

File 770



THE DREAMING TREE HAS AN ODD DAY...

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James White 1928-1999

We all look up to James here, and not just because he is about 6 1/2 feet tall. -- Walt Willis

James White died August 23 in Norn Iron, the day after suffering a stroke. His son, Martin, told Geri Sullivan that so far as he knew it was over very quickly. White was 71.

Looking around the obituaries and medical reports in this issue makes me believe there must be an epidemic rampaging among the nicest and sweetest people in fandom. And if charm, a rich sense of humor and a gracious interest in everyone they met were the chief traits of the victims, none were more at risk than three Irish fans who made *SLANT* among the finest fanzines ever -- Walt Willis (alive, but now unable to carry on fanac to due medical problems), James White, and contributor Bob Shaw (who passed away in 1996.)

White and Shaw added long careers as leading science fiction writers to their laurels as fanwriters; Willis became acknowledged as the best fanwriter ever. Two of them were honored by Worldcons in the '90s, Willis as Fan GoH at MagiCon, and White as Writer GoH at L.A.con III.

His first sale was of a story called "Assisted Passage" to the British magazine New Worlds, but to us his real apotheosis took place with the publication in Astounding of a story called "The Scavengers" in October 1953. I remember vividly the evening in May of that year when James arrived at my house, on his bicycle from the Lower Falls on the other side of Belfast, clutching a letter from John W. Campbell Himself disclosing that he was willing to pay \$285 for the story. This was a fabulous sum, but more important was the glory which had settled on our little group, born and nurtured on Astounding. It was like a country vicar who receives a pale blue tablet of stone announcing that his sermon last Sunday had found so much favour from on high it was henceforth to be included in the Bible. -- Walt Willis

The Last Diagnostician: I met James White at Intersection in 1995. We shared hot dogs in the SECC food court and talked about what he might do as next year's Worldcon guest of honor. Tor Books was taking over publishing his Sector General series. They issued *The Galactic Gourmet* to coincide with L.A.con III. *Final Diagnosis* and *Mind Changer* followed, and *Double Contact* is in the pipeline. All were edited by Teresa Nielsen Hayden, who did a wonderful interview of James during our Friday night GoH programming.

The committee fell completely under his charm. Gary Louie spent countless hours compiling a "concordance" of terms and ideas from White's science fiction (as yet unfinished). Fans invented strange "alien food" to display and serve at a book launch party in the Fan Lounge. Bruce Pelz issued t-shirts for "The White Company." He also had about 15 "Diagnostician" badge ribbons printed, given to James to present to fans he found especially helpful. The last of them went to Joyce Sperling, and I think it made her weekend.

Memorials: The funeral mass for James was held August 27, followed by cremation in Belfast. Geri Sullivan posted, "I presume the mass is going to be in their church in Portstewart... I attended mass in that church with James when I was there in March last year. It's a lovely old church, all stone and echo-y inside. Well, the pews are made of wood, but the rest was stone. Just steps away from the sea. A good place."

Peggy White and the rest of the family are asking that memorials be directed to the British Diabetic Association. Their address is: BDA Northern Ireland, John Gibson House, 257 Lisburn Road, Belfast, Northern Ireland BT9 7EN U.K. The BDA website is at www.diabetes.org.uk



Visit The File 770 Web Page
[Http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/mglyer/f770/index.html](http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/mglyer/f770/index.html)

File 770 132

File 770:132 is edited for the 21st year in a row by Mike Glycer at 705 Valley View Ave., Monrovia CA 91016. No animals were harmed in the making of this fanzine.

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News of Fandom

Stop the Presses! FAPA News by Robert Lichtman

Ending a 44-year run as fandom's last remaining handset, letterpress fanzine, Bill Danner has ceased publication of *Stefantasy*. The 123rd issue, which came out in December 1998, was the last.

