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Shuttle

The SFSFS Shuttle

May & June 1999
Volume 1, Issue 138

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Rantings of a Deranged Editor

I Do Not Eat Dirt

Carlos Perez



I first want to say thank you to all my contributors. Without them, this fanzine would be much thinner and full of lies that I would have had to make up in order to get it produced and out in a semi-timely fashion. There is however, one person I do not want to thank, as they did absolutely nothing to help me. In fact, this person managed to get in my way and foul me up at every instance. This person is my computer.

"Your computer can't be a person," you say. "It's only a machine and does what you tell it to do. It is only as good as you are." I will forgive you this time but please don't every say that to my face again.

You see, having finished editing and believing very erroneously that I was done, I decided that I would add just a few more things to a couple of pages. Pictures. All I wanted to add were two pictures and few meeting notices. They didn't need to be in here but I thought they would be a nice touch. So I opened the document that you now hold in your hands and I started to add them.

As a devotee of Word Perfect and an enemy of Microsoft, I was disturbed that my PC at work uses Word, but soon I was juggling columns and page breaks and wizards and footers and headers. Oh, my! The last time I edited, I actually cut out the columns

and laid it out like a newspaper like I did in high school. This time, I would leap into the 21st Century and maintain the whole thing in the computer, columns and all. Only now do I understand how arrogant that was. How dare I believe that I could get away with it without first having been separated into my constituent parts in the Giant Nuclear Reactor of the Gods of Technology?

One learns things sometimes a bit too late, but at least we learn from them so that they don't happen again. "That which does not kill us makes us stronger." I think that person never had to deal with fickle equipment. I managed to get the pictures scaled down to a manageable size and was trying to insert them into the document when something happened.

I'm not exactly sure what it was exactly and I guess we never will but I must have clicked in the wrong area and dropped the picture into the wrong place. Suddenly, my seemingly friendly computer ceased to be so. My hard drive started churning and whirring and grinding. And then it stopped. I tried clicking on the document. Nothing. I am running Windows 98 (that's another story) so I used CTL-ALT-DEL to check the status of Word. A cold hand squeezed my belly when I saw "Not Responding". No amount of clicking, cursing, or praying could resurrect it. Then I suddenly got the Blue Screen of Death™. I had no choice but to turn off the machine.

As the computer started back up, it gave me a nastygram saying that I shouldn't power it off but instead do a proper shutdown. It told me that it was going to be nice enough and run a scandisk for me. And that's when it hit the fan. Scandisk found several problems and when I finally got back into Word, I found out exactly what they were. The document was toast. Completely unrecoverable, even with autosave turned on. After several minutes of clicking, cursing, and praying, I started over. This time I saved copies everywhere: on my PC, on the server, diskette, everywhere...

The SFSFS Shuttle #138 May & June 1999 Just a little legalese here: The SFSFS Shuttle is published by the South Florida Science Fiction Society, a Florida non-profit educational organization recognized by the IRS under Section 501(c)(3). Membership information is on page X. The views and opinions expressed herein are those of the editor and the contributors and not those of the publisher. Thanks for continuing to read this, especially with such tiny type. We hope you enjoy the rest of the Shuttle. If you liked (or you didn't like) what you saw in here, please take a moment to drop us a note at the address to the left. We always love hearing from you. ●

The Truth Is Out There

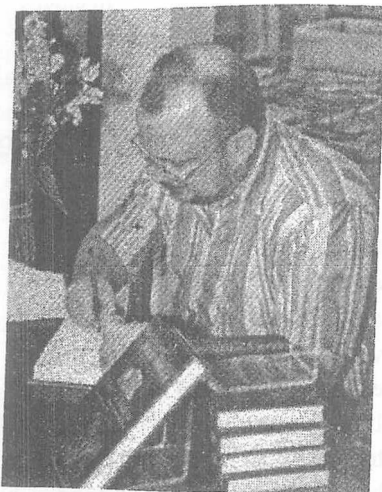
Robert J. Sawyer Booksigning

Shirlene Ananayo-Rawlik

Several members of SFSFS (Judi Goodman, the Rawlik Clan, Carol Porter, Dan Foster) attending a signing with Robert J. Sawyer at the Classic Bookshop on Palm Beach. Mr. Sawyer, who was visiting from Canada, was there to promote his newest book, **FACTORING HUMANITY**. He is the author of such works as **END OF AN ERA**, **FOSSIL HUNTER**, **STARPLEX**, and **ILLEGAL ALIEN**.

Immediately following the event, the aforementioned members – sans Dan, he was still working -- (and Mark Wingenfled from the Orlando area) took Robert and his wife, Carolyn to a late lunch. The plan was to go for pizza (at the author's request) but the local favorite Italian place that the Rawlik Clan picked out was closed at the time of arrival.

Instead, everyone adjourned to the Rosie's Bar & Grill conveniently located in the same shopping plaza where wings and dolphin sandwiches were happily consumed. ☘



Robert Sawyer

Belated Birth Announcement

Shirlene Ananayo-Rawlik

For those of you who might not have heard, we (Shirlene and Pete) are proud to announce the birth of our son, Peter ("Petey", "Pumpkin") Steven Rawlik, III!

Due to medical complications, my ob/gyn decided to induce labor three weeks before his actual due date. After fourteen hours of labor and an emergency c-section, he took his first breath of air at 10:24 p.m. on the 20th of January. He weighed in at 6 pounds, 5.6 ounces and measured a quarter of an inch shy of 20 inches.

He made his SFSFS debut at the April meeting at the SFSFS picnic. I am firmly convinced that he is the one that made the cold front arrive when it did, because he found the weather not at all to his liking when we arrived. It was way too hot and humid for his comfort! Anyhow, rumor has it that there might be a Carol Porter photo of him floating elsewhere in this issue. *[Carlos says: Since his name is Petey and not Waldo, I made him easy to find. Look below.]* ☘



[Seated left] Beverly Ananayo, Pete Rawlik, Judi Goodman. [Seated right] Mark Wingenfled, Robert Sawyer, Carolyn Sawyer, Shirlene Ananayo-Rawlik. [Sleeping center] Petey Rawlik, Chairman Tropicon XXXV.

Upcoming Events

June 19, 1999
2PM, SFSFS Clubhouse
SFSFS General Meeting:

SFSFS Discusses the Hugos

Join panelists Peter "Mal" Barker, George Peterson, Bill Wilson, & former Hugo nominee Adam-Troy Castro for an interactive discussion of this year's Hugo Award nominees. Audience members are encouraged to participate. For more information call Judi Goodman at 305-385-1793.

June 27, 1999
3PM, SFSFS Clubhouse
Tropicon XVIII Meeting

If you want to get involved with Tropicon, SFSFS' annual convention, please attend. Find out what running a convention is all about. Note: This meeting may be moved to the Clarion Hotel on Hollywood Beach for a walk-through of the convention facilities. For more information call George Peterson at 954-739-4376.

Continued on Page 4

July 16 – 18, 1999
Cocoa Beach, FL
Travelling Fête 1999

SFSFS' own relaxacon is back and better than ever. Come and join our Guest of Honor, Kathleen Ann Goonan for a weekend of fun on Florida's Space Coast. Membership is only \$30 and includes a special tour of Cape Canaveral and the Kennedy Space Center. For more information call Carlos Perez at 305-972-7222.

July 24, 1999
2PM, SFSFS Clubhouse
SFSFS General Meeting:
Internet Collecting and Trading and the Menace Within
For more information call Judi Goodman 305-385-1793.

August 21, 1999
2PM, SFSFS Clubhouse
SFSFS General Meeting:
Topic To Be Announced
Have any areas of interest that you want to share with others? Now is your chance. Run a panel. For more information call Judi Goodman at 305-385-1793.

September 18, 1999
2PM, SFSFS Clubhouse
SFSFS General Meeting:
Mike Resnick: The Man, the Legend, and His Works
For more information call George Peterson at 954-739-4376.

