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Infanity's Notebook

Note 4

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ART

Syeryl Birkhead - 2, 4 Linda Michaels - cover, 3, 7, 9 Peggy Ranson - 1, 6, 14 DEC - 5

KAZOO: 1. a toy musical instrument consisting of a small tube containing a membrane or piece of paper that vibrates and produces a buzzing sound when one hums into the tube. 2. a famish noisemaker sounded off key, off rhythm, and often too much. 3. a place to keep your wild ka.



Thank you, contributors. You are much appreciated. Any others who want to send writing or art, feel free. For those who want to send email, my CompuServe number is 70541.2754.

When I was getting ready to put out the issue of Infanity's Notebook scheduled for this past July, I went home to visit my mother in Mississippi. Unfortunately, I set my computer up on a TV tray and it suffered a disk crash. Literally. One of the clips holding the tray legs sheared off and the whole shebang settled not so The write head was gently to the den floor. damaged just enough so that writes became a process of chance, sometimes working bu occasionally messing up the drive surface. When I returned to Palm Bay, I shopped around and finally found a 130MB drive for about \$160 including installation. I got a faster drive and 100MB more space, but I would rather have not had to spend the money and time. Quite aside from the three weeks till I could get the new drive installed, it was quite a chore building the directory structure, reinstalling the editors and compilers and such (I didn't want to take the chance of transering executables from the old disc to the new in case files had been corrupted.), and moving the data and source code files. The June

In the Soviet Union every worker is a government worker, and they have a saying: As long as the bosses pretend to pay us, we will pretend to work. (The Hunt for Red October by Tom Clancy)

issue would have been so late that I decided to skip it altogether.

I've been rereading the three books of Tales of the Witch World edited by Andre Norton. The plot of the filk song Golden Eyes is used as the basis for stories by two different authors. Mercedes Lackey, who wrote the lyrics (Leslie Fish composed the melody.) of the song, turned it into the story Were-Hunter, for the first volume of the Tales In the third volume, Lisa Woodworth adapted the plot for Were-Flight. Both stories are well done, which proves there is more than one way to change a cat's skin.

For fans of Kelly Freas, there is a 1995 calender featuring his art. I saw it in one of the chain bookstores, priced at about nine bucks.

Filkers who are fond of the song *Ricter Scale* may be interested to know that most seismologists think the scale is obsolete. I was watching a show on faults and earthquakes and the narrator said that a couple of other measurements are usually employed now which are more accurate than the maximum swing of particular seismographs.

I've been working on a shareware program, which I hope to market sometime next year, after I've finished the coding and gone over it thoroughly for glitches. Anyone out there with any advice or anecdotes about writing or selling shareware?

Sheryl Birkhead wrote: "A comment on your dinosaur pandemic - think of what you wrote - and man/HIV/AIDS - does it sound so far fetched?"

So far AIDS is not close to many of the deadliest epidemics of the past. The great bubonic plague - the 'black death' - cut the population of Europe between a half and a third. Ignorant of how it spread and with no defense except to flee, the majority of people were still alive when the plague ended and prospered on the goods the victims left behind. It seems to me unlikely that any disease could be so devastating as to wipe out hundreds of species so completely that they could not repopulate.

Teddy Harvia commented: "James Burke is entertainment, but he virtually ignores intangible ideas' contributions to progress."

Linda Michaels asked why I didn't have a report on Oasis. Well, I didn't attend. I was planning to go down to a SFSFS event that Saturday and didn't find out it was cancelled until that morning. Sigh. I was glad to see Linda at Necronomicon.

Ned Brooks sent It Goes On the Shelf: I don't know how he finds time to read all the books and correspondence he includes and writes about.

The NASFA Shuttle included a full report on the voting for the 1994 Hugo and Campbell Awards. I haven't had the funds to travel to Constellation these last three years, a big disappointment since I lived in Huntsville and have always enjoyed the con.

I finally finished reading The Federalist Papers edited by Clinton Rossiter. Now I've started on The Anti-Federalist Papers and the Constitutional Convention Debates edited by Ralph Ketcham. Another interesting book on the

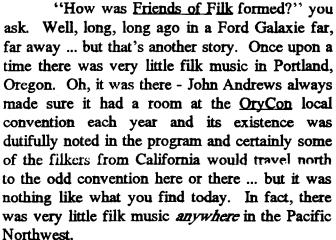
convention is *Decision in Phaladelphia* which provides a good deal of insight on the men and factions and the give and take that went on. One of the main impressions that the books left me with is how astounded all of the delagates would be if they could return and see the size and power of the Federal government.

