

MAY 77

ISSUE 23

RUNE 23, May 1971 is the official newsletter of the Minnesota Science Fiction Society. Lynn Torline is Editor-in-Chief and Margie Lessinger has taken over as assistant after Chuck Holst's departure. Don Nelson is our Patron Saint of the Arts.

RUNE is available free to all attending members of Minn-stf and to whomever we damn well feel like sending it to. Others can get it in trade/contributions or 10 issues for \$1.00.

WE wish to thank everyone who thoughtfully renewed their subscriptions in time and who sent in their cards if it was a gift. We realize that fen are intrinsically lazy (myself included) so we are giving another 2 weeks of grace to anyone who hasn't sent in their card as yet. As of June 1st, all subscription renewal rates will be \$1.50 for 10 issues. Approx. 250 copies printed.

RUNE 22 was collated with the help of Ken Fletcher, Jim Young, Chuck Holst, Margie Lessinger and myself. Special thanks to Barry Berg who lent his support by playing guitar for four hours straight. It was really groovy--thanks everyone. *et*

MINN-STF OFFICERS

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UPCOMING MEETINGS:

May 8--Lessinger-Torline's, 1350 Queen Avenue North. 1:00 - 5:00. General Meeting,
Open Meeting 4:00-5:00.

May 22--Third Open Meeting. Coffman Memorial Union, 1:00 - 5:00.

June 5--Pillsbury-Waite Center, 26th and Chicago. Genral Meeting and Pre-Minicon 4
meeting. 1:00 - 5:00.

June 18-20--MINICON 4, Curtis Hotel. \$2.00 in advance or \$3.00 at the door. For in-
formation, write Lynn Torline. Make checks payable to Minicon.

MINUTES

April 10th, 1971. Not very much happened at that meeting as we had two out-of-town visitors--Astrid Anderson and Michael Dobson. Chuck Holst dragged out his "Star Cruic Game" and tantalized the majority of the male membership, which is 80% at this time. Not to be outdone, the female population grabbed their guitars and sang for a while, drowning out, but nicely, any hope of communication among other members.

The business meeting was brief, as the only point of interest that week was a letter Lynn received from a person attending only an Open Meeting and offering criticism on things we should do to make meetings better. Only thing, we do those at meetings! Regular meetings, that is. Actually, many of the members had to leave early for the Seders which they were to attend later that evening.

THX 1138

Early one Friday morning, Mark Riley and I tripped downtown in the 80° spring weather to see THX 1138. The theater was only charging \$1.00 for the noon performance, so we figured we may as well go.

The movie began with a mass of people working at consoles, continuously being squawked at by one computer or another. The culture, rather than suppressing drugs and narcotics, inflicted harsh penalties and held trials for drug evaders, doing a complete about-face from the current shtick. The highest crime one can commit is having sex with the usual penalty of death. The government administers drugs which subdue the populace's natural drives, thus ensuring fidelity to the government.

While watching the show, I observed the reactions of the people around me, which usually ranged from, "Huh, what?!", "Hey, I don't get it.", to "Oh Wow!".

The producers of the flick tried their best to make it a second 2001, but failed miserably. It really had very little plot and the only visual effects were the metal-faced cops and the computer rooms. In fact, the high point of the entire movie was the "chase scene" where THX 1138, after escaping his incarceration, roars off in a jet-powered car with a metal cop in hot pursuit. THX 1138, whips around a workman finishing the tunnel, but the cop and his cycle smash directly into the pylons, going head over heels and lies inoperative on the road. The crowd loved it and responded with cheers applause and "Right on!"s, which says something about our society, I suppose.

The movie finally ends with the search, which had been conducted to the sound of the computer stating minute by minute cost of the operation, called off just as THX 1138 was about to be captured. The cops leave and THX 1138 continues to climb up the ladder to the surface, (which no one has ever seen) and stand facing a blood red sun as the credits roll on. It was quite disappointing, but carrying my first-man's hat I received for buying a bucket of popcorn, cheered me quickly.

--lt

PHONE COMMITTEE

Jim Schumeister called me the other night in a state of agitation about the Phone Committee. "The Phone Committee is in a state of disrepair and I will not phone the whole back side of the phone list. Also, I'm gonna get even with you, Lynn Torline. We are at the point where we have regular meetings at a regular place and time, so people should start thinking Minn-stf. As long as we are reshaping we may just about start phoning just the regulars. WE NEED EXTRA HELP! If we don't get it, the phone committee may peter out."

--lt

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OPEN MEETING

The Minn-stf Open Meeting, or MicroMinicon III, will be held Saturday, 22 May, at 1:00 in the Women's Lounge of Coffman Memorial Union.

A fascinating program is planned, including Gordon Dickson speaking on his Apollo Moon Flight assignment; plus answer questions about the SFWA, a discussion with Frank Frazetta via speaker phone, Star Trek presentation, "What is it like to be a new Pro?", and a "What is Fandom?" orientation for all the new attendees with handouts of fannish terminology. There will, of course, be an auction of paintings, books, and old pulps.

Antarian Glow Water, Rigelian Blog, and Aldebaren Raal will be served throughout the entire affair. Plans for an after-meeting en masse eat-out are still in the works.

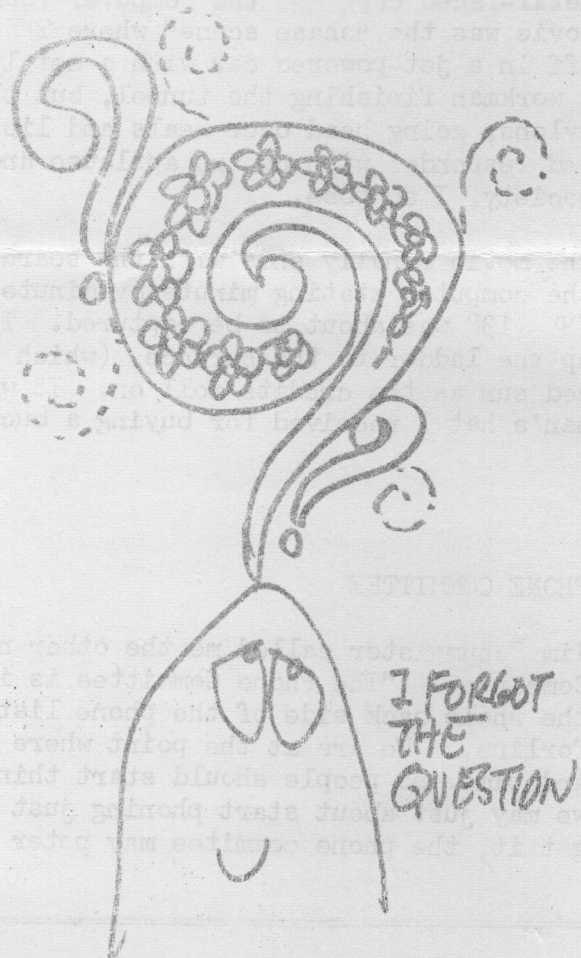
Should be a fine afternoon and we hope to see you all there. Jim Young, Lynn Torline, Jim Schumeister - Co-Chairmen.