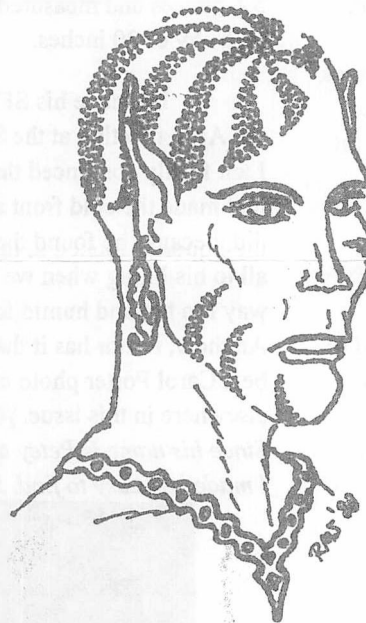
November 19 - 21, 1999
Hollywood Beach, FL
Tropicon XVIII
Winner of many awards, Guest of Honor Mike Resnick, is one of today's most influential and popular authors. Also our hotel, the Clarion, is just steps from the beach. Join for \$24 until October 18. For more information call George Peterson at 954-739-4376.

Where No SFSFSan Has Gone Before....

Edie Stern

Actually, this was my second trip to Quark's Bar. It's also the last time I let Carlos talk me into going barhopping carrying a notebook and pen. But, perhaps I should back up a little bit.

Mid-April is the time of year when the National Association of Broadcasters has its convention. As far as I know, NAB is always held in Las



Vegas, perhaps because the city is the closest thing to a media event left standing year round. My first trip to Vegas was more than 20 years ago, and, much in the manner of a human being, with age, Vegas hasn't changed but just become "more so".

NAB is way cool. I've attended for the last two years as part of my job, learning the latest and greatest

technologies being used in the industry. This year, I played hookie from what I should have been looking at for a while and spent some time watching demos of the software used to make special effects for films like *Mighty Joe Young*, *Star Trek Insurrection*, the new *Star Wars*, and the *First Union* commercials. They have paintbrushes that paint fur. And flowers. And trees that grow. There are virtual sets that let a newscaster standing in an undistinguished area appear to be in a smartly appointed newsroom (without use of a bluescreen, but relying on depth perception to create the travelling mat). I talked to the guys that insert virtual

ads into stadium games. Did you realize that some of the ads you see hanging on the big padded backstops are all in your mind? They don't physically exist. NAB is overwhelming, filling two convention centers, and with hundreds of exhibits and demos. This year only Comdex and a once-every-three-years construction show were larger.

In such a place, it is only a little disconcerting to walk to the nearest hotel and end up in Quark's Bar. The Hilton near the LVCC is Star Trek-

themed. It has an interactive experience, which is not a show, and not a ride, but a little of both. It has shops with a Trekker/ie slant, and a fairly extensive historical exposition on Trek. It has a space-themed casino, in addition to the regular casino, with lots of blackjack and one-armed bandits, but no crap tables. It has Quark's Bar.

Think Planet Hollywood. No, don't think Planet Hollywood. This isn't a paean of praise to Trek, as much as it's a make believe for DS9 fans. Quark's Bar is.... Quark's Bar.

The decor is futuristic. The decorator used a few truckloads of "storm" devices. These were the rage about 10 years ago as touchy feely globes. When you touch the glass, you get a spark of electrical discharge apparently touching your fingers from the other side. The storms in Quark's are on the walls, and beneath the level surface of the bar every few feet. The best part is the decor behind the bar. There are animatronic worms in some of the jars and bottles. There was a magnum of champagne, with a label that said "Dom Perignon 2265". There were bottles of different sizes and shapes, with different colors of liquid in them. The TV sets didn't show sports; they were showing DS9 clips.

The bar fare was not average. I had a Warp Core Breach. Picture this—the drink is prepared mysteriously, at the back of the bar, with a trickle of jewel bright droplets apparently descending a thread to land in an intermediate carafe. (What are those drops? Waitress: "It's the liquor.>"). The drink is served in a glass globe, and it smokes. Literally. I don't know what's in it, but I'm betting heavily on significant amounts of rum, fruit juice and dry ice. Especially the dry ice.

Other drinks included Wesley's Crush, Raktajino, and Phaser Fire. The Neutral Zone was nonalcoholic. The ales were interesting. There was Klingon Warnog Ale, Cardassian Pale and Trixian Bubble draft. The beer sampler had four glasses, with each beer a different color. There was red, yellow, brown and green. Romulan ale is green.

There was Liquid Latinum, and James Tea Kirk. The James Tea Kirk was blue, and had a gummy worm in it. Apparently James Tea is related to the Long Island Teas. Seven of Nine had a warning with it—"If you drink too many of these, you'll be part of the collective". Of course, there was Klingon Blood Wine and Saurian Brandy.

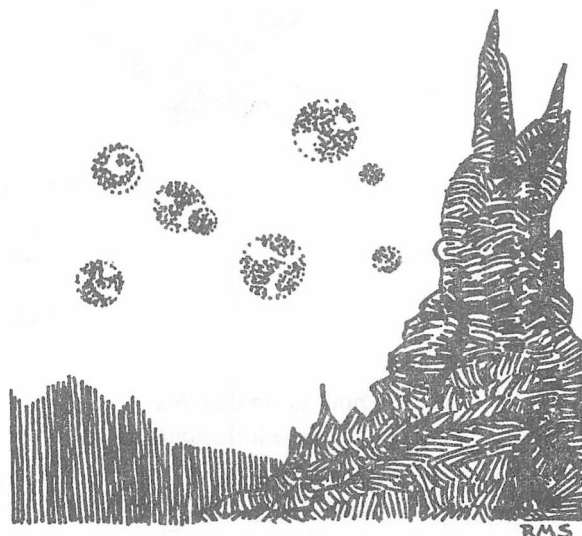
I asked about the animatronic worms. They are Talaxian Tigerworms. The liquor they were swimming in is about 1000 proof, and no humans can touch it. They say the worm ferments the liquor. It looked to me like he was merely stirring.

Other than an appetizer, I didn't sample any of the food. It did follow the theme. There were Hamburgers, Isolinear chips and dip, and the Holy Rings of Betazed, which I assume had onion ancestry. There were pita wraps, for instance the Wrap of Khan and the Warp Wrap.

The staff stays in character. The barmaids will tell you they are d'abo girls, and dress in purple velvet with generous sparkles and cleavage. When the waiter delivered my appetizer (a Saucer Section), he instructed me to "Engage".

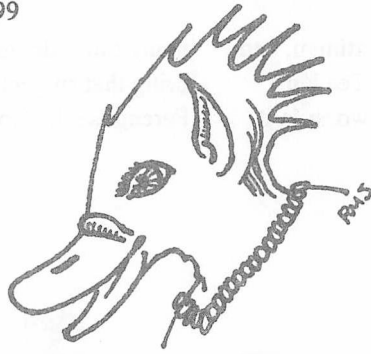
The walkabout decor was very cool too. A Ferengi came by, in full and beautiful makeup and costume, and engaged in repartee. The conversation quickly came to female dress customs on the Ferengi home world. So, how

many times do you suppose the patrons bring that subject up? As he left, the Ferengi said, "Go forth and acquire."



A little later, a Klingon strutted by. Captain Daymox was his name, and he was most cordial. He asked me if I knew the quickest way to a Ferengi's heart. The answer—through his chest. He advised me not to go to the Ferengi home world, and inquired of earthly geography. He assured me that Klingon women were equal to Klingon men. I don't know if he was anatomically correct, but the costume was impressive.

The patrons must have been mostly NAB attendees. The ones I talked to were. Unfortunately, the bar was only half full, and it was about 6 PM, prime time for a first drink. Any historians out there? Wasn't there an hour named "Prime" in the Middle Ages? Was that the hour when people started drinking? [Joe says that according to the OED, prima hora, the first hour, in Roman reckoning, was also one of the Day Hours of the western church. A Canonical Hour of the Divine Office, appointed for the first hour of the day (beginning originally at 6 AM but sometimes at sunrise), it was



“Funeral March of the Marionettes”: A Review

Mitch Silverman

also the hour or time of this office. Prime is one of the little hours as distinguished from the greater hours, which are Vespers, and is said to be of later origin than the others. According to Cassian it was added in his boyhood at the monastery of Bethlehem. Prime was the name of the office, and only secondarily came to be applied to its time. Joe is studying history.]

