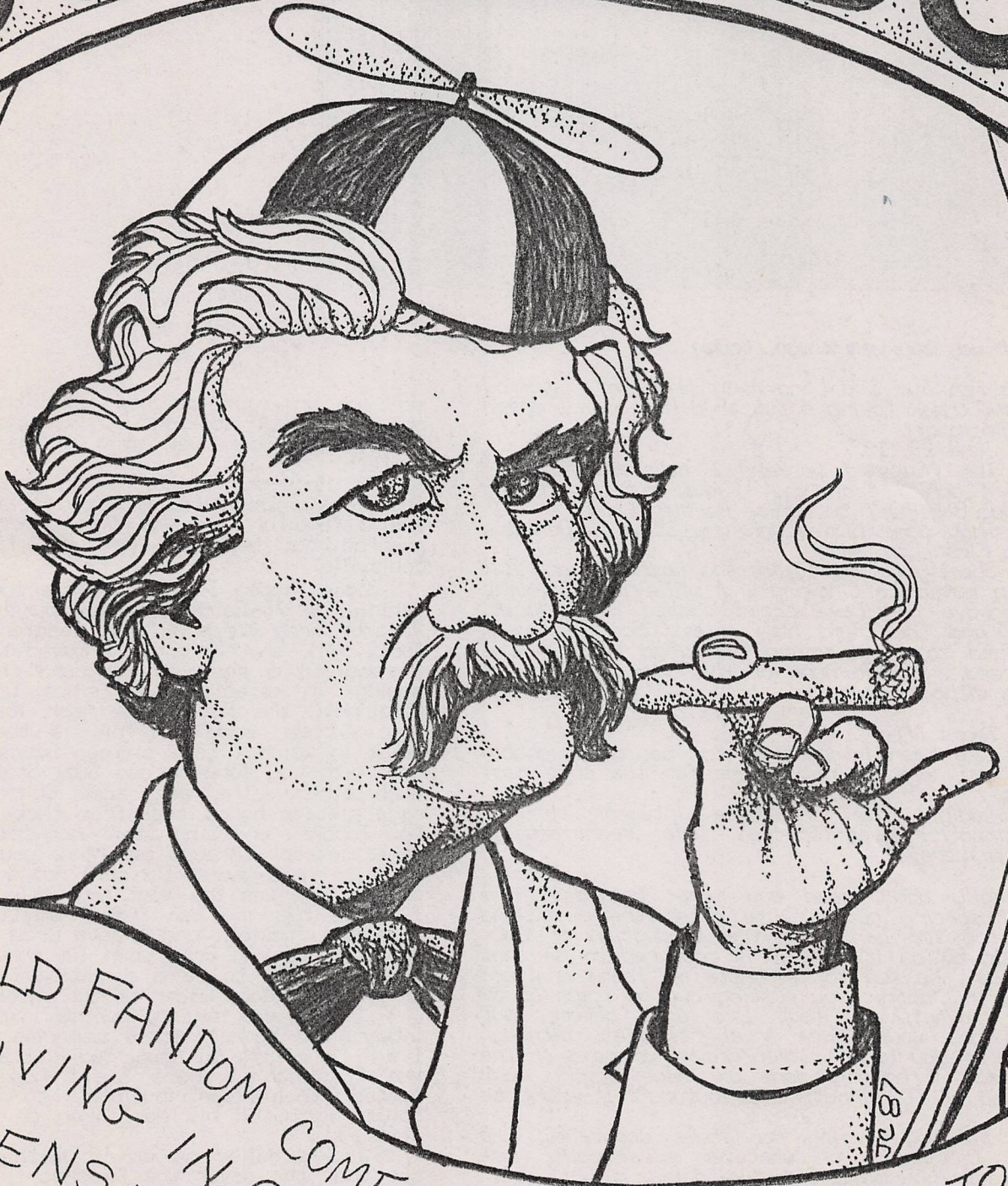


OUTWORLDS



SHOULD FANDOM COME TO AN END, I HOPE TO
BE LIVING IN CINCINNATI — EVERYTHING
HAPPENS THERE TEN YEARS LATER ...

WITH APOLOGIES
TO MARK TWAIN,
CHARLES SANTORE,
& THE RUNNING PRESS.



Patty Peters,
Bill Bowers
[...early 1977]

"...it was ten years ago, today..."

In a Far Ago & a Long Away Time...in a stuffed U-Haul truck towing a battered Mustang...I moved to Cincinnati.

June 20, 1977.

The following weekend I attended MidWestCon; I don't recall what I did, but my cat introduced herself to Denise Parsley Leigh.

That same MidWestCon was Steve & Denise's Very First Convention.

Shortly before I did, the Resnick's and Bill Cavin moved to Cincinnati. A while later, Jackie Causgrove and Dave Locke posted a Cincinnati CoA; and the third time around Sandra Jordan decided to stay...having recruited Greg in the process... [...but none of this was my fault; it goes without saying.]

Ten Years After...

It's been interesting: for me, and probably for you, even if not always for the same reasons.

Sadly, some of those integral to the Cincinnati-I-Moved-To---Lou, Dale, Bea---are no longer here.

I really don't need any more "Projects" (I'm still sorting out my life after the move...and I'm too far behind in the production of *Out-worlds 50* as it is) but it occurred to me that it might be fun to Celebrate my Tenth Anniversary in CinSanity by putting out an issue of *OW* for MidWestCon... That I've done before, but this one would have a slight twist: although most of you have written/drawn for me over the years..., I haven't done an issue totally comprised of "Cincinnati Contributors". It might be fun.

I'm not angling for items about me, the CFG, Cincinnati, or whatever specifically...just whatever you might feel like doing.

That is excerpted from a letter I sent out a month ago. Today is June 14, 1987. A week from yesterday is the Parsleigh's CFG meeting... and my actual anniversary; and two weeks from two days ago is MidWestCon 38... *OW50: The Audio* has yet to be started; *OW50: The Transcript* is still In Progress. However, *OW50: The Video [Special Colorized Edition]* is finished: Larry

sent me an 'approval' copy...and though even I grew tired of looking at/listening to Me...it turned out rather well...and will be Out at MidWestCon.

In Hand for this: Frank gave me a disc with his contribution at the last CFG meeting. Joel's fanciful tale was also generated on his Amstrad...but he sent hard-copy from Far Off Louisville.

Later today I will take the current Bowers Vehicle...a '78 Buick that was purchased by Lou Tabakow from Marge Schlott [esoteric reference for... Well, shortly after I moved to Cincinnati, I received a scrawled postcard from Kentucky saying, in effect: "Ever since you moved to Cincinnati...the Reds have been losing. I hate you. s/Love, andy"]. This is the very same Buick in which I rode sixteen hours to a Lunacon, with Lou Tabakow and Suzi Stefl talking to each other. ..the very same Buick in which I rode sixteen hours back from that Lunacon with Lou Tabakow and Suzi Stefl not talking to each other, except through me. (And, you know, after eight or nine years, I'm still not sure which leg of the trip was the most enjoyable...) However, I didn't buy the car from Lou, but from Dave and Jackie... and I have Orders to pass it on to Sandy and Greg when I'm thru with it: by then it ought to be a condition to match some of their previous modes of transportation!

...as I was saying, before I was so rudely interrupted by time-lapse memories, later today I will be making my Appointed Rounds. First, to the Parsleigh's, where Steve has kindly out-purtted their contributions, to the proper column-width, on his Mac. Then on to Dave and Jackie's...

Jackie called me at 12:30 this morning to say that the cover was finished. I asked about the status of Dave's wordifying of Al's cartoons. "It's on paper," she said. I must say that Mr. Dave, the very same Dave Locke who wrote the article in *OW49*, seems singularly reluctant to enter the electronic age of fanac. But Jackie "volunteered" to transfer Dave's typescript to disc...so I'll take this disc along, and we'll zap Mr. Dave into the twentieth century anyway...!

And, sometime in the next day or two, I'll go over to the Jordan's... and transfer their contributions, from their Amstrad.

Welcome to desktop publishing, Cincinnati-style. Ten months (electronically) behind the rest of fandom, but...

...as soon as we convince Mr. Cavin that the CFG's 'priorities' should be changed from picnics and Worldcon party suites...toward such necessities as modems, laser-printers, and fax-machines...

It's all Walt Willis' fault.

OUTWORLDS 51

Edited & Published by

Bill Bowers

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Cover by **Jackie Causgrove**

...strangely enough, the first contributor is the one who does not have a Cincinnati return address. But that's okay: it's relevant...and besides, anyone who's a Conflu Guest of Honor can lead off my fanzine anytime... (...anytime my Tenth Anniversary in Cincinnati rolls around again, that is...!)

"all the way from
Kentucky..."

JOEL ZAKEM

I do not remember when I first met Bill Bowers. He says it was June of 1977, one week before MidwestCon, and I have no reason to doubt that. I do remember how it happened, although some of the details are a little fuzzy.

It started out with a phone call from Bill Cavin, at that time the CFG's apprentice dictator. Cavin said that Bowers was moving from northern Ohio to Cincinnati, and he asked me if I wanted to help unload the truck. At that time I was living in Newport, Kentucky. (For those who have not had the pleasure, Newport is located on the Ohio River, directly across from Cincinnati. In my younger days, I regularly walked from Newport to Downtown Cinti.) After checking my busy social calendar, I said "Sure".