Bill wrote me in a letter dated July 7: "If you're wondering what happened to *Stef 124*, there isn't any. I started it right after Xmas and then we had two very cold spells and the cellar was unfit for human habitation. When it began to warm up, it was too late to get an issue out on schedule, and I found I had slowed down so much it took a lot longer to do anything, so I decided to call it quits. When I kick off a nephew in Colorado is to get my whole outfit, and he says he'll take care of it and use it, and hinted that he might continue *Stef*. That would be an interesting development, and I wish I could see his issues."

Bill is 92 years old now and not in the greatest condition. Writing of my auto accident after seeing the report in *File 770*, he says, "Hope you can dispense with the walker soon. I'm stuck with mine for however longer I hang on, but it's better than not getting around at all."

I loved *Stefantasy* a lot as a nexus point between SF fandom and amateur journalism, and I'll miss Danner's fascinating reminiscences of his early years in Pittsburgh. Definitely the end of an era.

Meanwhile, G.M. Carr, also 92, continues to hang on as a member of SAPS. Her husband of 67 years, Frank, passed away last year and she now lives in a retirement apartment, but is as feisty as ever.



Ditto Ditto Ditto Ditto Ditto Ditto

Look for **Ditto 12** at the Radisson Metrodome in Minneapolis, MN over the weekend of October 29-31. You'll find Karen Cooper, Jeff Schalles, Martin Schafer, Dean Gahlon and Sharon Kahn running it, and they say, "If fanzine fandom has a relaxation, *ditto* is it." Ditto lives up to its name this time by combining with Minn-stf's "Millennium Fallcon," with promises of an event that will please both locals and "the *ditto* crowd."

The con's ultra-fannish press release is done in gloriously unreadable ditto purple on blazing yellow paper. Those of you needing an assistive device to see this information should call up the web page:

<http://www.visi.com/~karenc/ditto12/ditto12.html>

Of if you want to simply plunge right in, send \$30 before October 15 to: Karen Cooper, ditto 12, 101 E. Minnehaha Pkwy., Minneapolis, MN 55419. Make checks payable to *ditto 12*.

Fanac History Project

Fascinated by fan history? Or just hoping someone's noticed you're part of it? Then, crank up your web browser and head for the FANAC Fan History Project site: <http://fanac.org>

Egoscan through the 8,916 names mentioned on their web site, a virtual Who's Who of Science Fiction. Over 200 fanzines are on site, with links to hundreds more. There are almost 1,000 convention photos online, from the 1930's through 1999. Joe Siclari says they'll soon be

joined by the contents of the Cinvention Program Book and the Cinvention Memory Book. They've even started a folio of Mae Strelkov's hectograph art at http://fanac.org/fan_art/

You can also find "Fan History For Sale" at fanac.org/For_Sale.html. There's a listing of fanhistorical publications available to purchase from a variety of sources.

Over 100 megabytes of material is available. Who's to thank for all this computer power? According to Ben Yalow, FANAC Inc. is dedicating \$30,000 of Magicon profits to the Project.

All Those Yesterdays

"Many apologies for the way I've gone silent for several months," begins a loc from **Harry Warner Jr.**, after a long hiatus. "They have been bad ones for me, but when I thought about stating that I've had a bad summer, I realized it would be more accurate to say I've been having a bad century.

"First, my typewriter broke down and I even descended to the mire by using an electric one for several weeks before I found this Smith-Corona which operates without wasting electrons.

"Then I got sick, not once but twice, the second time very sick. Meanwhile, Hagerstown has been having record summertime heat and it was entirely too hot in this house to do much typing, even when I felt well. It took me two full weeks to turn out an eight-page zine for FAPA."

Welcome back, Harry!

