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Incidental Info

Our cover this time is divided between two *9 Chickweed Lane* strips and a photo of an Australian "road train" stopping for fuel somewhere in the Outback. Another shot of a road train will be found on Page 3, as an illustration to an MC to the *SFC Bulletin*.

Kate and i just bought a new (to us) car to replace my truck, which is becoming thoroughly decrepit. with a capital Decrep. It's another Honda -- an '89 Accord, this time. I've never been particularly impressed with the Accord; i mean, it never seemed to me as if the Accord was enough better than the Civic to justify the price difference-- it always seemed as if, in order to make the car More Luxurious than the equivalent Civic, they put in fancier seats and so on and actually wound up with proportionally less interior space.

Maybe, maybe not -- but i do know that my head is closer to the headliner in this '89 Accord 2-door than it is in our '90 Civic wagon... If it had a sunroof, i wouldn't be able to sit in it with my head held upright, because Honda's sunroofs take more than an inch of headroom away.

[This zine was originally intended for the July
Mailing. Sigh.]

Greetings, and welcome to
Tired of London.

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MC#1
Southern // Kopeland

At first glimpse, i thought that your masthead image was the one at <http://antwarp.gsfc.nasa.gov/apod/ap011226.html>, a truly amazingly spectacular view of the Himalayas shot from the International Space Station.

Dues should be arriving with this zine -- whether i continue the one that already has two mailings worth of MCs in it or do a new one.

As long as i'm including an URL with this MC, i might as well include another. This is a site i found myself at after clicking on a button that popped up in the shareware check-printing program i downloaded when i needed to write a check to the vet, we didn't have any printed and i discovered that our recent disc crash had lunched our commercial check-

printing software. Definitely a weird thing to find in a check-printing program; it's <http://www.checkprintingsoftware.com/origins/>. (I have it bookmarked in the browser under "Nutbars".)

Variations on a Theme //
R. Lynch

Impressive and solid obit for Harry Warner; so often we discover that people or things that we thought that we knew all about had so many more facets or depth than we knew... because we never knew to or never bothered to look.

Cat Yronwode was also one of the main proponents/voices of the "Don't! Buy! Thai!" (which they indeed wrote with exclamation points exactly like that; i just checked online) movement, whose main voice was Andrew Vaachs (official site at <http://a.m11.com/yh/pu/yhgeouspu.htm>, and a more recent

statement from Vaachs at http://www.vachss.com/mission/dbt_update.html). [A digression here -- i am rather perturbed by the mention {in an approving tone} in Vaachs's statement that some countries have passed extra-territorial laws by which they can prosecute and punish their own citizens for acts performed in foreign countries which are legal in the country where performed. Even though the laws Vaachs is coming out in approval of are aimed at pedophiles making use of children forced into prostitution, who i also think Bad Things ought happen to, i find the principle scary. Of course, it's maybe not quite so scary as the situation in which a US citizen who had published pro-Nazi propaganda on the Web was arrested while traveling in Denmark and extradited to Germany to be tried under German law...]

I doubt that the reason that Eminem's song wasn't performed when he couldn't make it was because no one else is capable of performing it; were other Best Song nominees performed? If so, were any of them done by anyone other than the original artist? Also, of course, there's the thought that possibly even the original artist wouldn't be capable of performing the song live, given the way that most pop/rock/rap/etc, music is recorded today, and would have been lip-synching if he HAD "performed" it. (I recall tuning in to something i would not normally watch -- SNL, maybe -- to see a promised live performance by Blondie, which turned out to be them faking it to the single version of "Heart of Glass", including the multiple overdubs of Debbie's voice on parts of the track.)

Did the not-Australian Ballot come in in Hugo voting in 1959 (as your phrasing here seems to imply)? I seem to recall reading a piece somewhere at the time it was adopted, explaining that it was going to provide a "built-in runoff"; would have had to be in P. Schuyler Miller's "Brass Tacks", methinks, if it was 1959, as that was

the only place i got info about WorldCons and their doings when i was eleven. (I got the address to write to to register for TriCon in 1966 from one of Miller's columns. I miss his style and his recommendations.)

"In the end, their music, good or bad, will decide how well [the Dixie Chicks] do in the future." Maybe. Remember Donna Summer? While she was about the best of the disco divas (you still occasionally hear "She Works Hard for the Money"), she pretty well alienated her primary audience by making rather strident anti-gay remarks; her career was over before the disco era itself died.

SFC Bulletin // Cleary,
editor

Dinner with David: "...just don't offer him anything from the squash family." In this, it would appear, as in other things, Dave and i are (mostly) alike -- i do eat and enjoy yellow crook-



neck and zucchini, but will eat no other gourd-family stuff. As i recall, Kathy and Jim, OTOH, are great eaters of anything squashy.

Re: Trinlay's LOC -- i believe a "road train" is

a super-semi; one cab towing several large trailers -- one site i just checked says that they may be up to 50 meters in overall length [the second URL below is a brief newspaper account of a publicity stunt, assembling the world's largest road train...] (<http://www.austehc.unimelb.edu.au/tia/492.html> and <http://www.abc.net.au/news/newsitems/s819658.htm>).

The New Port News //
N. Brooks

I've seen that cartoon on your cover somewhere before; have you reprinted it before this somewhere?

I haven't read the articles, but the headlines i'm seeing recently seem to indicate that NASA has decided that it was, indeed, the foam that did the damage that led to the Shuttle's demise.

"Cavorite" (i don't think it had a "u" in it) -- is not from Verne, but from Wells -- "First Men in the Moon", to be precise. Its name comes from the fact that it was created/discovered by a Professor Cavor.

The Shrub seems to have never expected that people would actually expect him to produce either some actual Weapons of Mass Destruction or at least some real evidence that Saddam had such or was working on getting such -- apparently him going "Saddam has Weapons of Mass Destruction and he done my Daddy wrong!" at regular intervals was supposed to be all the reason anyone needed for a war. As of today (6/11) not only has no evidence of any such programs or devices come to light (except for two labs of sorts in trailers which could have been used to produce biologicals, except that there's no sign they ever were), and the headlines seem to waver back and forth between "Shrub Says Weapons of Mass Destruction Will Be Found" and "White House Says Actual WMD Irrelevant, It's the Principle of the Thing". (Sort of like New Math -- didn't matter if you could actually add two plus two and get "cat", as long as you grasped the principle.)

As to FreeCell -- i believe that the people who programmed it said that all but one of the possible

games that their program could generate were winnable -- and the one that isn't is one that they intentionally created to be unfinishable. (Sort of like the time i disassembled the Rubik's Cube, put it back together with one corner twirled, and then randomised it and left it lying around where certain boastful friends could find it and demonstrate their ability to solve the Cube in under two minutes...) Just found this online:

<quote>

Well, I learned something from Windows XP in a Nutshell:

In FreeCell, cards are not dealt randomly. Rather, there are 32,000 distinct numbered games, each representing a different predetermined deal of the cards. According to the help, "It is believed (although not proven) that every game is winnable." In fact, it has been proven that game #11982 is indeed not winnable.

<end quote>

I just looked at that game and i'm pretty sure they're right.

This "rave provision" that you mention is, essentially, the sort of logic that put the old Cotton Club music club out of business here in Atlanta a few years back, with the added irony that there's a very good chance that the kid who turned up dead didn't get alcohol at the Cotton Club, but was proved to have done so at another club... which didn't even get charged, much less railroaded out of business.

I think the French caught hell particularly because, let us face it, the French are loud-mouthed braggart cheese-eating surrender monkeys who annoy people.

Well, no, i have never heard of an aircraft fuselage failing because of a bullet hole -- but, then, i have never heard of a bullet-hole being made in one under conditions under which the type of catastrophic result that i postulated would be a possible failure regime. I don't think it's all that probable, myself, but the potential is there in the type of construction used.

Talking about the pressure loading on the

window due to a "mere" 4psi differential -- a datum point: the combined string tension on a large modern concert grand piano is around thirty tons.

The Harold Lloyd film you mention -- the hanging-from-buildings one -- is "Safety Last", i believe. Lloyd did all of his own stunts for that and other films, including actually hanging from tall buildings; i remember reading that there was a wooden platform with mattresses on it below, out of shot, but nobody was actually sure if it would hold if he fell onto it. (In another film, an explosive device went off before it was supposed to and blew two fingers off one of Lloyd's hands. In later films he wears a glove on that hand to hide the damage.)

Tyndallite // N. Metcalf

"Dinosaur Beach" has one of the sneakier methods of expanding a shorter work for book publication (or possibly for cutting a longer work for the magazine version) that i have



ever seen -- roughly the middle third of the longer version begins and ends in exactly the same place and time, and doesn't (so far as i can recall) introduce any significant changes to the plot as a whole. But it expands the shorter version by roughly 50%...

Speaking of first-draft writing, i've been told that John Creasey first-drafted at about 60WPM and seldom rewrote much; this may explain why most of his work -- the "Gideon" Scotland Yard procedurals and the stand-alone historical novel "Masters of Bow Street" excepted -- reads well enough the first time but is (to me) un-re-readable.