Although I did not know him personally, I knew who Bill Bowers was. I subscribed to *OUTWORLDS*, even if some of its then current controversy was beyond me. I may have even spoken to Bowers at a MidwestCon or somewhere else, but he was basically a stranger to me.

But with nothing better to do the night of the move, I drove to Cavin's apartment (it took about 15 minutes). Cavin and Mike Lalor were already there. There might have been another person--perhaps Dale Tarr--but no one remembers. We sat around, talked, and waited for Bowers to call and tell us he was in town.

If I remember, it was almost 10 p.m. when

the call came. Bowers had pulled the rented truck into a Kroger's lot across Harrison Avenue from his new abode. The three (or four) of us piled into cars and travelled the mile up the road to meet Bill.

When we reached the parking lot, we discovered a problem. The good folks at U-Haul had given Bowers a truck equipped with a dry battery. It would not start, and we were unable to jump it. By this time it was approaching midnight, and Kroger had closed.

I don't remember who had the idea of trying to get the truck rolling and seeing if it could reach sufficient speed to start. It seemed like a good idea at the time. The only problem was that it didn't work. The truck, still dead, and the four (or five) of us ended up behind Kroger, by the loading dock.

Someone apparently thought this looked suspicious. As we stood there, trying to come up with another great idea, three police cars, lights flashing, converged upon us from different directions.

At this point, I could embellish this by talking about drawn guns, brutal interrogations, and the like. The truth, however, is that the police were very understanding. They listened to our explanation and seemed to believe us, especially after looking in the truck and seeing for themselves that we couldn't fit anything else inside, had we even considered breaking into the store.

We never got the truck unloaded that night. I think Bill finally got the stuff into his apartment the next afternoon. I wasn't there for that, but I suppose it went smooth. I don't remember hearing about any arrests.

One thing does stand out in my mind. At MidwestCon, and the next few times I saw Bowers, he made a special point of thanking me for coming "all the way from Kentucky" to help him move. Not wanting to disillusion him, I kept quiet. Unfortunately, some time later, someone must have showed him a map.

Since that time, Bowers and I have become friends. We sometimes drove to conventions together...at least until I moved down to Louisville. Bowers recently moved from 2468 Harrison. The strange thing is, that for this move, Bowers did not ask me to come "all the way from Louisville" to help. Who knows, I might have done it. It has been some time since I was nearly arrested helping someone move in.

---Joel Zakem

...for some reason, I've always remembered June 20th as The Day I Moved To Cincinnati. Whether that was the Friday night Joel describes, or the next day is a question that only a 1977 calendar would solve...

Joel forgot to mention just how close the truck [containing all my possessions; and still towing my--then undented--'76 green Mustang] came to a rather sharp dropoff before we managed to get it stopped. All in all, it capped one of (the many) Longest Days in my life...and I spent my first night as a Cincinnati resident on Bill Cavin's couch.

There have been a few stutter-steps, but the average curve of my Cincinnati tenure has been UP since that auspicious start...

The following weekend I went to MidwestCon. What I primarily recall from that particular one is that it took me longer to get from the lobby to my room in the hotel...than it would have taken me to drive to my apartment...

But my cat may have different memories...

REMEMBRANCE OF THINGS PAST

Denise Parsley Leigh

Fortunately the cat only got my scarf. I can't really say the same for Bill... (obligatory ambiguous statement... ellipses optional.)

"The weekend after Midwestcon I ventured into Hap's Irish Pub to hear Al Curry perform his debachery. Upon meeting Ric Bergman, Bill Cavin, and this strange creature known as a Big Name Fan, Bill Bowers, I proceeded to get delightfully drunk and went out partying until 4:30 a.m. at Bergman's place, neglecting to tell Steve where I was going. Fortunately I had the presence of mind to call home at that time and inform Steve of my whereabouts. Unfortunately, finding out that I was at a stranger's apartment with three guys and only one other girl (Al's wife, Tanya) didn't make him feel any better--he'd already headed out to Hap's, only to find out that it closed at 1:00 and was about to call the cops.

"The next evening Bowers had a Fourth of July party and I finally convinced Steve that he should get to know these strange people called CFGers and find out how potentially harmless they really were. By dawn the next morning the damage was done and our social life hasn't been the same since."

-Graymalkin 1, 1978

There was a kind of magic about the CFG that summer. Steve and I started going to parties every weekend, coming in with the dawn and generally having a good time. Bill impressed us with his fanzines (what did we know) and generally taught us about the fannish world as he knew it...I guess he was kind of our guru. We could have done worse.

But not much.

The rest is pretty much history.

So now we come to the present. With all its idiosyncrasies, fandom is still a pretty good family to me, though definitely not the way of life I once thought it was...fandom changes, people change, I've changed. For better or worse, but greatly affected by the people around me. A joke between Al Curry and myself has often been that we live in

Midwestcon will mark our 10th anniversary in Fandom. A lot has happened since then, both to us and to Cincinnati fandom as a whole. We've lost three familiar faces...Lou Tabakow, Dale Tarr, and now Bea Mahaffey; each of them was instrumental in finding and keeping our fannish "family" and we can't help but find the group lacking without them.

In GRAYMALKIN Steve and I recounted our experiences at our first Midwestcon. Dale Tarr called Steve and invited him to the con, after seeing his story in IASFM. We thought the convention was something for SF writers only, so Steve went on Friday afternoon by himself. Being the awkward, social dolt that he sometimes is (especially back then... really, he *has* gotten better), he spent the afternoon being a wallflower and finally came home, telling me what a miserable time he'd had.

In retrospect, not much ever happens on Friday afternoon at *any* con, let alone a Midwestcon. I talked him into going back that evening and taking me with him this time. We had a wonderful time, met lots of interesting people -- Steve swears it's because I was an attractive female. We decided to make a weekend of it.

I remember spending much of the con listening to Dale Tarr tell stories about First Fandom and Big Name Authors and Fans and feeling amazed that I was in the hub of so much greatness. That's what Cincinnati fandom was at that time, and it still is, to a large extent. It's just that the players have changed.

I also remember listening to Al Curry tell stories of a different kind...and being intrigued by a short, hairy Englishman who always seemed to be surrounded by adoring fans, usually female. I was too shy to do more than admire from a distance. I guess things haven't changed *that* much.

I remember sitting in the grass by the pool talking to Al, Ric Bergman, Sally Sellers and other local fen and suddenly being attacked by a black cat. I later found out she was Bill Bowers' *Responsibility*.

Denise
Parsley
Leigh
[1979]



the same town but have to go to conventions to see each other. Sad, but oddly true...our social life in Cincinnati has slowed down a great deal, partly due to Megen and partly due to involvement with other groups, but it seems like whenever I need to slip into something loose, or more comfortable, I always come back to fandom. Ask Bill...he says I only call him when I want something. (Of course, phones work both ways.)

In rereading my editorial from *Graymalkin* 6, I notice it was dated December, 1981. I also notice that I stated I

would be trying to publish on a more regular basis. Well, here it is, June 1987 and I still haven't done a fanzine. This article was going to be an editorial for #7 but it didn't seem right to do something half-assed just to get it out for MidWestCon so Bill said why not give it to him? So, Bill, I hope you have no regrets...and I *will* publish again.

So, happy anniversary Steve, Frank, Joel and Bill (though your milestone is a bit different than ours). And thank you all for making these ten years in fandom some of the best.

---Denise Parsley Leigh

...the "But not much..." was Steve's commentary. I am told. Figures!

No, Denise; no regrets...and I'm waiting.

Now every fangroup has its unsung heroes. And I figure anyone who can survive living 5+ years with Sandy...deserves our utmost admiration...

Hi Greg!

[Well, she said I couldn't add any snide comments to her article!]

RECIPES NOT INCLUDED

Greg Jordan

After a mere seventeen years, they're back. Everywhere you look. When I was a kid, we tormented them (or their parents) endlessly, finding a whole new way to spend the early summer months. Some tried to hide, but there were always more victims. The sidewalks were full of easy prey. Some even rode buses. Others caused traffic accidents. They'd crash their mindless bodies into whatever happened to be between them and their sanctuary. I'd almost forgotten what they were like, but these noisy beings are back again, after seventeen years of being mostly harmless. Just who are these people anyway--and why are they so damned afraid of cicadas?

Maybe it was the story of the one who laid

eggs... Or the one about the biker who was buried in his "Helmet Laws Suck" tee shirt. Did they ever find that baby that was carried off in the direction of Cleveland? How does it all relate to this area's very reasonably priced Big Mac?

I heard a comment on a city bus recently, likening the whole scene to a more pessimistic segment of the New Testament. That's some really pessimistic stuff, though I'm sure that Jerry Falwell would disagree (and you can take that from the guy who says that the half empty glass of an experimental new purple dye will probably, due to these ever so frequent tremors, get broken onto the floor). To avoid overhearing this person's explanation of the bibli-cool significance, my eyes drifted sideways to the reading material in another passenger's hands. Chapter Five of her book began with "Not all things done with good intentions are necessarily bad, however." I longed for a very angry cicada.