Uniformly, the customers at Quark's were boomer trekkers with deep delight at being there. Some of them seemed to be making pilgrimage. I wonder how many times a non-enthusiast would return to such a theme bar? There's a tinge of sensawonder at Quark's, with a generous and Ferengi-appropriate profit motive overlaying it. But it may be that this sort of tinge is passe among the general public, who grew up with SF generally accepted, and without that almost illicit sensawonder rush.

Empty bars don't stay in business. I only took one statistical sample, so it may be doing better than I thought, but my advice is to see it when you can—Quark's one note may bear little repetition among the general public. If you do go, enjoy the hell out of it. What's the sense of going to Quark's if you don't talk to the Ferengi's and trade jokes with the Klingons. What you do with the d'abo girls is up to you. ☺

The SFSFS meeting I attended in April was my first meeting back in quite a while. I found the rained-out picnic site in the park when I saw Peggy Dolan's face through our car windows. It was great seeing all my old SFSFS friends, and making new ones.

But when Edie Stern said “We have a Hugo-nominated writer in the group,” I was impressed – and not because a Hugo nomination is closer than I'll get to one of those rocketships since Phil Tortorici showed me his work for MagiCon. No, of the two science fiction awards, the Hugos than impress me more than the Nebulas. They've been around longer (named, as a middle-school acquaintance swore, after the famous French science fiction writer Victor Hugo – *quelle erreur!*), and they're voted for by the largest group of people *I* can identify with, more or less. Oh, they're also much less political. (Besides, though Edie didn't mention it, “The Funeral March of the Marionettes” was also nominated for a 1997 Nebula.) So I resolved, on meeting Adam Castro (“Adam-Troy Castro” is his pen name), to secure a copy of his novella and read it.

I didn't think Edie was trying to impress me in telling me that Adam

had been nominated for a Hugo. Edie (as many of you know) had her masters' degree in mathematics at age 17; titles don't much impress her. Edie was saying that Adam was a damn good writer, not a damn-impressive title-holder. And in reading “Funeral March,” I wasn't disappointed.

I once heard or read that there are three types of stories: Human vs. Human, Human vs. Self, and Human vs. Nature. “Funeral March” is in the third group, where “nature” is personified by the Vlhani, the eponymous Marionettes. The Vlhani are fascinating, some of the most inhuman aliens I've ever read about. I took the equivalent of a minor in anthropology and linguistics; as I read Adam's description of their language, their interactions, their culture (such as it is understood by his characters), and their suicidal Ballet, I well believed that such a species could exist.

And when Hurr'poth, alien linguist friend of human narrator Alex Gordon, says to him of human dancer Isadora, bent on participating in the Vlhani's fatal dance, “Leave her be. She's a pilgrim. It's her privilege to die if she wants,” Adam both articulates that central tension of his story, and foreshadows its unfortunate but inevitable ending.

Aristotle said, in his *Poetics* (or so I'm told) that the two purposes of fiction are to inform and entertain. I think that lately fiction (and here I am speaking of belletristic fiction, not – or not only – of SF) gets critical acclaim if it strives to inform readers; not about science, in the case of SF, because few science fiction stories will teach you anything useful about science, but about the human condition: about what we are and how and why. Most of that fiction, in my opinion, tries too hard.

There is an exercise (in what used to be called "Values Clarification") in which someone fills a big jar with large rocks, and asks his audience if it is full. The instructor then "fills" the jar with small rocks, sand, and water, one after the other, and each time asks: "What's the point of this exercise?" One student (in the version I read) says, "There's always more room in your jar!" The instructor replies "No – you can only get the big rocks in if you put them in first."

Good fiction, worthwhile fiction, isn't interested in sand or water, but the big rocks. The name Alex assigns to the human dancer in "Marionettes," "Isadora" – clues the reader in as to what her biggest rock is. After all, as she says to Alex as Alex rescues her, "Ye're in a lot hotter stew than I be. Leastin' I ken the steps."

Kenning – knowing – the steps is a good place for one to start. I hope that Adam is as successful as his character Isadora in following his muse and getting that big rock in first. One piece of advice, Adam: stay away from the pomegranates.

Locus magazine has a bibliography of Adam-Troy Castro's fiction on the Web, available at:

www.sff.net/locus/sl52.html#A2482 ●



Corflu Sunsplash

Joe Siclari

Getting to Corflu was a bit of an adventure. My aunt was having her throat cut on Friday morning (carotid artery surgery). Edie and I decided to delay our drive up to Panama City until after we were sure everything was OK with her. With that and a few other last minute delays, we didn't leave until nearly 8:00 PM on Friday. Our arrival therefore was not until nearly 5:00 am on Saturday morning. But we did make it to Corflu.

Corflu Sunsplash is an annual gathering of fanzine fans. This 16th edition was a very small convention. There were only 18 members. A few more local people were at the barbecue on Saturday. Attendees came from all over included: Arnie & Joyce Katz, Ted White, Rich Brown, Hope Leibowitz, Andy Hooper, Carrie Root, Art Widner, Don Fitch, George Flynn, Ken Forman, Frank Lunney, John Hardin, Edie Stern, Joe Siclari, Shelby & Suzanne Vick, and Cheryl Good. And I apologize if I left anyone out.

Saturday we all went out to a state park on the beach for the BBQ. Edie and I took Shelby into town to get some last minute purchases: 60 pounds of fresh Appalachian oysters and the knives and gloves to eat them with. However, there was so much food that we never even got to slurp a single oyster. At the beach we had some silliness building sand castle structures in a landscape capped by Carrie's elaborate castle and John's all encompassing wall. Joyce created a canyon-like structure and Don kept building outposts to confound John's wall building. The rest of us were kept busy catching or dodging frisbees and stomp rockets which Ken Forman kept launching at the castles.

There was a fanzine auction late Saturday afternoon that was also held simultaneously online. Communications problems made the online section problematic. Multiple disconnections and a response lag sometimes over five minutes gave those signed on little chance to bid. Richard Brandt and Nigel Rowe did get in some bids for the last small issues of Ted White's STELLAR. Several people auctioneered; basically whoever might know the most about the item. Rich Brown and I started but others pitched in especially when Rich or I wanted to bid. The highlights of the auction were a copies of FanHistory #1 and #2 which went for about \$28.00 each and a hardback first edition of THE IMMORTAL STORM which Rich Brown got for \$125.00. Total raised was \$408.00. Not bad from a crowd of 18 who mostly have lots of zines.

While some of us went to dinner, the rest of the con pigged out on the hoard of oysters. Cheryl taught several people the art of shucking. I had gone out with Art, Suzanne, Edie, Hope and George to a very good meal at Mergenthal's Restaurant. They served fabulous crab cakes and delicious grouper, so we couldn't really complain. Art says that he rates all seafood restaurants by their crab cakes and has tried them all over the world. Mergenthal's receives his highest recommendation – he ranked it in his "Top 3".

Sunday was also fairly laid back. The banquet was at 2:00 PM. After which GoH Art Widner did a slide show on his trips to Chicon and Denvention, the first of each in 1940 and 1941.

At the banquet, Andy Hooper announced the FAAn Awards. The winners were:

Best Fanzine: Outworlds

May & June 1999

2nd Place: Crifanac

Best Writer: Ted White

2nd Place: Victor Gonzalez

Best Artist: Ian Gunn

2nd Place: Steve Stiles

Best Letter Hack: Harry Warner Jr.