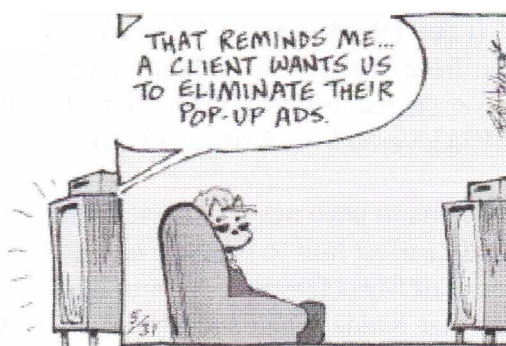
Speaking of soldiers in movies about Alexander the Great wearing wristwatches -- perhaps you haven't heard about the method which Alexander de-

veloped to enable his officers to synchronise their attacks (at least a bit more closely than had previously been possible). Basically, he consulted with natural philosophers, and they developed a solution which could be used to saturate a strip of cotton cloth, which was to be worn -- surprisingly enough -- about the wrist, like a modern watch. The solution was so compounded that, when exposed to the sun and to the sweat of the wearer, it would change colours at a more or less predictable rate (plus or minus a few minutes). While not at all accurate by modern standards, it worked pretty well for the day.

It was, of course, the original Alexander's Rag Time Band.

Or, of course, i could tell the story of Olaf Alexandersrog, the great Swedish geographer, who plotted the International Date Line...

Nice Distinctions //



A. Hlavaty

When i was married to Susan, we tended to name things; our

Renault Alliance rejoiced in the monicker "Maximilian Gainesborough". Actually, i sometimes named things before that marriage -- my Austin Healey Sprite, which was (nominally) white, was tagged Algernon R. Norvegicus. But my favourite name for something was a cat we had; he was black, except for a small white spot on his tummy, made messes and occasionally slashed things up. So his full name was Macadam Messer...

Personally, i found Mae West a bit oppressive -- not specifically because she was a sexually-aggressive female as just simply that i find anybody with that sort of personality oppressive, male or female. But it's true -- an older female who is openly sexual is regarded with anything from pity to disgust, but an

older male who is is regarded as virile and to be envied. Dorie Previn, in "Starlet Starlet on the Screen", has the line "female meat does not improve with time", and in Truffaut's "Day for Night", the actress in the film-within-a-film complains that she and the actor in the male lead role hit Hollywood at the same time, and he's still playing romantic leads and she's playing the woman dumped for a younger girl; this is made even more pointed if you know that Valentina Cortese (who won an Oscar for the role, BTW) was eleven years younger than Jean Pierre Aumont. And last week, three supermarket tabloids and **US Magazine** all featured Demi Moore and her new boyfriend on their covers, and all of them made prominent display of the numerals "40" and "25"... What would they do if Sean Connery dated a 25-year-old? (As long as it was a 25-year-old girl, anyway.)

I rather like the implications of the last two sentences in the announcement of the N3F Story Competition.

In the Time of the Monsoon

I remember the monsoon -- i spent a year in Viet Nam, after all, and i remember the rainy season. The current spring here in Georgia seems determined to outdo the rainy season in The Awful Place.

Georgia has been experiencing a drought for the last eight years or so. Lake levels have been getting lower and lower, and water-use restrictions have been in force in various places for at least part of summer every year. Office parks have signs saying "Irrigation from On-Site Lake".

At the beginning of this spring, Lake Lanier was several feet low. There's a bridge on Highway 400 that crosses what the sign by the bridge grandly proclaims is "Lake Lanier", and, i guess, technically it is Lanier -- but a very small arm, running up the valley of one of the creeks that used to be tributaries of the Chattahoochee before Buford Dam. To one



Found Online: Got to be from Mardi Gras

side of the road even when the lake is full, it's maybe twenty feet wide, on the other it widens out and gets deep enough that there's room for a dock or two when the lake is at full stage.

As you may know, Lanier is a CoE flood-control/hydro/water-supply lake, and all boathouses and docks on such have to be of floating construction, able to ride up and down with the water levels, as water is pulled from the lake or held back, depending on conditions, and the people who own lakeside lots own the land only to a line that is ten feet above the lake's nominal full stage, and the dock/boathouse has to be connected to that by a gangway. I think the requirement is that docks have to be able to follow a drop of ten feet in surface level, too, but i could be wrong about that.

Anyway, all of the docks on this particular upper neck of the lake were sitting on dry land, with the nearest water several feet away -- in fact, the water was a narrow little creek about ten or fifteen feet wide, surrounded by wide flat areas of grass and tall weeds.

(I took a series of photos and spliced them together with a panorama program back when it was dry; i'd put the picture in here but it's too wide in relation to its height...)

Now when i pass over that bridge, the docks are floating somewhere near the TOP of their range.

I don't think we've had a week since March or so that it hasn't rained at least some, and May set a new record for rainfall; a day with no rain was rarer than a day with it, and some of it was damned heavy and came in violent storms, as those who pay attention to tornados will recall.

I could stand a few dry weeks, myself.

The Corps has the opposite problem to what they had last year -- now people are after them to let water out of the lake and lower the level a bit, but they're resisting, since the sort of really large release that would be necessary has the potential of doing damage downstream; especially, he said, reading between the lines, because idiots have developed stuff in areas that no-one in their right minds would have put anything on if the Hooch was anything like its normal self.*

Of course, the rain played hell with our move last month -- i don't think there was a single day without heavy rain during the last week of the move period, which made loading and unloading interesting, especially because the front of the trailer we were moving into was a sea of mud. *Sigh*

*Atlanta has a long history of people building Expensive Stuff on the flood plains of some of the creeks in the area because the damned thing hasn't flooded in years and you can sell it to dumb Yuppies who have moved in since the last flood and don't believe that a cute little creek like that could possibly be dangerous...

Trailer Trash

'R' U?

And so we moved out of the house where we have been living since Helen began at North Georgia College, and into a beat-up and elderly trailer in another town.

We got the thing cheap -- with an extra monthly charge for washer/dryer hookups and a charge for trash collection, it's still less than half of what we were paying for the house.

Which is fair, because it is rather less than half the house.

To start with, it's two bedrooms where the house was three. The bedrooms are Very Small -- so small that we can't set up our waterbed in the master bedroom. It's a single bath, rather than a two-bath setup like the house, and it has a single living/dining/kitchen room in the middle between the two bedrooms, which are at the opposite ends of the trailer -- which is a single-wide, BTW.

It has gas heat and (with the gas coming from a tank in the back), but an electric stove. Dammit.

The back porch overlooks what seems to be a lovely sewage lagoon, although there are large snapping turtles and some quite vocal frogs living in it. Kate swears that the back of the lot is overgrown with poison ivy, but most of it looks like either common English or Boston ivy or Virginia creeper to me. Except for one rather scrawny bloomless rosebush and some wild grapevine, that is.

One reason that we got the thing so cheap is that it's in medium-bad shape -- the skirting boards are so dry-rotted that the installers from the phone company had a hard time mounting clips to hold the wires in place, for instance -- and the other is that the park is about half-empty and has been for some time; this particular unit had been empty for over a year when we moved in, which seems to be not atypical for the park as a whole.

And therefrom hangs a tale.

When we moved in, there was a definite Bad Odor hanging about, which we eventually realised had resulted from the fact that the water had been off for so long that all of the water in all of the drain traps had long since disappeared and sewer gas had been coming in. Once the water was back on and all of the traps had filled up appropriately and we had ventilated the place for a while, the smell went away.

We noticed that the toilet was slow to start with, and eventually it stopped up, so we got a plunger and went after it. This worked for a while, and then finally it blocked up solid and our plunger couldn't move it. So we called in the maintenance guy/resident manager. Bobby and his sons went after it with industrial strength plungers and drain solvents, and it seemed to start working for a while, but then finally simply quit.

So Bobby had to replace the toilet itself, which seems to have solved the problem.

Other Interesting Things about the place include missing knobs on the stove -- particularly the oven knobs. Bobby was able to come up with knobs that fit the switch shafts, but the markings on them bore no resemblance to the settings of the switches, so, by trial and error, i determined which settings were "OFF", "BAKE" and "BROIL", and bought a dial-type oven thermometer to calibrate the temp control with.

This is all well and good, but the largest surface unit is dead, and Bobby hasn't managed to come up with a working one yet. This wouldn't be too bad, except that it means that frying eggs or other things in my big skillet can be interesting, as the burner that i have to use is rather less than half the diameter of the skillet, and fails to heat it all the way to the edge until it's been on it a long time, by which time whatever's in the center is probably burnt

to a crisp... *Poo*

Meanwhile, there's no chance of getting DSL as we had at the house, so we have to rely on a dial-up connection.

That would be bad enough, but the line that was in here when we arrived was only good for 22600, and unreliable at that. The second line we had put in just for the computer -- on which the installer said he hand-picked the best pair in the cable for us -- is only good for a max of 44600 and tends to drop out at relatively short intervals (more often if it's raining); it took me four tries to hold a connection long enough to download a four Meg file the other day.

But i keep telling myself it's cheap.