MINN-STF QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

Out of the 400 questionnaires mailed out to fen in the RUNE territory, we have received 45 back. Many of the fen put a lot of time and energy into the form, which was appreciated, but unnecessary. Many of the questions were rather vague, with a choice of multiple answers. We will, however, report the results of the majority of answers which we feel would be of the most interest ((at least to me, I am nosy.))

mundane endeavors

College students	10
Retired	4
High School Students	3
Computer Programmers and Operators	3
Radio Announcers	2
Writers	2
Electricians	2
Artists	2
Gas Station Attendant	1
Garbage Hauler	1
Drug Store Clerk	1
Photo Technician	1
Filling out this form at Present	1
Pharmacist	1
Secretary	1
Chemist	1
Ex-Marine Sergeant	1
Steno Clerk	1
Draftsman	1
Civil Engineer	1



FAVORITE DAY OF THE WEEK

Wednesday	1
Cunegonda	1
All good	1
Any day without class	2
None	2
Payday (Ah, honest ones)	3
Thursday	3
Friday	11
Saturday	11

DO YOU PREFER DOGS OR CATS?

Cats	15
Dogs	6
ToWhat?	4
For What?	2
Yes	1
Both	2
Horses	1
Neither	1
Sehlat	1

FAVORITE COLOR

Blue	13
Black	4
?	3
Red	2
Browns	2
Green	5
Yellow	2
Purple (or any variation thereof.)	2

WERE YOU EVER IN MINNEAPOLIS, KANSAS?

No (and variations thereof).	21
Yes	6
Maybe	2
Near it	2

DO YOU READ SF?

Yes	Unanimously
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FAVORITE TV SHOWS AND MOVIES

((This was tough, as there were many single answers. However, of the duplicates we took a count, otherwise there would be too many single items to list.))

Star Trek	14
2001	9
Sesame Street	5
Mission: Impossible	4
Prisoner	4
All in the Family	2
Laugh-In	2
George of the Jungle	2

FAVORITE SF AUTHOR

((Bear in mind that there were many multiple answers given on these questionnaires.))

Asimov	8	Borroughs	3	Herbert	1
Clarke	7	Sturgeon	3	Dick	1
Heinlein	5	Van Vogt	3	Delany	1
Bradbury	5	C.A. Smith	3	Loumer	1
D.C. Fontana	4	P. Anderson	2	Silverberg	1
G. Dickson	3	Niven	2	del Rey	1
Lieber	3	Farmer	2	Lin Carter	1
Ellison	3	Simak	2	Tolkien	1

An exercise in name-dropping.....

PECON II
OR

Minneapolis vs Peoria
(with a sprinkling of St. Louis thrown in for pollution)

A Con Report by Mark Riley

If at any point along the line I bore you, let me reply that you're a pathological liar and you probably only read fantasy.

It was a remarkably drunken con--even for SF conventions--and generally ~~drinker~~ more fun than a Minicon and Midwescon combined.

I saw Pecon II from behind itchy contact lenses, through a veil of Scotch and Irish whiskeys, Chateau LaSalle wine, Blog, Beer, Beer, and more Beer, and Ghod Nose what else (my eyes looked like a highway map by Sunday).

It was a fan's dream con, coming as it did on the anniversary of my third year in fandom. A long enough time to lose that quality of starry-eyed, neo-fan glow, but still close enough to appreciate meeting and talking at length to those who, 'till then, had been but names: Bob Tucker, Joe Hensley, John & Joni Stopa, Juanita Coulson, and the incredible Couch clan.

I even spent more time with Gordon Dickson at Pecon II than at any previous con --including the Minicons.

Not to mention the patron saints of weirdom who chaired the con, Don Blyly and Larry Propp. But before I develop the name-dropping, let's try to take the whole thing chronologically.

We left Minneapolis at midnight.....that being the time the hockey game ended. An en passant note here:

I like hockey. I adore professional hockey. And when the home team is in the Stanley Cup Playoffs--oh joy, emotional peak! I am, you see, the quintessential team-sports freak. ("Run him out of fandom!") Hush, audience, I shall add in utmost condescension to the legions of the unenlightened--("String him up!") ah, legions of the unenlightened among you, that hockey will hereinafter be referred to only insofar as is necessary to the telling of the tale. I will not even deigh to relate my real reason for watching hockey on TV. Someday I shall compose a tome titled, Riley's Tricks and Gimmicks for the Stoned.

I bear in mind that not everyone is as tolerant as I.

(Wide-spread open-mindedness is a fool's myth; open mindedness itself being non-existant, achievable by, and as useful as the result of inserting the index fingers in the ears and pulling vigorously upwards until separation of the skull occur. There.....you now have instant open-mindedness.

The open mind, like the empty head, is merely waiting for something to fill it.)

Where was I? Oh, yes.....the hockey game had ended. Hockey, finances, and Larry Propp were the three factors to be weighed. Hockey came out heavy, finances light, and Larry Propp should go on a very strict diet. So, money and the game-of-the-puck balanced each other and I was left with the awful necessity of determining the virtue of seeing Larry again. I regretted not going to the first Pecon and since I admire both Propp and Blyly (they tolerate each other so well) I flipped a coin and they lost.

