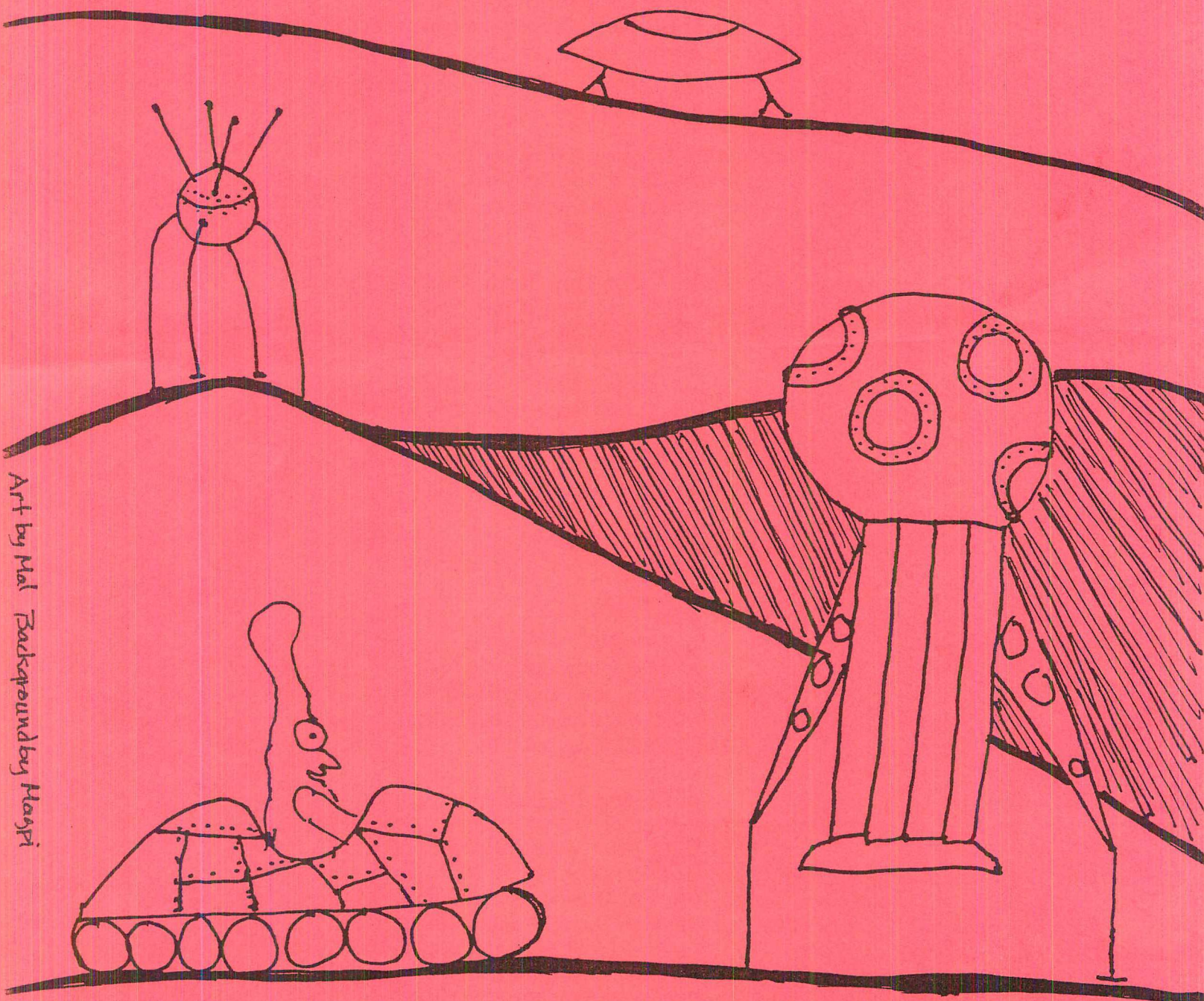


SFSFS SHUTTLE #126
the August/September 1996 issue



South Florida Science Fiction Society

P.O. Box 70143

Fort Lauderdale, FL 33307-0143



Shuttle #126 Manifest

- 2..... Manifest; Contributors' Listing; Club Officers; Department Heads; Legal Stuff
- 3..... Upcoming SFSFS Meetings
- 5..... Maggi's Editorial
- 6..... SFSFS General Meeting Recaps
- 7..... Members Directory Corrections; Area Code Change Reminder
- 8..... Request For Nominations For Next Year's Officers; Just When You Thought You Had It All
Memorized...scifi.maid.com became scifi.squawk.com
- 9..... Reason #29 For Why You Should Always Travel With At Least One Package of Dry Cereal...
a.k.a. Nick's Natto Novelette
- 10..... Book Reviews
- 12..... Things To Look Out For!; Bad SF Movies We Love
- 14..... The Further Adventures of Moe, Larry, and Curly a.k.a. Doing A Vulcon In Orlando
- 16..... SFSFS Membership Application: You are getting this Because
- 17..... Tropicon XV Flyer

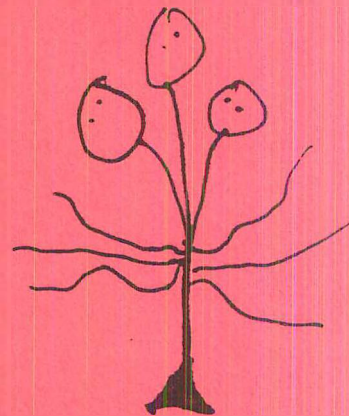
Contributors: Shirlene Ananayo, Peter Barker, Adam-Troy Castro, Carlos V. Perez Jr.,
Nick Siminich, Jack Weaver **ART CREDITS ON PAGE 18 [a.k.a. "the back page"]**

CLUB OFFICERS:

Chair: Joe Siclari, 561-392-6462 (Boca Raton); jsiclari@pbfree.net.seflin.lib.fl.us
Vice-Chair: George Peterson, 954-524-1274 (Ft. Lauderdale); z004406b@bcfree.net.seflin.lib.fl.us
Secretary: Shirlene Ananayo, 561-844-6336 (West Palm Beach); sananayo@umiamivm.ir.miami.edu
Treasurer: Peggy Ann Dolan, 305-532-8008 (Miami Beach); d005518c@dcfree.net.seflin.lib.fl.us

DEPARTMENT HEADS:

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 Ordering: Peggy Ann Dolan
 Small Press: Pete Rawlik
Book Discussion: Edie Stern & Joe Siclari 561-392-6462
Creative Writers' Group: Pete Rawlik 561-844-6336 (p.rawlik@genie.com)
Filk: Dina Pearlman 954-989-0290 (dinamite@safari.com) and Edie Stern
Library: Cindy Warmuth 954-987-9905 (z007793b@bcfree.net.seflin.lib.fl.us)
Media: Ericka Perdew 561-883-5126 (p028893b@pbfree.net.seflin.lib.fl.us)



Shuttle #127 Editor: Melanie Herz Deadline for submissions: 20 September 1996

SFSFS SHUTTLE #126 August/September 1996

The South Florida Science Fiction Society is a Florida non-profit educational corporation recognized by the Internal Revenue Service under Section 501(c)(3). General membership is \$15 per year for adults, \$1 for children (see form at the back of this issue for more details). Subscribing membership is \$12 per year. The views and opinions expressed in the SFSFS SHUTTLE are those of the authors and artists and not necessarily those of the publishers.

