see Taral's art on so many issues of *F770*. He seems to keep getting better and better with an ever-increasing playfulness to each piece.

I'm curious about the item in #105 about Dennis Fischer. It said that the door to his car was unlocked with a fanbelt. For the life of me I don't know how they did it since fanbelts are such stiff, inflexible objects?

I feel for Mr. Fischer. As the father of a two-year-old myself I know what it's like trying to shop with one in tow and the distinct pleasure of shopping alone. On the other hand, what was he thinking leaving a small child in a hot car on a hot day?

The short articles from Effinger and Taral and your short story in #105 were a lot of fun to read. I never would have expected *Field of Dreams* to lend itself to a fannish parody.

Lloyd Penney: I know some furies in the Toronto area (besides Taral) and there is a BBS called the FurThest North in Toronto. When I chaired Ad Astra, we recognized the interest in anthropomorphics and we tried to set up a room that would be shared by the furies and the anime fans. However, we ran into a stumbling block.

Lloyd: "Hi, we'd like to see a room at Ad Astra for the Furry fans."

Furry: "Great!"

Lloyd: "However, we need your help. Would you be willing to help us with the room?"

Furry: "No."

Lloyd: "Well, could you lend us some materials to show in the room?"

Furry: "No."

Lloyd: "Okay, could you lend us copies?"

Furry: "No."

Lloyd: "Is there anything you can do to help us with this room?"

Furry: "No."

And at the convention, they circulated a flyer stating that they sneaked into the con, in spite of our best efforts to keep them out. Sigh.

1946 HUGO NOMINATIONS

Robert Lichtman: I was intrigued when I read in Kevin Standlee's WSFS meeting report that the '96 Worldcon was going to present Hugos for 1946. Which categories will be used? Later, in your comment to Ted White about WAW's Hugo, you go on to inquire "which overlooked fan writers who were superstars in 1946 would you like to call to voters' attention?" They're not all overlooked but I'd like to nominate the following for best fan writer of 1946: Joe Kennedy (JoKe), Charles Burbee, Bob Tucker, Francis Towner Laney and Elmer Perdue. For best fanzine: *Shangri-L'Affaires*, *Vampire* (both were probably at their peak that year), *The Acolyte*, *Fantasy Commentator*, *Stefnews* (Speer), and *Bloomington Newsletter* (Tucker). For best novel: *Slan* (Yes, it was serialized in ASF in 1940, but first appeared in book form in '46).

I Agree with Harry Warner, Jr. that it would be super if Rotsler would write his autobiography. I feel the same about Forry Ackerman. By the way, did you mean to put the Harry Warner Jr. Rotsler on the wrong page? Will Harry complain about the cartoon facing Ted White's letter instead of his?

Thanks for putting in people's e-mail addresses. Someone ought to do a fan-nish director of the things. My own entry awaits a new computer. 1987 XT clones aren't simpatico to the needs of the Internet. But I'm beginning to fold e-mail addresses into my mailing list files.

Let me be perhaps the last to congratulate you and the missus on your recent wedding...

Harry Warner, Jr. I do like unreservedly the idea of awarding Hugos to meritorious people and publications during years in which no Hugo was originally available. But this will need to include comprehensive lists before nominations open to show exactly what was available in the year in question. It wouldn't be hard for older fans to remember the best prozine of 1945, but there's a big problem involved in finding out what books were published that year, which fanzines were in existence, and the identity of prolific artists during that particular year. Fortunately, fanzine polls to determine fanwriters were fairly common before the Hugo awards were established and those would give help in determining what should go on a preliminary listing of potential nominees.

Of course, I second Robert Whitaker Sirignano's suggestion about publishing mail addresses in addition to e-mail gibberish. It might help even the fans who normally communicate via e-mail, in case they want to send artwork or a publication.

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