As city council deliberates on a declaration of a "Relish Watching Locust Bodies Rot Week," the panic is nearly over. I can hardly hear the noisy beings, nor anything else now, thanks to a DRI concert, where I could at least be bumped into by people for better reasons than escaping the wrath of an insect that even inspired ME into *Outworlds*.

---Greg Jordan

THE SOUND OF A GRINDING AXE

Stephen Leigh

If there was a joke involved, it was on me.

"Mr. Leigh, would you be interested in being one of our instructors? A lot of our fiction students are interested in science fiction...."

Yeah, I went into this thinking that it'd be nice to make a little extra money. Sure, it was a correspondence school and I'd heard various and sundry Bad Things about schools like it, but this one had a reputable name, and I enjoyed teaching on a one-to-one basis, and it was at least connected to my primary field of interest.

Those were all the rationales. We could use the extra money; that was the clincher. So I said yes.

Inside, I laid down rules for myself: I wouldn't tell someone that they were good when they weren't. I asked the school to send me a course outline before I committed to them -- it seemed reasonable enough, and rule number two was that I'd allow *my* students to depart from the text if they needed to do so. I'd try to keep my people from making some of the mistakes I made -- if someone insisted on following that path, I wouldn't stop them (I learn best by falling down. Lots. Bruises make the best teachers) but I'd at least point out the edges of the pits. I would try to do more than the minimum.

Yet I couldn't avoid feeling that I'd somehow coated myself with mental slime. Green stuff, gellid and rancid. *The best way to learn how to write is to write*, said the whispering demon that sits in my head and shakes its head at everything. *The best thing you can tell them to do is take a piece of paper and stuff it in the typewriter and start banging away.*

That works for me, I answered. Maybe they need the extra push. Maybe shelling out the bucks will *make* them sit down. The pressure of the dollar. Don't *you* often write harder when the checkbook sits there howling plaintively?



Marla Gold, Steve Leigh, Lynn Parks
[New Year's; 1978]

I gave in. 'Spineless jellyfish,' commented the demon. 'Self-righteous prude,' I told it.

.....

"I have developed a special vision which only I can understand."

-from a student's intro

"Sorry to hear that."

-a comment thought but never voiced

.....

Teaching doesn't pay well. I heard that even back in college. I'd always wondered at the priorities of a country which pays those who educate their children far less than those who can hit a ball with a stick of wood. *Humph*

Teaching people to write doesn't pay well unless you can write fast yourself. Very fast. The students hand in three or four lessons at a time 10 - 12 pages, usually; the teacher is expected to respond with two to five single-spaced pages of commentary. I suppose that's not unreasonable, though two pages is very little feedback to give someone who's desperate for response. For this the teacher gets a standard fee: anywhere from \$5.50 to 7.70, depending on the lessons. At the beginning, I'd thought that I'd be able to do one an hour or so, making the pay rate not anywhere near fantastic, but okay for part-time extra bucks.

The demon giggled.

Instead, I found that to read 10 or so pages critically, mark various comments in the margins, and type up expanded comments took somewhat longer -- more along the lines of two hours. Yeah, figure that out. I'm not the world's fastest typist, admittedly, but 60 wpm is tolerable, so it wasn't simply slowness at the keys. I scratched my head, wondering how in the hell other writers managed to do this and make it worth their time.

It didn't help that I couldn't seem to write less than two-and-a-half pages per assignment. If I tried doing less, the demon would waggle fingers at my nose and pretend to wipe clinging goo from my forehead. "Just like all the rest, eh?" he'd say. "Giving the poor suckers garbage while you line your own pockets."

"You can't line pockets with goddam pennies," I told him. "They weigh too much and wear the bottoms out."

He just sneered. Unfortunately, mind-demons always know what you know, and I'd done some research -- for the course, the students paid almost \$200.00, receiving from

that the textbook, various and sundry other geegaws, and the teacher's criticisms on the six assignments, to be completed over a two-year span. "Yeah," he scoffed. "To you, it's only \$5.50 an assignment; to them it's closer to \$30.00."

"I'm not responsible for that."

"You know that, and I know that, but do you think *they* give a good goddam?"

"Probably not," I admitted.

"You'd better believe it," he nodded.

.....

"Let me explain Steve's Rule #1: THERE HAS TO BE A REASON. By this I mean that everything in your stories should flow in an understandable way from one scene to the next; there has to be an inner consistency to the tale. Every move your protagonist makes should have a logic behind it..."

-from a criticism

.....

Just before I became totally disgusted, I acquired a word processor. Now I'll be able to do it, I thought. Now I'll be able to make this work -- at least I wouldn't have to proof my own stuff quite so much.

Uh-huh. And you can learn to be a writer by taking a correspondence course, too. It *did* help, but not a great deal. I still had to read the stories, still had to make the marginal notes, still had to compose my own thoughts. Don't misunderstand -- I *love* the computer; it's speeded up the process and has taken away half the drudgery. But the sucker doesn't have a "MIRACLE" program. "How do they do it?" I muttered to Denise, frustrated. "I don't understand."

I already knew; I just didn't want to admit it. I didn't want to put myself in the company of the green slimies.

Then I started getting the transfers.

When a teacher found that he or she had too heavy a workload or simply quit, the school would transfer the students to another instructor, giving that new instructor copies of all the criticisms the former teacher had given the student. Most of my transfers were from one particular instructor.

I knew the name. That made it worse. I noticed his technique immediately on reading the second transfer -- the others confirmed it: you make the course pay off by giving everybody basically identical criticisms. Verbatim, quite often. He also had a word processor to help: just pull this paragraph from here, that one from over there... Individual comments? Hah! Minimal, at best; he'd start off by talking

about himself and the latest projects he'd been doing, then layer in some standardized commentary, add in a standard half-page anecdote from someone else, then close -- two pages, of which little had anything directly to do with what the student had handed in.

A decision crystallized.

"Told you so, asshole," the demon hollered.

.....

"At this point I don't wish to be given any new students. I'll continue to finish the course for the ones I currently have... But please don't send me any more transfers or new students. I enjoy teaching, I enjoy sharing knowledge...but practicality enters in -- something that takes this much time and effort also needs to have some financial rewards as well.

"... I must say that if ***** is an example of your standard of instructor, you have a problem there... I know we all tend to use certain standard phrasing... but his are *identical*... He passes off stock meaningless comments and toots his own horn... Is this normal? If so, I can understand how your instructors manage to make the pay scale viable."

-from my resignation letter, two pages in entirety.

Dear Stephen:

Thanks for taking the trouble to spell out the reasons why you can't continue on as an instructor. I'm glad, however, that you're willing to continue on with the group you do have.

I appreciate the caliber of critiques you've been giving your students.

-the entire text of the reply to the above

.....

The student made a pact with the Demon of Words. "I want to master writing," he said.

"Nothing easier," the Demon answered. "Just sign here -- you realize that it requires selling your soul?"

"I thought that was a requirement no matter which way I went about becoming a writer," the student replied.

The demon grinned. "Exactly." He made an arcane gesture, spreading his fingers wide and raising his hand so that palm faced to his left, resting his thumbnail on his nostrils. He wagged his fingers.

"POOF"

They were in a cave set in a high, rocky mountainside. To the rear of the cave, the student could see a vague, shadowy figure. "The Master," the demon whispered at the student's side. "Listen to his words and you'll know everything you need to know."

The master stirred as if he'd noticed the two for the first time. He began to speak in a grating, halting voice. "To learn writing is simple," he said. "Heed my words..."

But the student had stopped listening, for as the Master spoke, his body began to fade, his feet shimmering and then dissolving from sight, the bizarre effect sliding rapidly upward. The student stared in dread fascination as the legs became translucent, then vanished entirely. He strained to hear the Master's words before it was too late, but the Master's voice became softer and softer as the apparition's body melted away. The last words were a husky rasp like a breath of wind. Only the mouth remained visible. Then that, like the rest, was also gone.

"You've cheated me," the student cried in dismay. "The Master went away without telling me anything."

"Quite the contrary," the demon insisted, unperturbed. "He told you everything."

"But as he spoke, he disappeared..."

"That because words were his substance." The demon shook his head. "I gave you exactly what you asked for. You fool, don't you realize that the concept of mastering writing is only a figure of speech?"