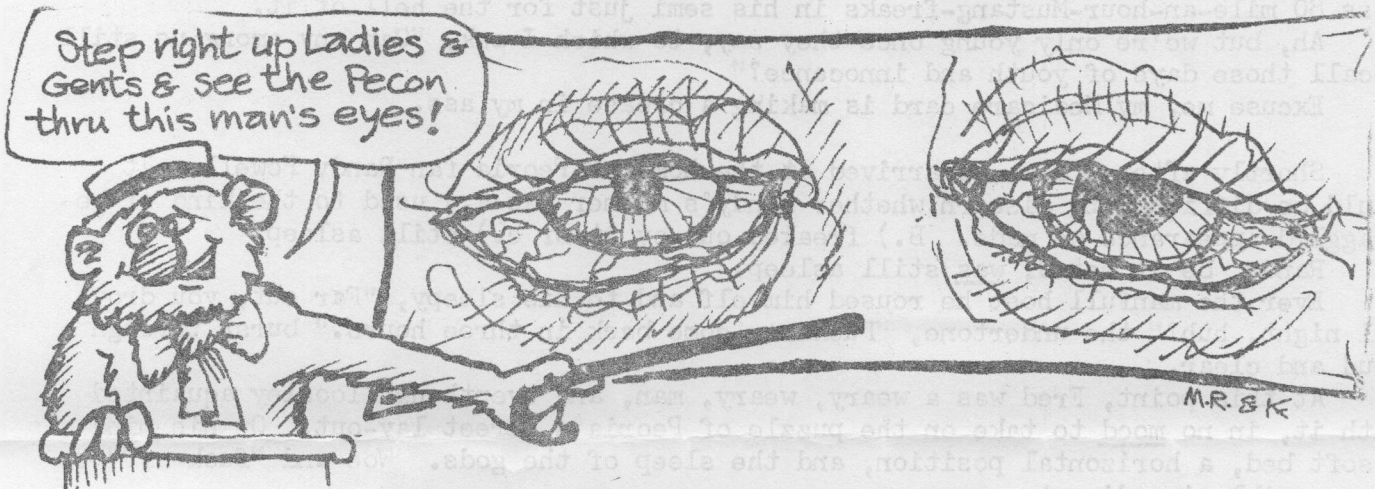
I went to Pecon.

As I have said we started late because of the game. My fellow travelers were--perturbed?--at this turn of events but not quite enough to vent their wrath and bury the body.

The carfull? Myself, Fred & Karen Haskell, Ken Fletcher, Karen's sister Holly

(that sounds like a far-out song title, notice the meter?) and a familiar looking freak from the Minneapolis Public Library who left us prior to Peoria headed Somewhere. If that sounds likely to you, I have a deed to the Washington Avenue Bridge on the U of M I'd like to shuck at a ridiculously low price (an autographed matzoh ball from Larry Propp's Passover dinner plate.)

The car was one of those magnificent symbols of opulence that I would dearly love to spend more time with/near. An FM Stereo radio is a possitive joy to travel with even if you are forced (by lack of variety) to waste it listening to the maure broadcast through the breadth of Wisconsin by "LOVE STEREO, MADISON". If that's the best MADISON has to offer (and for christssake the University of Wisconsin's city--being the third largest campus in the country!) their underground people must be hurtin'. Compared to KQRS here in, believe it or not, suburban Golden Valley, "LOVE STEREO" is not only anachronistic but positively primitive. I'm not overly fond of KQ, but I know it well enough to be thankful for both its quality and opportunity it gives me to keep track of the Other Side.



Besides they've recently been broadcasting old radio tapes. Goodies like "Leinengen and the Ants", two Frankenstein radio dramas, "Terry and the Pirates" and other delights. Not to mention they are shortly going to broadcast 52 weeks--a full year!--of Shadow episodes. When you're all here for Minicon you might even consider taping that Sunday night show and if you're very persuasive, you might talk Anthony Tollin into recording his "Shadow Laugh" for you. (True evrybody got thoroughly weary of it around here, but the first time I heard it I though it was very good..... the second time it was, "Right Anthony." the third time, "Uhh.....yeh....." and about the time he crossed into three figures I was wishing he was the Shadow so I could turn a strong light on him.)

Fred drove. All the way. Normally not driving would have bothered me but I was as paranoid as he about driving his mother's car. Still, there was a chance that he'd need relief, so I left my lenses in. Now those of us with the plastic circles caressing our corneas know the two-fold pain of either sleeping with them or popping em in and out.

That, however, is preferable to risking extreme fatigue smothering the Driver with no relief in sight.

For the most part it was an uneventful trip save for my once mentioning--in jest mind you--that, "Another good reason for going to Peoria.....it might be in the range of the St. Louis TV stations and we could see the Minn. North Stars/St. Louis Blues games now that they're playing in Minneapolis."

The stony silence greeting that lent this thought:

"Shut up, fella, or they're gonna squeeze you through the air-conditioning vent."
As you will see, I never learn.

A lovely car, that. Imagine travelling through the aortas of America's heartland, rolling 70 miles an hour over gentle I-94, buckled in lap and shoulder belt security, sinking into leathery-cushiony seats, listening to static--in stereo, noless--as Fred fiddled with the tuner.

It would have been relieving to drive, even a little bit, but at least I got to sit in the front seat! (I'm a noon-shade slice over six feet and I VIVIDLY recall sharing the back seat of Margie Lessinger's Toyota with Frank Stodolka and my 12-string guitar part of the way back from St. Louiscon 20 months ago.)

One other travelogue event of note: Service par excellence from a Holiday Inn waitress (unbelievable but true) at breakfast time. Fred enjoyed an Amphora (pipe tobacco) cigarette rolled in a dollar bill paper post-repast, which flirted with my greak-out threshold but didn't manage to seduce it. It struck me as the most inopportune time to risk getting roused because some truck driver couldn't dig it, but that same truck driver would probably have had three beers for breakfast and gone out to pass 80 mile-an-hour-Mustang-freaks in his semi just for the hell of it.

Ah, but we're only young once they say, to which I ask, "Can any among us still recall those days of youth and innocence?"

Excuse me, my Medicare card is making a crease in my ass.

Shortly after 9 a.m. we arrived at the home of Peoria fan Randy Powell. It would be difficult to discern whether Randy's mother was a.) used to the kind of be-draggled appearance we made. B.) freaked out by it or c.) still asleep.

Randy, be it noted, was still asleep.

Ever the manfull host he roused himself and to his sleepy, "Far out, you drove all night, huh?" the undertone, "Fuckers, come back in three hours." burst through loud and clear.

At this point, Fred was a weary, weary, man, and eventhough loosley aquainted with it, in no mood to take on the puzzle of Peoria's street lay-out. On his mind was a soft bed, a horizontal position, and the sleep of the gods. Woe and "fuck-off" to any possible impediment.

Fraskell, when he's grumpy, is hilarious.....though I'll freely concede that even Teddy Bears have useable teeth.

The Sands Motel is an ideal place for a con. Physically laid out as a horseshoe on whose west side is a double deck room wing, on the east side the central complex and lobby, with a parking lot in the middle.