1999 Hugo Winners

Best Novel

To Say Nothing of the Dog by Connie Willis (Bantam Spectra)

Best Novella

"Oceanic", Greg Egan (*Asimov's*, Aug 1998)

Best Novelette

"Taklamakan", Bruce Sterling (*Asimov's*, Oct/Nov 1998)

Best Short Story

"The Very Pulse of the Machine"
Michael Swanwick (*Asimov's*, Feb 1998)

Best Related Book

The Dreams Our Stuff Is Made Of: How Science Fiction Conquered the World, Thomas M. Disch (The Free Press)

Best Dramatic Presentation

The Truman Show

Best Professional Editor

Gardner Dozois

Best Professional Artist

Bob Eggleton

Best Semiprozine

Locus, Charles N. Brown, ed.

Best Fanzine

Ansible, Dave Langford, ed.

Best Fan Writer

Dave Langford

Best Fan Artist

Ian Gunn

John W. Campbell Award for Best New Writer (Not a Hugo)

Nalo Hopkinson

The Last Vote Standing: As always, some of the Hugo races were very close. In two categories the winner had only a two-vote margin, the novella "Oceanic" edging "Aurora in Four Voices," and the short story "The Very Pulse of the Machine" shading "Mankei Neko."

On the other hand, pro artist Bob Eggleton sailed through with a 69 vote margin, fanartist Ian Gunn won by 65, novel *To Say Nothing of the Dog* won by 61 votes, movie *The Truman Show* buried the nominated *Babylon 5* episode by 49 votes, and fanzine *Ansible* won by 44.



Both *Ansible* and *Thyme* finished ahead of *File 770* in the Hugo round, but *File 770* won the second place runoff after *Ansible's* votes were eliminated. Yes indeed, what a surprise to discover my chances of winning a Hugo depend upon getting people to vote *File 770* ahead of *Ansible*.

Full Hugo statistics are available on the *File 770* web page at:

<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/mglyer/hugostats/index.html>

Ian Gunn won a well-deserved Hugo, posthumously. He was a wonderful talent, taken from us long before his time. I'm looking forward to acquiring my copy of the collected *Space-Time Buccaneers*. And Ian's friends and supporters know perfectly well that if he were alive, Ian would have been very embarrassed to read some of their remarks about his co-nominees. It's not as if I ever heard of Freddie Baer, myself, which in no way minimized the depressing experience of reading insulting remarks about her chances of winning ("Roadkill," was one writer's word) and threatening predictions about an Australian audience's response if she won.

Honorable Mentions: It's always interesting to see who came close to getting a Hugo nomination. For the fan Hugo categories, here are the top 15 nominees and all other nominees with at least 5% of the nomination ballots cast in the category. The full results can be found online:

<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/mglyer/hugostats/page2.html>

Best Fanzine: 48 *Mimosa* (Richard and Nicki Lynch eds); 44 *Tangent* (Dave Truesdale ed); 38 *Ansible* (Dave Langford ed); 34 *File 770* (Mike Glycer ed); 23 *Thyme* (Alan Stewart ed); *Plokta* (Alison Scott & Steve Davies ed); 21 *Bento* (Kate Yule & David Levine); *Outworlds* (Bill Bowers); 17 *Ethel the Aardvark*; *Metaphysical Review* (Bruce Gillespie); *Challenger* (Guy Lillian III ed); *Emerald City*; 16 *Nova Express*

(Lawrence Person ed); *The Reluctant Famulus* (Tom Sadler ed); *Banana Wings* (Brialey & Plummer); 15 *Idea* (Geri Sullivan); *Fosfax* (T. Lane & E. Garrott eds); 13 *Trapdoor* (Robert Lichtman ed).

Best Fan Writer: 47 Dave Langford; 28 Evelyn C. Leeper; Mike Glycer; 26 Bob Devney; 20 Maureen Kincaid Speller; 17 Cheryl Morgan; 16 Bruce Gillespie; Joseph T. Major; 14 Andy Hooper; 13 Ian Gunn; 12 Terry Frost; 9 Steven Silver; Lloyd Penney; 7 Judith Hanna; Guy Lillian III; Ray Radlien; Vicki Rosenzweig.