Some years ago Patricia Wrede and Caroline Stevermer turned their Letter Game (also called Persona Letters) into the book Sorcery and Cecelia. The background is a Regency England where magic is a profession much like the law or medicine and the story is told as correspondence between Cecy (Pat) and Kate (Caroline). Patricia Wrede has used the same milieu for Mairelon the Magician. Patricia doesn't display the same penchance for witty and humorous conversation that Georgette Heyer does, but her denouement is a series of entrances reminiscent of some of Heyer's but even more hectic. Heyer fans or those who like a combination of magic and mystery will enjoy Mairelon.



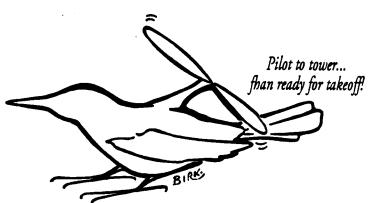
How 1 Spend My Summer Vacations

by Cecilia A. Eng



One day in 1985, we ere sitting around at a meeting of Friends of The Doctor (the local Doctor Who fan club) when then-club-president Shawn Wall said, "Hey, why don't we have a filk party?!? I've got a living room, stereo, and tapes - YOU can bring the COSTUMES...." The rest is history. At first we sang along with her Off-Centaur tapes. Then some of us began bringing guitars and writing parodies. Pretty soon we were making trips to the Bay Area to attend Bayfilk conventions.

It rapidly became evident that traveling to other states and paying for gas and hotels would quickly bankrupt our various budgets. What we needed was a way to bring music guests of honor to the local science fiction conventions. After all, music is a legitimate part of the sf/fantasy subculture and the musicians deserve the same sort of attention at conventions as writers and artists. Filk had long outgrown the old definition



(which one still finds in many convention program books): funny parodies to old tunes. Many original tunes and lyrics being written and published - and sung - are ignored by much of fandom.

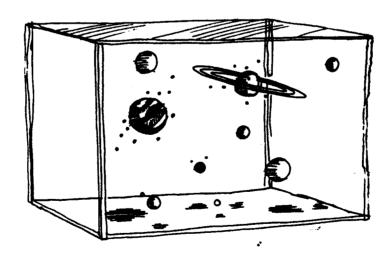
We briefly toyed with the idea of running a filk convention. Fortunately, I've been on enough convention committees to know better. Why worry about hotels and break-even memberships and hospitality and security and all the other headaches, when there are other people willing to do that for you??? We could just wait for a convention committee to form, then back the chairperson(s) into a corner and offer to invite a Special Guest to their convention and explain that we'll pay all expenses and point out how many filkers will buy memberships and by the way, we'll take the horrible job of running filking off their hands.... And with some of the smaller (250-membership) summer conventions, the filker to non-filker ratio would be such that it might as well be a filker convention. The problem: how to raise enough money to pay for transportation, room, and a per diem for music guests of honor.

At this point, Serendipity reached down and sprinkled some of her magic potion over Oregon (very few Oregonians noticed - most mistook it for just another Oregon rainshower). The newly incorporated Off Centaur, Inc. had also come to a similar conclusion about the cost

of out-of-town conventions - their dealers tables were not earning enough to meet travel expenses and show any respectable profit. They announced that they would no longer be selling tapes at conventions.

Faced with the possibility that there might no longer be filk music tapes (*gasp*shutter*) available at Pacific Northwest conventions, suddenly this crazed lunatic was jumping up and down in the back of the room crying, "We'll do We'll do it!!!" A few moments later I realized the lunatic was me. Fortunately, the local filk enthusiasts agreed to form a non-profit group which would sell tapes at local conventions and use the funds earned to bring musicians to the Pacific Northwest. Being the highly imaginative and creative group we are, we of course could not think of a name for the new non-profit association. I threatened to call it Friends of Filk (after Friends of the Doctor) if no one came up with a better name ... and so it remains to this day.