The Money-Go-Round

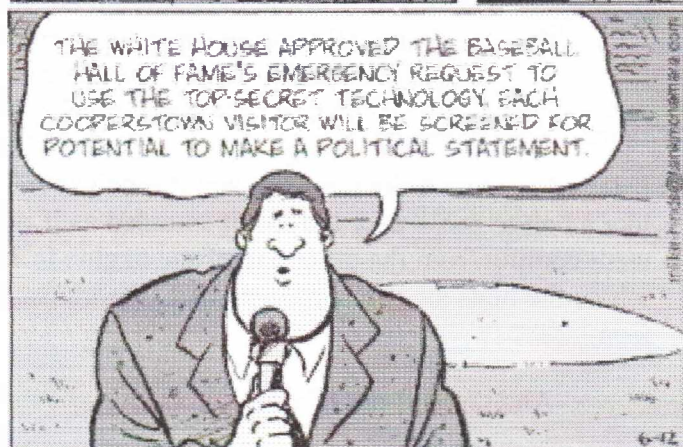
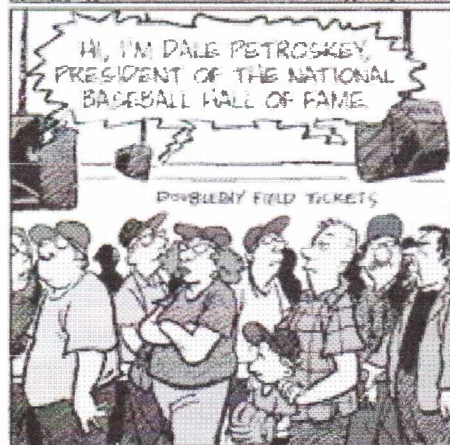
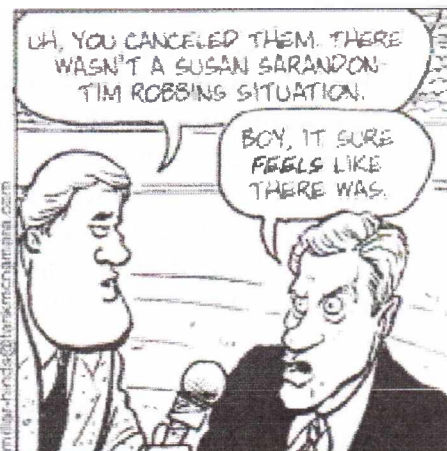
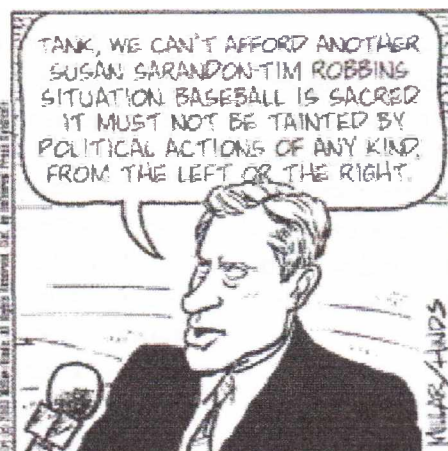
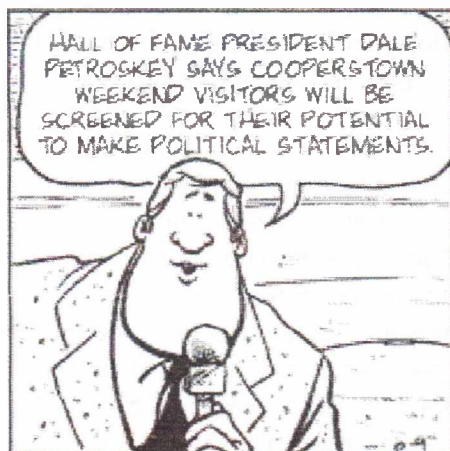


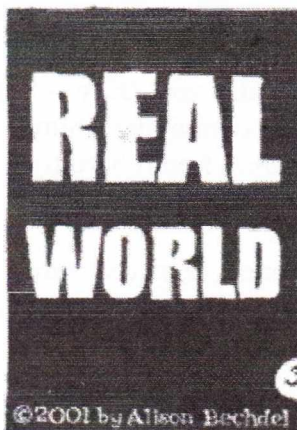
Some SFPAns are aware that we went through a gen-you-wine financial panic here-around the other day. The cat needed surgery on his ear, the truck was not legally drivable as it had no taillights at all -- no taillights, no turn signals... No brake lights.

And then Kate came home from dropping Helen at the professor's place where she's house-sitting while the Prof and his wife go gallivanting around somewhere for a month or so... and the car was making An Ominous Sound. She thought it sounded like a belt

I started it up with the hood up, and it didn't sound like a belt to me -- and, indeed, it sounded as if it were coming from the other end of the engine from where the belts are; perhaps even from the transmission.

And i'm still out of work..





Basically, it looked as if we were Right Out Of Luck.

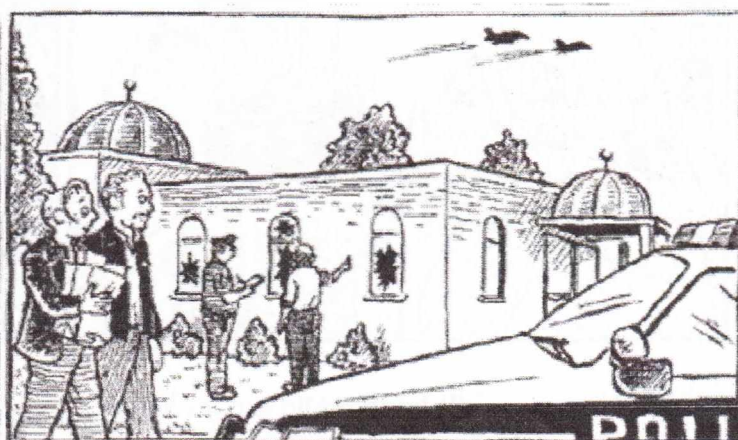
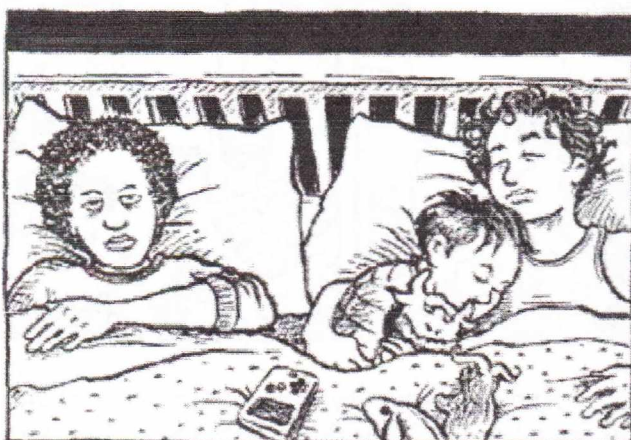
But, at the last minute, we got a reprieve.

And so, we have had the car in the shop -- getting the CV joints, which it had needed for long

all last summer.

I am ashamed to admit that the AC problem was a fuse.

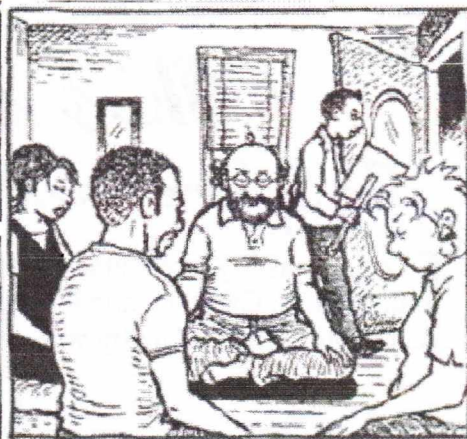
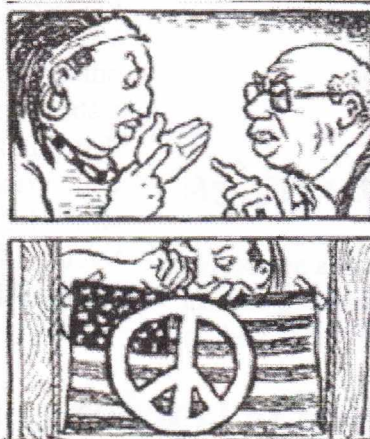
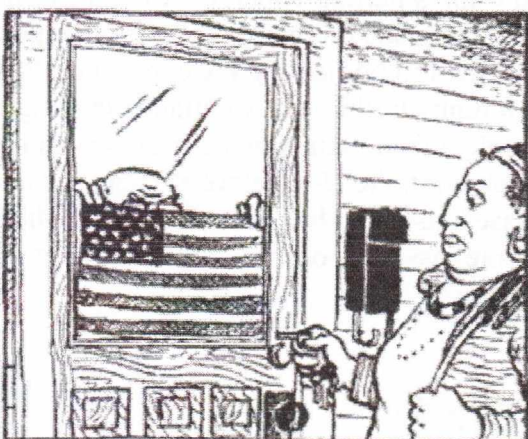
I went through all of last summer sweating in that damned car because i didn't think to check the



and long done in the process -- and discovered that the noise (which, in accordance with Murphy's Seventeenth Law, quit just as Kate was turning in to the shop's driveway yesterday morning) was a bad distributor. I also asked them to see if they could figure out what happened to the AC, which we did without

fuses.