Never, never, never have I dealt with such a co-operative lodging staff. As an example, the following story about the lady desk clerk:

{Put your imaginations back in line, gang, it wasn't that kind of a story, nor was she that kind of a lady desk clerk.)

It seems that in reply to fan's question:

"What would you do if get complaints?" (Fans aren't notably grammatical and I'm an honest reporter) she replied:

"Kick them (the complainants) out."

That is a gem of a lady desk clerk (and a better deal of the con attendees than the other kind would have been). Not only highly co-operative but, as it turned out, a hockey freak.

Not one complaint did I hear made against myself or any other number of inebriates who staggered, swayed, and wobbled our way from one wing to another--to do so, you had to go throught the main lobby, see.

Our group was in 158, the Couch family in 157 and Gordon Dickson in 160--I don't know who had 159, but he/she, them/they got left out a lot.

That morning bright-eyed KenFletch and I did our usual tour of duty at the bathtub, icing the pop and the beer. Being an experienced team ("For once let's put the CANS IN FIRST!") we were thus perfectly willing to aid and abet Chairman Blyly and

I shudder at the thought: Face to face meeting his horrible ~~face~~ fusillade.

He is a practicing attorney (he should only keep on practicing) and we've seen Perry Mason, we know good lawyers are with words. And as such we shall expect great things from Larry, one day (trumpeting strains of triumph, drum roll) making headlines with a dynamic plea before the United States Supreme Court! A plea to invalidate all the Dairy State Laws prohibiting pre-colored oleo margaring!

"Mental Cruelty, you Honor!" he will shout, "Can you imagine squeezing the red dot in the bag, for hours on end, merely to make it look palatable?"

"I could dig it, counselor."

And thus (full orchestration) Larry Propp's succesful day in court will case the udders of America to wobble in fear! Single-handedly he will have smitten the Powerful Dairy Association and made America safe for labor-saving oleo!

Ten years too late.

After registration of new arrivals including Gordy and the Hensley's among the earliest, Propp showed me his house (it's a nice house), I got to ride in his (Fiat?) blue car, and we wnet to a liquor store.

See how many importanat things one can do at a convention?

Shortly after we returned I began drinking, and continued for the next ten hours. It was perhaps as late as 3:00 in the afternoon when I started, rousing well, with Gordy and the Hensley's. When we ultimately left Gordy's room, I pointed to my KenFletch creation name-tag. Gordy smiled politely. Five minutes later I told KenFletch how proud I was of it, and he pointed out the empty plastic holder pinned to my shirt. Gordy smiled sheepishly and said, "I didn't have the heart to tell you."

Things are a bit foggy from there on but I recall the spirit, if not the letter, of them.

Chris Martersteck and I bored each other discussing Spider-Man, then I told him about hockey and he told me about waterbeds. Concluding that we sauntered into the suite's other room and played with the color TV set, challenging each other to tune it properly.....which was impossible because it was broken.

And I remember Jr. Coulson drooling over a Star Trek re-run on the other set.

Ah well, I watched Crusader Rabbit when I was young.

The suite gradually filled and then Juanita Coulson arrived. When Juanita picked up a guitar I managed to con her into singing semi-privately to me for little better than an hour.

I love hearing her sing, and given the chance to really concentrate on her (without the usual background distraction) I was impressed to the point of being honest-to-god thrilled. Juanita sings a song EXACTLY the way she wants to.....no compromise, no sliding in and out of notes, she hits every note perfectly.

A good singer is controlled, a great singer is exact. Which Jyanita is--as well as being a good guitar player.

She and I discussed some points of etiquette for fandom singers and strummers, which I've discussed with others, and the consensus is this:

If you directly ask someone to play, it is the height of boorishness to start a conversation while they perform. If it is in a party room, no performer has the right to expect silence, but if it's a singing room or if a loose majority in the room are interested, have a little consideration, please.

Personally, I'm trying to be more aware of the background noise I make, try not to sing along unless it's clearly acceptable, talk between songs, and not ask for the guitar at the wrong time.

As for my own singing and playing, none of the above applies. I only get asked to quit, not start, so it's a case of inflicting my peculiar growl and whine voice on masochistic listeners as I flail my guitar.

Actually I perform only under the following conditions: If my voice is in remarkably good shape (never), if I've been practicing a lot (seldom), or if I'm drunk (usually).

And bear in mind too, that if someone whose performance is requested precedes me, I can not expect the attentiveness they got. Jump in and take your chances is the rule.

Other foggy Friday remnants:

Randy and Holly retiring to our room for most of the evening and conducting themselves with enough energy to make Leigh Couch, on the other side of the wall, aware of them.

As Holly said later, with remarkable candor, "Randy kept hitting his head on the headboard."

A plea, if I might, on Randy's behalf (and god knows my own) for longer beds. Those of us over 5-5 often wake up with sore heads--which will teach us to be more discriminating. But it's either hit your head, get cold feet (literally, not figuratively) at the "diagonal position" (unnatural). In our own beds we ignore it, but when we pay for the bed we'd like either longer or equipped with well-padded headboard.

I wonder what Ralph Nader could do with that complaint?

Hotel managers take note: Many of the fans are tall and friendly; serve us better or face the prospect of a convention full of Harlan Ellisons.

Later, I got the chance to talk to John and Joni Stopa at length.

The Stopas approach me cautiously. Joni says I remind her of somebody else (always a flattering thing to say) to which I reply, "And you don't like him either, right? Someday I envision her saying, 'What 'him'? Her.'"

But Joni takes me seriously and John knows better. In any case, the two of them are among the Friendliest Fans I've yet met--and SF fandom is notoriously friendly.

This was the first time I'd talk to them at length, and after they told me some wild Fandom Experience stories, they kindly spent a good deal of time convincing me of the rationality of Minneapolis killing its '73 bid.

Thanks to some of the things they told me, things I hadn't known before, I lost the edge of bitterness I've had since December.

Not all of it, mind you, but I heard what they said.

It's just that the '73 bid was what drew me strongly into fandom initially, and when it died, part of what fandom was to me died. But this is the start of my third year, and I guess I can handle fandom by myself without having to be a part of a bid and the security, place, and purpose there involved.

So I'll remain a Minneapolis People, but not a part of anything. I'll just be me. J&J, you may regret your kindness.

And now there are two: Joni Stopa and Marge Lessinger, the most sensual women in fandom.