Since that time our Special Guests have become a mainstay at local conventions and have included Heather Alexander, Peter Beagle, Marty Burke, Meg Davis, Jenny Lindner, Michael Longcor, and Tempest. We were also able to help sponsor Ellen Guon at Westercon 46 in Seattle. Due to popular demand, Friends of Filk also owns two copiers - one attends Portland accur conventions and filk parties, and the other does the same in the Seattle area. We publish a small newsletter to let people know where to find filk events and other items of interest in the Pacific Northwest and Friends of Filk also works with the local library associations to provide music for special science fiction/fantasy events. In August, Larry Warner will be our Special Guest at CascadeCon and we expect the filker to nonfilker ratio to be high enough that we'll have all the fun of a small filk convention with none of the headaches! And that's what Friends of Filk is all about.



PLANETAR IUM

OLD RIP

words by Don Cochran

to Old Blue (Joan Baez version)

(based on *The Hunt* from the third season of *The Twilight Zone*)

C

Had a dog and his name was Rip;

G

C

Followed a 'coon in for a dip.

Jumped in after to save my hound;

G

С

Woke up lyin' on the creek-side ground.

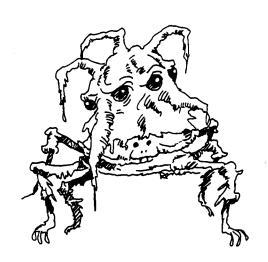
G

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Here, Rip, we're on our final trip.

We tramp back to the old homestead; Arrive to find that we were dead. Follow the coffin there with its load; Follow a fence along a road. Here, Rip, we're on our final trip.

The fence leads to a wooden gate;
The keeper says that Heaven waits.
Leave old Rip to stay behind;
He'd have to go to his own kind.
Here, Rip, we're on our final trip.



No dogs allowed in Heaven yon?

Me and Rip will mosey on.

We wander on past fields and trees,

Meet an angel in dungarees.

Here, Rip, we're on our final trip.

Said Rip would catch that brimstone smell And wouldn't go, but into Hell With eyes wide open a man will slog, "But even the Devil can't fool a dog!" Here, Rip, we're on our final trip. Here, Rip, we're on our final trip.

ConAdian Trip Report

by Chuck White

Well ... if you missed the chance to enjoy the vast open spaces of our neighbor to the north Winnipeg Canada, I should tell you a few things:

1. The vast open spaces of the central prairies of Canada are VERY vast ... plan on about a day of riding uncomfortable airplace seats to get there. 2. Your money is worth about 75% of what you thought it should be ... but you never were very good at math, were you?

Anyway, after about a day of enjoying the attentions of various airlines and border guards, I finally made my way to the vaunted portals of ConAdian.

The convention seemed to underestimate itself a bit. At least, every function we tried to attend had too many people and too little space. Even the filks ... LATE at night ... were a bit cramped. In all honesty, this reporter ducked out and did not even try the HUGO award ceremonies.

The weather, on the other hand, was marvelous (at least to fen from Florida). With the highs in 50's to 60's, I was at last comfortable in the sweater Mom bought me. Well, I would have been comfortable in the sweater if Jenn had not appropriated it.

One of the highlites of the trip was a chance to take an afternoon trip on an authentic 4-4-0 steam locomotive called the Prairie Dog Central. After about an hour of butt jarring track, we found that the local church bake sale was ready to way lay us at the crossing. The pumpkin pie with fresh cream was great! Although I saw foxes and red tailed hawks, I had to go to the zoo to see a prairie dog.

Jenn reports that the art show at Con-Adian was a bit disappointing for a WorldCon and that art track programming was virtually nonexistant. The dealer's room was a bit sparse but there were treasures to be found (Jenn reports as she mournfully counts the dollars left in her trade wallet). Your roving reporter also found a couple of prints to his taste. The readers are left to speculate.

This concludes the trip report. Keep in mind that this report is made mostly to rub in the fact that all of you had to stay home while we had fun up north.

Until next time

Chuck
(This trip report made possible by bird sitter Fran!)



Noteworthy

Friends of Filk

Larry Warner will be Special Filk Guest at CASCADECON (Aug. 26-28 in Portland, OR), accompanied by fiancee Theresa Armandarez.

Michael Longcor will be Special Filk Guest at ORYCON 16 (Nov. 11-13 in Portland, OR) with wife Lea.

TEMPEST will be Special Filk Guests at WESTERCON 48 (June 30-July 3, 1995 in Portland, OR).

Firebird

Availiable on CD & cassette: Surfing to Meccea - Tempest, Drunken Angel - Michael Longcor, Shadow Stalker Songs of Vanyel's Time, Sungamin - Heather Alexander, By the Sword - Meg Davis, Wanderlust - Heather Alexander.