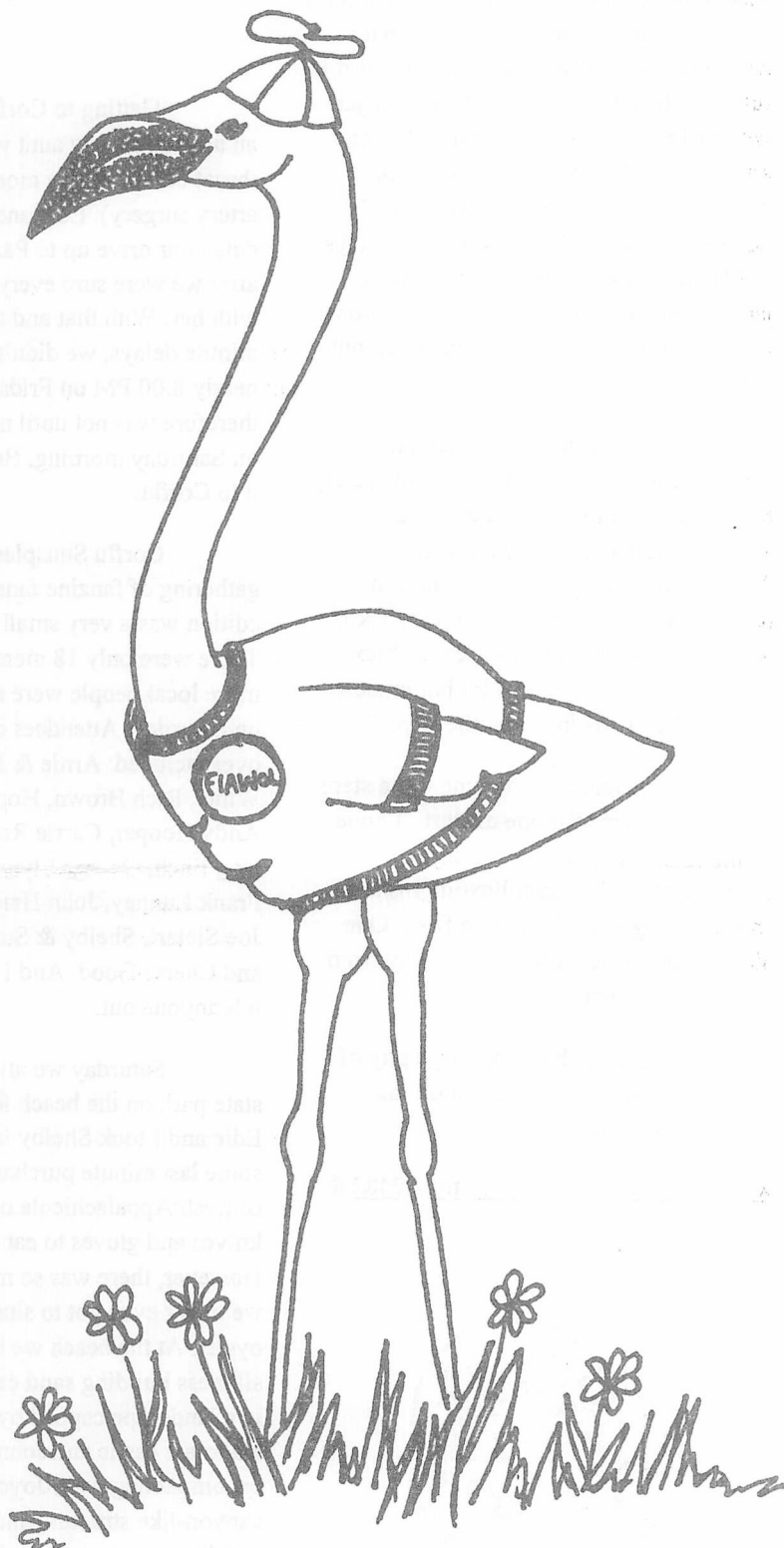
Best New Fan: Karen Johnson

Ted White announced the fwa Past President at the banquet. It was Shelby Vick. (fwa stands for fan writers of america.)

Next year, Corflu will be in Seattle on March 3-5, 2000; \$40.00 to Carrie Root. It is one week after POTLATCH 9 (Feb 25-27, 2000)(if you want to go to both, they have a special deal).

Corflu Sunsplash t-shirts with a collaborative cartoon between Lee Hoffman and Shelby Vick with their trademark styles were made and sold at the con for \$12.00. Shelby Vick and rich brown worked far into the con to produce a tribute issue of HYPHEN 38. It's all reprints except for one new addition to James White's "The Fester on the Fringe" series of autobiographical articles which we reprinted a few years ago in the SFSFS SHUTTLE. Unfortunately, because of the quality of the original copies and photocopy degradation, the repro does leave a bit to be desired. Still, if you don't have any HYPHEN's, the high quality of the writing is there and the original layouts and cartoons by ATom. It's \$5.00 plus you should probably send a buck for postage:

Shelby Vick
627 Barton Avenue
Springfield, FL 32404



FANAC Fan History Project

Information Update #1
6 May 1999

Joe Siclari

Periodically, we will issue an Update to tell you what is going on with the FANAC Fan History Project. These Updates will contain information about changes to our web site, publications we are issuing, our exhibits, and other related information. To keep current on what we are adding, you can sign up on our new FANAC-Updates list on our home page (<http://fanac.org>). We will not give any addresses out.

This being the first Update, I expect it will be longer than most.

We have added a lot of material to the Fan History Project web site (<http://fanac.org>) in the last few months. We now have nearly 200 fanzines on the site in text or graphic format (<http://fanac.org/fanzines>) and links to hundreds more. We are closing on 1,000 photos from Worldcons (<http://fanac.org/worldcon>), other conventions (http://fanac.org/Other_Cons) and fan groups from around the world (http://fanac.org/Fan_Photo_Album). The material comes from the 1930's right up to 1999.

We are reorganizing the web site to make the information more accessible. In addition to the items listed above, we have over 100 meg of material for you to go through. From fannish references, fancyclopedias, fan histories, and enormous bibliographies at http://fanac.org/Fannish_Reference_Works to a Cross Reference list of nearly 9,000 fen who are mentioned on the FANAC Fan History Project web site at <http://fanac.org/names.html>. It's a

virtual Who's Who of Fandom. See if you are listed. If not, why not? Help us document your fandom.

This is only a partial list of the New Material:

1. Fan History For Sale (http://fanac.org/For_Sale.html): we have added a page where you can find fanhistorical publications available to purchase from a variety of sources. This is a free listing as a service for fans. If you have an appropriate publication, contact us.

2. Classic Fanzines on-line (fanac.org/fanzines/Classic_Fanzines.html): among the fanzines we have recently added are issues of Cosmag, Cry of the Nameless, Fantasy Magazines, Helios, Hyphen, Novae Terrae, Science Fiction Digest (1950s), Slant, Spaceways, A Warning!, and Wastebasket.

3. Modern Fanzines on-line (fanac.org/fanzines/Modern_Fanzines.html) and Electronic Fanzines (fanac.org/fanzines/Electronic_Fanzines.html): text copies and links to hundreds of fanzines are available here, ranging from Plotka to the Australian Science Fiction Bullsheat; from Ansible to Tommyworld.

4. Our Fan Photo Albums (http://fanac.org/Fan_Photo_Album) have increased dramatically with photos from Irish, English and Detroit fandoms, several fan fund trips and much more. Take a look.

5. Worldcon and Convention Photo Albums: we have added too much to list all the photos here. Entirely new sections include: Albacon, BucCONeer, Channelcon, Chococon, Clevention, Confluence, ConStellation, Corflu Nova, Eastercon, Faircon, the International Conference on the Fantastic in the Arts, the International Science Fiction Convention,

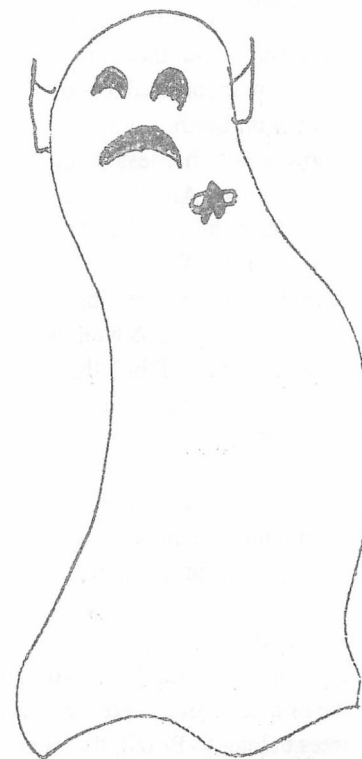
NorthAmeriCon, SFcon, Westercons and the World Fantasy Con. Literally hundreds of photos have also been added to: MagiCon, Intersection, Noreascon III, LoneStarCon II, LAcon 3, Philcon, SMOFcon, Boskone, Tropicon, and XIIcon.