UPCOMING SFSFS MEETINGS

August General Meeting

Saturday, 17 August 1996, 2:00 p.m.

Location: Hallandale Library

Program: "Now that you've got it, how are you going to keep it?"
with Judi Goodman

Join us for an informative discussion with Judi on how to maintain collectibles in mint condition. If you don't think you have any (and I seriously doubt that there is anyone in this group who does not own at least one item) collectibles or don't realize that you do, don't worry...by the end of Judi's talk, you might realize that you own several!

Directions: Exit I-95 on Hallandale Beach Blvd and go east. At US 1 turn south and go 3 blocks. the library will be on the west side. 9554-457-1750.

Tropicon ConComm Meeting

Date: Saturday, 24 August 1996

Time: 2:00 p.m.

Location: tba

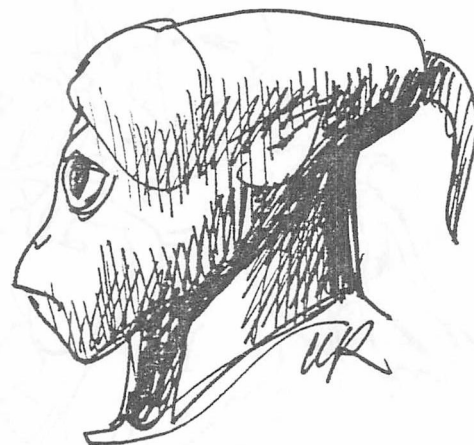
Please call George Peterson for more information.

Writers' Group Meeting

Date: Sunday, 25 August 1996

Time: 2:00 p.m.

Location: Inkwell House, 359 37 St.
West Palm Beach



Please note that this will be the last official meeting of the Writers' Group until Tropicon XV. For more information on the group or to get directions, please call Pete Rawlik at 561-844-6336.

September General Meeting

Date: Saturday, 21 September 1996

Time: 2:00 p.m.

Location: tha

Program: tba

We are in the process of arranging for a viewing of a videotape taken of a dramatic presentation that was done at a previous International Conference on the Fantastic in the Arts in Ft. Lauderdale.

Literary Discussion

Date: Saturday, 21 September 1996

Time: 2:00 p.m.

Location: Siclari/Stern Residence

Join us for a spirited discussion on the various works of our Guest of Honor, David Gerrold!
For directions, please call Joe Siclari at 561-392-6462.

October General Meeting: Saturday, 19 October 1996, 2:00 p.m.

Location: Hallandale Library

Program: Scandals in Fandom, part xiii
with Joe Siclari and Edie Stern

Just when you thought it was safe to return to general meetings...join us for another session on the stories behind the stories in fandom. A little dirt, a little titillation, a lot of laughter!

Directions: see August General Meeting.



November General Meeting

Saturday, 9 November 1996, 2:00 p.m.

Location: Imperial Point Library

Program: Paleoecology of Florida
with Pete Rawlik

A presentation on Florida's past from the view of your typical Lovecraft-lovin' environmental scientist. Sure to be full of theories that you're welcome to dispute!

Directions: Take I-95. From north, exit at Cypress Creek Rd. Go east and take a right onto US 1. Library will be on the right side of the road. From south, exit at Commercial Blvd and take a left onto US 1. Library will be on the left side of the road. You can park at the shopping plaza next to the library. 954-492-1800.

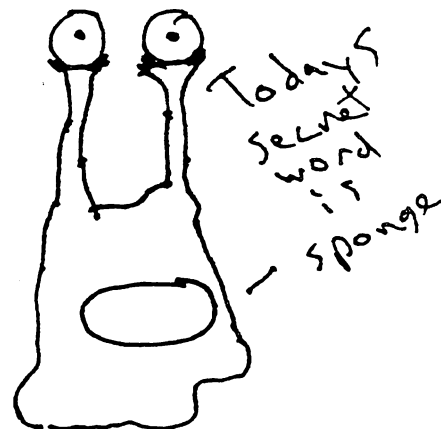
December General Meeting

Date: to be decided/announced

Time: to be decided/announced

Location: to be decided/announced

In December our General Meeting is actually a dinner gathering. We need both a location and a date in December when all interested parties will be available to meet. If you know of any good, inexpensive or moderately priced restaurants in your area that also have a separate room for large parties to gather (traditionally, the before, during, and after-dinner games and conversation tend to get loud and boisterous). Please let Shirlene Ananayo (yours truly) know of any places and available dates so that she...err, I mean "I" can start the ball rolling to reserve the location!





MAGPI'S EDITORIAL

Welcome one and all to the August/September 1996 issue of the *SFSFS Shuttle*! Through a strange quirk of fate, poor time management, and a peculiar juxtaposition of the planets, I have managed to churn out another slightly late issue. There aren't enough good reasons in the world to explain this one...and if there are any, I suspect that we (the collective of editors who have ever edited the *Shuttle*) have used them all already.

Instead, I will sing the praises of the chuckle-inducing gems to be found in this issue. No, I'm not referring the SFSFS General Meeting Recaps, gentle reader. I'm talking about: the reprint of Nick's e-mail report on natto (an unappealingly described breakfast food in Japan that probably explains why every Japanese individual I've ever met has been quite thin!); Carlos' verbose report on his pilgrimage to Orlando to see Kate "Captain Janeway" Mulgrew; and Adam's book review on *Resume With Monsters* that makes one wonder which is stranger, the man who would write a book full of Lovecraft-based mythos references, or the individual who would read the same novel? I promise that at least one thing you read in this issue will cause you to chuckle/grin/giggle/laugh out loud. If nothing tickles your funny bone even a little bit, please contact me as soon as possible and I'll arrange for my cousin, Salvatore, to visit with you and show you something that will be sure to evoke the aforementioned promised response.