I would care to say who is moreso, in fact, if you'll pardon the word choice, I consider it a dead heat. Sensuality is a very rare thing, but for these two it is clearly evident in the fact that they are women. Not chicks, ladies, girls, broads, (perish the thought), or femme fans.

Women. The only really applicable term for them.

Cause and effect here as I see it: It is not necessarily true that sensual females are women, in this regard, but that women ARE sensual females. There's also a quality of relaxation in them both, which, I guess, is part of it.

The problem though is that John Stopa and Joel Lessinger are examples of that well-known phenomenon, "husband".

I am a dedicated misogynist, but these two gentlemen are proof positive that misogamy is pessimism.

Many drinks later, I found myself in the Couch room, and finally found out why the early Minneapolis and St. Louis people dug each other (I came in late, remember?). Some of them I knew peripherally but with the exception of Mike Couch, I knew the other members of the family not at all.

Mike I knew well enough to nod drunkenly at when our paths crossed and ask, "How the hell are ya?"

And he's nod hellishly back and ask, "How drunk are you?"

I ignored him and we went our separate ways.

At Pecon II he made me aware of a problem I will Not ignore.

If you don't like Mike Couch, be sure to read this next section (I say a lot of unfriendly things about him). Read it even if you do like Mike Couch (I lie a lot). If you don't know Mike, you're being positively unfriendly and quit bothering me.

NOTE TO RANDOM-AT-LARGE, MEDIUM, & SMALL

SUBJECT: IDENTITY CRISIS

COMPLAINANT: MIKE COUCH

TO WIT:

Fans frequently call Mike Couch "Chris" (This bothers him. It may also bother Chris). Mike has a brother named Chris (This apparently bothers a lot of people.) Mike Couch has curly black hair (this doesn't bother anyone, and if it does, quit being so nosey). Chris does NOT have curly black hair (maybe this bothers Chris, but who cares?) He is a good person. (Who--Chris?) ((No, MIKE! I don't even know Chris.)) (Well, if you don't even know him, what are you talking about?) ((Shut up!))

Mike is a good person. (S Chris is no-good, huh?) ((Chris who?)) (See! You don't know who you're talking about!) ((Nope. That's why I always call him Chris.))

Mike is a good person because he has curly black hair.

Chris is a rotten person because he gets everyone confused and doesn't have curly black hair. For all I know, he may be bald.

(Mike, this may be enough for you to show at the next con with your head shaved.)

Let's try it another way--

MNEMONIC DEVICE #1:

"My couch has curly black hair."

Of course, if you have one that does, you may in a lot of trouble. (Mnemonic devices never were any good.)

If still unsure, fellow fans, "Hew you" will suffice. (Naturally anybody might answer to that and you'd still have a problem, but if the respondent is a gorgeous young femme fan you'll no longer CARE which Couch is which, you'll have better things to think about. If, on the other hand, YOU ARE a gorgeous young femme fan and interested in one or the other, then you are a stupid broad with no taste and I'VE got better things to think about.)

"Mr. Couch" would be better for either, if you're chicken, but you take the risk of Norbert answering. What risk? He's okay. Now if only he didn't have these problem kids!

If he should answer, incidentally, ask him which is which.

And if he's wrong, give up, gaffiate from fandom, go home, and count your gonads.

THIS IS A NOTE TO NORBERT AND LEIGH COUCH (Nobody else is allowed to read it): Why didn't you just name the curly black-haired fella 'Chris' and the other guy 'Mike'? You would have saved me a lot of trouble and you wouldn't have a son with an identity crisis on your hands.*

*If you just read this note, shame on you, don't you have any respect for privacy?

wave our little red Coke cans (for shame Donald, this is the ecological age!).

A momentary salute to Sire Blyly (and tongue twister fans, you can try saying that a couple of times) who has been known as a good friend of this City of Lakes. We are more than happy to help in any way we can--and if I really meant that, I'd quit writing now. (Rumor has it that Donald intends to move here.....but that same rumor has spread in the past for Pecon Co-Chairman Larry Propp, for the far-flung Fred Lerner, and recently for Michael Dobson. Larry the lawyer and Lerner the Librarian, however, were dissuaded professionals who couldn't find suitable employment--will they ever? Hopefully Blyly and Dobson won't have as much trouble, being young and eager).

Note the desire, at least, that fans have to move here--and dedicated fans like Blyly and Young in the same club (wow! Power struggle!). Fans frequently drop in, witness the fact that both Dobson and Astrid Anderson were in the Twin Cities during Pecon (hosted by Lynn Torline and Ruth Berman--with Jim "The Rock" Young thrown in for variety, balance, and Astrid) coupled with (that's the pun I was setting up.....Yawn... other fan visits of the past (including Gale Burnick to me at New Year's) and you see what kind of people we are.

Loveable.

There's another word for it (Spelled p-r-o-m-i-s-c-u-o-u-s) that's not polite.

Anyway Fletch and I continued our history as refreshment icers and thanks to our improved technique--plus a metal ice scoop--escaped our usual frost-bitten, ice scraped raw hands.

Shortly, the imperturbable hero of the Battle of Bed Bumpercar, Larry Propp, Attorney at Law, arrived.

Blyly promptly fell into the role of inscrutable Charlie Chan playing a Stanislavsky-method role as a Ming vase.

You understand reader, that LP and I are kindred souls. Propp is Blyly's sidekick (you wondered how don got all those bruises?) as I used to think of myself and Jim Young.

Blyly and Young, and all you aspiring BNF's, you need us BMF's (big mouth fans) to add color, verve--nay let us be honest--balls to your well-planned conventions!

Tut! Blyly and Propp managed an excellent con as I will continue to show. (A final aside: Donald Blyly, you strike me as all too similar to Jim Young to take seriously! But Lawrence, take heed, they know our secret and if people like them quit doing what they do so well, people like us are 'a gonna have to do that necessary, tedious, piddly-shit work! Shocking thought? Yes, but we must be realistic, Larry.... even if such activity is beneath us.)

So, Propp showed up and we all went out to eat--thereby leaving the registration desk unmanned. Later he showed us his office (pointing out the stunningly stacked chick in an office down the hall) and impressed us by signing his name to some letters on his desk. JOY UNTOLD!

Gossip aside, there is no conflict at all between these two gentlemen. They divide convention duties equally between them. And Blyly does both halves.

Blyly is not a stingy man. He offers a share of drdgery, but Propp, in suave, sophisticated way declines. Thus, while Donald plays with boxes, cans, bags, and for Larry precociously counts and plays with the buttons on his innumerable double-breasted coats and blazers.