He was able to find a used distributor, and, what with parts and labour, the whole thing came to \$650 (including replacing and properly torquing down the intake manifold gasket that the guys who



installed the engine failed to properly install), and it Runs Good now.

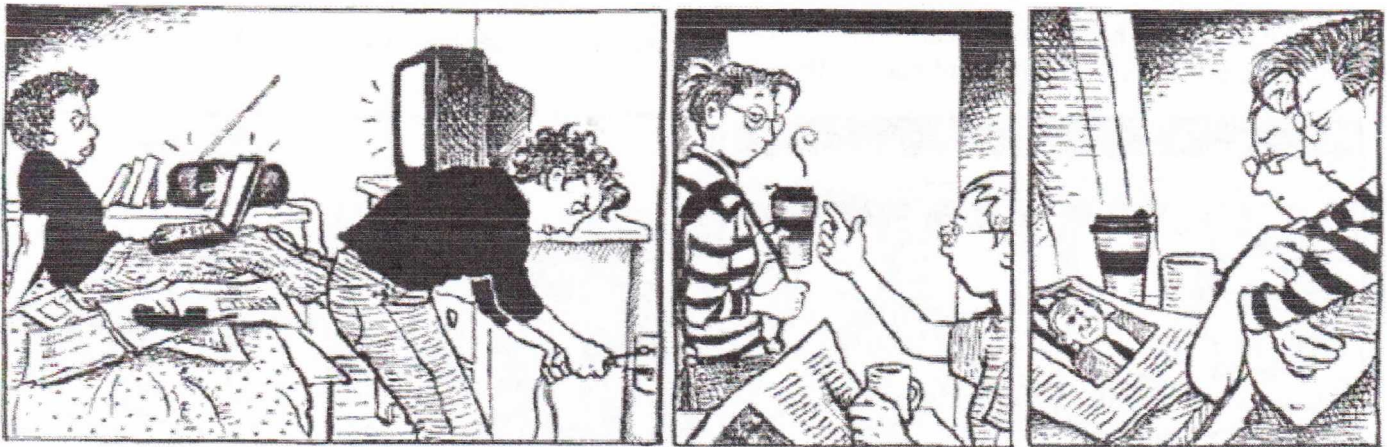
The "Check Engine" light still comes on from time to time -- i suspect that it's a throttle-angle sensor error, which seems to be common with this engine from about 1987 on.

And he has an Accord parked behind the garage -- an '89 two-door in which he has just installed a new timing belt and new brakes all 'round, with good AC and a CD player and a hideously sun-burnt paint job -- which we may be able to afford to buy, after which i will ceremoniously put the old S10 out of my misery. If we get the Accord, it becomes Kate's car and the wagon becomes mine, which is fine by me; considering how many miles i racked up

the old days -- gee, i wonder why that was? -- i have no doubt that the idea behind the current revamp of the character was, as Gary basically says "Hey -- let's take one of our old Western heroes and make him a faggot to sell lots of copies!", and i find it hard to believe that you don't.

Actually, if they had done it relatively subtly (which, actually, they may have -- i'll never know, because the first issue was so horribly done that i have no intent of reading any more of it -- i could live with it. But they didn't. (Apparently)

As to the Millie the Model thing -- depending on how it was done, it might or might not bother me -- if i cared a rat's ass about Millie the Model.



on our '85 wagon, it'll be like Old Home Week, though most of the people i used to visit in Faraway Places like Raleigh-Durham or New Orleans are now living Somewhere Else...

If we just had Just A Little Bit More Money, i'd take the wagon and head out to Lexington KY next weekend to catch Fairport Convention, Lexington being (as usual) the closest to Atlanta they're coming on this tour.

MC 2

The Sphere // D. Markstein

It sounds as if you are playing devil's advocate in this MC to Gary -- while it is quite true that the Rawhide Kid's sexuality was never touched on in

And, adopting the same stance that you did with regard to Gary's position -- do we, in fact, know that Millie wasn't a tennis star when she was a teenager? Are there any stories that establish anything in particular about her teen years? Could she not have been one of those athletes who look so good as teens and then burn out, who then turned to modeling?

Ham Fisher -- besides any attempts he made to prove Al Capp a pornographer, of which i was not aware (can you expand on that?) -- also used to periodically lay claim to originating the concept of doing a strip about funny hillbillies, essentially claiming that Capp stole it from him, when as i understand what i read about it, the "Joe Palooka" sequence on which he based his claim had been done not by him but by a former assistant of his -- a young fellow named Al Capp.

*(It's because we're proud of
you // J. Copeland*

Kate is that way about Helen, who is about to graduate with a degree in Physics and intends to go on to grad school.

Just as with Miss Julia on the cover of *Now & Then* the shot of Allie on the back cover causes me a touch of cognitive dissonance as i recall the small person i boosted out of the back seat of the car at some party you guys let me tag along to up there in NC. (One of the last times i saw Karl Wagner, as i recall.)

I had forgotten that i wanted to see *The Transporter*, thanks for reminding me. Sounds like *The Driver*, except not trying to be The Great American Existentialist Movie.

Another film under the Disney banner that wasn't about the disgusting things you mention was *Return to Oz*, the film that forces within the company tried to kill because it had been greenlighted by the previous administration. (Or *Watcher in the Woods*, basically Hammer Lite, come to think, and pretty good, though none of the three endings they tried on it really worked. Brian Clemens has sometimes had a problem with endings; many *Avengers* episodes' endings were their weakest parts.)

Meanwhile, i really enjoyed X2; i must say that as soon as Jean said something about her powers being unpredictable lately, i began wondering

*<SPOILER ALERT OOOGAH!!
OOOGAH!! SPOILER ALERT
OOOGAH!! OOOGAH!! SPOILER
ALERT OOOGAH!! OOOGAH!!
SPOILER ALERT>*

exactly how they were going to Do Her In... and how they're going to bring her back in the next film.

<END SPOILER ALERT // END SPOILER

*ALERT // END SPOILER ALERT // END
SPOILER ALERT // END SPOILER ALERT>*

I also found myself thinking how good Halle Berry might look as the punk Storm.

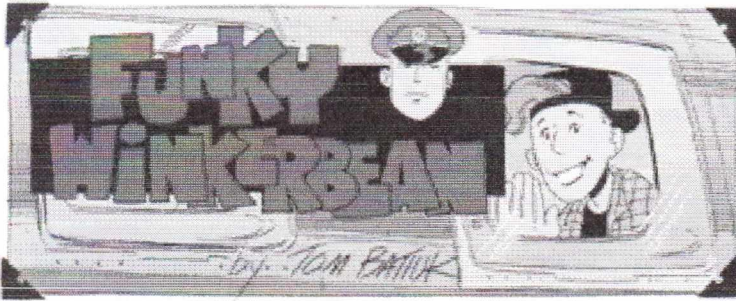
Matrix Reloaded is another film i sort of want to see, but not Real Badly. I found the first one to be all flash and little substance -- actually, about on a level with either *Battlestar: Galactica* or the Gil Gerard *Buck Rogers* teevee series, where, if you could turn off all of your mind except the minimum needed to comprehend the film's premises without thinking about them critically in the least, and just watch the pretty lights flash in front of your eyes, it's not bad. (*Close Encounters* is another such; unfortunately, i made the mistake of seeing that one too many times, too close together and wasn't able to avoid actually thinking about it...)

Your remarks about ad agencies and politicians who use inappropriate songs because they listen to the title and the music and not the lyrics reminds me that a year or so ago, i swear that Levis were using the instrumental intro from "Fortunate Son" in their ads.

The only dePalma films i have ever enjoyed, if i even managed to watch them all the way through, are *Phantom of the Paradise* and *The Untouchables* -- and the second is only because he did such an excellent job of stealing everything that makes Sergio Leone's films so good -- unlike, say, Spielberg, i feel as if dePalma actually understands the material he's "paying tribute" to. (Got to add Carpenter, Dante and Arkush to the list of directors who understand the material they're referencing...)

The Italian Job remake looks like basically one long-drawn-out BMW product placement.

As to the League of *Extraordinary Gentlemen* film, I'm annoyed by the fact that Mina Harker has been reduced to a sidekick and that Quartermain (portrayed in the comic as a burnt-out, indecisive opium addict) will be the leader (of course, being played by Sean Connery, that's a given, i guess). Also, the introduction of Tom Sawyer as a Secret Service agent bothers me a bit. On the other hand,



with Peta Wilson cast as Mina, there'll at least be something to look at...

Hey -- i'm happy for Brinke Stevens; if she can make a good living as a Scream Queen, she should ride it as long as she can, with the Marine Biology degree as the Old Ace In The Hole to fall back on. Hard graft as it may be, acting on movies beats working for a living.

Speaking of Texas Legislature members taking hotel rooms -- i loved the spectacle of Democrat members of the Legislature moving en masse to a motel in Oklahoma to foil Republican schemes to do Bad Things. Molly Ivins is right -- the only state that has politics and politicians even nearly as gaudily entertaining as Texas is Louisiana.

Many years ago, when my mother was enthusing about the film *Gandhi*, and saying that i ought to see it, my response was that in a world in which India has nuclear weapons, i fear that Gandhi was a failure.