Do you know how challenging it is to wear multiple hats in SFSFS? I'm sure some of you do, since I'm not the only one who has more than one responsibility in SFSFS. And, I'll admit that it's been fun. I will also admit that it leads to burnout. I don't mean to whine about it and I am not going to. Instead, I am going to challenge those of you in SFSFS who have been hanging back and not volunteering to do things for fear that SFSFS is really being run by a group of megalomaniacs who love to do everything without giving anyone else a chance [well...okay, maybe George Peterson fits into this category...but not the rest of us! I'm kidding by the way, George! I don't think you're a megalomaniac...<WEG>]. We would love to have everyone actively participating in SFSFS. As head of the Nominating Committee [my newest hat, number #5, do you like it?], I am looking for folks willing to volunteer to serve the club (and, after reading the description of the offices, if you think that you would be willing to run for one of them, let me know!). We don't just need folks for the four major board positions. We also need folks who would be willing to do things like coordinate and/or think of programs that we could have at future meetings. Joe and Edie are great folks, but they live the same 24/7 that we do and they are beginning to reach the bottom of their collective barrel as far as program ideas. If you live in Dade or Palm Beach and think that we should have meetings in those counties, then you should take the initiative and arrange for a meeting space for the club in one of those counties. Do you like film? Volunteer to head up that department. Dina and Edie wouldn't mind, so long as you are willing to coordinate times, dates, and locations for film gatherings. SFSFS is something that we should all be getting something out of. Come to meetings and get to know your fellow members. Let's get to know the face behind the names that show up on membership lists! If you have questions about something, ask a club officer. We'd be glad to answer your questions. Have an idea for a program idea or want to volunteer to do a program on something that you think others would be interested in, let us know. Help us to celebrate the diversity of interests and specializations that exist within the group!

Oh, this does extend to the *Shuttle* as well. Turn in items that you want to see in the *Shuttle*. Read a good book that got you excited or thinking? Share that with us. Seen a movie or television show that you think needs to be discussed. Send that in as well. In addition to being a source for information for the club, the *SFSFS Shuttle* should be a forum for SFSFS members to express themselves. And, if you don't send something in, then the same five or six folks are going to continue doing it [expressing themselves, that is]. So I don't want to hear any complaints about one-sided opinions or anything like that. Okay, I will admit that everything that is sent in will not be used immediately...but it will be held onto. And, if the fates are kind, I might be able to promise that the editor will send you a postcard to let you know that your submission was received.

In any event, I hope that you enjoy this issue of the *Shuttle*. If you don't, Salvatore will be knocking on your door! Take care, have fun, and enjoy yourself!

SFSFS GENERAL MEETING RECAPS

The May Meeting was held on the 18th at the Imperial Point Library. Due to a family emergency, George Peterson was unable to give his intended presentation. Luckily, Judi Goodman and Pete Rawlik were able to step in and give an informative presentation on the works of both our Guest of Honor, David Gerrold, and Toastmaster, Peter David, of Tropicon XV.

During the Business portion of the meeting, a recap of the Board Meeting was given:

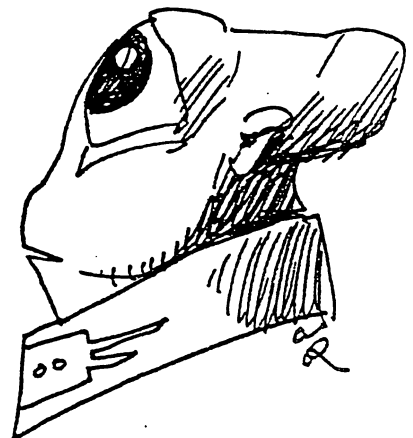
- a breakdown of the current membership was given by the Secretary (33 Regulars, 36 General, 1 Child, 2 Subscribing, 22 Honorary, 3 Complimentary);
- the club's application for the special non-profit bulk mail permit is still being worked on by the Secretary;
- the Book Division announced it's intention to expand service in the areas of small press, video, audio, and comics;
- the Chairman announced that door prizes would be given out at every general meeting and everyone who attended would be eligible to win. Donations for future door prizes were requested;
- the formation of the Nominating Committee of Shirlene Ananayo, Edie Stern, and Melanie Herz was announced. They will be gathering nominations from the membership for next year's SFSFS officers. Interested parties should contact them; and
- the Travelling Fete Chair announced the rates for the Fete to be \$25 for membership, \$20 (or less) for the banquet; and \$75 (or less) for the room.

Condolence cards for George Peterson (his grandmother passed away) and James White (upcoming Worldcon in LA GoH who was ill) were passed around for signatures. Upcoming meetings were also announced.

The June Meeting was held on the 15th at the Borders Bookstore in Coral Springs. Edie Stern, George Peterson, Paul Edwards, Joe Siclari, and Fred Bragdon gathered together to give a presentation on the Hugo and Retro Hugo nominations. One of the best parts of the presentation was watching the panelists sneak off to pull "visual aids" from the science fiction/fantasy/horror section of the bookstore and prop them up on the table for folks to see!

The Business portion of the meeting was brief. Janet Sorenson and Gerry Adair both renewed their memberships [hurrah!]. We also welcomed a new member, Alex Hochberger. The Media Research Event Head announced that a viewing of Independence Day was being planned and would be posted on line. Edie Stern announced that the filk committee was accepting both suggestions and donations for a possible filk guest at Tropicon XV. The final rate for the Travelling Fete hotel, Quality Inn-Key West, was announced. Joe mentioned that everyone should bring "blow-up dolls". After the laughter had died down, he corrected himself and said "pool toys". The Tropicon Chair gave an update on Tcon XV. It will be held at the Doubletree Hotel (same location as Tcon XIV) and rates are \$79/night, single or double and \$89/night, triple or above occupancy. The membership rate will be \$23 until October 25. Afterwards and at the door, the membership will be \$28. The banquet will be \$24.

The July Meeting was held on the 20th at the Imperial Point Library. George Peterson did an updated presentation on the Single-Stage-To-Orbit rockets currently being researched and developed. He showed some video footage on a various experiments done with the DC-X. During the Business portion, the upcoming meetings and programs were announced. Additionally, members were asked to contact George Peterson if they could think of any other places to advertise future meetings. Joe Siclari also requested that any donations for door prizes should be donated to him. Various meetings were announced.



MEMBERS DIRECTORY CORRECTIONS

Please note that there have been several changes/ corrections/additions to the membership directory that appeared in the last *SFSFS Shuttle*.

Official Name Change

Ericka Perdew is now, officially "Ericka Barker", due to her recent marriage to fellow SFSFS member Peter "Mal" Barker. Congrats!

New E-mail Addresses

Peter Barker: p028893b@pbfreenet.seflin.lib.fl.us
John Fast: caliban@gate.net
Dave Lyman and clan: dlyman@earthlink.net
Dina Pearlman: dinamite@safari.com

Address Corrections

Janet Sorenson's correct address is:
1540 Shell Point Road
Crawfordville FL 32327
(904)926-9428
jan60448@aol.com

Bruce Feldman's correct address is:
3161 Holiday Springs Blvd. #14
Margate, FL 33063

Misplaced Members

[aka the folks I forgot to add to the list]

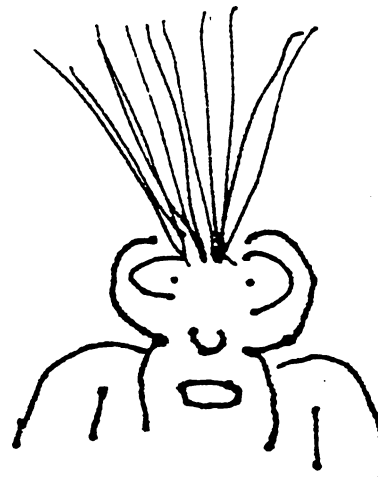
Miriam Gan (G)
2415 Sagemont Drive; Brandon, FL 33511
813-661-0760; m.gan@genie.com