Are there those in fandom uncharitable to the point of denying the implicit merit of Larry Propp's practice of buttoning and unbuttoning his clothes?

Consider the awful predicament he would be in if he forgot how!

And then (plot complications) he meets a Nice Passionate Jewish Girl.....

The mind indeed boggles.

Bear in mind, too, that a classic Propp whisper-of-urgent-passions would run something like this:

"Why the hell don't you wear pullover sweaters and stretch pants?"

Now, now, don't accuse me of attacking ~~the indefensible~~ those not present to defend themselves. The next time we meet I'll have to pay this portly piper.

Semi-seriously, readers, You know what a drag it is when someone calls you by the wrong name--or even by a bothersome nickname like, say, "Marcus", which I can dig..... albeit wearily--so pay attention.

PERSONAL NOTE: MICHAEL, WHY DON'T YOU JUST WEAR YOUR GOD DAMNED NAME TAG!??

In lieu of that we get you drunk at Minicon and by heating twisted staples drawn from old issues of LOCUS, we brand an "M" on your forehead. This will get you one of three reactions:

- 1.) Recognition as Mike
- 2.) Misinterpretation as a modern Hester Prynne branded "M" (for guess what?) by the well-known sensitive citizens of St. Louis. or
- 3.) Just a lot of dumb fans standing around gaping at you, inspiring you to boast:

"So Superman has an "S" on his chest and I've got an "M" on my forehead--what's the difference?"

Naturally, only a comic fan would reply, sneeringly:

"Superman came from Krypton!"

Allowing you to administer the coup de grace:

"Aw, they just say that in comic books--you don't really believe that he did, do you?"

Take heart, Mike Couch, there are warriors among us who fight this battle no quarter asked, no change given, no IOU's taken.

Problem solved.

(And if this bit doesn't win me accolades and nominations for fan funny man at HUGO time, I'll personally throw every member of the Couch family into the Missouri river and retire to write bad, depressing poetry.....which is the only kind being published these days.)

Mike, like most of us, has a mother. Unlike most of us, his mother is a fan. And, in addition, one of the farthest out fans in the primary universe.

Her name is Leigh (or Mrs. Norbert Couch, depending on whether or not you pay any attention to Women's Lib).

She reminds me of Lauren Bacall. I am very fond of Lauren Bacall and have been ever since I saw Dark Passage, a flick she and Bogart made in 1945. I've been very fond of Leigh Couch ever since PECON 1971 (unlike Dark Passage, PECON 1971 will not be on late TV, soon or ever. If you missed it, tough shit, baby. Be a good fan and be at the next one.).

Lauren Bacall always had that non-braggy look of, "Man, I know everything you know and a hell of a lot besides." about her.

As does Leigh Couch. Even better, she strikes me as mischievously omniscient Kathrine Hepburn. (Now before I compare her to Liz Taylor, Vilma Banky, and Katherine Ross, I'll say you have to meet her to believe her--even then you might not.)

Essentially the woman is a delight. A true oasis in a world-wide desert of dry-to-the-point-of-incendiary personalities.

It seems I impressed Leigh with my ability to remain standing.....she having noted the amount of drink I downed. I made the decision before Pecon that I was going to drink drank drunk.

As I did.

Admirably.

It's all part of the ego trip and when I get on it I can swallow goldfish, snort Ovaltine, and watch firecrackers explode in my palm with no ill effect.

*Ibid.

Leigh endeared herself to me forever by referring to me from that point on as "indestructible".

I rather liked that.

The morning snuck upon us at 5 A.M. I took my leave.

Only to be confronted with the less-than-amusing prospect of sharing a bed with Randy & Holly.....who weren't quite through yet.

Passively I allowed them five minutes of bed tremors while we traded scathing banter, and then, (we will note it as "annoyed") in my best truck driver growl said to Powell:

"Shut up bastard or I'll hit 'choo ri' in da mout'.....an believe it kid, I'm da kinda cat dat really does dat kinda t'ing."

I'm not, of course, but I'm the kind of cat that really says that sort of thing.

The threat was effective, which was its point.

I mean, after all, there are limits to human endurance even if Powell was eloquent, living, quivering denial of that theory.

I thought I had more or less kept my voice down but the next day Leigh said, "So that was you screaming and swearing at everybody."

Screaming and swearing indeed!

Chiding children, no more.

Two hours later, I was awake.

And I still don't believe that!

Seven o'clock? Obviously it's P.M. No, the sun's coming from the east.....curious.....Of course! It's Sunday night and the Sun is in the wrong part of the sky. I am therefore in the Twilight Zone.

Truer words were never spoken. For most of the day I was in the Twilight Zone.

I took a shower and cursed the maids.

No towels.

Drying my large but not corpulent body with a washcloth was the kind of challenge unwanted at any hour.....and met with predictably limited success.

Shortly, enough of us collected in the parking lot to make breakfast noises-- (our minds snapped, our eyes popped, and our stomachs crackled).

And when I say our minds snapped, I really mean it. We made the same mistake fans will make throughout eternity.

We ate at a Pancake House.

This is my most graphic image of Hell: Seated before a table, feeling slightly woozy, staring at sticky brown syrup-puddle soaking into a fibrous yellow pancake.

Naturally, I ordered Blueberry pancakes.

And those evil blue dots stared back at me from the splits and cracks in the oozing mass.

Will any of us ever learn?

Returning to the Sands I thought of sleep--(anything to get my mind off that creeping horror I'd paid to eat)--which I didn't need then but, I thought, it may come in handy.

The sun was warm and gentle in the Illinois sky that morning and rather than return to the air-conditioned, occupied room, I secured permission to nap in Donald's car.

Ah, idyll! Ah, joy! Ah, respite!

I removed my boots, stretched once experimentally, folded my arms, closed my eyes, and settled into a cozy retreat.

Propp promptly bonked me on the head with a Frisbee.

In my mind I considered dropping him from a great height.

But!.....I'd been badgering him the day before to go play Volleyball at the "Y" this morn or somesuch insanity. Frisbee proved to be an equitable substitute. I was not really sleepy now anyway. Besides, would I ever admit to lack of energy before Propp? Never.

"Lawrence," I said, "You are old, decrepit, and wrinkled. And I am the spirit of youth incarnate. Your blood will cover this toy and flow through the lot like gasoline from a split tanker. Smile and meet your doom."

"Riley," he retorted indignantly, "Ignorance being bliss, you dwell in Fool's Paradise. Put your Frisbee where your mouth is, it will surely fit."