If it didn't cost so much, i might put XP on the other computer, replacing 98. But it does cost a lot. And the other computer isn't set up yet, either.

However, the description of pellet gun vs. BB

gun that you quote here from Steve isn't wholly accurate -- the pellet guns Steve was talking about, i would guess, are the .22/6mm ones that use either high air pressure or CO₂ as propellant. There are similar .177/4.5mm air/CO₂ guns that shoot either pellets or BBs with equal power and accuracy -- and, i suspect, a little more striking power in the BBs than in the pellets because they may well have a bit more mass. (BBs, incidentally, are copper-jacketed -- like military steel-jacketed hardball ammunition -- so that they can be used in guns with rifled barrels and get a good effect from it without wiping out the rifling.)

I may do the CD trick again this year -- but this time, if i do, i intend to have it in members' hands before the Egoboo Poll vote.

I remember a young lady who would appear at ChambanaCon with a pair of Irish wolfhounds. Given that i seem to recall that she was maybe five-feet-nothing, when she walked between the dogs, she was almost invisible. Very neat dogs, gentle and willing to put up with a lot of foolishness from people impressed with their size.

Re the exchange with Gary about the CD -- if i do it again, i'll include a note listing the contents in the package. I didn't expect any page credit as such for it, anyway.

For those not following the Funky Winkerbean strip, the Sunday strip reproduced on this page is almost entirely a flashback to high school days by returning serviceman Wally Winkerbean (in the cap in the flashback and in uniform in the last panel), recently returned after being held hostage by bandits after being reported dead in a copter crash



Spiritus Mundi // GHLiii

Actually, the parked-car-rolls-uphill is an optical illusion, but you knew that, didn't you? There's a place like that in -- ummm -- San Francisco? -- and Six Flags used to have a whole house built to look as if things defied gravity. As I recall, just going through it gave Susan an attack of vertigo.

When I did my trip report on my first trip to England for the Cropredy Festival, I ended it talking about the hedgehog who was scrounging in a discarded Burger King bag outside the gate at St Hilda's College in Oxford where we were staying. Sounds like your quokka was as well-adapted to civilisation as that hedgepig.

The platypus is also venomous, I recall reading somewhere -- it has spurs on its hind legs that carry a mild poison.

Eric Bogle*, a Scot who emigrated to Australia, arrived on ANZAC Day, long enough ago that some of the veterans of Gallipoli were still in good enough condition to march in the commemorative parade. The sight so inspired him that he wrote "The Band Played 'Waltzing Matilda'", one of the great anti-war songs:

Now when I was a young man I carried me pack
And I lived the free life of the rover.
From the Murray's green basin to the dusty outback,
Well, I waltzed my Matilda all over.
Then in 1915, my country said, "Son,
It's time you stop ramblin', there's work to be done."
So they gave me a tin hat, and they gave me a gun,
And they marched me away to the war.

And the band played "Waltzing Matilda,"
As the ship pulled away from the quay,
And amidst all the cheers, the flag waving, and tears.

*"Eric Bogle was born in Peebles, Scotland. He trained as an accountant before becoming a professional singer-songwriter. In the early 1970s he moved to Australia, where he has continued to perform and record songs remarkable for their trenchant political message. He is best known for his anti-war lyric, 'And the Band Played Waltzing Matilda', which has been recorded by more than 100 artists from Joan Baez to The Pogues. The definitive version is by June Tabor, who also recorded "'No Man's Land'."

We sailed off for Gallipoli.

And how well I remember that terrible day,
How our blood stained the sand and the water;
And of how in that hell that they call Suvla Bay
We were butchered like lambs at the slaughter.
Johnny Turk, he was waitin', he primed himself well;
He showered us with bullets, and he rained us with shell --
And in five minutes flat, he'd blown us all to hell,
Nearly blew us right back to Australia.

But the band played "Waltzing Matilda,"
When we stopped to bury our slain.
Well, we buried ours, and the Turks buried theirs,
Then we started all over again.

And those that were left, well, we tried to survive
In that mad world of blood, death and fire.
And for ten weary weeks I kept myself alive
Though around me the corpses piled higher.
Then a big Turkish shell knocked me arse over head,
And when I woke up in me hospital bed
And saw what it had done, well, I wished I was dead --
Never knew there was worse things than dying.

For I'll go no more "Waltzing Matilda,"
All around the green bush far and free -
To hump tents and pegs, a man needs both legs,
No more "Waltzing Matilda" for me.

So they gathered the crippled, the wounded, the maimed,
And they shipped us back home to Australia.
The armless, the legless, the blind, the insane,
Those proud wounded heroes of Suvla.
And as our ship sailed into Circular Quay,
I looked at the place where me legs used to be,
And thanked Christ there was nobody waiting for me,
To grieve, to mourn and to pity.

But the band played "Waltzing Matilda,"
As they carried us down the gangway,
But nobody cheered, they just stood and stared,
Then they turned all their faces away.

And so now every April, I sit on my porch
And I watch the parade pass before me.
And I see my old comrades, how proudly they march,
Reviving old dreams of past glory,
And the old men march slowly, all bones stiff and sore,
The tired old heroes from a forgotten war
And the young people ask "What are they marching for?"
And I ask meself the same question.

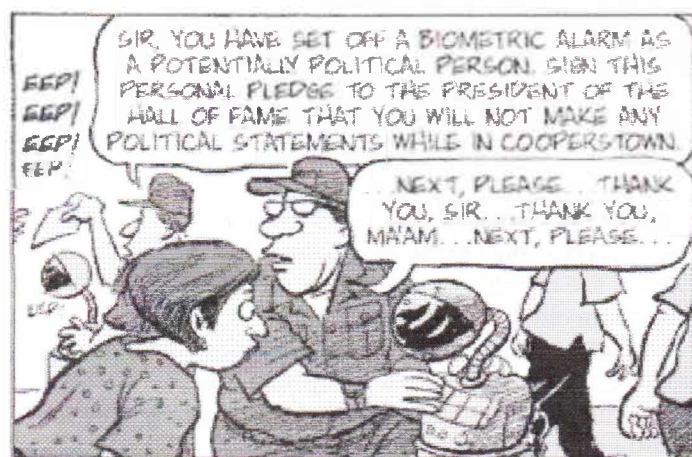
(Bogle's own recorded version fades out with a barely audible "Waltzing Matilda ... and their ghosts can be heard as they march beside the billabong: 'Who'll go a-waltzing Matilda with me...?'")

Speaking of "dive" motels -- on one occasion, many years ago, when i was engaged in fleeing the state of North Carolina rather than face somebody who was unexpectedly going to show up where i had planned to stay (maybe some day i can tell that story), i checked into a fairly crumby motel. There was either an orgy or a gang rape going on in the room next to mine (and, since no-one was yelling for help, i'm inclined toward the orgy theory); if i hadn't been able to use the white noise from the teevee set to a blank channel to drown it out, i wouldn't have gotten any sleep at all.

Well, they renamed Washington National Airport after Reagan -- which i thought was appropriate, it's also outdated, dangerous and (metaphorically speaking) senile, kept alive only by heroic measures by Congress.

You mention *Moonraker* (the movie) disparagingly -- have i mentioned here that a large portion of the last half of *Moonraker* is a virtually scene-for-scene uncredited remake/ripoff -- right down to its Rio setting and a chase sequence on the same road -- of a Dino diLaurentis spy spoof called *Kiss the Girls and Make Them Die*, starring Mike Connors, Dorothy Provine and Terry-Thomas? (...and *Kiss the Girls...* is much the better of the two.)

Speaking of Halliburton -- i have a Tank MacNamara that ends the Hall of Fame sequence that i may stick in about here if it fits when i'm formatting:



I am sorry that the civilians you're talking about died; and i agree that we should not have invaded Iraq. That said, i have to say that anyone who drives through a combat area (at all) and doesn't automatically stop and look very very Harmless when

confronted by armed foreign troops -- who are by definition going to be nervous and jumpy -- is quite likely to become Collateral Damage, and i can't much blame the troops. This is not a My Lai situation, this is a panic reaction by marginally-trained troops in a bad situation where they really neither want nor ought to be. This is the sort of situation in which *i* damned near blasted one of our own watch-towers with a full magazine when the damned fool in it did something that startled me in the dark when i was already keyed up. (I was about one ounce of trigger slack away from getting into an Interesting Situation when my brain caught up with my reflexes. Not that i would have hurt the guy if i had cut loose -- i would have been firing into about two feet of sandbags between me and him and the M16 has very little penetration. But it certainly would have emphasised for him how stupid what he did was...)

Speaking of being interrogated for saying that the leader of the current ruling junta in Washington is out of control -- i just read a piece online (from Reuters, i think) that said that if your name is "David Nelson" and you try to fly, you're likely to be yanked off your flight and questioned by the FBI -- for some reason, that name is big on the "no fly" list. (THE David Nelson -- who's 66 this year, BTW -- had problems about it recently...)

Kerbs painted "LOOK RIGHT" are all over London, and have, apparently, been for years. Which didn't stop me from nearly getting creamed by



a lorry if a bobby hadn't literally grabbed my sleeve at the last second. (In my own defense, i have to say that i was trying to figure out

see page 9 for the setup for this

what would be the best angle to shoot a picture at the time, and i might well step in front of a truck here in Atlanta if i was concentrating on something else that hard, too.)