Charles Fontenay (H, GoH Fete 3)
1708 20th Ave. N, Apt C;
St. Petersburg, FL 33713

Renewed/New Members:

Gerry Adair
132 Saratoga Blvd E
Royal Palm Beach, FL 33411
gadair5062@aol.com

Alex Hochberger
305 NW 111 Ave
Coral Springs, Fl 33071
scorpion@pinecrest.edu



AREA CODE CHANGE REMINDER

Just a friendly reminder that several area codes in South Florida are in the process of changing. The new area code for Broward County has changed from 305 to 954. The new area code for Palm Beach County has changed from 407 to 561. The old area code for Broward County is now officially inactive. In other words, if you try to call it, an electronic voice will come on to inform you that the area code has changed and that you have to re-dial. The old area code for Palm Beach County is still usable, but will become inactive by Jan or Feb of 1997. Some of the area codes were listed correctly in the last issue, but some were not, this is the list of the ones that were not corrected:

Broward County 305 = > 954

Louise Auerhahn	Dwight Douglas
Ahava Drazin	John Fast
Bruce Feldman	Geraldine Giorgianni
Nunzio Giorgianni	Bruce Konigsberg
Randall Russ	Jack Weaver

Palm Beach County 407 = > 561

Shirlene Ananayo	Susan Andrews
Elaine Ashby	Ericka Barker
Peter "Mal" Barker	Bob Ewart
Dan Foster	Doyle Green
Dave Lyman	Deanna Lyman
Alex Lyman	Beth Lyman
Glenn Meganck	Cynthia Plockelman
Carol Porter	Pete Rawlik
Joe Siclari	Dan Siclari
Edie Stern	Deb Siminich
Nick Siminich	Stuart Ulrich

REQUEST FOR NOMINATIONS FOR NEXT YEAR'S OFFICERS

It's that time of year again. We, on the Nominating Committee [Shirlene Ananayo, Edie Stern, Melanie Herz], are in the process of putting together a slate of prospective club officers. We are also looking for folks interested in heading up the various departments within SFSFS. Listed below are the descriptions of the responsibilities for each of the offices, taken from the by-laws of SFSFS. If you are interested in any of them, please feel free call or e-mail your interest [our phone numbers and e-mail addresses are listed on page 2]. Thanks!

11. Officers' responsibilities in accordance with descriptions discussed at the September 1990 Board of Directors meeting are:

Chairman: Member of the Board of Directors

- Legal agent, responsible for the filing of legal reports
- Responsible for meeting activities and agenda
- Responsible for Programs
- Responsible for Liaison with other groups

Vice-Chairman: Member of the Board of Directors

- Responsible for special events
- Responsible for Discount Programs
- Responsible for Publicity
- Responsible for Chairman's duties when Chairman not present
- Responsible for membership development

Secretary: Member of Board of Directors

- Prepares postal reports
- Responsible for minutes of Board and regular meetings and attendance records
- Responsible for correspondence
- Responsible for membership records
- Responsible for Newsletter/meeting notices
- Responsible for Publications
- Responsible for Mailing lists

Treasurer: Member of Board of Directors

- Responsible for Financial records and reports
- Responsible for Collection of Dues and dues notices
- Prepares tax and legal reports

JUST WHEN YOU THOUGHT YOU HAD IT ALL MEMORIZED... **SCIFI.MAID.COM BECAME SCIFI.SQUAWK.COM**

Due to circumstances that are best left to individual imaginations, the e-mail addresses for the various distribution lists used by SFSFS have changed. Everything that was previously "scifi.MAID.com" is now "scifi.SQUAWK.com". Everyone who was already on the old distribution list has been shifted over to the new list. If you have any burning questions regarding this, or did not pay attention to Nick's e-mail regarding the name switch, you can e-mail your inquiry to yours truly at sananayo@umiamivm.ir.miami.edu. And, before you ask, Nick said that "squawk" is the sound that a parrot makes...okay?

REASON # 29 FOR WHY YOU SHOULD ALWAYS TRAVEL
WITH AT LEAST ONE PACKAGE OF
DRY CEREAL...A.K.A. NICK'S NATTO NOVELETTE

From: SFSFS-DISCUSS@SCIFI.SQUAWK.COM

Sub: Breakfast in Japan

I'm in Japan for a week or two, working on the Olympics project for IBM. They will have a shadow of the main Olympics server here in the far east at Keio University.

So, like, I'm staying at a businessman's hotel here in the small town near Keio, about 100 clicks (as the crow flies, according to my GPS) from Narita (where the airport is), across Tokyo. N 35D, 23.850', E 139D 27.911'.

<section excerpted to protect the sanity of the innocent> The most disgusting Japanese food, to a westerner, that we had ever run across was Natto, which is seemingly made from soybeans which have been allowed to go bad, which are then covered in mucus (and, to be authentically Japanese, mold, as I learned).

So, I'm trying to lose a little weight. One thing I'm doing is ordering Japanese food, which supposedly is lower in fat and calories.

So last night, I ordered a Japanese breakfast in advance. I was warned that there would be no place else to get breakfast on Sunday morning.

When I went down to the eatery in the hotel, I presented my ticket, and sure enough got breakfast. It consisted of a bowl of rice, a grilled fish, some pickles, some seaweed, and, of course, a small packaged bowl of natto.

I picked at the other stuff, eating slowly, when the waitress came over and informed me that, well, the drift I think I got was that I should have eaten the natto first, and wasn't I happy with my breakfast? How come I didn't dig right into the natto? Didn't I know I was supposed to eat that first?

Now, many of you have heard the Robin William's sketch, where the Japanese are talking about how to get rid of the unwanted westerners who have wandered into their restaurant. Extending it slightly:

"My God! They ate the RAW FISH! What can we do now?"

"I know, let's serve them this cheap hot wine I use for cleaning!"

"They drank the hot wine! They want more! They must have no taste at all!"

"I've got some spoiled soybeans here. They are all slimy. No one could eat that."

The spoiled, slimy soybeans are natto.

And here I thought I was going to mortally affront this waitress if I didn't eat the natto.

It was packaged appropriately: In a single use cup, with a top layer of plastic in case the underneath layer ruptured, and some little condiments (please - give me anything to make this taste a little less like natto) and then a bottom layer. I peeled off the plastic, and dumped the condiments in and stirred at it vaguely, dispersing the covering coating of mold. I thought of all of the odd things that westerners eat: McDonalds, fermented cheese with mold, and so forth. Nothing quite approaches natto. I thought of not eating it. The waitress was still waiting. If I didn't eat it, she might do something odd, like go off in the corner and commit suicide. Did I want her to commit suicide?

It was close, but I ate it. The waitress relaxed and went away. You know, it was just as bad as I remembered. But after eating the natto, let me assure you: I was as awake as if I had drunk two strong espressos.