TOP TEN USES FOR A USED KAZOO

- 10 sheet music weight
- 9 chocolate chip cutter
- 8 art show mobile dangle
- 7 fanish door knob
- 6 blues guitar bar
- 5 fan grave marker
- 4 pwop fow a small wabbit twap
- 3 Dead Last But Fanish prize
- 2 goodminton shuttlecock
- 1 lime jello mold for Harlan

Crossing the Florida Peninsula with Fun and Camera

by Don Cochran

Melanie Herz and I left Palm Bay in mid-afternoon and arrived at the Airport Holiday Inn in Tampa about 5:30. After registering at Necro, I blitzed the con-suite snacks and wandered around. Most cons have a Meet the Pros party; Necro has a Meet the Fans get-together. The name of one of the early registrants is drawn and the lucky one becomes Fan Guest of Honor, garnering a tee-shirt, a free membership, and two nights at the hotel. The other features included introduction of the fans by a pro as they came in, big band music, and a host of devilishly deadly deserts. I had a piece of apple pie and two reasonably large chocolate chip cookies. The Fan Cabaret highlights Friday evening, with bad jokes vying with songs. This year the jokes were too inane to repeat. A short opera selection and a fanne signing to a tape were very well done. As usual a skit ended the show. The Cabaret was followed by The Mighty Rassilon Art Players at Necronomicon (an evening of audio comedy and horror?). Filking started at Midnight, or as soon thereafter as we could chase the Japanimation people out of our room. My guitar was the only instrument, so if I didn't have the music, the other filkers were on their own. So a capella was the demi-order of the night. I managed to make it to the room I was staying in a bit after three. Some of the other crashees were still up and watching TV. After trying a corner of the room for a while, I switched to a folding bed when two were brought in and finally got to sleep.



Saturday was mostly quiet. Various noises woke me about eight. Why any of the noises were up is more than I can see. Sat out by the pool and ate and wandered through the art show and visited and strolled around the huckster room and nibbled in the con suite. There was a filk workshop late in the afternoon. An attempt was made to explain filking to neos, followed by twenty minutes of writing a filk on filking to the tune of "Greensleeves." The group actually came up with a chorus and three acceptable verses, not bad for the short time left. I went to Morrison's for supper. Their meal plan included an entree (I had shrimp), salad, two vegtables, bread, and desert. The cost including drink was only six bucks, not bad at all. The masquerade was fairly good, five or six kid entries and about a dozen adults. Two of the first prize winners must have gotten together beforehand: one came as Cardinal Richelieu and another as Count de Rochefort. The filk was somewhat better attended and the

four or five of us left broke up about four. After stowing my guitar and music in my car, I sneaked into the room and bedded down on a blanket. I must have tossed and turned all of fifteen seconds before dropping off.

Fortunately I woke in time to go to Joe Green's Hubble Telescope Slide Show. He always presents an interesting talk. This one included some of the best shots of galaxies showing the differences between those from the ground, before Hubble got its glasses and afterwards - and Jupiter after it was socked by Shoemaker-Levy. He says he's planning to show it again at Tropicon. I ate and walked and talked around, but neither Melanie or I saw anything scheduled for the Sunday afternoon worth waiting around for, so we left about one thirty.

Saturday night they announced that attendance had set a new record. Necro always seems to pull in a lot of local people who aren't really involved in fandom - their rep as a fun con, I suppose. Here are the titles of most of the panels. I'll let you guess at what they might be about. Heh, heh.

"Look Up in the Sky", "Play Dress-up", "What Makes a Hero a Legend?", "Frankenstein is Alive and Well", "One More Book", "From Victims to Heroines", "Moonlanding and It's Effect", "How Much Science Can We Afford?", "We Don't Need No Stinking AEsir", "From Script to Screen", "Working in the Company Store", "Cutting Edge Technology", "Shades of Gray", "Villians", "Days & Nights in Hollywood", "I Wanna Be Like Spock", "Looking for a Hero", "Memories of Childhood", "Till the Fat Martian Sings", "Real Science", "Why Do People Like to Be Scared?", "Still Boldly Going", and "Extraterrestrial Deleted".

The pictures on the next page are of the Niagara Falls and Atlanta worldcon tables, the filk workshop, Joe Green telling a story at the Fan Cabaret, and three shots of the masquerade.