Jail? Contempt, mayhaps?

Trivial Pursuits // J. Gelb

Did you honestly expect that there would be weapons of mass destruction? I was skeptical from the beginning, and especially so when Iraq failed to use WMD's on our troops when they might have done them some good -- or at least, might have seemed to Saddam and Co. that they might do some good.



Well, though i'm not getting a lot of news these days, what with no radio, no teevee and no newspapers, it seems to me that i've heard that, since you wrote your comment about Jayson Blair, some of the brass at the Times have resigned, more or less in disgrace.

I definitely need to see *A Mighty Wind* -- prolly wait till i can get it on DVD, though. The last three movies i can recall actually seeing in a theatre are *X-Men 2*, *Lilo & Stitch* (which, according to sources in the industry, relayed through David Lindsay, looks as if it was the last hurrah for traditional animation at Disney) and *Spider-Man*. (*The Hulk* is opening day after tomorrow, and i may go see that in the theatre; the local comics shop has a special show for its patrons set up -- regular price, but they have

the entire house to themselves.

I've found that, if a website will run satisfactorily on Opera, it will run okay on just about any other current browser, since Opera pretty much sticks to the HTML standard, rather than adding proprietary extensions. (I read somewhere [rasff, maybe?] that FrontPage writes broken code that Internet Explorer has no trouble with but that, by a strange coincidence, chokes Netscape.) I truly despise sites that say "This site is best viewed with {fill in a browser}." and will usually do my best to avoid patronising them if possible. My own site says "Best viewed with any browser at 800x600", and i have buttons that link to download sites for Opera, IE and Netscape..

"Lydia the Tattooed Lady" -- my memory insists that that was first sung by Groucho, but maybe i'm just associating it with him because it

For those not following [Tank Macnamara](#), the late-October strips have been rather a vicious commentary on schools switching conferences for big money...

would make such a perfect Groucho number.

I still go out for live music -- not so much as i used to, because (a) i have no girlfriend who also loves to go to clubs and so on to go with and to know about upcoming shows that i miss hearing about (b) it's a long way from where we now live to where the music is and (c) live shows are starting to get too expensive. (Of course, if it's a Dash show or a Cowboy Mouth show or a show at a venue where i know the door guy, i can usually get in free, but the principle holds true for other bands and venues.)

If people are looking for sabotage theories:

Since the shuttle loss appears to have been due to damage to some of the tiles -- which they were more or less definitely blaming on the foam, last i heard -- how much trouble would it be to set up with a Really Good sniper rifle and just pop one in in a way that damaged the tiles just at or just before liftoff?

So, in the *Luann* strips i reprinted, you see why Guy and i were assuming that he was portraying Eiffel as a predatory lesbian?

Actually, rather than the number of "u"'s, i'd say you can tell how good or bad (if such terms of art actually apply) porn is by how many "m"'s there are in "I'm cummmmmming!"

Stuff from the News

New Software Helps Leverage the Paradigm

A new software program sends a clear message to corporate America -- cut out the bull.

New York-based Deloitte Consulting admits it helped foster confusing, indecipherable words like "synergy," "paradigm," and "extensible repository," but now it has decided enough is enough. On Tuesday it will release "Bullfighter" to help writers of business documents to avoid jargon and use clear language.

"We've had it with repurposeable, value-added knowledge capital and robust, leveragable mindshare," Deloitte Consulting partner Brian Fugere said.

"Bullfighter," as the software is called, could help investors spot troubled companies. Used to test language used by now-bankrupt energy trader Enron from 1999 through 2001, Fugere said the program found "it got progressively more obscure as they got deeper and deeper into trouble.

"We think that's a good indicator of the linkage between clear and straight communications and business performance, including the issue of transparency and trust, which is such a big issue these days," Fugere said.

Black-and-white photographs of matadors fighting real bulls accompany the instructions.

Marketing director Chelsea Hardaway said employees had fun developing the program over 9 months. They came up with about 10,000 "bullwords." The final version has a dictionary of 350 words and gives users the ability to add more.

"It flags your 'bullwords' but then it gives you sort of a good-humored lashing over why you have used those words," Hardaway said of the program, which works on Microsoft Word and PowerPoint documents much like those that check spelling.

The firm said employees voted "leverage" as the most hated word, followed by "bandwidth" and "touch base." Other incomprehensible words were "incentivize," and "envisioneer."

The program, which can be downloaded free at <http://www.dc.com/bullfighter>, was tested on statements by 30 big U.S. companies. Home improvement retailer Home Depot was first for clarity on the "Bull Index," while computer hardware and software companies suffered the lowest scores for readability

-- Grant McCool

Tolkien Rage at 'Rings' Success

The family of *Lord Of The Rings* author JRR Tolkien is furious that a London musical based on the books is being staged. Son Christopher Tolkien also is said to be deeply unhappy that his father's masterpiece has been adapted into an acclaimed film trilogy directed by Peter Jackson. And now the three-hour musical is enraged him even further. A pal says, "He's catatonic over the success of the film and thinks all popular entertainment is unutterably low."

-- from IMDB.com Entertainment News



MC13

Peter Pao & Merry // D. Schlosser

Sure -- turkey "bacon", like turkey "ham", would be mainly a matter of the cure process, though the consistency might be a bit more difficult to get right than turkey "ham" or "pastrami".

Actually, i prefer turkey ham to real ham for sandwiches -- it tastes fine, and it's generally less expensive by some factor and often is sliced and formed in a manner that makes it better for sandwiches than real ham.

As to the accents of the characters in *Lord of the Rings* -- yeah, i "hear" them with various Brit accents -- particularly Sam, who would be pure country; Yorkshire, maybe. Gandalf, of course, is pure Oxbridge -- and always "sounded", voice wise, to me, like Christopher Lee or Peter Cushing. Frodo is educated Londoner, not Oxbridge, for some reason.

Re: your Ct. *Steve*: "You're already getting several months more use of your earnings than I do." Why should you get any use of Steve's money?

The anti-dope commercials associating it with auto accidents don't bother me nearly as much as the "If you smoke dope you'll get date-raped" one and the "Because this guy bought a joint, this family in South America was wiped out by a huge international drug cartel" ones.

The problem with a "federation" between Israel and the Palestinians with "...some sort of joint 'over-government' ... leaving each to its own domestic affairs ... something like the way the 13 colonies originally envisioned their relationship to each other

and the federal gov't..." And, of course, that worked so well -- among people who were generally inclined to not try to kill each other off -- that it's how we still run the country, right? I can see something like that in the region -- and i can predict pretty much just how quickly and how gaudily the wheels would come off...

As to human factors vs. technology in *Fail-Safe*, i saw the film when it came out, but i can't recall how closely it followed the book -- in the book it was a single component that burnt out at a crucial time and triggered the events of the story.

Your comment about aerobatics to shake up hijackers reminds me of the bit at the beginning of the animated "World's Finest" film that introduced Batman and Superman to each other -- Lois Lane is on Air Force One, hijackers take over the aircraft,

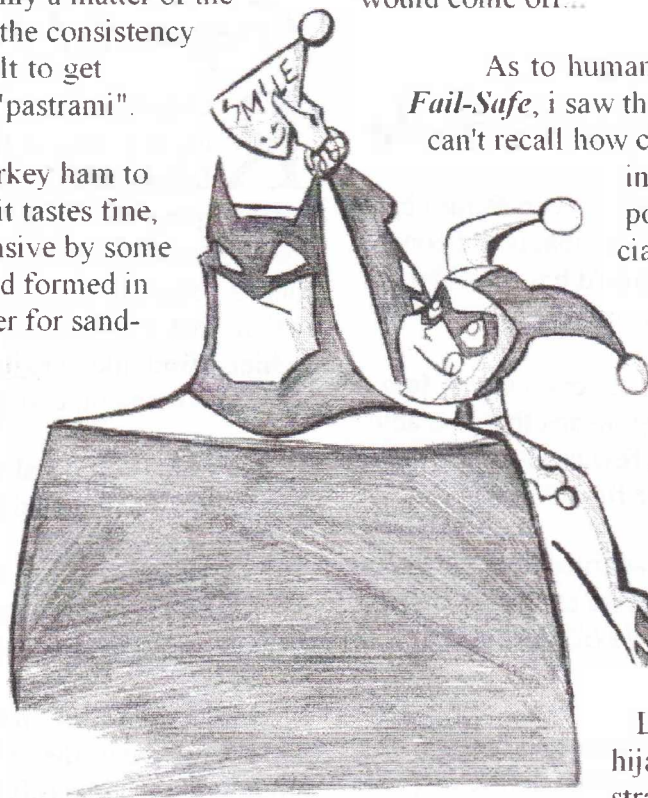
Lois tries to use cell phone, hijacker shoves her into seat, straps her down, plans to make example of her... As he raises his gun, he sardonically asks her name -- "Lois Lane" she replies. "Lois Lane?!? The one Superman always...?!?" "Always rescues? 'Fraid so..." she replies just before Superman grabs a wingtip and the aircraft rolls over and tosses the unbelted hijackers around...