6. Fan References: added Fancyclopedia II, Lee Gold's Filk History and updated several of the Fanzine Bibliographies.

There is more being added all the time. We are working on a number of larger projects like the Master Fanzine Checklist and indices to major fanzines. So bookmark <http://fanac.org> and keep checking back.

For more information or to help, contact:

Joe Siclari
jsiclari@gate.net
FANAC Fan History Project
Coordinator



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On Energy

Joe Green

Robert A. Metzger's column in the Spring 1999 "Bulletin of the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America" has some interesting comments on the subject of energy. The article is copyrighted, of course, but I think "fair usage" will permit me use of a short quote:

With abundant energy, all things are possible - right down to a nearly infinite supply of toilet paper for every posterior which may grace this planet.

That's partly in reference to an earlier comment, in which he points out that professional moaners and groaners, including many SF writers, are constantly predicting the imminent shortage of food, air and clean water, not to mention toilet paper. (Those who've traveled there know that most of the continent of Europe already manages to survive with very poor substitutes for toilet paper.) Metzger's main theses is that there is lots and lots of energy on Earth, if you know how to harness it and put it to use. And the point to be made here is that if you do, a lot of assumptions now passing as accepted facts, as well as many modern shibboleths, can be pushed off their tottery thrones.

Take the trees from which we make that toilet paper, for instance. A lot of people believe that South Americans, particularly Brazilians, shouldn't be cutting down the rainforest trees. Never mind that the trees belong to Brazil, that what they do with them is their own business, and

that we cut down most of our own before we started telling our neighbors they should preserve theirs. We all breathe the oxygen they produce, making it a worldwide resource—right?

With abundant energy, there's another, comparatively easy way, and you don't have to antagonize your neighbors. Water, consists of two atoms of hydrogen, atomic weight one, to one atom of oxygen, atomic weight 16. Splitting that molecule back to its constituent atoms puts roughly eight times as much oxygen into the air as hydrogen (or you could capture and save the hydrogen, to become another form of portable energy). The water supply may be finite, but the ocean(s) would never miss the amount we need to convert each year.

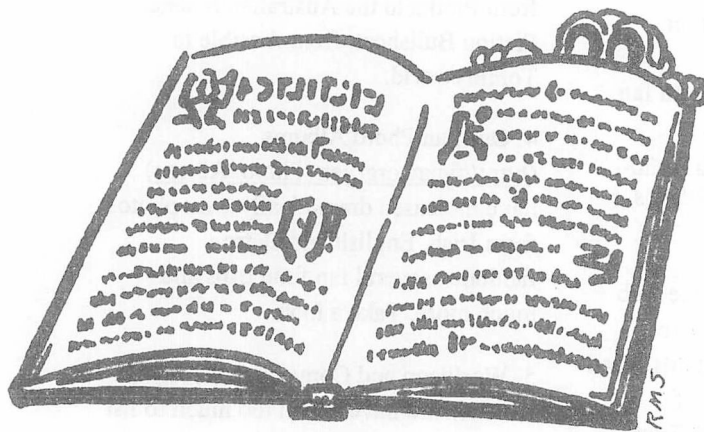
Humans exploit trees in one other major way, because until lately they've been comparatively cheap, abundant, and available over most of the world. Trees remain today, as throughout human history, a primary source of materials. The two largest

trees as building materials. Sand makes a great house, providing you have the energy to convert it into glass blocks and roof tiles, and transport them where needed. A few impurities, easily included, makes them opaque, and roughened edges and cement allow you stack them for strong walls. And glass doesn't have to be brittle. Glass blocks can be as strong and impervious as the ubiquitous ones of concrete that are such a staple of Florida construction. As for running out of sand—well, don't hand money to anyone who has plans to corner the market. The amount available may be finite, but it is huge. And if eventually we use up our own deserts, there's still the Sahara to go. And we could in fact grind up more rocks to make more sand, eventually. All it takes is energy.

As for transporting all those glass blocks—the first fuel cell cars are now on the highways. The trucks will follow. Unlike the ones pioneered by the American space program, these suppliers of electrical power use oxygen extracted from ambient air, and

hydrogen from natural gas; meaning they must bring along only the latter. Fuel cells produce electricity to power highly efficient motors, which will last your entire driving lifetime (with a very occasional bearing replacement). And the only byproduct is water, which returns to the earth and the atmosphere to be recycled. Oh yeah,

the new cars are kinda' expensive at the moment. But give American manufacturing ingenuity a few years, and look again.



uses are probably for housing and paper products.

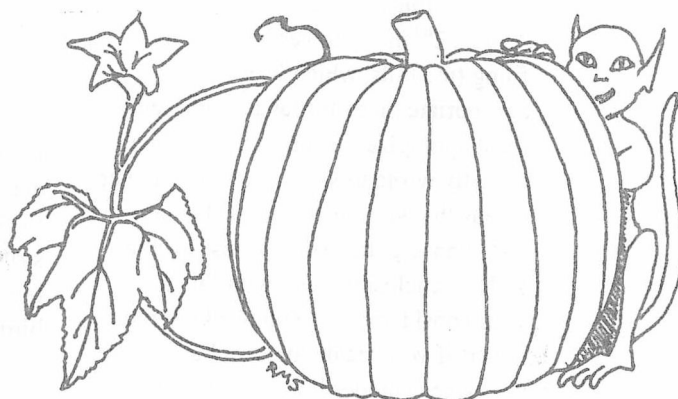
Take the cost of energy out of the equation, and there is no need to use

To this point, no one's figured out a good system for making toilet paper from sand...but give us time. (More realistically, modern American paper companies are ensuring their long-term survival by planting millions of acres of trees, intended as future harvests. While growing, they provide oxygen the companies haven't—yet—found a way to charge us for breathing.)

That's all well and good, the cynic says, but what if everyone wants to live at the same comfort level as the average middle-class American? Guess what, folks? Everyone does! (except the small percentage that lives even better, of course). For every person enjoying an air-conditioned house this summer, there are probably several thousand sweating through their native heat. How can the world possibly provide living standards for all, equivalent to ours? The answer, naturally, is energy. The physical materials of our world are malleable; we can make of them what we will. (Sand into building blocks, but also, with a few carefully chosen impurities added, into computer chips; far, far more valuable per ounce than gold.) It's possible to build air conditioned and/or heated homes for every person in China and India, providing you have enough energy to transform the local building materials into usable blocks and electric motors. If the cost of energy is no object, you can also mine the needed basic chemicals and operate the pumps to circulate them to hydroponically

grown crops. No real need to get out into the fields with those hoes.

Which brings me to an old shibboleth I want to kick off its ancient



and shaky throne, the idea that in a free enterprise system people should compete for good jobs, and these should be scarce. Under this system the better educated, or smarter, or those with influential parents, prevail, and the devil takes the hindmost (read "hindmost" as uneducated, poor parents, undesirable skin color, handicapped in some way, etc.). Lots of people sitting on their butts drawing welfare, or working at substandard jobs that could be better and more efficiently done by machines, is a "natural" result (as if Mama Nature, rather than human societies, was in charge here).

I submit that wealth is generated by human activity, and all that is required for overall improvement in living standards is that every worker produce noticeably more each year than he or she consumes. The way to do that is to build and operate the machines that produce goods far faster and more efficiently than human labor ever could. And the way to do that! Is to acquire the education that enables you build those machines, and make them

function (using only renewable, non-polluting sources of energy, of course).

That's why China and India are, potentially, the richest countries on Earth. They have the highest numbers of untapped energy sources—their populations. But that potential is meaningless until realized, of course.