Nostradamus, Move Over

by Donald E. Cochran

In Last Day in Limbo, a Modesty Blaise book by Peter O'Donald, Willie Garvin and Maude Tiller are trekking through the Guatemalan jungle. One night he asks her to decide whether she would rather travel 500 years into the past or into the future - and to give reasons. This set me speculating on what life would be like half a millennium hence.

The great majority of people alive at the time of Columbus' voyages would not have been overwhelmed had they been transported to the United States of a hundred years ago; the automobile, the telephone, the computer, and the consumer manufacturing revolution had not yet radically altered everyday life. Today, the story would be different. The ever-increasing rate of change makes any attempt at predicting the future no more than a SWAG. But I'll take a swing at it.

I won't try to predict what the social structure will be. Two hundred years ago, no one would have anticipated Communism. At the end of World War Two, not even Churchill would have predicted the breakup and collapse of that seeming monolith. Five centuries past, the idea of democratic republics would have been dismissed as madeap fantasies. Five centuries hence, the world could be a global beehive directed by computers or a bio-engineered version of the South Sea islands; but more likely it will evolve into something we haven't thought of yet.

I will make three assumptions. First, no catastrophe intervenes, such as a major asteroid strike on the Earth. Second, current scientific theories remain essentially valid - no FTL drive,

anti-gravity, matter duplication, or such like. Third, basic motivations and needs don't change appreciably.

Technology is the driver. The major science fields of today will be moribund; the laws of physics, chemistry, astronomy, biology, physiology, geology, and genetics will have been discovered, though there may be a few esoteric chemical or biological reactions being looked into. Research will be concentrated in psychology and sociology and a few other fields with similar complexities. Most technology will be computer expert systems applying known laws and algorithms to achieve any set requirements.

First let's take a look at the basics: energy, food, shelter, clothing and other material goods, and waste disposal. Energy will be essentially unlimited. The prime source on Earth will probably be solar for minor local uses and fusion for all else. Long-lasting accumulators with high power densities will provide energy for mobile and night uses. The three other possibilities for the prime energy sources are large solar collectors in space, matter-antimatter power plants, and black hole power plants. The first seems to present problems of complexity, efficiency, and distribution. The question with the other two is how to manufacture the anti-matter or black hole. Also, there are safety problems. Uncontained anti-matter would leave a crater with a size proportional to the mass and even the smallest stable black hole getting away would eventually consume the Earth.

Food will probably be produced on the spot. There are three alternatives. The first and least likely is totally artificial food, chemically synthesised in the home. Alternatively, microcultures would produce proteins, carbohydrates, vitamins, and so forth with any desired taste which would be given the desired texture, color, and form by the home food processor. Most likely, genetically engineered plants growing in the back yard or a home plant room would

provide gourmet meals meeting all nutritional needs free for the plucking and needing little more than heating or chilling. Whichever method catches on, agriculture will be no more and the entire food transportation and distribution network will be a obsolete memory. A major industry might be food fashion, creating new tastes as we now change clothing styles.

Most small items - clothing, shoes, everything from combs to kitchen knives - will also be made at home. There is a new process which allows computer-designed three-dimensional prototypes to be grown a layer at a time from plastic, directed by a laser beam. Currently it is expensive - though, after the initial investment, much faster and cheaper than machining or casting. Eventually similar techniques will be available to make almost any simple product. More complex gadgets would have to be manufactured in automatic factories, so a commerce system of some kind will still be necessary.

An analogous method might be used to build homes. A machine could form a house on the spot, complete with water and waste systems, power and information conduits, lighting panels, and climate control ducts. Another possibility is a living house, genetically designed and grown to order. A person might choose either type of home, according to his taste, though there probably will be traditionalists who will insist on houses built "from scratch" by robots or even by hand. The waste system of either type would be capable of handling any type of garbage, converting most things to air, water, or soil, and storing other material for reuse.

The population of the Earth will continue to boom for the next fifty years. However, as developing countries reach full industrialization, population growth will become linear rather than exponential. A plot of the population of the United States since the end of World War Two is a straight line (with small irregularities) of just over two million a year, even including immig-

ration. Applying the same ratio to all of humanity for 500 years leads one to expect the population of the solar system will be thirty to forty billion.