"...'Remove Evil Dictator' ... takes on ourselves the right to make that decision ..." -- Tom Lehrer said it so well:

*They've got to be protected
All their rights respected
Until someone we like can be elected...*

The unofficial crossover was, i think, about the last time that Marvel did Halloween stories set in Rutland; i know they did it more than the one year.

Speaking of abbreviating "Valentine's Day" -- ever notice that Vincent diFate signs paintings "VdiF"?



Avatar Press // R. Cleary

The "...majority [of the furry people] were of an alternative life style..."? What sort of "alternative"? Gay? Polyamorous? Republican?

Tennessee Trash // G. Robe

You'll be "... handing off ... everything I bring back from Latin America that is not contagious ..."? I'd think you'd have problems not handing off the contagious stuff.

I wouldn't say that we've "conquered" Iraq -- we've defeated it. Conquering means that you actually stick around more than a few months and that you have real influence on the future.

You say that there was little time for the Bush League to form an endgame strategy -- what makes you think they're capable of forming an effective one?

It's hard to imagine religious authorities approving of magic or accepting that a divine magic is possible? -- have you read the Deryni books? Much of the magic in those is very definitely Church-based (or at least religion-based), involving frequent direct invocations (and apparent presence) of the main archangels as part of workings.

Reverant // S. Strickland

It's been three years since i last managed to make JazzFest; i used to get there virtually every year for a while. Maybe next year i can make it. I had hoped to get up to Lexington KY this weekend for Fairport Convention's show there -- the closest they ever get to Atlanta anymore. They were supposed to play here in 1975, but the joint they were supposed to play burnt down the day before and they didn't get rescheduled. (Or maybe it was Steeleye Span who didn't make it because the club burnt down and it was Fairport that got cancelled because the club they we rescheduled into got closed down because Georgia Power shut off their power the day

before the show...) But we haven't got the money for me to go running off on a two-day trip to a concert 400 miles away. Dammit.

(The spellchecker in this DTP program just suggested "swastika" in place of your name, above.)

frequent flyer // T. feller

Re Harry Potter (a phenomenon which i, having read two or three of the things, find unfathomable) -- Rowling and her US publisher are suing the *NY Daily News* for printing excerpts from the new book a couple days ago. Apparently there's a store in NYC which claims its people didn't realise that there was a hold on the new Potter (which i find, like, really plausible) and put it out as soon as it came in, earlier this week.

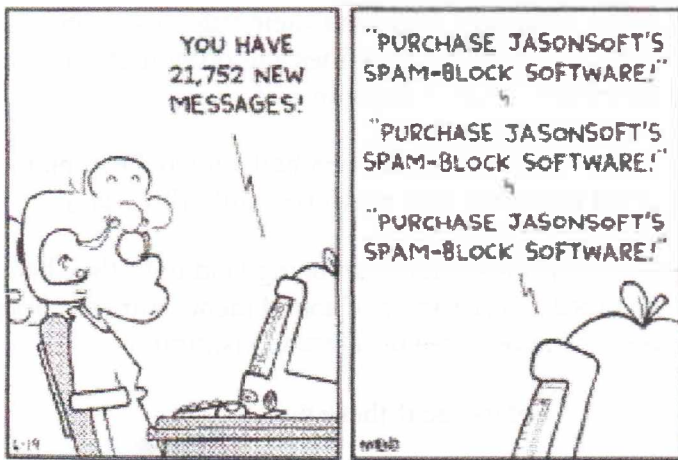
Sorry -- if it's slash, you can't be with Halle Berry. For slash, you'd have to be with, say, Guy.

There are those who seem to interpret any criticism of any sort of anything Jewish or related to Jews or Judaism as anti-Semitism.

I've seen only the first "Austin Powers" film, and i don't recall the "Flint" phone ringer in it -- though that could easily be me just forgetting. It definitely was used in *Hudson Hawk* for the electronic handcuffs that James Coburn's rogue CIA agents used.

We are currently using a WalMart-branded Compuserve (AOL) spin-off as our ISP, and they haven't blocked the ports that those damned Windows pop-up messages come in on, so, periodically, as the spammers' software cycles through the various possible port addresses, i get bombed with a bunch of the things. I notice that the largest single category of pop-up spam i get is selling software to block pop-ups. (Since i typed that, i have gotten six pop-ups. One was for porn, one was for virus software, one was trying to sell me a box to steal cable teevee with and





the other three were for pop-up blocking software.

{Update on the above -- i left the machine on-line when we went out to get dinner and groceries, came back, and found a total of 24 pop-ups stacked on the screen. Two each were for ways to steal premium cable services, two were for McAfee anti-virus and utilities and the other twenty were for software to block pop-ups. [Add one more just as i type this for pop-up stoppers] This is akin to a doctor spraying a culture of some mild, annoying and debilitating but not fatal illness on a crowd of people at a bus stop and then offering to sell them penicillin...}



The *Fox Trot* strip i am including is, coincidentally, the one that ran today (6/19), which i downloaded just after i originally typed this comment..)

When you refer to e-groups, do you mean mailing list type groups, or Usenet newsgroups? I know that participating in rec.arts.sf.fandom sometimes seems to cut down on my apazine activity. {Case in point, sort of: i have not looked at rasff for weeks, since i haven't set up the computer that has my newsgroup software and files on. In the last week or so i have turned out over twenty pages of SFPA material.)

(The spellchecker in this DTP program just suggested "tomfoolery" in place of your name, above.)

More Stuff from the News

There's Nothing Like a Coke

ATLANTA (Reuters) - It doesn't pay to take the Pepsi challenge if you happen to work for Coca-Cola.

Rick Bronson, a union activist and driver at a Coca-Cola bottling plant in Southern California, apparently learned that lesson the hard way this week when he was fired for allegedly drinking a Pepsi-Cola.

Management at the Coca-Cola Bottling Co. in Sylmar, California, told Bronson on June 12 he was being dismissed for violating a policy prohibiting slander of Coke products, according to the International Brotherhood of Teamsters.

The union, however, claims Bronson was actually fired for his work organizing Coke merchandisers in Southern California.

"Rick Bronson was actively involved in those organizing campaigns and Coke management knew it," said Jim Santangelo, a spokesman for Teamsters Local 848, which represents Bronson. "That's why he was fired."

The Teamsters have filed unfair labor practice charges against the California bottler, which is owned by Atlanta-based bottling giant Coca-Cola Enterprises Inc.

Bob Phillips, a Coca-Cola Bottling Co. spokesman, declined to comment on the specifics of Bronson's case and would not say whether drinking a competitor's products was a disciplinary offense.

Phillips noted that the bottler had a strict policy prohibiting retaliation against union members and other employees and hoped to reach a

"satisfactory resolution" of Bronson's case.

There are more than 300 workers at the Coca-Cola plant in Sylmar, which is in the Los Angeles area.

Psychiatric Tests for Gridlock Drivers

LAGOS, Nigeria (AP) - Nigeria's traffic authorities confirmed Thursday they had ordered psychiatric tests of traffic offenders blamed for "insane" gridlock in sub-Saharan Africa's

largest city. arrest offenders, impound their vehicles, impose 25,000 naira (US\$200) fines and order mandatory psychiatric tests, Adesegun said.

Hundreds of drivers had already been punished under the new measures, authorities said.

Their vehicles are being held until they had received a "certificate of sound mental fitness" from one of Lagos' three psychiatric institutions.

"Let us see if these peo-



ple are mentally balanced. We have to end this insanity," Adesegun said. "If this doesn't work, the next thing we may do is advise the judiciary to impose jail terms."

Lagos' legendary traffic jams, known as "go-slows," are being worsened by impatient drivers who brazenly jump curbs and drive on the wrong side of the street, Lagos Traffic Ministry spokesman Ogundeji Adesegun told The Associated Press.

"We have insane traffic. It is madness, no doubt about it," the official said.

The ministry in recent days ordered police to

Hatch Proposes Destroying Pirates' Computers

Senator Orrin Hatch of Utah, chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, has recommended the development of technology that would effectively destroy any computer that is repeatedly used for downloading pirated movies and CDs. During testimony before the committee on Wednesday, Hatch said that putting a downloader's computer out of commission "may be the only way you can teach somebody about copyrights." He suggested legislation that would exempt copyright owners from liability for damaging computers and suggested that pirates receive two warnings about illegal online downloading before being zapped. "If that's the only way, then I'm all for destroying their machines," Hatch said. Hatch himself has composed a number of religious songs and receives about \$18,000 annually in royalty payments.

MC 4

Oblio // G. Brown

I hope you enjoy ComicCon; if we had any money to spare, i'd be in Lexington Kentucky at this very moment, for a Fairport CONvention concert, rather than sitting here at the computer typing. Oh, well, maybe next time.

Maybe next year i can afford to go to Cropredy again.

I had thought that i might go see *The Hulk* (which opened yesterday) today to sort-of console me for not being at the Fairport gig, but i didn't; the Accord had what i thought was an oil leak, but turned out to be a leak in the power-steering hose that was squirting fluid on the exhaust manifold. And that is going to cost some bucks -- if it had been the valve-cover gasket as i initially suspected, it would have been free, as we paid an extra hundred dollars above his original asking price to get a leaky valve-cover gasket and a worn motor mount replaced. He's willing to do this for just the cost of the hose -- and at his cost, not list. But it's still going to be almost a hundred bucks.