We glowered at each other and separated in the traditional 20 paces. It being his Frisbee he got off the first shot. And a vicious toss it was, slicing through the air with everything he had behind it.

Did I quail in fear? I did not. I laughed as it missed the rear window of a new Cadillac by a hre's breath.

Smugly confident, I retrieved it.

"Propp, you have the sense of direction of a blind man in a bowling alley."

I threw it back, like Oddjob's hat in Goldfinger, and would clearly have decapitated him had not a sudden wind cruelly whisked it 40 feet wide of it's target.

The Cheshire Cat had a smaller smile than Propp at that Moment.

"And you, Riley, have the accuracy of a palsied archer."

Keenly noticing my disadvantage in throwing uphill and into the wind, I complained

"Propp, your well-educated helium is untracking me."

"Riley, you're in your proper place. On a lower level than I."

"That is impossible, gracious Sabu, lowest of the low."

"Come now, Mark. Surely someone such as yourself, someone who has overcome the handicap of being born without a heart can handle the task throwing uphill."

"I'll do one handed, no less."

"You have not been doing well with two, perhaps you are right."

"I leap like a gazelle.....and see! Make the catch."

I bowed.

"You lumber like a 3 wheeled locomotive, and it got caught on your hangnail."

"You move like a crippled frog and require two hands to drink a glass of milk."

We were out for blood.

We got it.

Mine.

Full body weight descending on a piece of glass with my bare right foot.

"Lawrence, I am injured. I concede; bloody, beaten, and bowed."

Lawrence of Peoria victorious over the Minneapolis Madman! Never in the history of sport had such an upset occurred.

About this time sane people started waking up.

Leigh came out yawning. Injured, I nonetheless maintained steadfast cheerfulness and gaily sang out a morning greeting.

The look of incredulity on her face was classic.

"You're still alive???" she said without words.

The con came to life, everyone in our room left and I considered sleep again. But not in a 'used' bed. The maid, however, was not to be rushed.....45 minutes later she hadn't even been found. Lady desk clerk was sympathetic, told me to retire and she would call me at 12:30 as requested.

I bid the registration desk assemblage adieu, adjourned to my room and laid my body to rest.

But no such happy condition was in order.

I ask you, can man overcome the gods? Certainly. Can he cheat fate. On occasion. Can anybody survive--much less sleep through--the sonic onslaught of Peoria City Hall belling, chiming, and pealing out, in godawful muzak style, "April Showers?"

Ain't no way.

Ired, I called on Propp in his professional capacity.

"Dear friend, I am disraught. Your wonderful village deals me a dirty hand. Harken to that horrible noise. Sue them. We will charge the city's fathers with everything from paternity evasion to breach of the piece.....anything I can think of and you can spell."

The bastard laughed.

Finally I dressed for the panel discussion at the library.

Unfortunately I had missed out, the previous night, on the spectacle and furor created by the head librarian, who, apparently showed up, got plowed, and took on the whole room as some kind of no-holds-barred brawl.

But I sure heard about it.

The panel consisted of Bob Tucker, P.J. Farmer, Gordy, Joe Hensley and Gene Wolf. It was so typical it was memorable.

And the audience was more so. On cue the mass mind cheered Star Trek and booed Analog.

The former bothered me not in the least. Ever since I read Craig Reardon's ST blast in Castle of Frankenstein #14, I've re-considered the show and found it much less than I first judged it. I've been watching the re-runs daily on local TV for most of the past two months and now I can justifiably say Star Trek really was that bad. So an anti-Star Trek stand isn't a popular one to take. If you don't make enemies you'll die of boredom.

No, I'm not courageous.

But the fans who Booed Analog in that room are to be commended for their staunch bravery. Just and righteous they spoke out.

Delivering direct insult to Pecon's professional GoH, Gordon R. Dickson.

Yes, you assemblage of no-think artists, I praise your unbounded courage in showing your disapproval in the face of such overwhelming opposition.

I wonder if any of you ever mastered anything as difficult as table manners?

The point being, jackals, that in the context of that discussion your derision was aimed not John W. Campbell's editorials, but at the kind of FICTION he PUBLISHES. Right?

Right.

A man whose most recent work was at that moment on Peoria newstands in Analog.

And a man who has had many of his works published by Campbell, a man who was twice consecutively voted President of the SFWA by his fellow writers--the man who was PROFESSIONAL GUEST OF HONOR!--Gordon Dickson, out of courtesy and nothing else, remained on trial before you.

It was the trial of a kangaroo court by the soul-brothers of a lynch mob.

Fandom will have to go a long way to out-do itself in ever sinking that low again.

No, John Campbell was not there to receive your abuse, but that didn't stop you from making your "Honest, Gut Fellings" known, did it? But it's the kind of reaction that makes my gut react as it attempts to empty itself.

The contradiction is that gutless people can not have any gut reactions.

I actually looked for the excuse of ignorance, that you weren't aware of what you were doing, but it didn't wash. Unfortunatley you are science-fiction fans and deserve the name--as you most assuredly do not!--you have to know who's being published where.

You knew you were attacking Gordon Dickson and you didn't care.

Reprehensible? You don't even deserve that strong a label.

The word that describes you all--is "small".

If I've just made waves, fine.

A choppy lake clears its slime.

I was so pissed off in fact, that I headed back for the motel leading the pack (How appropriate here) and spoke very little until I had the chance to apologize to Gordy for your actions--and it seems I wasn't the only one to do so--then I got drunk again.

The magic cure-all for bad vibes.

As I oncesaid of the death of Minneapolis in '73 bid, "Pardon my sour grapes, just pass some fermented grape and it will go away."

The Saturday night party was truly unforgettable.

The black light, body painting people went to work and freaked everybody out with imagination, artistic skill, and willing canvasses.

I kept thinking I smelled grass, but I couldn't find it.

And here I owe fandom an apology.

I irritated, unbalanced and frightened a lot of people by "asking around". It is quite probable that that kind of stupid--and immature--behavior is what has made conventions dangerous places for grass.

I offer no defense at all.

But I am not a narc. If I get busted I never heard of you before, and you never of me. I learned my lesson, and I learned it well, in hearing some of the things people were saying about me.

I guess you'd just have to say I'm not cool. And that's demonstrably true. All I have is my honesty.....which is gleefully upsetting when unleashed in the presence of those who've done so much gassing about it the past few years.

Blunt honesty, like the blunt object, is potentially lethal.

Which is exactly why I dig it.