A major portion of the human race will live off Earth. I would expect the first self-sufficient space colony, almost certainly on the moon, to be established on the close order of forty years from now. Once the industrial base in space is set up, growth will be explosive. The limit to population growth off Earth will be the rate at which new habitats can be built.

The perfection of a continuous acceleration space ship will do for space travel what the steam ship did on Earth: even a 0.01 g ship could reach any part of the solar system in months. A 1 g ship, taking a tenth of the time, will most likely be developed within a century. Construction of the first interstellor colony vessal, carrying several tens of thousands of people will begin almost immediately thereafter. In 500 years, scores - perhaps hundreds - of colonies will have reached the nearer stars or be in route. Any star system having planets or asteroids for building material and hydrogen for fuel will be sites for settlements on planets or in space or for refueling and repair waystations. Millions of people will live outside the solar system. Some ships may never stop but perpetually travel from one star to the next, visiting both new systems and old.

There are three other questions I want to ask. How will we use genetics on ourselves? How far will computers advance, either as stand-alone systems or as adjuncts to our own intelligence? What effect will medical advances have on human life?

Certainly all genetic diseases will have been eliminated and selection for favorable traits will be normal. The basic human form and functions should not change; it is very flexible and adaptable and suited for survival in most environments. However, there are many internal

weaknesses for which a better design might be tried. The bones and muscles of the legs and feet could be better adapted for upright posture. The spine could be modified to eliminate slipped discs and similar problems. The digestive system could be changed to get rid of the appendix, ulcers and indigestion. The blood vessals could be modified to prevent blockages, weak walls, and poor circulation. The immune system could be improved to combat almost all diseases. The biggest argument will be over whether the human form should be adapted for space, such as substituting arms and hands for the legs and feet (see Bujold's Falling Free). There will almost certainly be those who argue that, instead of building rotating structures to produce an Earthnormal habitat, that the human body should be adapted to fit its new weightless environment. Some of the more extreme proponents will go ahead and do it. This divergence will be the most hotly-argued social issue 500 years from now.

The ultimate factors which limit computer speed are switching time and propagation time between switches. Currently the fastest switch operates in about a tenth of a nanosecond and the most advanced semi-conductors employ one-tenth micron technology. Barring some totally revolutionary discovery, both can be improved between two and three orders of magnitude. Given the current rate of progress, we should be bumping into the limits in thirty to forty years. Thereafter, developments will have to be made in software, interfacing, and parallel processing. But sometime between 50 and 100 years hence, a fully functional artificial intelligence will be up and running which will generate fundamental but unresolvable questions such as whether the program is self-aware or alive or deserving of civil rights. I doubt - humans being what they are - that any program will be allowed out from under our thumb. Whatever the outcome of the the debate, the furor will be over by 2500 A.D. On the other hand, the techniques for direct

interfacing between the human brain and computers will take longer, but will have the most profound effect of any invention in history, including the discoveries of fire, agriculture, writing, and printing. The effective increase in intelligence and access to data will produce answers to some of the fundamental questions of philosophy and will probably be regarded as the beginning of human maturity.

Medical advances will lead to a vastly increased life span which will change society almost as much as the computer developments mentioned above. Disease will be gone and remembered only as an appendage of a semiadvanced society. Missing limbs or damaged organs will be regenerated or replaced. Indeed, It will be possible to transplant the brain into an artificial body. Brain deterioration will be the only limit to immortality. This has advantages and disadvantages for society. People will have time to explore and develop inventions or books or art, but having the same individuals working on the same ideas could lead to stagnation. Leaders will only be replaced when they die from accident, decay into senescence, or change Of course, there could be a rule for automatic rotation at intervals.

Even if the basic human urges remain, civilization 500 years from now will be even stranger to us than we would be to a visitor from 500 years ago. If genetics lead to sensory and form changes or cybernetic advances result in human intellects residing more in cyberspace than the material world, civilization may become incomprehensible to our present understanding.

What do you call ten thousand kazoos dumped in the middle of the Pacific?

A good start.

Tropicon 13

Jan. 6 - 8, 1995

Palm Beach Airport Hilton

West Palm Beach, FL

(407) 684-9400

(please mention South Florida Science Fiction Society)

Guests of Honor

Kristine Kathryn Rusch

Jael

Toastmaster

Ben Bova

To register, or for more information, write:

Tropicon 13, c/o SFSFS

P. O. Box 70143

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Membership: \$24

Please make checks payable to: South Florida Science Fiction Society

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