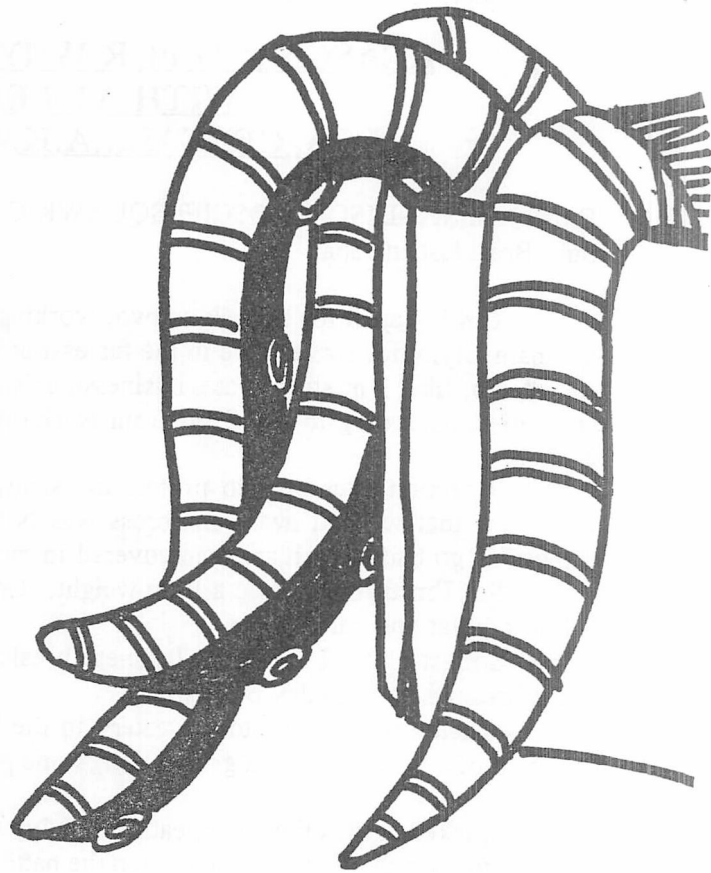
BOOK REVIEWS

Resume With Monsters
by William Browning Spencer

Wouldja believe a funny Lovecraft novel? Wouldja believe a funny Lovecraft novel about corporate America? Wouldja believe a funny Lovecraft novel that takes the time to spoof the idle chatchat at academic gatherings? Or the terror of job interviews? Or the awfulness of baby-boomer movies?

That's *Resume With Monsters*, by William Browning Spencer, the tale of a poor shmegggege [darn it, Adam, you used that word on purpose so that I would have to pay really close attention to my typing, didn't you?] who has never been able to make it in the business world, in part because he finds daily employment pointless and demeaning but also because he's happened to run into evidence that the stultifying boredom of most office jobs is a deliberate plot of the Lovecraftian Elder Gods. Indeed, that's why he left his old position as an executive of Megacorp, and why he's now working at a resume center for a living. Of course, since he also happens to be writing a long and impenetrable Lovecraftian novel, everybody thinks he's crazy. Maybe he is; even if he isn't imagining the shuggoths he keeps seeing behind the water cooler, he does have a strange way of trying to warm his way back into his old girlfriend's graces...

The Lovecraftian element remains in the background for the majority of the book. Though labelled horror, *Resume With Monsters* derives most of it's power from it's hilarious satirical view of life in the latter part of the twentieth century, a baffling nightmare of crazy co-workers, billable hours, and motivational leaflets that say things like, "You may not be important, but you work for somebody who is." Indeed, it contains a couple of perfectly realized demeaning job interviews that are substantially more horrifying than the tentacled thingies in the basement (best of those being the one where our hero makes the mistake of telling his potential employer that he's a published author; his ego is not only trampled upon, but chewed up, spit out, and burned). It's also filled with lots of neat observational stuff that may not have much to do with the plot but just happen to be there because the author happened to think



of them -- stuff that merits a laugh out loud about every two pages or so. Take our hero's puzzled reaction to a current bestseller somebody's given him to cheer him up. The book, synopsized in detail, is clearly a subsequent work by the author of *The Bridges of Madison County*, and our hero has absolutely no idea what to make of it. Is it supposed to be funny? A genuine love story? The ravings of a diseased mind? Or a work of fiendish terror in the tradition of Stephen King? The riddle bothers him for several pages, even more than Chthulu does. As well it might.

Resume With Monsters is almost unclassifiable. It's Lovecraft connection got it labelled as horror, but it's more like the comic strip *Dilbert* as filmed by Tim Burton. Whatever it is, it's also a terrific, hilarious, unclassifiable read, and should unnerve anybody who ever saw a pitiless creature from before the dawn of time lurking behind the eyes of Mr. Feeney from payroll.

--Reviewed by Adam-Troy Castro

The Truth Machine

by James L. Halperin

ISBN 9651041-0-9

IvyPress

\$19.95 Hardcover

Mr. Halperin's first foray into Science Fiction, indeed his first novel of any kind, follows the life of Randall Peterson Armstrong from the mid-1990s to 2052. Armstrong, or Pete as he prefers to be called, is a scientific genius with a photographic memory who is the driving force behind the development of the Armstrong Cerebral Image Processor (ACIP), the Truth Machine. The ACIP is a lie detector that can, with 100% accuracy, detect deliberate lying in 98% of the population and positively identify the remaining 2%, those individuals that have no sense of truth.

Full of richly detailed descriptions of the people and events that affect Pete's life and his path towards his goal, and the effect that Pete and his ACIP have on the people in his immediate circle and on the world in general, the story traces his rise to prominence and wealth and his final fall from grace.

We first meet Pete, or Petey as he is called by his younger brother Leonard, when he is about five years old. That he is an unusually intelligent child and has been blessed, or cursed, with total recall is obvious from the beginning. The kidnapping of Leonard by a recently released inmate of the state prison, which Petey witnesses, and Leonard's subsequent murder have a profound effect on Petey's life and is a major factor in shaping his destiny.

Most of the book is purportedly written in the year 2050 by an Intell 22g CP-TLMos (22 billion instructions per microsecond contextual processor) especially designed for reporting. One of the things that I particularly enjoyed about the book is that each chapter begins with the location and date of the action and a brief sampling of the major events of the time. This technique, and the fact that there are no flash backs or strange jumps from hither to yon, makes for an easy to follow story that held my interest from start to finish.

Another thing that, for me at least, makes for a engrossing story is the presence of characters that I can feel for. Characters that, in another life, I might like to be. The Truth Machine is rich in such characters and they are, in my opinion, painted in sufficient detail that you feel that they might exist in reality not just in the author's imagination. There are a number of people that I found easy to like and also several that it was easy to hate. The meat and potatoes of all good yarns.

Whether or not Mr. Halperin's crystal ball is accurate we must leave to history to decide. Whether or not you believe that the near future that he envisions is desirable, that, of course, is up to you to decide. There was only one of the future events that he predicts that I had a problem with. The idea that troubled me was that politicians would stand still, even encourage, the creation of a Truth Machine in the first place. All of the rest of his ideas seemed to me to be straight forward extrapolations of many current trends or reasonable predictions of what might come to pass in our world.