---Stephen Leigh

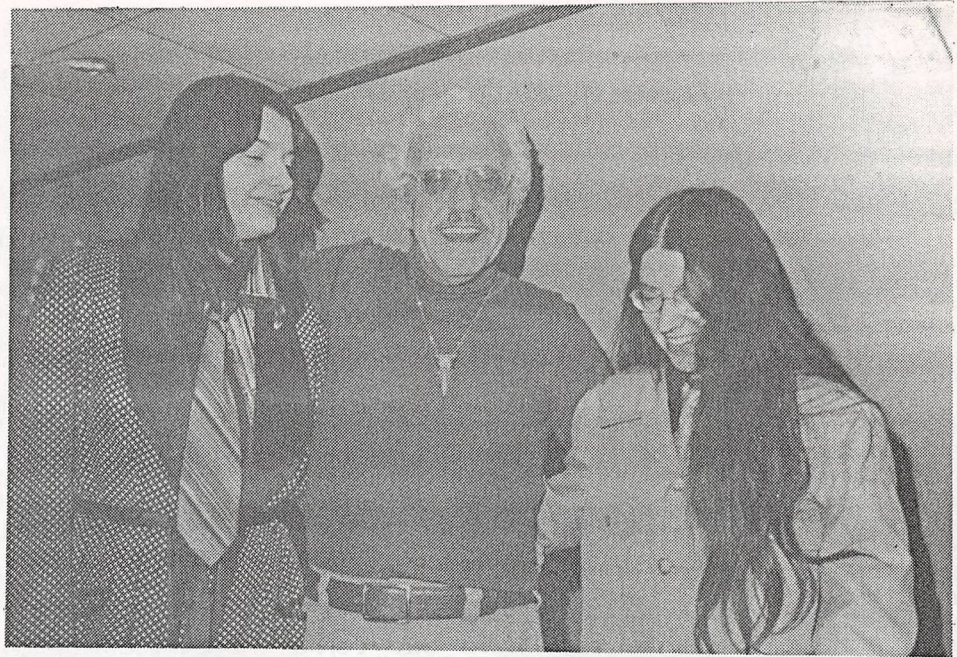
...Steve's article is the one he was going to 'do' for the live OW, before doing...something else. It's also been in my files for just a bit, and I want to thank Steve for his patience. But, as I pointed out, this way he didn't have to do something 'new' for this issue...

This will be MidwestCon #38...and will be my 19th, which means I've attended half of them. My first was in 1963, which means I've missed a few over the years. One of those I missed (I was off keeping the Phillipines safe for Tammy Bakker-sized closets) was the first for Frank Johnson and Joel Zakem. Gee, I wonder if they were as obnoxious as Bruce Coulson and Debbie Stapa were at the 60's Midwestcons...?

Frank "I can't possibly imagine owning more than five videotapes" Johnson is not responsible for...but knowing him has contributed to the mass of electronic gear and tapes surrounding me. You see, every time Frank makes noise about leaving town for another job...I borrow a ton of records. Frank hasn't left yet...but I have all these tapes, you see, and...

That's okay: I returned the favor. Frank had a CFG meeting a while back, you see. I went, and I took along the literature on the New Toy I had purchased that very afternoon...

Lynn Parks (Carter)
 Lou Tabakow
 Marla Gold
 [New Year's; 1978]



Speculations on the Mutability of Time and Cicadas FRANK JOHNSON

May was already turning out to be a crazy month. But I figured it was going to end up well because of a little vacation that would wind it up. I had been planning to spend a week or so in Toronto, Canada for the annual Mikecon bash. A week away from work and the same old Cincinnati sights. And a week of good people, very little sleep, card playing ("you must have a drink on the table" and only local currency allowed) and some very serious record and book shopping. Planning for the trip, making sure I have the time off from work, the proper insurance forms for driving out of the country, enough travellers checks...all of this made the last few days before leaving kinda frantic. Add this to the usual daily activities (work, looking for new and better work, and watching the Letterman show taped from the night before), and I had some pretty full days.

Then I get this note from Bill in the mail. It seems that this very issue of *OUTWORLDS* was to be full of Cincinnati people. Bill's tenth anniversary in the town made famous (and infamous) by Proctor & Gamble and Simon Leis. It has also been pointed by numerous souls that other anniversaries are about this summer. It was also ten years ago that good friends Steve Leigh and Denise Parsley Leigh entered fandom. Seventeen years ago, those damned pesky obscene cicadas emerged from the soil and flew around the city - just like this year. It was twenty years ago that the Beatles released the Sgt. Pepper album - and it's on CD this month. And then there's this ugly rumor going around that for Joel Zakem and I, the MidwestCon of

1987 will be ("get ready to cover me, Paul") the big number *TWENTY*. By the way, Joel's the one who's out there spreading these tales.

(And since this is a Bill Bowers fanzine, I'm allowed to make all kinds of obscure references that may mean something to only part of the readership, perhaps to only a single person or two. If Bill wants to explain [and, thus, break with tradition], that's up to him.)

I called up Bill to thank him for the invitation and to get some kind of deadline. This vacation, please understand, was already in the works when Bill's letter came in the mail. And knowing the work schedule (and the schedule for playing around with his toys and publishing) he keeps for himself, I was afraid I wouldn't have the time to work on something. Sure he wants to have this out by the end of June so I didn't expect there to be more than a week knowing how Bowers likes to do things. But because we both recently entered the computer world (along with a sizeable chunk of the CFG) with the same type of computer, all I have to do is type this straight onto a disc and drop it off at Bill's place. Ain't technology wonderful?

So the trip to Toronto was quite a good time with a lot of good people. A few didn't make it this time. Al and Lin were moving the next week so they couldn't make it (Phil and Nancy send their love. Phil's put on some weight and looks better than he has in a long while. And Nancy's just as gorgeous as ever). Lan and Maia stayed in Michigan because she broke her leg earlier in the week. And Drew and Karol, who were supposed to be there with the rest of us, got their weekends confused and were supposed to go to Toronto a week later. And that's my fault. Drew called me up a couple days before we left to get directions to Hania's. I asked how long they were planning on staying there and he says just the weekend because Karol has to go back to work on June 1st. I asked him about the week in between. OOPS! They got

confused and thought Memorial Day was a week later. In their defense, the actual Memorial Day really was a week later, on the 30th. However the official off-day was on the Monday before, not after.

(And just in case you're wondering, they didn't go even the following weekend. The latest threat is that they'll go up sometime after MidWestCon.)

After almost a week out of town, I had to catch up on things in Cincinnati and the rest of the country. It's not a case of withdrawal, but one gets used to hearing the local poop from Kathy McGonagle and reading the national sleaze in *USA Today* with numerous full color pictures and charts.

After an extended stay out of town, the things to do are 1) go to the post office to pick up the withheld mail and 2) to the grocery store to replace the stuff that went bad in the fridge because I forgot to eat it all before leaving. At both of these locations I overheard two main topics on conversation (Surprisingly, neither one was the Reds). On the national front it was Jim and Tammy Bakker's appearance on NIGHTLINE. Those two are quite the pair aren't they? And let's not leave out Jerry Falwell. He's just as bad and almost as funny.

Jerry says he's got proof of Jim's homosexual affair. What kind of proof? Sworn testimony? Not good enough for me. Pictures? That's a step in the right direction at least. 8X10's on the actual sex acts, complete with insertion shots. Now we're talking! Even though we'll never see them on TV, think of the millions the PTL could make by selling the photos to *Penthouse* for publication.

All of this juicy national sleaze has kept attention focused away from important things like the Iran-Contra affair and those bloody cicadas.

If this actually sees the light day at this year's MidWestCon, you, the reader, might already be aware of them. They're big, black, ugly red-eyed insects that fly around in swarms and make the loudest damn noise all day long. They're not locusts (Jack Hannah was wrong when he was on the Letterman show) and not harmful at all. And they don't last a long time, about six weeks is it. Then they all dead, leaving only the crunching of their dried shells under shoes and lifeless husks to be dragged away by ants.

(My dictionary says that only the male cicadas are making this obnoxious shrilling noise. Is there some correlation to be made that males are also responsible for heavy metal, another obnoxious shrilling noise?)

What I hate about them most is that they fly with the grace and skill of a small rock. And with just as much intelligence. No matter where you are, you hear a steady *thunk, thunk, thunk* on the windows of your home or car. These stupid bugs will fly into anything and with a good head of steam, too.

If Irwin Allen was still making those disaster movies, he'd have to come here. Imagine what could happen - here's a plotline being born - if the chemicals collected in the Mill Creek saturated and mutated the underground, slumbering buggies into giant buffalo-sized monsters. They still would be relatively harmless to humans, but think of the damage they could cause when flying straight into a car's windshield. And the noise would be unbearable.

Even more interesting that the story of "The Cicadas that Terrorized Cincinnati" (not to be a song on a Dr. Demento collection) is that of our fanzine host, Bill Bowers. None of us

really know the whole Bowers (and you only get glimpses in the fanzines), but that part of the man that we are allowed to examine is astounding.

We see his publishing efforts that seem to appear quite frequently. His home media obsessions include a pair of video stereo tape machines, CED video disc player, compact disc player, 8-track and cassette audio machines on the hardware side. The software includes hundreds of video and audio tapes, records and CD's and a couple of dozen CED discs. There's also the material broadcast over the air (Bill catches a lot of television and radio - remember the *Hill Street Blues*/St. Elsewhere style opening to one of his fanzines a couple of years back?). Then there's the magazine subscriptions and tons of fanzines that Bill must get. And books, too. Oh, did I mention that Mr. Bowers has a full time job with Kenner?

Take all that into the equation, add all the conventions and fan pubbing, then include the mundane things like eating, sleeping, doing laundry and you come up with one question: WHERE DOES HE FIND THE TIME FOR ALL THIS?

I think that with all of these anniversaries now would be the perfect time to perhaps reveal the secret of Bill Bowers. Over the years, he has shown off a few of the more complicated devices that he's designed for the Kenner company. His draftboard (ohoh - sixties flashback! Let me rephrase that) drafting table has sketches of the latest implements of (Star) War(s). But I think I know the truth.