Many other examples could be shown that illustrate how to read Einstein's most famous equation back to front, and make mass from energy. Plants do this in their own little photosynthetic way, every day (I know that's simplifying the matter, but energy, I.e., the Sun, is the essential ingredient in endless supply). But in the big picture, it's the society that educates and trains its people—all of them—to do productive work that wins the Darwinian race. And the USA is, at the moment, a leader in that endeavor, starting with the systems of higher education that produce more potential sources of human productive energy than any other country. (A lot of our college graduates are admittedly from other countries, but so what. Some large percentages stay here after getting their advanced degrees anyway.) Our unemployment rate is the envy of most of the world, and our productivity per working citizen is among the best going.

One small matter I haven't touched on in this little essay is where we're going to get all that free, or at least very cheap, energy. There are lots of possible sources, but I will leave that, as the dear old professors used to say, as an exercise for the student. Have fun.



1410 McDowell Rd.
Jackson, MS 39204-5147
Email: Rshields@aol.com

January 29, 1999

Dear Mal:

I just found your letter of August 2nd in my towering stack of filing (the bills, which is not the appropriate place for fanac, sigh) and must apologize for forgetting it when I recently wrote to ya'll. However, the up side is that since my letter of January 14th, I have gotten some fillos together, so I am enclosing them with this for your consideration. You need not return the art if you decide to use it but if there are pieces you don't care to use, please let me know so I can send them elsewhere (I don't generally send fillos to multiple zines).

One of these years Rickey and I will really have to get to South Florida and attend a Tropicon. I've been reading great con reports about it for years, and saying "someday" the whole time. Unfortunately, the years we make it to Worldcon we usually don't have time for another trip until after Christmas, but maybe since we aren't going to Australia this year we will be able to make plans for a fall convention.

Again, thanks for the zines, and I look forward to the next issue.

Sincerely,

Ruth

[Carlos says: Thanks for the fillos, Ruth. As you can see, we have already put them to use. We would love to see you and Rickey at Tropicon. I'll be the person chained to the floor in the con suite, as I was conscripted -- I mean, I volunteered to run it. If you do manage to make it down, come on by and help distract me from my self-committed slavery.] ☺

1810 South Rittenhouse Square #1708
Philadelphia, PA 19103-5837

March 31, 1999

Dear Issue 138 Editor,

You have no idea of the peril you are in when Mal solicits lemur stories. Here is a personal favorite.

There are lots of forms of lemurs and as is customary among academic biologists, the battle on how to classify them is a fierce and ongoing struggle, although somewhat less well publicized than the question of whether birds are dinosaurs.

Being small, cuddly-looking, and endangered, many lemurs were collected to reside in zoos of one type or another. Their primary mission, had they chosen to accept it, was to produce more lemurs. Many of them had not accepted the mission. Indeed, they had not even tried. Boys wouldn't be boys and girls wouldn't be girls.

And so it went for years, as forest lemurs grew scarce and then merely rumored. Finally the ultimate tool of zookeepers interested in the reproductive status of their animals came into play. They did a DNA analysis on all the individuals of one type to determine if they still had enough genetic variation for a viable population.

There was plenty of genetic variation but not a viable population. For, it seems, in the dark jungles from whence they came, forest lemurs do not go for visual cues to tell one kind from another. They sort themselves by call and how high their preferred habitat is. Zookeepers had spent years waiting for different species that looked alike to mate. With the participants properly, sorted out, nature began to take its course, as boys whistled and chirped at

girls suggestively and were met with wild abandon. Lemur production went into full swing, and zookeepers turned their attention on how to release captive-raised youngsters into the reserves.

Where they turned into a tourist attraction, but that's another story.

Harry Warner commented on the Endless Series. My impression is that people buy these just like they'd pick a bag of chips and a six-pack. That is, they're more or less going to do the same thing they did last time. Picking out something else involves decisions and a willingness to undergo a different experience. That's not what they want. They want crunch, buzz, and mind candy all in the usual flavors.

Also, he comments on how strange televised baseball has become. What's happened, I think, is the people who now produce baseball on TV find it roughly as exciting as watching paint dry and have tried to jazz things up accordingly. This means you can't actually see the game and that you miss a lot of fine detail that would be interesting.

I remember one pitcher who always gave a little kick and replaced his foot if he was planning to stop someone from stealing a base rather than pitching. Close-ups by cameras would pick this up, but the would-be runner usually wouldn't. All this goes right by people who may riot even know what's out there to look for. Instead we get these great views over the fence and at the crowd and of each of the announcers saying hi to their families.

I'd rather see that telltale lift of the foot.

Sincerely

Catherine Mintz

[Carlos says: I wonder if the lemur production would have benefited from listening to Frank Sinatra, Marvin Gaye, or even Barry White. The zookeepers could have blared music at them 24 hours a day, 7 days a week like the Army did to Manuel Noriega down in Panama. I'm sure the population would be booming in no time.

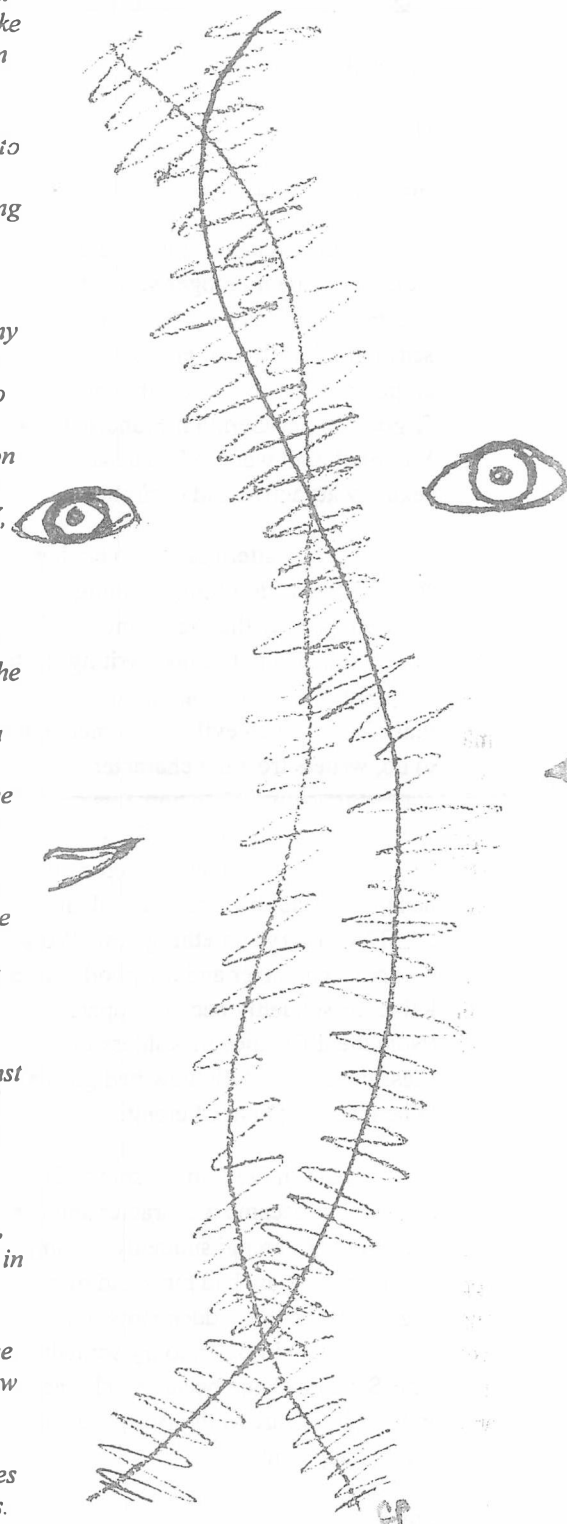
I buy series books from time to time for the same reason that you mentioned. I sometimes want something about comfortable, well-known characters that will occupy me for a while so that I can forget about how difficult my day at work was, how many different people I owe so much money to, and the fact that I have a fanzine to edit and a very near deadline.

After baseball players went on strike in 1994, I stopped caring about the game. I didn't even watch it on TV, changing the channel to the latest infomercial for the George Foreman Grill or the Juice Master rather than watch a second of the game. I gave up my self-imposed strike in 1997 when the Marlins made it to the World Series, even getting into Game 6. It was like a sign from above.