-- Reviewed by Jack Weaver



THINGS TO LOOK OUT FOR!

Congratulations to Gail Bennett, Tcon XI Fan GoH, on the sale of her first album cover. Gail sold a painting that was used as the album cover for *Legacy*, an album by Derek Hatfield.

Also, congratulations to former Tcon guest and SFSFS member, Sarah Clemens. She has just sold a story to *Asimov's* called "Red". We are not sure yet as to the exact issue that it will be published in, but we are very proud of her.

And, in case you didn't already know, we have a resident up-and-coming writer and all-around nice guy in our midst. Adam-Troy Castro has sold several short stories and was recently nominated for a World Horror Award (which he lost to Stephen King). He will be having another cover story in *Fantasy & Science Fiction* in an upcoming issue.

BAD SF MOVIES WE LOVE

by Peter Barker

The Corpse Vanishes

If you put Bela Lugosi in front of a camera you are bound to come out with an enjoyable screen gem. Bela's acting abilities often give one the most unusual insights to the character he portrays.

The Corpse Vanishes allows Bela Lugosi to exercise his oddball acting talents to their fullest. Bela was, of course, one of the top Hungarian matinee idols of his day, and his extravagant acting style here at times seems as though he is trying to pull this movie out of the "B" movie basement by sheer force of will. According to the critics he gives one of his most chilling mad scientist performances in this movie.

Besides Lugosi there is Angelo Rossetti. Most people do not recognize this name, but on spotting him in a picture will point and shout, "Hey! It's that dwarf guy! What else has he been in?" This film is a regular tour de force for Rossetti, who gets to creep through spooky dark corridors, carry luggage up long flights of stairs, and open doors. He even gets a heart wrenching death scene.

Aside from Rossetti there is a house full of other weird looking creatures. You just can't find quality creepy actors like them any more. Watching them hulk about on screen is enough to make the movie.

The Corpse Vanishes is ostensibly about a perky gal reporter hot on the trail of a story about pretty, healthy young brides who mysteriously die - then disappear - on their wedding day. The reporter bears a passing resemblance to Rosalind Russell in *His Girl Friday* and tries - really tries - to imitate her clipped, hard-boiled manner of speaking. On catching sight of her and a few other details you will rapidly come to the conclusion that who ever wrote the screen play saw *His Girl Friday* perhaps one too many times.

Needless to say, the reporter's boss thinks she is wasting her time and ought to be more concerned with the society column than a string of suspicious deaths and disappearances. This seems to be an attitude familiar to anyone who's ever seen a movie about journalists. One would think that such an editorial policy in real life would result in a circulation lower than the number of producers who think



it would be a good idea to star Madonna in their next film. Then again an attitude like this could help explain the *Sun-Sentinel*.

Our girl Friday develops a theory about the brides that leads her to the spooky house of Bela Lugosi, who we already know is behind the disappearances. He sends the brides orchids which, when worn, render them into a cataleptic state. Then he pretends to be the mortician and spirits the bodies away to his remote house. He needs the young bodies of the brides to keep his eighty year old wife young. Once at the house, Bela takes an excruciating five minutes to don a surgical gown over his three piece suit. He's an amazing meticulous man and you must give him credit for plunging forward in his slow methodical manner even though his wife is rapidly aging to oblivion moaning all the while. At the same time his assortment of freakish assistants hop around impatiently as if they need to go to the bathroom but Lugosi won't give them the key. What concentration that man has! "Hurry! HURRY!" cries the woman aging away to dust. Bela will not be flustered. Once the lab coat is securely on, he sets to with a syringe and his trademark hand flourishes. Soon the deed is done. The wife instantly becomes young and super model thin. Only her body grows younger. The woman's mind stays firmly in crotchety old lady mode which manifests itself throughout the film.

The story continues to unfold as the plucky woman reporter delves deeper into the mystery. Eventually she solves it and justice is done. What movie with a plucky reporter could end otherwise?

Every time I see this movie I'm in awe of Lugosi's complete methodicalness at putting on that gown. While other mad scientists would be rushing around in a panic, Bela is an ice berg. The sheer chutzpah of Lugosi's character is astounding. Even after the police have him all figured out and set traps to stop him, somehow he manages to snatch another bride. The man is an unstoppable juggernaut of evil deeds. At one point he even demonstrates how spry he is by carrying a body down a flight of stairs. Now there's a true actor!

The entire movie is filled with a mosaic of moments which make the film a classic. The complete insanity of how people behave often leaves one gasping in appreciation. At one point this simpleton hunchback is pursuing Rosalind Russell- I mean the woman reporter - down a dark hallway. In one gnarled hand this mishappened creature of horror and fear holds a candle. In the other hand- gasp - he holds a turkey leg which he gnaws on with as much gusto as King Henry the Eighth.

With so many brides in the movie, guess who gets bitten by the marriage bug? The female reporter. Here she is so gung-ho to be a professional but she catches sight of a wedding dress and goes all goofy. In the course of her adventures she meets this doctor, who seems to find nothing wrong with helping the mad doctor Lugosi conduct medical experiences even though he is not licensed to practice in this country, and the two are married.

Ah, but what do you expect for a cheap quick movie such as this? It has a charming quality to it. The dwarf and the other inhabitants of the house have a horrific element you cannot find in today's films. There's a touch of the movie *Freaks* or *White Zombie* in it. Nothing modern can hope to capture that.

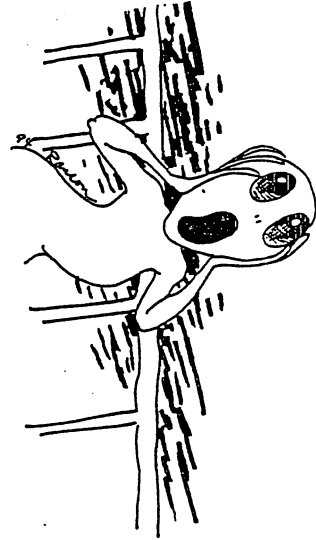
All in all, this movie is as entertaining as it is inept. It confirms once and for all that Bela Lugosi was one of the strangest actors to ever gain widespread recognition. *The Corpse Vanishes* is also in the public domain, and so should be easy to find either on late night TV or amongst the three dollar videos at your local drugstore. Why waste your time going out to the expensive theaters when you can sit at home learning how a real mad scientist puts on a lab coat!

THE FURTHER ADVENTURES OF MOE, LARRY, AND CURLY A.K.A. DOING A VULCON IN ORLANDO

by Carlos V. Perez, II

It was straight out of a Three Stooges short with me, Melanie, and Judi as Moe, Larry, and Curly. After five plus hours of driving between Miami and Orlando (only one plus for Melanie as we picked her up in Melbourne), we arrived at the Altamonte Springs Hilton. We arrived in the pouring rain only to find there was no parking. Apparently some unlucky girl was having her *Bas Mitzvah* opposite the Star Trek convention. Add to this the fact that the guest was the ever elusive Kate Mulgrew, Captain Janeway from *Star Trek: Voyager*, who only does two or three conventions a year. Attendance would be well over a thousand. The ingredients were all there.