Those aren't toys. They never were. Bill Bowers has invented, perfected and makes constant use of a Time Machine.

Now think about it for a moment. How else can you explain the massive amount of projects that Bill not only embarks upon, but also completes. Take this fanzine for instance. This is supposed to be out the same time as a video/audio production of Corflu, a get-together which he got together as well. There are also a number activities that I can't go into here for various reasons (and knowing Bill he'll explain a few anyway). Ordinarily, there isn't enough time in the day of all of these goings-on. Yet Bill does them all. The only explanation is a Time Machine, one that adds those hours to the day. Perhaps it's one of those models that slows down all time around him. Maybe it allows to him to relive days at a time and finish those numerous projects.

I believe he has a portable model that goes to conventions. Sometimes it's disguised as a video tape recorder. Or maybe a boom-box. It would explain the long periods that he couldn't be found at various Spacecons, a convention he put on for some many years. It's my guess that he was sleeping for the forthcoming month in a compressed amount of time.

So why then, Bill, do you keep this marvelous device to yourself? We all have books and fanzines to read, music to hear, movies to see and locs to write. But we don't have the time to do it all. Go public with your great invention. Think of all the good your Time Machine could do for mankind. You'd be a certain shoo for a Hugo. Or at least a Nobel prize.

This would be a good time to finish my few pages here and give Bill a fair chance to answer these speculations into what may be the biggest fannish secret of our time. Think of all of us, Bill, your friends and readers. I know you'll do the right thing.

---Frank Johnson

FANNISH BRAT

Sandra Jordan

Fandom is one of the many things I enjoy in my life. I often have trouble separating my family and Fannish life. They were parallel, but Fandom is probably where I achieved my open mind (no free dumping space here, however), especially when some people I meet have such closed ones. Back in Beecher, IL, the kids I knew didn't quite know what to make of me with all my talk of science fiction and conventions and why on earth travel to all those cities for them. I guess that is one reason why I never have quite fit in with the status quo and enjoy the world of Fandom.

I've been called several things in my life (editor, insert nothing here) and one of the few of them is "Fannish Brat". No, I wasn't born in to Fandom like some of my friends or their children, rather I was happily taken along to conventions by my mother (Jackie Causgrove) with the rest of my family. I loved going to all the different cities and meeting all sorts of people, some of whom I'm glad to say became my friends or "Fannish Family". Around 1974 or 1975, I started "collecting" what I lovingly call "Fannish Fathers" (the guys in my Fannish life who have given me advice and support). The list is somewhat long but none the less every one of them have been, and several still remain to be a significant influence on my life (Bill Bowers, Mike Glicksohn, Rusty Hevelin, Lynn Hickman, Dave Locke, Lou Tabakow, and Bob Tucker (also "Fannish Granddad"). I also have a "Fannish Mother" (Martha Beck) and a "Fannish Grandmom" (Nancy Tucker).

September 1980, I had just finished an unpleasant stay in the United States Army (a total of four weeks and four days). My superiors told me I could go back home or anywhere else. "Just go." It didn't take long for me to answer, for I had given this matter of my residence thought ever since I had moved from my father's house; and told them to send me to Cincinnati. There is just something about the people, hills and trees that had gotten into my blood. I know this also had a lot to do with coming to Cincinnati for MidwestCon ever since 1972. I have made quite a few friends here as a result, and fell in love with the area.

There was a brief period (1½ years) that my husband Greg and I left Cincinnati for Dallas, but we have learned our lesson and moved back to stay. I should mention that Greg's family, and Becky Cartwright and her family made the decision to move back here a difficult one. It is an added plus for me that I have family (Fannish and otherwise) living here in Cincinnati, and have CFG meetings and MidwestCons to attend.

As for "True Fannish Brats" we have our son Joshua, and as of May 30th we now have our new addition. Our daughter, Michelle Rene, arrived at 7:44 AM on May 30th, weighing in at 5 lbs 15 ozs, and 19 1/4 inches in length. Josh thinks Michelle is the best thing to come along since ice cream, and I of course am now the Grinch who stole Christmas. I feel like the odd one of the family now, since I am the only one who is not a Cincinnati "Native." Curiously enough, however, none of the four of us were conceived in Cincinnati! Our children will certainly find their own way, certainly exposed to the caring and the thinking.

---Sandra Jordan



Brian Franke; Sandra (Franke) Jordan
[April, 1977]

Thanks for your 'column', Sandy. (And I was kidding... Earlier. ...to Greg. Really! ...Sandy?)

Naomi is my friend...and co-worker. What follows is remarkably like one of our work-conversations, with two significant differences: 1) It's more cohesive, and 2), this time I can get a word in edgewise. Damn...! Speechless; sigh.

Naomi Cowan

I have always hated being told to write something, Topic of My Choice. I thought of writing my own adventures of moving to Cincinnati, but there really weren't any. I moved here 15 years ago with my husband and first baby for purely economic reasons. (I really like being here, though.)

I considered airing my views on current political sex scandals. Unfortunately, my commentary is "Who cares?". I don't think I could do a whole lot with that.

Writing about my wonderful, cute, beautiful, witty children (I've got pictures) might get the same response as talking about them.

However, there is an issue that I'm sure will be of interest to a possible few. Dave Barry's Tupperware Song. This came to my attention through his column, wherein he described, in glorious detail, its first performance. This song has real potential at Tupperware parties. I'm sure it could bring tears to the eyes of any TupperLady and pep up the proceedings besides. I myself was inspired to buy a cakesaver shortly after first reading the lyrics. Personally I think people should write to Tupperware HQ recommending this song be sung as part of the opening exercises at all Tupperware parties.

I watched a movie a few nights back. I tuned in after it started, so didn't see the title. As a result, its message was nicely undefined for me. It was a kind of British science fiction movie. Although it could have been a British surrealistic social commentary. Or it could have been an attempt to dissect an individual's descent into psychosis. Or maybe it was a surrealistic dissection of a psychotic society. Probably it was science fiction--or fanatsy. I enjoyed it a great deal, and, not knowing what it was supposed to be about, have been pondering its meaning, erratically, ever since.

---Naomi Cowan

A MOVING EXPERIENCE

written by
Dave Locke

illustrated & captioned by
Al Curry



Really wish you had remembered
to get boxes before we tried moving
your fanzine collection, Bowers.

When Jackie and I moved to Cinsanity in November of 1980, we never figured we would tour the city by living at three addresses within the first two years. Neither did our local fan friends who twice helped us move, which in turn moved them to tell us how displeased they would be if we didn't stay put for at least the next five years. Consulting the calendar, this means we can feel free to move again this coming November. Fortunately for our friends this is not a notice of intent.

In the gaping interim between then and now, between arriving in Cincinnati, moving about, and feeling sufficiently threatened to stay in place, I think I've been successful in paying my dues. Or at least in assisting any local fan who even casually mentioned that they were uprooting and moving from point A to point B within at least a geographically close vicinity.

I have packed, lifted, hauled, unloaded, carried in, and put away more possessions owned by other people, by a factor of maybe three, than can be inventoried among the possessions of Jackie and myself. Dues are paid. IOUs are cashed. OBs are mounting up on the other side of the ledger.

There is, of course, no ledger. For the next friend who needs helps in moving, I'll drag my tired ass out of bed early in the morning, dress in the traditional shabbies, put on a heavy-duty tennis sweatband, and saunter forth to once again demonstrate that I Can Lift Anything You Can Lift, And Then Some. Along the way I will also probably demonstrate that my sweatband is overpowered by my lack of stamina. I can also run the three-minute mile for at most a hundred yards. Fortunately, the exercise of pitching in to help move a fan has thus far involved frequent beer breaks, which means that my lack of stamina is often not excessively blatant. It is, however, mollified by beer breaks.

Each fan move has its own syntality, or personality. No two moves are even vaguely alike, unless they're to move the same person. If they involve basically the same movers, a sense of déjà vu might even set in. Especially when the mover realizes that the box they're carrying hasn't been opened since the last time they toted it someplace.

What I want to do here is give you a brief taste of what it would be like if you volunteered to move, or were pressed into moving, a Cincinnati fan. Fortunately most all of you will never be placed in such a situation. You have your own problems, they have their own wrinkles, and fortunately neither you nor your geographically close friends will ever be put in such a position.

The first two moves I was involved in were my own. We don't have an excessive amount of furniture, none of it is excessively heavy, and all other possessions are boxed, sealed, labelled as to content, and labelled as to specific location for delivery in the new abode. We're nothing if not disgustingly organized. The catch is that the overwhelming majority of boxes are packed with books or fanzines, to about the density equal to that of a small dwarf star, and that we don't carry hernia insurance on volunteer or coerced movers. We do, however, provide food and beer for all who show up. There isn't much road time involved, because we rent a Big Truck and everything goes over in one or two loads. Everything goes into the truck in orderly fashion, and everything comes out with a known, specific destination based on the game plan of filling the far corners first and then back-filling until the last item which is the piece which will sit closest to the apartment entrance. Items needed for feeding or quenching the thirst of the troops is kept under close scrutiny and given special handling.