Reality gave me a wake-up call the next year when Wayne Huizenga sold the team. It's still all about money. That's why the games on TV are these technological marvels that would make even George Lucas see green. If you watch the games on Fox, they have all these little graphics that move and explode and make all kinds of noise. The games now have to compete against so many other channels and programs that are out there that they cease to be games and become media events.

Everyone knows that you can't have a media event without celebrities, sex, and violence. So if there is a fight in the stands, a pretty young lady who keeps smiling at the camera while she dances, or Jerry Seinfeld and Spike Lee are in attendance, the camera will show you that.

Another thing that bothers me is that some of these baseball game scores are starting to look like football scores. Everyone is trying to be the next Mark McGwire or Sammy Sosa and no one gives a damn about the game. I guess I'm getting too old and cynical.] ♡



May & June 1999

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E-mail: jtmajor@iglou.com
<http://members.iglou.com/jtmajor>

March 30, 1999

Dear SFSFSians:

Scary Monsters

Or whatever. I think the reason Count Dracula no longer scares us is because vampires have become sensuous signifiers of erotic empowerment. Nick Knight and Ragozy Saint-Germain Franciscus and Vampirella all want to bed us and are so sexually attractive and desirable.

The pattern seems to be that first, writers trying for something different portray the "scary monster's" viewpoint. Then, because writing from the point of view of something malicious or even evil is extremely hard to do, writers treat the character sympathetically. Note how this progression went along in STAR TREK. In Classic Trek, Klingons were bad guys. Bad, bad, bad. But then in ST: TNG, to try something new, Worf became a character and the good side of Klingons suddenly became apparent. (Note the difference in Kahless in Classic and TNG.) So new bad guys had to be invented; hence Ferengi.

But in DS9, to try something new, Quark became a character and the good side of Ferengi suddenly became apparent. So new bad guys had to be dug up; hence the sudden stress on Borg. But in Voyager, to try something new, Seven of Nine became a character and the good side of the Borg suddenly became apparent ...

Good Omens

Now I thought that book had a proper sense of the absurd. As in the

lead-in, where Agnes Nutter knows that she is destined to be burned at the stake. Nothing, however, about the other people in the village, which is why she demonstrates to them that long skirts can conceal a pretty effective anti-personnel bomb ...

The Clunkerson's Baltimore Vacation, Part II

Lisa and I got to the Hugo Nominees' reception late because of the FOSFAX dinner. We ended up sitting next to Mike Resnick because we knew him. (In fact, Lisa and I first met in the flesh at a brunch for Mike.)

I guess I didn't miss much by not eating at Shula's, then, if as you said the food was disappointing. What put me off was the prices.

LoCs

Whether centaurs have two souls, or two hearts, is open to question, but according to C. S. Lewis they have two stomachs. Having Centaurs over to dinner is a serious matter. First they have to fill the horse stomach, with fodder, and then the human stomach, with people food.

Stanislaw Lem has a further problem in that most of the original Lem translations into English were translated from, not the Polish originals, but German translations.

Back when we were in college, Grant McCormick (publisher of FOSFAX) persuaded the language department to give a course in German Science Fiction. So they used Perry Rhodan English translations of works written in German-and Samuel Delany's Nova - a German translation of a book written in English. I lent the teacher an English version of Nova. Afterwards, he told me it read better in the translation (?!).

If you are having trouble with Heinlein's adult novels, perhaps you should try the ones from the fifties - Double Star, The Door Into Summer, The Puppet Masters.

All right, all right

The Return of Dr. Fu Manchu was one of those episodic novels where the not-so-good Doctor crops up time and again (showing a remarkable capacity for escape, since at the end of the first book, The Insidious Dr. Fu-Manchu, he went into a house and then it burned to the ground). Evidently Rohmer (Arthur Sarsfeld Ward) didn't think this idea had legs, inasmuch as there were several years between the publication of the first book and this one.

Farmer in the Sky I wrote about at some length, of course.

No, I haven't read A History of the Devil by Gerald Messadieu.

Forty-five books last month (February 1999).

"Just think what Contact would have been like if, instead of them seeing old Nazi television broadcasts, they got the Teletubbies instead."

"Worldwar: Sidesplitting the Balance"?

James Blish told a story of having a kitten climb up the leg of his trousers, the way the lemur Catherine Mintz writes about did. He had to open his fly to let it out, and a strangled noise caused him to look up and see, across the airshaft, a woman staring out the window of the apartment opposite. He later said that she had passed him on the stairs muttering "Ears?!"

Not buying into series

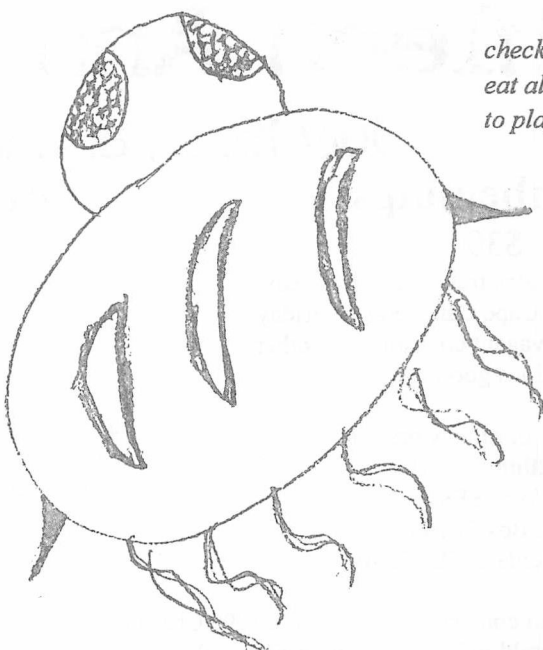
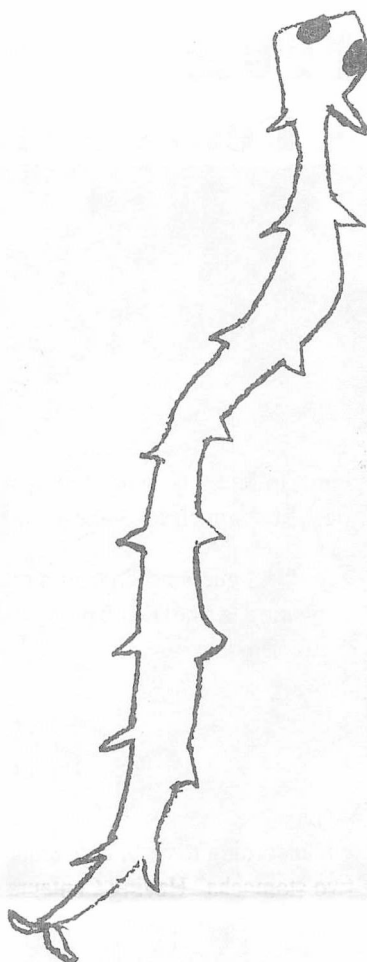
This was why the movie of the play *The Madness of George III* became *The Madness of King George*, because otherwise people would say, "I didn't even see *The Madness of George*, much less *The Madness of George II*, so there's no point in going to this one." Not to mention the people who might wonder how they missed all the previous ones in a long series upon seeing ads for *Malcolm X*.

Joseph T Major

[Carlos says: Like Mal, I am in awe of the number of books you manage to read. Unfortunately for me, life is very intrusive and I am unable to read as much as I would like. However, I do buy books like a hungry person buying groceries. I usually pick up more than I can't get to. <Sigh. > If only I could win the Florida Lottery...

I shiver to think what any alien race would make of it upon receiving a telecast of "Teletubbies" or "Barney." Maybe they would feel obligated to remove us from the surface of our planet as a courtesy to the galaxy. Maybe that's why the aliens in "Independence Day" were eager to eliminate humanity.