After dropping off the luggage and being double parking in the hotel loading zone for some time, Melanie and I went to a nearby Kinko's to make copies of the Tropicon XV flyer. After all that's one of the reasons we were there: to drum up membership for Tropicon. We had brought up some flyers with us from South Florida but, suffice it to say, it just wouldn't have fit the Three Stooges theme if there wasn't a snafu on the flyer. That's all I'll say on that. Since it was so humid from the rain, the copier that we used (it's cheaper if you do it yourself) kept getting paper jams. The self-serve counter doohickey they gave us just kept counting up and up and up . . . I had worked at Kinko's before so the jams weren't really a problem but the Wally Cox of copying came over to see if we were OK. I mentioned my former life as a Kinko's employee and said we were fine. There followed a surreal discussion of copier mechanics and weather phenomenon. Melanie watched me drowning the whole time and didn't bother throwing me a life preserver. *Why I aughta* . . . The cashier looked at us as if we were crazy or he was stoned as explained why the counter showed more copies than we made. Maybe I should have poked his eyes out or slapped him. Moe would have.



There was parking when we got back to the hotel -- across the street and half a block down. It was still raining but luckily I keep a giant golf umbrella in the back seat. Unluckily, I left my keys in the car, but I didn't know it yet.

Rejoined with Judi, we entered the convention area. Three quarters of our flyers found a home on the freebies table. It was a tight squeeze but we managed to make room for them without obstructing any others.

With our main mission complete, we waded into the sea of humanity that was milling in and about the hallways. It was still four hours before Mulgrew would appear so the masses needed something to do. Dave MacDonald, editor of *Starlog Magazine*, was doing a lightly attended presentation on upcoming films in the main ballroom. I guess the masses don't like new movies.

Instead, they were milling about the hotel hallways and lobby like Flying Trekkie Dutchmen (or Flying Trekker Dutchmen, if you prefer) with no purpose or destination. We dog paddled towards the dealers room and found the motherlode. People were crammed in shoulder to shoulder, no-one entering until someone exited, no-one moving until the person in front of you did. The heat was incredible. It had a tangible presence in that room, one that would grab you by the throat and choke you until you passed out. It was as if the available oxygen in the room was being sucked in by all these bodies. I stayed outside while Melanie and Judi risked life and limb to see if they could find hot and sweaty dealers who would be willing to take tables at Tropicon.

While I waited, I went back to the freebies table to see how we were doing on flyers. It had only been a few minutes but then there was nothing else to do except wait and see if Judi and Melanie returned alive. Our flyers had been moved and were now covered, thanks to some people running another Florida convention who shall remain nameless. (Ask me if you really want to know.) I uncovered and moved the flyers back. And so began what was to be our main preoccupation throughout the whole weekend: making our flyers visible. Every time we went

by the table, our flyers were moved and hidden. Every time we went by we uncovered and moved them. By the time the two women had re-surfaced for air from the dealer's room, we had to move the flyers again.

Mulgrew came on at 3 p.m. and was spectacular. For over an hour she talked about many things, but she kept coming back to two points-- acting and family. She came across as an actor who is very passionate about her work but is even more passionate about her two young sons. There was one thing that really set her off -- a question about Captain Janeway's hair. She feels that if she were a man, there would be no discussion of her hair. I think it's finally refreshing to have a captain on *Star Trek* with hair. At the hotel bar, later that night, I was discussing this with a few of my Starfleet, Klingon, Federation, Bajoran, and whatever-other-*Star-Trek*-club your mind can imagine friends when I found out about the *ping*! factor. They don't discuss the captain's hair styles but the fact that it goes *ping*! An example:

Janeway becomes slightly decoified after the Kazon shoot up the Voyager. A lock of her hair tumbles across her face. Now watch as the camera angles change and the lock *pings*! back into place only to *ping* back out when the original angle is resumed.

You can also play a drinking game where you drink every time there is a *ping*! Some episodes you don't drink at all, others you don't remember what happened the next morning.

I was ready to ask Mulgrew during her talk about the salamander babies that her character had with Tom Paris in the warp 10 episode (don't ask me to remember titles, there are just too many -- remember when there were only 79 and you could do this?) and the captain's cavalier attitude towards all this. I had been ready to ask her this question since I found out she would be appearing in Orlando. It was just one of those wacky situations and reactions that the writers of *Voyager* are becoming famous for. However, some little 10-year-old punk stole my question. *I should have mertalized him*. He got the warm and amusing response that I was seeking. She had also had her problems with that episode. With five minutes left in the presentation I scrambled for a new and hopefully funny question. With my new question in mind, I raised my hand and I was picked!

"What's with the um... uh..." Damn! I had forgotten those stupid aliens' name in my haste to get a question. *D'oh*! Mulgrew looked at me with a pained and questioning expression on her face that said, "Do you have a question or are you merely insane?" *Kazon*! That was their name. "What's with the Kazon's hair?"

"What's with it?" she asked. "I don't know. Would you even call it hair? Looks more like a sponge. Next question."

* * *

We had to dig our flyers out again after the presentation, on our way up to the room. We were getting ready to go out to dinner when I noticed my keys were missing. I tore apart the room. No keys. I checked where I was sitting downstairs. No keys. I asked the convention staff. No keys. I asked the hotel staff. No keys. Like a miracle, it had stopped raining while we were inside. I went to the car. There were the keys, sitting on the back seat. Here is where the Three Stooges parallels end because I own a Saturn. Saturn supplies its automobile owners with a plastic card that has a key cut out in it. This key is a duplicate of yours and can be used sparingly in the case of lost keys, to open and drive your car until a new key can be made. I didn't even have to break the key out as I was able to bend it out a little and open the door. The All-You-Can-Eat Mongolian barbecue we had for dinner was one of the best meals I have ever had.

* * *

Sunday went much the same as Saturday except that there were a lot less people. Mulgrew avoided me when I wanted to ask a question. The good news was that our flyers were all gone when we checked them in the morning. There hadn't been too many left the night before. We put out the final fourth. We got several nibbles from dealers and managed to drum up a couple of memberships. All in all, a very successful outing, despite the comedy of errors.

South Florida Science Fiction Society Membership Application

Send this completed application form, along with your check for Membership dues to:
SFSFS Treasurer, 4427 Royal Palm Ave., Miami Beach, FL 33140-3039.

Make check payable to SFSFS.



Date Joined	General	Subscribing	Child
Jan. - Mar.	\$15	\$12	\$1
Apr. - June	\$12	\$9	\$1
July - Sept	\$9	\$6	\$1
Oct. - Dec.	\$6*	\$3*	\$1*

* Any person joining the society during the last quarter of the membership year (Oct. - Dec.) shall be required to pay the prorated dues and also to pay in advance the full dues for the next calendar year.