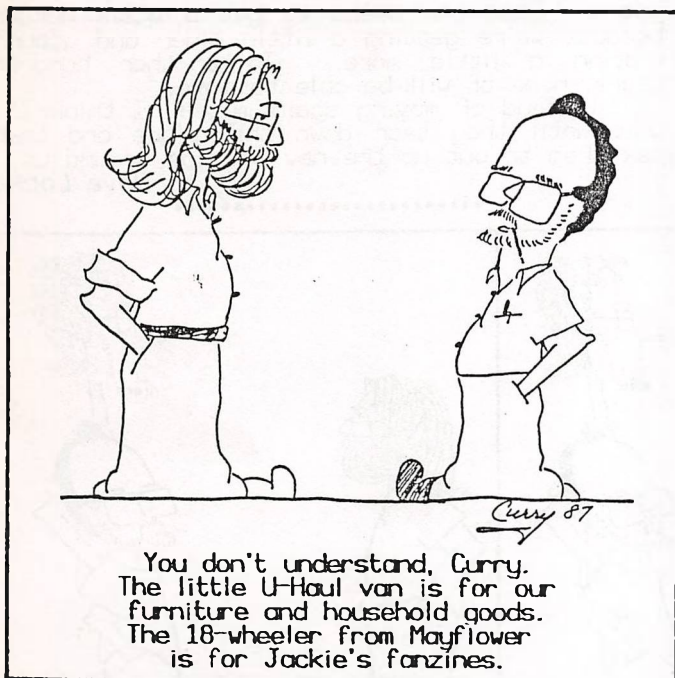
Moving Bill and Cokie Cavin is an altogether different experience. Bill, for those who don't know or remember, is the Ghod and Living Dictator of Cincinnati Fandom, which is otherwise known as the Cincinnati Fantasy Group or CFG. Bill inherited this position because he is the largest and strongest member of the group, and also because no one else was willing to do all the work. Bill is stronger than I am to the point that, when I have lifted as much as I can handle, Bill could then lift and carry me. However, Bill has even less stamina than I do. Walking up a flight of stairs is enough exercise for Bill to justify taking a nap.

Moving Cavin is a relatively sedate but lengthy matter. Bill is rarely in a hurry to do anything, to the point where he will announce that he now has to leave for some engagement and he hopes that anyone who is willing will come back tomorrow to continue the exercise. Sweatbands really aren't needed.

Planning is kept to a minimum, as is supervision. Bill will wave his hand to encompass the entire apartment, announce that we should move whatever appears moveable, and point out that he has boxes lying about which can be used to pack the loose stuff. When we arrive at the new place, Bill and Cokie will engage in spirited debate as to where each of us should set down our loads. At one point, as I recall, we built a wall of boxes around the both of them.

Later, after bringing everything into the new place, we would receive instructions as to where this box or this piece of furniture should really go. We would then pick it up again and carry it somewhere else. Upstairs things got moved downstairs, vice-versa, and items would be carried from one room to another in the same floor. Most every item would be fingerprinted at least two or three times. Some particularly arguable items would be moved even more often, at least at first. After awhile us volunteers realized that Cokie was winning the discussions more often than not, and decided to put them where she wanted them. This, I believe, is called adapting to the environment.

Twice I assisted in moving Bill Bowers. I could spend twelve pages telling you about this if I decided to be merely concise. If I let



myself go, there's an entire novel-length manuscript which could be generated after editing with abandon.

The first time I helped to move Bill, he had stayed put for a great number of years and accumulated an unsurpassed amount of kipple, clutter, dust bunnies, and tumbleweeds. As items were moved out, treasures would be discovered hiding behind things. We found unopened mail from 1977 which had fallen behind furniture. It was the furniture itself which presented the greatest hazard. Under each piece was a small mountain of dust. When the piece was lifted, the dust collapsed like a house of cards and then spread evenly over the whole floor like water seeking its own level. Tanya Carter spent the better part of an entire day vacuuming and revacuuming the living room as each piece of furniture was carried out, just to keep the level of dust down so we wouldn't lose a piece of furniture if we dropped it on the floor. I told him: "Bill, you don't need an allergist, you need a housekeeper."

One of the greatest challenges of moving Bill Bowers is that Bill doesn't believe in boxes. Arms and paper bags and plastic bags are fine, but boxes are primarily reserved for books and magazines that don't get looked at inbetween moves. Boxes are actually more time-consuming to move, because first you have to sweep off

the bugs and spiderwebs and then you have to reinforce the boxes with tape so they don't disintegrate when you lift them. This is probably why Bill doesn't much believe in boxes.

Bill Bowers, like Bill Cavin, doesn't much believe in supervision. He send each of his helpers to different rooms with the instruction that they're to take their best shot. All he asks are status reports. "Did you get your room done yet?"

Both Bills tend to dither as to whether an item should be pitched or saved. "Bill, what say we shitcan this five-year run of the Cable TV Guide?" "Bill, this two-year old stack of newspapers seems to be moving on its own. In another couple of weeks it will probably be over next to the trash, anyway."

Sometimes we make mistakes when moving one of the two Bills. "Hey, one of you guys hauled my trash over!" We'd look at each other, then look at the various items from the latest haul, and then one of us would ask, "which item do you classify as the trash?"

Moving Al Curry and Lyn Loughlin was the latest adventure. Luckily there wasn't all that much to move, as they hadn't been back from Ireland all that long and hadn't the time to accumulate a great deal. Timing, however, was another matter. Al picked the hottest day of the year.

I first heard about Al's move when he told me they'd given notice because the amount of rent increase was too steep. The conversation went like this:

"Oh, where are you moving to?"

"No idea."

"You don't have another place to move to?"

"Damn, I knew there was a trick to it."

"Overlook something, did you?"

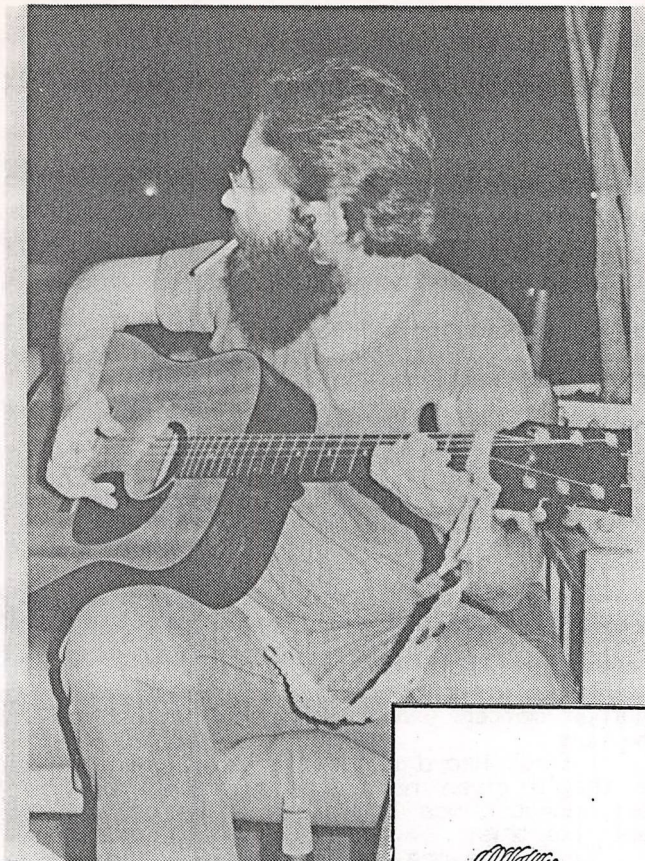
"And it seemed so simple at the time."

"Life is just a tire swing, right, Al?"

The day of the move it was Al, Bill Bowers, Keith Carroll, and me. We showed up, dripping, at Al's doorstep. All four of us then proceeded to load two boxes apiece into our respective cars. All four of us then had a cold beer.



Heh, Bowers! When they moved your chair,
they found this old TAFF Ballot
lying up against the wall.
It's all filled out...
Do you want to keep it?



Al Curry
[Hippotocon; 1977]

Two boxes, beer, two boxes, beer, and on and on until everything was loaded and so were we.