Best Fan Artist: 78 Ian Gunn; 60 Teddy Harvia; 41 Joe Mayhew; 28 Brad Foster; 17 Freddie Baer; D. West; 15 Sheryl Birkhead; Peggy Ranson; 10 Sue Mason; Taral Wayne; Steve Stiles; 9 Kerri Valkova; 8 Naomi Fisher; 7 Kurt Erichsen; 6 Steve Scholz; Beryl Bush; Bill Neville.

An Also-Ran Goes Nova: When Lawrence Person saw the nominating statistics online, he wondered why 7 votes for *Nova Express* as a semiprozine and 16 votes as a fanzine didn't add up to 23 nominations, which would have tied it with fanzine finalists *Plokta* and *Thyme?* Roy Ferguson, Hugo Awards Administrator, answers that although the rules allow votes for nominees in the wrong category to be moved to the correct category, this may only be done if the nominator hasn't already listed five valid nominees in the correct category. Since all the voters who listed *Nova Express* as a semiprozine already nominated five fanzines, none of the errant *Nova Express* votes could be moved.

Canadian Unity Fan Fund

Lloyd and Yvonne Penney have searched the length of Canada for a CUFF delegate and declared Vancouver's Garth Spencer to be the 1999 winner.

The Canadian Unity Fan Fund was established in 1981 to bring a fan from the opposite side of the country to Canada's national SF convention, the CanVention. This year's CanVention is at InConsequential II, October 15-17 in Fredericton, New Brunswick.

A western Canadian fan was due to be selected, but when July 7 passed with no takers (not even a stuffed llama), the Penneys reported they were opening the race to fans from the entire country.

In the end, a Western Canadian was selected. Garth Spencer threw his hat in the ring and received a total of ten nominations, from westerners Randy Barnhart, R. Graeme Cameron, David Malinski, Andrew Murdoch, Doug Finnerty and Clint Budd, and from eastern Canadians Murray Moore, Simon Parkinson, Brian Davis and Will Straw. Within CUFF's informal selection process, ten nominations is a strong showing.

Past winners of the Canadian Unity Fan Fund are:

1981: Michael Hall, Edmonton

1988: Taral Wayne, Toronto

1989: Robert Runte, Edmonton

1990: Paul Valcour, Napean

1992: Linda Ross-Mansfield, Winnipeg

1996: Rene Walling, Montreal

1997: R. Graeme Cameron, Vancouver

1998: Lloyd & Yvonne Penney

When Time Is Out of Joint

Members of the Philadelphia SF Society helped out with the WYBE telethon, subjecting untold thousands of viewers to a

hair-raising misstatement of vitally important fanhistory.

The July *PSFS News* repeated it: "They [WYBE] said we're the oldest science fiction society in the world. (We're the oldest, continuously running science fiction society in America, but LA's society was founded before ours.)"

That's exactly backwards. Philly was founded first. The Philadelphia chapter of the Science Fiction League was Chapter Three, and the Los Angeles club was Chapter Four. On the other hand, it's the LASFS that has met regularly since it was founded, not PSFS. The Philadelphia club experienced a hiatus in the middle of World War II. As Harry Warner Jr. explains in *All Our Yesterdays*:

"By the end of 1942, [Ozzie] Train blinked and found himself the only PSFS member still a civilian residing in the Philadelphia area.... Single-handedly, Train kept the dismembered club alive during the war years. Meetings of a sort were kept up through the spring of 1943...." Meanwhile, a competing group called the Philadelphia Futurians sprang up, claiming at least 20 members. "James Hevelin, who had been PSFS president when the club suspended activities, suggested to the scattered membership that it wasn't right to have a club with only one member in the city for which it was named. [The Philadelphia Futurians and PSFS] merged on October 8, 1944, retaining the PSFS name...."