So no movie today.

Maybe i'll go to a cheap show tomorrow.

A Mighty Wind is definitely a film i want to see, at least on DVD. As to *League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*, the changes from the original concept that i've been hearing about worry me. Particularly making Quartermain the leader and Mina a sidekick and introducing Tom Sawyer as a character. OTOH, Peta Wilson.

Finding Nemo has been getting good buzz and is making pots of money, apparently on word-of-mouth, but i'm a little leery of the concept.

And *Terminator 3* has only Arnie, out of all the people involved in the first two, associated with it. This could be bad or it could be not-bad. I'll have to see.

As to the WMDs, as of today, the Shrub's latest reason for not finding any is that the Iraqis looted the weapons stores and carried them all off, presumably in their back pockets or on camels. This is all well and good, but the kind of stuff he's claiming were there is the sort of stuff that you have to have fairly sophisticated and mostly non-moveable facilities to produce and store, and the current ruling junta in Washington has failed, so far, to produce any evidence that such existed in antebellum Iraq.

OTOH, a report online today says that they may have found evidence of sorts that maybe there was a program; however, the early story that i read seems to be saying that what they've found is crypto machinery and paperwork saying that it was intended for the agency running a nuclear program. This is, at best, if that's all that they have, useful at best as corroboration of real evidence, when and if they ever find any.

As to the *NYTimes* thing -- you say "...someone in *The Times*' management/editing scheme is eventually going to be punished...". I haven't been actually following the story -- with no satellite, no cable, no teevee antenna or rabbit ears that work worth a damn, no radios in the house and no newspaper subscription, about all the news i catch is what i either see online or read in newspapers when i stop in at a store that has them on display -- but i



understand that at least two more-or-less highly-placed editorial/management types have resigned (whether voluntarily or not, i don't know). Wouldn't surprise me if there were more to come.

Norm is quite right, from what i've read, that the English translations of Verne have been, for the most part, badly mangled. And, of course, all that most people know about Verne, anyway, is, oh, say "Jules Verne's *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*, starring James Mason and Kirk Douglas"...

As i said, i'm pretty sure that Jughead's cap is a chopped-up soft felt hat; such would probably last longer than headgear made from the sort of felt that someone's mother would likely have to give them to make their own from; good felt hats will last literally decades, if well-cared-for. (I have a canvas Fred Dobbs/Indiana Jones-style fedora that i bought in 1986; i don't wear it a lot, but i always take it along for outdoor music events to keep the sun off my head; it's still in really good shape, and, if i make it back to Cropredy or i go to JazzFest again, it's going along...) [A later note: It seems as if I may have lost ol' "Fred" in the move... Sigh.]

As to *Treasure Planet* -- from IMDB.com:

At a cost of \$180 million (including \$40 million for advertising), and a worldwide gross of \$101 million, this is Disney's biggest financial loss.

Sigh

I hear from a local who says he has it from sources in the industry that Disney has pretty well

dissolved its conventional animation operation to concentrate in-house on live-action, most of them themed to plug park attractions (*Pirates of the Caribbean* and *Haunted Mansion* being the first).

As the material that i quoted in a previous zine -- maybe the one ahead of this one in the mailing that was supposed to be in the May mailing -- pretty well establishes, the "Dylan was booed at Newport for the electric music" is pretty much a myth. Actually, according to the producer who has the original tape of the performance, it may well be that what was being booed was Dylan's set not being extended.

On one side of the Thor/Beast/JLA crossover (the JLA story, i think), the demon-possessed costumed revelers who attacked the heroes were the actual characters (both Marvel and DC, as i recall) -- one of them being Glynis Wein in a Supergirl costume -- but on the other (and, now that i think, i'm pretty sure that it's the Marvel side, because someone makes fun of Glynis's not-quite-Supergirl costume) they were *Watchmen*-style thinly-disguised versions of the same characters.

Your comment about the "Vegas odds" on who the Shrub and his Merry Men commit us to attacking next reminds me of the "Wossamatta U" *Bullwinkle* sequence:

Fearless Leader walks into a bookie joint to bet on the game between Wossamatta U and the Mud City Manglers.

F.L.: Tell me, my good man, what odds are you offering on the upcoming Big Contest?

BOOKIE: Oh, you mean Woild War T'ree? Six ta five and pick 'em.



Twyggsdrasil & Treehouse

Gazette // R. Dengrove

At first glimpse, i wondered why you had Don Wollheim standing in front of the Leaning Tower of Pisa on your cover this mailing.

Had you mentioned that your sister's boyfriend was Warren Zevon before? When i read his name here, i went online to see if he was still alive; apparently he is, rather beyond the five months his doctors originally gave him (though they backed off from that). **{Well, he was, when I typed that.}** There were a number of articles about how he's dealing with his death sentence, and most say that he seems to be holding up fairly well. One article quoted a very typical-sounding remark he made:

"I told Hunter [Thompson] I might have to break open a bottle of absinthe," says Zevon, who has been sober for two decades. "He said, 'Are you sure you want to launch yourself into some orgiastic debauch only to find out the bastards are wrong, like they always are?'"

Your funeral rabbi and your comments about him put me in mind of Herbert Tarr's novel *Heaven Help Us* -- if you haven't read it, it's probably worth your time (as is his first, *The Conversion of Chaplain Cohen*; but i've bounced off his third book several times, to the extent that i can't even recall the title) -- about a young and idealistic rabbi, fresh from rabbinical school, confronted by the realities of a wealthy suburban temple in the '60s. The rabbi's grandfather, a devout man, sneers at a lot of modern Jews -- he says they're inside-out Morenos (Jews in mediaeval Spain who outwardly converted to Christianity to avoid persecution but continued to practise their faith in secret [as you probably know, but

some of the others might not]): "On the outside, they're Jews. On the inside, they're Rotarians." Wonderful book.

I thought that all of the Flying Tigers were volunteers. And that their main period of operation was before the US got into the war -- or did they get absorbed into the Air Corps when the US got into it?

Your account of your mother wanting to "go home" rang a bell -- for the last couple of years of her life, my grandmother had a fixed belief that she and my mother were visiting somewhere, and she regularly was amazed at how nice this place was and how much it looked like her home, but shouldn't we be going home, now, Alice? And she would wake up in the night and panic and my mother (who will be 80 herself this year) would have to get up and try to calm her down. In some ways, her death was a release for all of us, herself, i think, not the least.

Cyrillic was, indeed, derived from the Greek alphabet, by Saint Cyril {wotta surprise} and his brother (also a Saint, whose name i have lost -- Urbanus, maybe). They were more or less the first missionaries to the Slavs, and there was no alphabet for the slavic languages, so they invented one. There are characters in Cy-



rillic, i believe, that do not occur in the Greek alphabet - it used to have like forty-three characters and was "simplified" to like thirty-six (or something like that) somewhere about the early-to-middle Twentieth Century.

NO, in the preferential ballot used for the Hugos (which is not the "Australian" ballot), you rank all of the contenders in your opinion of their order of quality/worthiness for the award. Your second-place vote for something doesn't mean that you think it should be in second place -- it means that you think that it's better than most of the rest but not as good as whatever you ranked first.

There is an alternate history series -- by Turtledove, maybe? -- that ran in one of the magazines over a period of time; instead of Indians, the European settlers find the Americas populated by "sims" -- ape-like, more-or-less-intelligent hominids. And then there's the "Aquila" series by Somtow Sucharitkul that ran in *Asimov's*, in which the Romans settled the Americas. (Which features a Jewish Sasquatch -- [named Avram Bar-David, I seem to recall] in one story.)

My favourite by Silverbob is prollly *Lord Valentine's Castle*, but i couldn't deal with the sequels.

I disliked *Farnham's Freehold* because it was just plain Badly Written; plus, it seemed, at the time, to be an attempt to be didactic by shocking the reader to make him think. And not particularly well-thought-out by RAH himself.

Certainly, by burning military materiel, the defenders of Atlanta were playing into Sherman's hands; but that wasn't my point. What i was referring to in that context is the popularly-held image that Sherman burnt Atlanta, when, in fact, he had specifically issued orders that the city was not to be treated in that way; then he catches the blame for something that happened because the city's own defenders were incompetent in their own actions.

In the Charlaine Harris books, which are more private-eye/suspense novels rather than mysteries in the classic sense, suspense is maintained by the fact that Sookie's mind-reading abilities are rather limited in range -- she has to pretty much be in the same room with the person she's reading -- and that she doesn't actually (as i'm recalling) necessarily get clear thoughts; more like images and impressions.

Actually, to the best of my recollection, the Coast Guard has always been civilian -- what has been changed from time to time is exactly which department it reports to. At the time that i was trying to get into it and failing, i believe it fell under Treasury; more recently it's been Transportation. The "military" aspects of the situation arise from assignment of USCGS units to work with the Navy or to take on duties that free Navy vessels for other functions -- we had a Coastie that i'm pretty sure was DE sized working out of Cam Ranh Bay when i was there -- white hull with red and blue stripe and all.