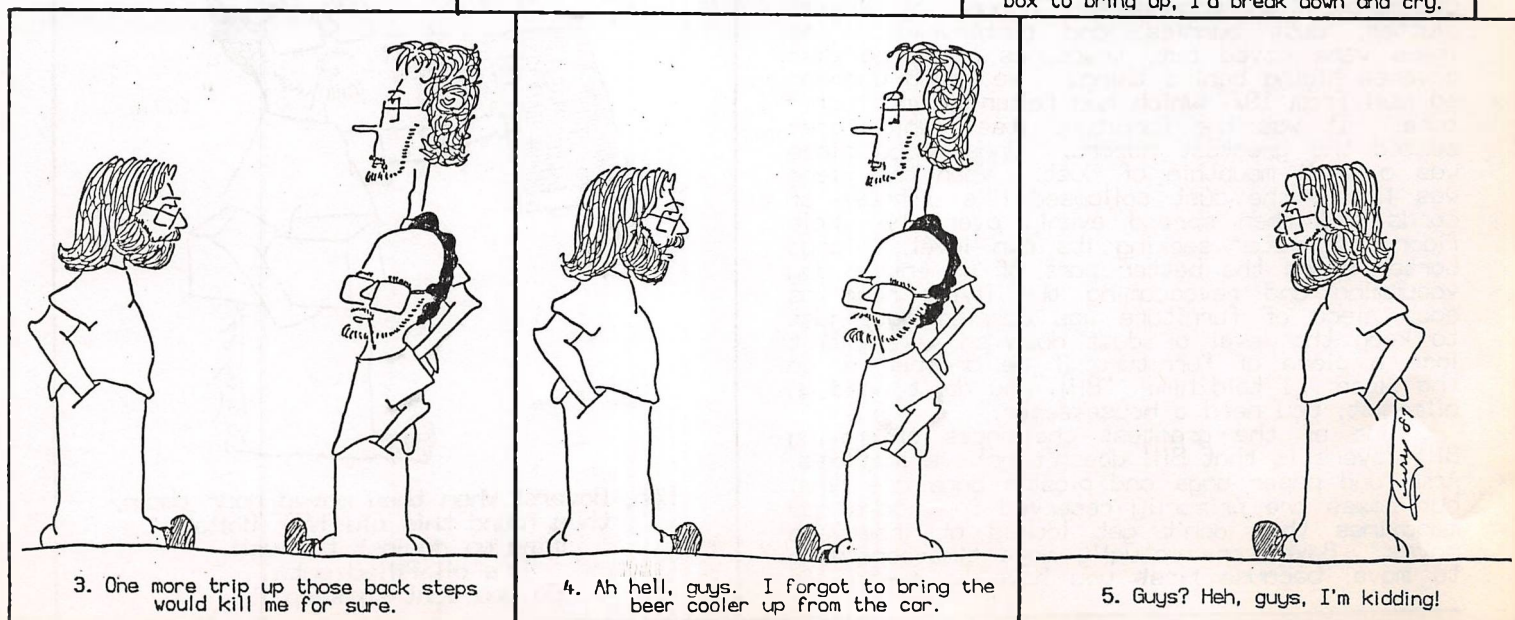
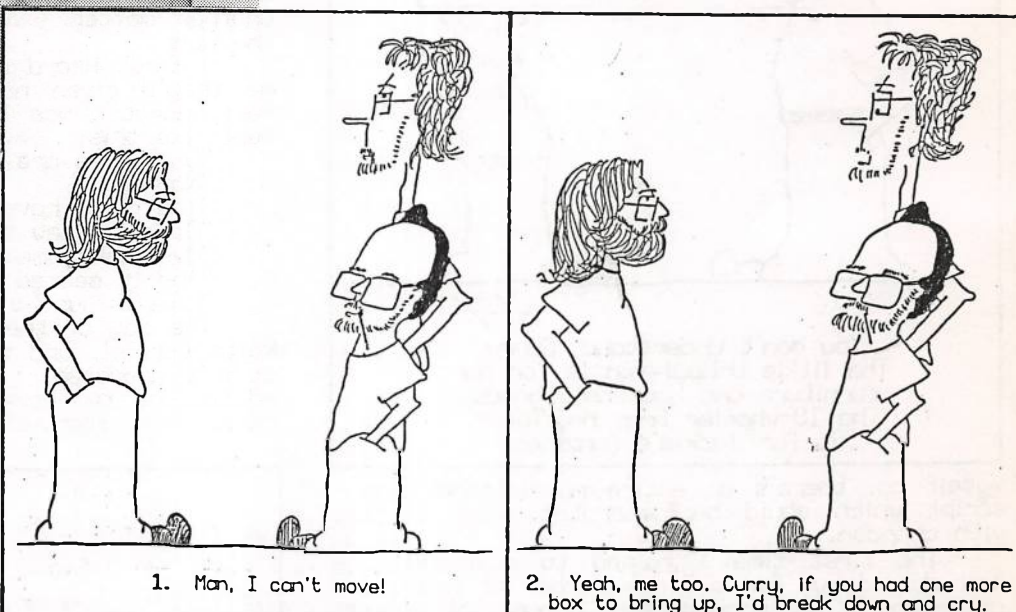
The new place for Al & Lyn is 2½ flights almost straight up. The place was built in 1907, back when stair-angles were much steeper than they are now. If those stairs were rebuilt today, Al & Lyn would probably have 4½ or 5½ flights to reach their apartment.

We made about seventy-five trips up and back down these back stairs, then perspired into the upholstery of the living room furniture to suck up one last beer while trying to regain enough strength in our legs to stand up again. In the interim, each of us pondered inwardly on our middle-aged status and on the possibility that maybe we should enroll in a fitness center.

And that brings us up to date on moving experiences incurred in the last half-dozen years. Each one seems to get a little harder because we're getting a little older and accumulating a little more. In another hundred years, none of will be able to move.

Instead of moving again myself, I think I'll wait until they tear down this place and then ask them to put up the new building around us.

---Dave Locke



Jackie Causgrove
[Midwestcon; 1976]



LIVING AND DRAWING
AT
THREE-QUARTER TIME...
Jackie Causgrove

It's six minutes to three on a Sunday morning in mid-June of 1987. I just finished erasing the pencil lines from the cover drawing for this ish and it dawned on me that I neglected to ask Bill which number to put on it. Alas. There's really no *place* for it, either. Knowing Bill to be a kindly soul, I don't expect that he'll complain, but it bothers me.

Y'see, Bill asked me to do a cover for this Special, Chauvinistic, Issue of *OW* over two months ago; almost immediately after CORFLU, to be more precise. There didn't seem to any problems in doing one, so I readily agreed. Then Things began to happen.

On the 7th of April I had been told I'd have to face yet another bout of surgery. Surgeries, three of them. A two-stage thingee on my back--to remove the hardware currently holding my spine together and another to refuse some improperly or non-fused portions and to fuse the lumbar area vertebrae (only one joint above my pelvis, and those in my neck, will be left unfused). Before that, though, the surgeon wanted me to go to a plastic surgeon to have...breast reduction surgery. (Well, I certainly don't need them anymore. As far as I'm concerned, the M.D. could simply remove them rather than reduce them. Doctors, however, seem to feel that females just wouldn't feel right without those globes of flesh. I think they are confusing boobs with cojones...) Being on Medicaid, any surgical procedure must be requested in advance--with lots of supporting paperwork--through the State of Ohio offices in Columbus. As anyone who has ever had dealings with the Federal or State government can tell you, speed is not their forte. I'm still awaiting Word on just when the Powers That Be will let all this stuff proceed.

As these things will consume a lot of time--two days for the reduction procedure, six weeks healing (which should include five weeks of autonomous blood donations for the back sur-

gery), then three weeks for the back work, three months of wearing a body cast, and then three months with the same sort of brace I have grown to know and loathe so well and another six months for "weaning" from the brace and I'll be just about where I am now, only without the constant deterioration of my spine's condition. Or so they say. It took longer than that the last time, and I was in better shape then than I am now.

My youngest, a Staff Sergeant in the Air Force, dropped in for a five day visit en route from his previous base in Mississippi to his newest assignment in California. He stayed at daughter and son-in-law's (Sandy and Greg's) house except for his last night in town, but he and his sister came over for four to six hours each day, so it was almost like having company myself. (Sandy would most likely disagree, but we're talking personal perceptions here; not actualities.)

Sandy, in the meantime, kept threatening to deliver the newest addition to the family in an extremely untimely manner. Like ten weeks ahead of schedule. It became almost routine to receive several phone calls a day, reporting on progress or lack of same (a change of pace we all wanted to hear) on the Labor front. As this was to be her last child, no one wanted Complications to cope with.

May is Birthday month in this household. Dave clicked over to 43 on the 5th and I hit 47 on the 27th. Grandson Joshua made it to 3 on the 29th. Granddaughter Michelle René decided to make her for-real appearance on the 30th (after a five-and-a-half hour spell of "Maybe-I-will, maybe-I-won't" the night before). My Mother, who had planned to come out from California for a visit on the 1st of June, decided to make it out here on the 27th of May--so she could take us out to dinner on my birthday--with about 48 hours of advance warning. I was feeling a bit Panicked.

Anyway, this sort of stuff does tend to screw up one's mind, and with all these things coming down the pike, it seemed that for the second time, I would end up reneging on a Fannish Promise to Deliver. Most nights (of the few I was actually left to my own devices), I'd stew over just what to do for Bill's ish. Ideas there were, aplenty, but none that I really wanted to *draw*. Some I really liked, and had times been different, I might have sat down and

gone through the labor needed (and it would have been *labor*, to make no bones about it). But not now. "It" (whatever "It" is) just wasn't there. So the deadline grew closer and I fretted even more. Shortly after eight last night I was on the phone wailing to my daughter; "I'm dry! No ideas! Nothing! There's only 24 hours left and I can't come up with *anything*!" A nervous breakdown was waiting in the wings. By now I felt that one had certainly been earned.

Dear, ole Dave, always a calming influence (when he's not sending me up the wall, of course), came through again. We had kicked around several ideas for a cover, and he had taken a fancy to doing something that featured Mark Twain's comment about everything happening in Cincinnati ten years later than anywhere else. It had ties to the ten-year anniversary Bill wanted to acknowledge as well as to the locality, but that was still thin. I worked up several sketches showing the changes Bowers has undergone in that ten year span--from caftan-wearing, long-haired semi-Hippie to neatly-groomed (well, all things *are* relative), semi-Yuppie--but couldn't reach the *Essence* of the idea without drawing what was amounted to a comic strip. I don't like comic strips. I've done 'em, but I don't like doing 'em. I like comic strips even less when they're supposed to serve as covers for fanzines.