The year-and-a-half gap in PSFS meetings, contrasted with LASFS' uninterrupted record of meetings, is the reason why LASFS claims to be "This world's oldest science fiction club." PSFS has always to be oldest because it was founded first. So come on, guys, let's not get our stories tangled up after all these years!

Three Hearts and Three Skunks

The skunks in our garden may not be stealthy, but they have plausible deniability thanks to George Flynn. George made the following motion at a NESFA meeting:

"Whereas, in a recent issue of *File 770* Mike Glycer described the discovery of three skunks in his driveway, with the comment 'I don't know how you did it, NESFA.' Now be it resolved (1) that NESFA does not admit any knowledge of how the aforesaid skunks were introduced to Mr. Glycer's property; (2) but that others may profit by his example." *Instant Message* says the club passed George's motion "with great enthusiasm."

Repent, Updike!

Not only did **Chris Barkley** call **Harlan Ellison's** "Repent, Harlequin!" Said the Ticktockman" the best short story every written, he was outraged to find it missing from a big anthology of the century's best short stories edited by John Updike.

The book Chris had in mind is *The Best American Short Stories of the Century*. Harlan Ellison called to take a little heat off John Updike, saying that all the selections had to be made from among stories already selected in the annual *Best American Short Stories* collection, figurehead-edited each year by "the flavor of the month."

Updike couldn't pick "Ticktockman" because it hadn't been included in the annual collection for the year in which it appeared.

That explanation made, Harlan still feels *The Best American Short Stories of the Century* has shortcomings in common with



the American Film Institute's 100 Greatest Movies. AFI's choice of the best of each year leads to a list of 100 movies that fails to include any work by some of Hollywood's leading talents, for example, W. C. Fields.

Harlan's short story, "The Man Who Rowed Christopher Columbus Ashore," was picked for the 1993 collection, which makes him the only sf genre writer other than Bradbury with that distinction. Harlan jibed, "It's one of the few things I have over Silverberg."

Campbell and Sturgeon Award Winners

Brute Orbits by George Zebrowski won the John W. Campbell Memorial Award for the best science-fiction novel of the year and "Story of Your Life" by Ted Chiang won the Theodore Sturgeon Memorial Award for the best short SF of the year. Both awards were presented at a dinner held on the University of Kansas campus on July 9.

Brute Orbits was published in 1998 by HarperPrism. Second place in the novel competition went to *Starfarers* by Poul Anderson; third place, to *Distraction* by Bruce Sterling.

"Story of Your Life" was published by Tor Books in *Starlight 2*, edited by Patrick Nielsen Hayden. Second place in the short stories went to "Wading River Dogs and More" by Michael Kandel; third place, to "The Summer Isles" by Ian R. MacLeod.

The Campbell and Sturgeon Awards are sponsored by the Center for the Study of Science Fiction. The Campbell Award is chosen after discussion by a seven-member international committee composed of writers and scholars. The Sturgeon Award is chosen by a three-member committee from a group of semi-finalists selected by a group of 25 reviewers and editors, and 10-11 finalists selected by one of Sturgeon's children, this year Robin Sturgeon.

The Weapon Shops of OSHA

Jack Speer's letter in the July *Asfacts* complained about the Albuquerque bomb squad requiring fans at the April meeting of ASFS to evacuate, after the squad was called to deal with a black box on the steps of the UNM building where ASFS

meets.

"If there had been a bomb inside that box at the entrance to the law school, no one at our meeting, on the other side of the building, would have been hurt. This was no truck possibly loaded with explosives, just a black box. The chance of getting hurt was as small as many risks I take every day. We should have been free to choose."

Didn't Van Vogt say, "The right to be blown up is the right to be free!"

Leaping In And Out of Pavement Pictures

L.A. fanartist **Selina Phanara** had a ball at Pasadena's annual Absolut Chalk Festival, held over the July 10-11 weekend.