_____ General (non-voting) - \$9.00

_____ Child Membership - \$1.00 (12 yrs or younger with a parent or legal guardian who is a SFSFS member)

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Name: _____ Date: _____

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=====

You are getting this because:

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_____ This issue contains an article of possible interest to you.

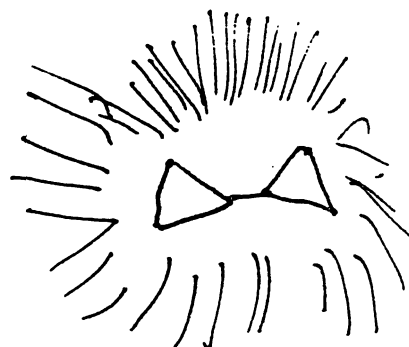
_____ The cats all thought it would be a great idea.

_____ The Psychic Friends Network said that you needed a copy of this issue.

_____ Peggy's "Flossie" wanted you to have one.

_____ We wanted you to know that we hadn't forgotten about you!

_____ Your mailbox looked empty.



Tropicon XV

November 15 - 17, 1996

Guest of Honor: David Gerrold
Toastmaster: Peter David
Special (Media) Guest: Arne Starr

Other (Confirmed) Guests: Ben Bova, Adam-Troy Castro,
Hal Clement, Barbara Delaplace, Caitlin R. Kiernan,
Charles L. Fontenay, Joseph L. Green, Jack C. Haldeman II,
Daniel Keyes, Mike Resnick, Graham Watkins, Rick Wilber

Venue: Doubletree Guest Suites on Cypress Creek Road in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida

Special Tropicon rate:

Single or Double = \$79.00/night; Triple or Quad = \$89.00/night
To make your reservation, call 1-800-222-TREE

Membership to Tropicon: \$23 until Oct. 25th; \$28 after Oct. 25th and at the door
Saturday Night Banquet: \$24.00

Art Show Rates: Panel price: 4' x 8' for \$20.00; 4' x 4' for \$12.00
Table price: 2.5' x 6' for \$20.00; 2.5' x 3' for \$12.00
Dealers' Room Rate: \$40/table (includes one membership)

For more information via e-mail, address inquiries to jb42@aol.com

***** Tropicon XV Membership *****

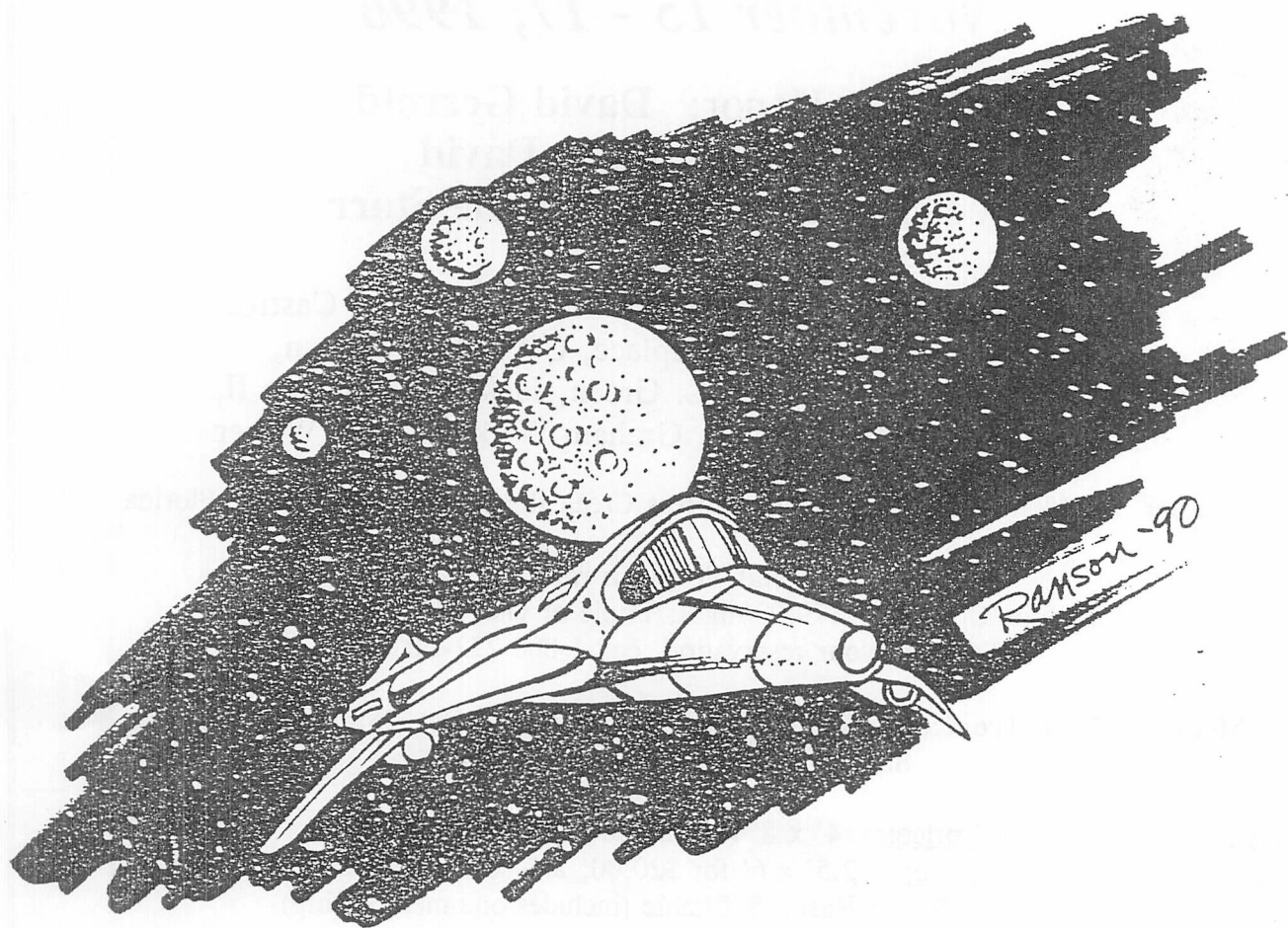
mail this coupon along with your check or money order <made out to SFSFS> to
Tropicon XV, c/o SFSFS Treasurer, 4427 Royal Palm Ave., Miami Beach, FL 33140-3039

Name: _____

Address: _____

Enclosed is a check or money order for : _____. It is for:

_____ membership(s) at \$23 before Oct 25	_____ membership(s) at \$28 after Oct 25
_____ banquet ticket(s) at \$24	
_____ art panel(s) 4' x 8' for \$20.00	_____ art panel(s) 4' x 4' for \$12.00
_____ art table(s) 2.5' x 6' for \$20.00	_____ art table(s) 2.5' x 3' for \$12.00
_____ dealer's table(s) \$40/table (includes one membership)	
_____ contribution to Charity Fund	_____ contribution to Filk Fund



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