So I stayed with liquor, falling back on the Irishman's delight, John Jameson & son Irish Whiskey.

And the night rolled merrily onward.....

I remember staggering through the lobby, trying to hide the can of Bud someone had left with me, forgetting about concealing it, and taking a slurp. I then grinned at the night desk clerk, who grinned back as he watched me try to open the glass panel next to the door.

The Sands obviously appreciated our money, which is another point their favor.

A party had started in Gordy's room and by the time I found it the Hensley's were there, Propp and friend ("Lucia" from St. Louis?) and a whole bunch of other people.

When we got word Tucker was back, we kidnapped him.

Later Gordy and I tried to teach him some guitar, but I don't think he ever learned much.

Between the three of us the amount of alcohol consumed was enough to pickle a sumo wrestler.

And MR. TUCKER (he really hates that) was just starting.

I kept trying to set up a drink out with GRD, but we never got around to making it official. Which leaves me suspicious: I know damn well that wise old fox does not respond to the challenge of the cub.

Bob made a determined effort to catch up....and in the final analysis surpassed us both.

Skol, BT, and salutations.

There will never be a substitute for practical experience, I fear. Bob, you proved that Jim Beam in the proper hands, will out do Irish whiskey in youthful paws, or Scotch in the grizzled grip of the weary vet.

Gordy was frazzled (read that "weary") and in a moment he chose for "eye-rest" we tried to tiptoe out of his room. It was strictly eye-rest for he promptly opened them and protested. But we understood, Gordy, and you need not have feared any unkind remarks from us, for I am young and stupid, and Bob had only this night to be there and do it up right.



We moved on to the Couch room.

Bob and I laughed at each other a lot, but I don't remember any specific reason. But then, who needed one? That rosey glow in the room was not yet the rising sun.

At each successive pull on the bottle that weird SSMOOOOOOTHHH! burst from him. I regard Bob in awe and amazement, but that sound was like the battle cry of a bull.

To which I reply, "No contest."

Finally I reached the stage of resting my eyes--I do NOT pass out--and managed to rouse myself only when Norb Couch returned and, I believe he was referring to me, asked, "What's That?".

I bid the Couch clan "Good morning" and left. Sunday morning brought back that disassociated feeling of not being quite there and wishing it was true.

We ate across the street at a place I remember only because the one waitress-cook-and-cashier took forever to anything. I do not remember who 'we' were except that Lucia (?) was there.

Damn, I wish I could remember her name! I asked her, she told me, and I lost it. I'm sure she understands, but I hate forgetting anything, and names more than anything else.

Finished eating, I went back to the motel and a source of concern immediately dried up. I'd been wondering how to watch the CBS Hockey Game-of-the-Week and there

it was on TV.

In the lobby.

Lady desk clerk became one of the most beautiful creatures on earth when she told me SHE'D turned on the game, to watch it, because she was a hockey fan.

So there I sat, in full view of fandom assembled, flaunting my interest in this sport.

"But there's a convention on! There's an auction going on this very minute!"

"Maybe so, but this is the Stanley cup and the Black Hawks lead the flyers three games to none."

How do you communicate with a sports freak?

Between periods or not at all.....and not at all if they're showing Stars/Blues highlights between those periods.

I didn't say a final goodbye to anyone, being content to bask in the radiation of the 25" Color Screen (I'm stuck with a brilliant black-and-white 11"er of my own).

Veiled threats of being left behind (not much of a threat with the game on) finally penetrated.

And so we drove homeward.....

But as a last note, somewhere in Wisconsin, Fred accidentally hit the radio broadcast of the Stars/Blues game. I heard it most of the third period as Our Team came from behind 1-0 to win 2-1.

I make the point again:

With four speakers in the car, and a radio equipped to receive FM stereophonic sound, Fred let me listen to a crummy AM mono hockey game.

That, is true friendship.

And that concludes my story of the Pecon II experience.

The RUNE staff would like to remind its readers that these opinions do not reflect the opinions of the RUNE, its staff, management or sponsors. All LoC's concerning this article should be sent directly to the author: Mark Riley/ 4000 20th Ave. S./ Mpls, Minn. 55407. Thank you.

the editors

Yes, Tim, that is really me huh on the cover. When are you going to do a cover for me

FANZINE REVIEWS

LOCUS 82: A fairly good issue this time. Many note/newsworthy items included this time. It contains a listing of new novels out and some to come in the near future, plus items about Pro's, BNF's and not-so-BNF's. Good illos, but I've seen better. One gripe--Charly, you haven't reviewed a RUNE since #18. Get on the ball and review. Yourlist was not half as complete as it could have been. 2078 Anthony Avenue/Bronx, NY 10457.

RIVERSIDE QUARTERLY vol.4, #4: An excellent zine done completely off-set. It offers a little something for everyone. Leland Sapiro/Box 40 University Station/Regina, CANADA.

MICKY 8: An unusual zine. Those in Apa 45 and readers of Minneapolis based fanzines are familiar with John Kuskee's writing. Excellent illos by Ken Fletcher. I would recommend it to anyone tired of the usual stuff. Route #2/Hastings, Minn./ 55033.

YANDRO 201: Charles Brown was quite unfair in his rating of YANDRO. It is very well done and has excellent repro and art. Includes an excellent, witty article by Andy Offutt on Women's Lib, which is a must--no matter what your views. Bob Coulson/Route 3/ Hartford City, IN 47348.

Green Fandom #6: A fairly good zine. It would have been slightly better if she didn't spread her lettercol all over the zine, though. Good ditto ((I'll be glad to show how to use mimeo)) and very interesting. Linda Lounsbury/ Macalester College St. Paul, Minn. 55101.

KAZOO! 2: Very funny zine by KenFletch. Written and illustrated by Ken. General news of interest and mailing comments. Good ditto and fantastic off-set front and back cover. Ken Fletcher/ 1501 Breda Avenue/ St. Paul, Minn 55108.

Last Minute News

*Vaughn Bode's Deadbone Erotica is now on the bookstore's stands. A random sampling of the work done by him in the past. \$1.95, which is a very reasonable price for the well put together book. Highly recommended if you're a Bode freak.

*If you read the L.A. Free Press, (and who doesn't) The Collected Adventures of the Furry Freak Brothers is out. It includes many of the best including the The Heist, and Fat Freddy's Cat, plus other goodies. Really great.

Blue Petal is in the Hospital with some affliction that has affected the nerves on the left side of his face. A speedy recovery is wished by all the members of Minn-stf and good fans who know Blue.

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