*Teletubbies and any of their insipid relatives scare me more than anything else possibly could. They are scarier than any monster or villain. The mechanical pap that is being served up under the guise of children's television recently makes me believe that we are not far from the collective consciousness of *Star Trek's Borg*. We are teaching our children to be mindless drones. I think 1984 was just delayed by about two decades. Resistance is futile. Be afraid... Be very afraid...]* ☹



P.O. Box 426069
Kendall Square Station
Cambridge, MA 02142-6069

Dear Mal et al.,

Many thanks for Shuttle #137. Good stuff as usual, and pretty well done. (Watch the spellings, though: Someone who didn't already know what you were talking about would probably be baffled by "Kiniyaga" (p. 13 - though it's right on the Tropicon flyer) or "the Zoasters" (p. 17).)

You say you already have flamingos. How do they get along with the wild lemurs?

George Flynn

[Carlos says: I tried to check for spelling so I hope I didn't miss anything. The Houston airport put up signs that stated in Spanish that you had to be over 18 years old in order to buy cigarettes. Unfortunately, they left the tilde off of the letter ñ so instead of the word for years, "años", the sign read "anos", which means "anuses" in Spanish. I'm not exactly sure how long it took someone to catch it but the Latinos had a great time reading those signs.

About the lemurs, I'd have to check with Mal but I think they would eat all the flamingos or maybe use them to play croquet.] ☹

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For more information contact Travelling Fete 1999 Chairman Carlos Perez at the address listed above or e-mail carlos7@herald.infi.net Travelling Fête 1999 is sponsored by the South Florida Science Fiction Society, a Florida non-profit educational organization recognized by the IRS under Section 501(c)(3).

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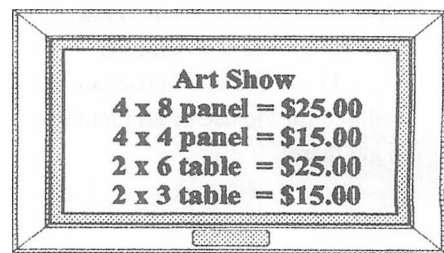
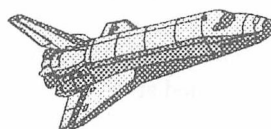
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The South Florida Science Fiction Society (SFSFS)

<http://scifi.squawk.com/sfsfs.html>

Established in 1985, the South Florida Science Fiction Society (or SFSFS, pronounced "Sisyphus") is a non-profit organization made up of people like you that are fascinated by all aspects of science fiction, fantasy, and horror and are interested in sharing these interests with others. As a member of SFSFS you will be entitled to a wide variety of activities and benefits. Among but not limited to these are:

The SFSFS Clubhouse, located behind the offices of Michael Block, CPA, at 275 East Oakland Park Boulevard, Oakland Park, FL 33334-1155. The clubhouse is available for the use of all members. To get there:

Take Interstate-95 to the Oakland Park exit in Ft. Lauderdale

Go east to Northeast 1st Avenue (it is a short block east of Andrews Avenue)

Turn left onto Northeast 1st Avenue

Immediately turn right into the alley

The Clubhouse is located near the end of the alley. We have a sign on the door.

Monthly club meetings provide an opportunity for members to gather and enjoy guest speakers discussing a wide range of subjects relating to the fields of science fiction and fact, fantasy, and horror. There are also opportunities to meet visiting professionals and join in lively discussions about the latest in genre literature, film, art, and the field of multimedia. Several special events, including museum outings, author signings, and picnics occur throughout the year. Meetings are held in our clubhouse.

The SFSFS Shuttle is the club's bimonthly newsletter. It contains up-to-date information on meetings, club outings, local events of interest to members, and special sales. Members get to see their names in print and display their varied talents by contributing artwork, convention reports, fan history articles, poetry, short fiction, book and film reviews.

The Book Discussion Group allows members to gather for in-depth discussions on books, authors, and common readings. Meetings are often based around one theme, author, or novel.

The SFSFS Web Page can be reached at

<http://scifi.squawk.com/sfsfs.html>. SFSFS also has several discussion groups that are offered via

e-mail subscription. SFSFS-announce is for club announcements and important information while SFSFS-discuss is for general messages. In order to join either mailing list, send an e-mail containing the word "subscribe" to:

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or

sfsfs-discuss-request@scifi.squawk.com.

The SFSFS Book Division allows members the opportunity to purchase new books directly from a distributor at 30% off of the cover price! If you only buy \$50 in books a year, the money you would save through the Book Division would cover a full year's membership to SFSFS. Shipping and handling costs are almost always already paid for. The Book Division is also investigating adding music and video to the list of items available for purchase.

The SFSFS Library is the club's lending library. It contains a wide variety of hard to find and out-of-print science fiction, fantasy, horror, and reference literature. All of these materials are available to members.

The Filk Group consists of members who gather to develop the fine art of setting new words to old or new tunes thereby creating and singing all-new musical masterpieces with a science fiction/fantasy/horror/fannish slant.

The Media Research Group invites all members to join them for

gatherings to view and discuss a variety of films and other media presentations. Meet with people to compare and contrast themes; discuss the making of a movie, television, or radio program; and learn behind-the-scenes workings of video production.

The Creative Writers' Group is made up of members who gather to read each other's works and provide mutual constructive criticism and helpful hints on how to get the most out of their creative efforts. You may uncover a hidden creative ability while you work with the group.

Tropicon is the oldest running Florida science fiction convention and is sponsored by SFSFS. Members running Tropicon learn how to plan and manage different aspects of a convention. Past Tropicon guests of honor include: Lee Hoffman, Marion Zimmer Bradley, Forrest J. Ackerman, Vincent DiFate, Robert Bloch, Gardner Dozois, George R. R. Martin, Kelly Freas, Poul Anderson, Walter Willis, Lynn Abbey, Leslie Turek, Hal Clement, Bruce Pelz, Andre Norton, Ramsey Campbell, Judith Tarr, Kristine Katherine Rusch, Jael, James P. Hogan, David Gerrold, and Esther Friesner. There is a separate registration fee.

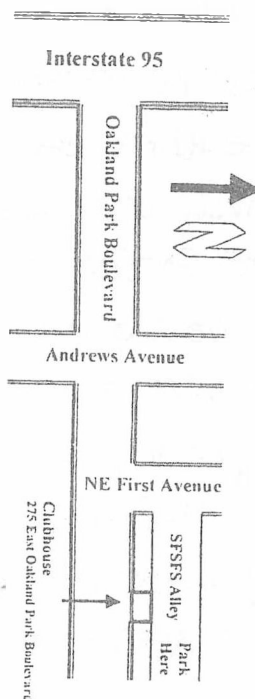
The Traveling Fête is our annual relaxicon. Members get together to honor a Florida professional in a carefree and casual environment. The fête is currently held during the summer. There is a separate registration fee.

Past SFSFS Events have included:

- Interviews with Stephen Donaldson, Roger Zelazny, Greg Bear, and Dan Simmons

- Professional presentations by: Daniel Keyes (author of *Flowers for Algernon*); Nichelle Nichols ("Lt. Uhura" of *Star Trek*); Ellen Datlow (fiction editor of *Omni Magazine*); and Kristine Katherine Rusch (former editor of *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*)
- Annual review of the Hugo nominees
- Interactive program on creating alien civilizations and other science fiction necessities
- Outings to the South Florida Renaissance Festival
- Outings to the Miami and Palm Beach Book Festivals

Your membership to SFSFS opens the doorway to a vast storehouse of knowledge and experience about science fiction, fantasy, horror, and many other areas you may never have run across in your life. This is what SFSFS is all about, a fun and educational way to expand your horizons, discover new interests, and share them with others.



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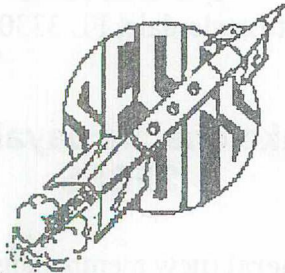
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- ☐ You really can't read e-mail on the toilet
- ☐ It's a conspiracy; Oliver Stone told me so
- ☐ The Force is with you
- ☒ You are mentioned somewhere inside
- ☒ Babylon 5: Crusade starts June 9th on TNT