I'd finally narrowed down the focus to a front-and-back cover combo. Front to show a ghostly version of Twain citing his advice to a caftaned Bowers, who was pulling a red Radio Flier wagon loaded with essentials to fannish living like Gestetners and Selectrics and lots and lots of paper. Back to show the updated Bowers, surrounded by all his electronic junkie and books--*sans* Gestetner, *sans* Selectric, but

still with lots and lots of paper. (Originally, there'd been an idea to include the change in automobiles as well. However, I never was any damn good at drawing machinery and though it would occasionally seem like a good idea to include mechanical things in a picture, sanity usually returned before such nonsensical notions were set to paper.) It would still be *busy* but I thought it would work.

For me, with my undisciplined work habits, coming up with the Idea has always been the hardest part of drawing. Rendering has been a cinch by comparison. Or it had been before my eyes started their current downward slide. Coupled with the spinal fusion which restricts movement of my neck, declining ability to focus clearly made it increasingly more difficult to draw, particularly to draw the sort of detailed work I prefer to do. Dave and I have tried a few ideas that would make it easier, but nothing has really worked (if anyone out there has any suggestions along those lines that don't a) cost much and b) take up much floor space and c) will accommodate the use of a swivel-type chair, they'd be certainly appreciated). As a result, I don't draw much any more.

It has become increasingly Easy to put off setting pen to paper until the very last moment. Only I waited too long this time. By Friday evening, it was evident that there was no way a sufficient number of hours existed that would enable me to get those covers drawn by the time Bill had been promised delivery. Nor were there any back-up notions available. Ergo, *PANIC*. Ergo, *ANXIETY*. (Naturally, each time Bill would make one of his nagging phone calls to remind me of the job to be done, the lack of progress was never mentioned, but instead he was reassured that the cover would be done on time. Which merely compounded my mounting feelings of inadequacy.) To coin a phrase, it was back to the old drawing table (well, in this case a clipboard, but can't one use artistic license when spinning a yarn?) and racking the old brain for some semblance of an idea that could be executed in the short time remaining.

Needless to say, it was a fruitless search. Which explains the frantic conversation with my daughter and the following, calming, session with Dave. And that resulted in the drawing that should grace the cover of this issue (assuming Bill doesn't gag when he sees it). Okay. It's hurried. It's not an example of my Best Work, but it is esoteric, and it is fannish, and what-the-hell else should anyone expect with a lousy 68 days advance notice? (How the dickens does Brad Foster do it? And do it so ghod-damnedly well? I'm deeply envious...)

If Bill actually prints this rambling bit of nonsense, I'll be surprised. But there are times when someone takes that extra step, goes that bit further than anyone (including oneself) has a right to expect. Those times should be acknowledged, even if it means staying up hours past one's usual bedtime, and even if it means one is patting oneself on the back. Because you only do that sort of extra work for those you consider Important in your life, and I consider Bill Important (an Irritant, to be sure, but Important nonetheless). Congrats on making it to the ten-year mark here in Cincy/Cinti (the former is for outlanders, the latter for residents), and may you continue to find whatever it is you seek here in the Queen City for another few decades.

-----Jackie Causgrove



Mary Tabakow; Bill Cavin
[New Year's; 1978]

...Bill Bowers, Yuppie, eh Jackie? If you say so!
Suddenly it is late afternoon, Friday, June 26th...and I'm sure that (even with Cavin's promptness in signing Hotel Contracts) MidWest-Con 38 is well underway. And I'll get up there some time this evening, even if not quite as early as I'd planned.

I finished up 'running off' (at 8 copies a minute, I detect the need for a new euphuism here) an initial print-run of 60 copies of OW50 at 3 a.m. this morning. Today I've collated those, and ran off 40 copies of most of this... as a 'downpayment' for distribution at the Party tomorrow night: the one apparently prompted by my letter -- to celebrate Steve & Denise's, Joel's, Frank's, and my respective 'anniversaries'. I might make it to that!

...as I was going out for breakfast this morning, and as I was going down the slight grade out of this place...and as the brakes faded to the floorboard--I decided that intense fanac is one thing...but this was something that I should do something about...first. Three hours and \$75.00 later...the fanac is still here, and so am I.

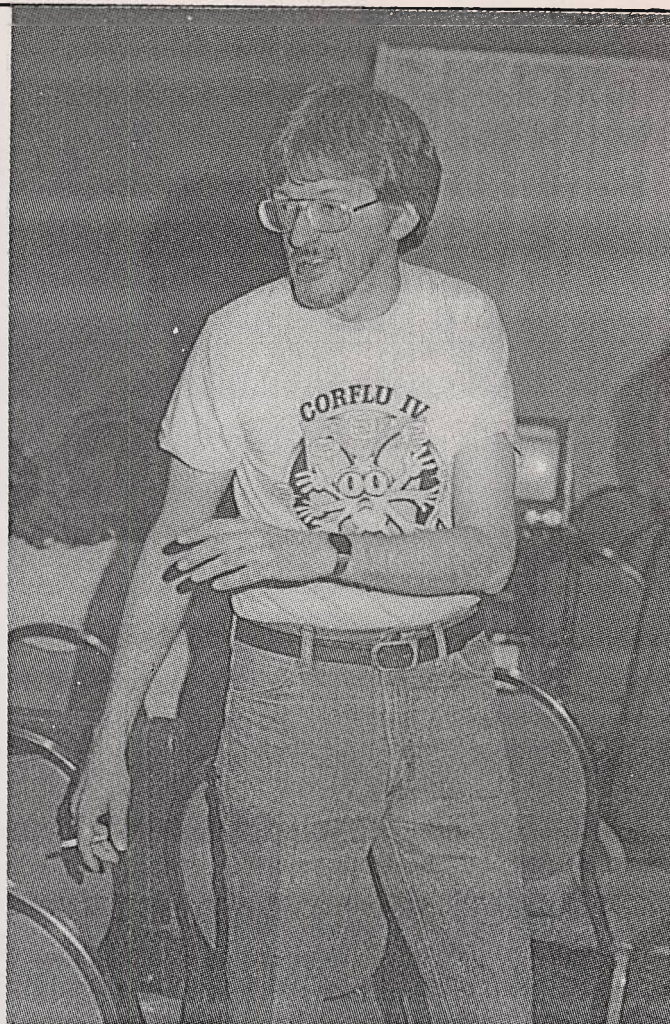
Which does prove something: Ten years ago, I probably would have put off the brakes till Monday...and gone conventioning anyways. Isn't progress wonderful?

(Say Greg...Sandy... About this neato car...!)

I really want to thank all the locals for coming through and helping me Celebrate. This issue, in spite of drawing some time/energy away from the production of the preceeding issue...has gone together rather nicely, and I'm pleased with it.

--and, after The Bobs concert Sunday afternoon, the next couple of weeks will be devoted to completeing the copy-runs and mailing these two issues, and 'mastering' the audio edition of OW50. Then...well, I have this neat Brad Foster cover for 52...and a couple of ideas to play with, based on what I've learned about my New Toys here...

...a few pages back I made an innocuous remark about "...every time Frank makes noise about leaving town...". Damned if, after I already had the following page copied-off, he didn't annouce that, as of 7/6, he'll be on the air in Vale, Colorado. So, Frank: do they have a cable system with stereo simulcasts? Or a tv station transmitting MTS? If not, for the right price...!

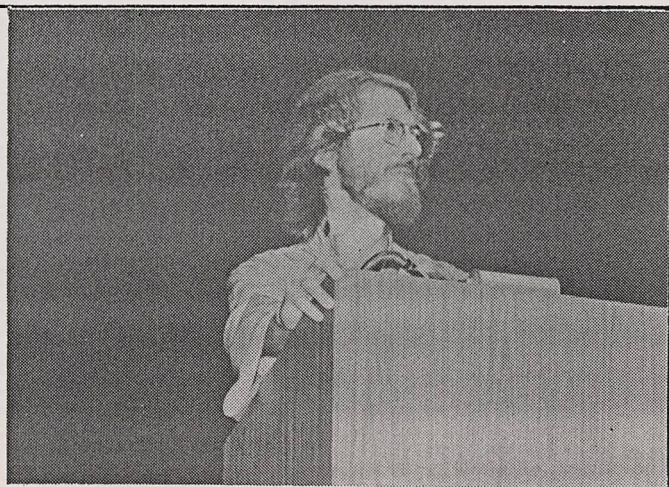


[photo by Fred Haskell]

It hasn't always been Ups, but I can safely say that my just-past Decade has been the best of my life...and, those of you who have been a part of my Cincinnati years -- not all of whom live here: Thanks!

I don't know what the future holds, but I have no immediate plans to leave the area. But then, again... (Please hold down the cheering!)

---Bill Bowers; 6/26/87



Harlan's Warm-up Act: Iguanacon; 1978
[photo by Charlie Brown]

Ten For A Tenth...

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NORTHAMERICAN; 1979
[photo by Jay Kay Klein]