"After two days in the blaring hot sun, with over 18 hours of raw intense chalking and drawing, our murals were completed by 6 p.m. on Sunday." Judging lasted another hour, and at 7:00 the festival was officially ended.

Then the best and most fannish thing happened. "At 7:05 it rained Big Hairy raindrops! I howled and danced in the rain and watched what the water did to the colors in the chalk on the pavement and it was so pretty and fitting, all across the festival grounds you could hear the other artists whooping and dancing as well.... Seventeen minutes of rain and then the bluest sky and sunshine and then everyone started to clap because up high in the sky there were not one but TWO wonderful rainbows! Double rainbow endings always make me cry!"

Medical Updates

Roger Sims underwent a successful triple by-pass operation on July 9, and remained in the hospital until July 17.

Pat Sims writes it was all "Totally unexpected, with no warnings. He didn't even fit the 'profile,' except for lack of exercise. That's a hint! Just failed the stress test the doctor ordered basically on general principles for *very vague* symptoms, and his age. Because of complications [Roger] was in hospital for 11 days and his recovery has been close, but progress is steady.

"Fandom has been good with the cards, e-mail, phone calls to encourage. We were able to make Rivercon three weeks after, although he was one 'weak kitten' and didn't get to do what he would have liked as Fan Guests."

Deborah Hussey told *Kronos* readers about seeing Roger and Pat at Rivercon. "Roger spent most of the weekend wheeling around in a wheelchair but from time to time you would see him up and walking about. People kept on commenting on how well he looked even though he was still a little fragile. Pat seemed to be holding up fairly well. The last I heard they are still planning on going to Aussiecon. They were going to skip the first part of the tour through New Zealand...."

"The Guest of Honor speeches and award presentations were Saturday night since there wasn't a banquet. The most memorable part of the ceremony was Pat Sims' speech on how fans were family. She was just overwhelmed with emotion as she spoke of all the cards, calls, e-mails they received from fans after Roger's surgery. She had special praise for some of the Cincinnati and other Midwest fans who had done so much for them. She mentioned several people including Bill Bowers who looked after their cats and did other things for them.... Since Pat and Roger are already Kentucky Colonels it was arranged for them to receive what I believe to be a much cooler honor, Hon-

orary Captains of The Belle of Louisville."

June Moffatt was hospitalized on August 9 for breathing problems, which tests revealed were due to a blood clot in one lung. Blood-thinning medicine was expected to take care of the problem, but may also have led to the internal bleeding which was detected a few days later.

So on August 16, doctors performed a surgical procedure to add an anti-clot filter to a blood vessel leading from her heart. This should avoid the continuing cycle of blood-thinning medication to prevent clots, then blood-thickening medicine to prevent bleeding.

When Len Moffatt and John Hertz sent out "A Special Moffatt House Newsletter" on August 19, June was still hospitalized in Downey, CA. Cards are welcome at the street address, 12316 Julius Ave., Downey, CA 90242.

Danny Frohlich missed DeepSouthCon because he suffered a heart attack three days before the convention. *[[Source: Kronos, 8/99]]*

Gordon Garb sustained a knee injury and has undergone surgery to repair and stabilize the affected joint.

KIM Campbell posted on August 2, "Just got back from the latest hospital clinic visit. I have been declared free of cancer and sentenced to a life of good health (subject to the usual caveats)."

Having finished the course of chemo, she planned a convalescence visit to John Harold's and to join the gathering at the "Ton.

KIM added about the doctor's "sentence," "It has a great ring to it. I just hope to live up to it."

Ned Brooks received a loc from **Madeline Willis** on August 17, which he shared with the Timebinders list because he "decided that it was more to fandom than to me personally, as if Madeleine had picked my zine off the top of a pile to occupy her mind." **Madeleine** said she was in Finniston House, a hospital, "owing to stress." She also noted, "**Walter** is very confused and is unlikely to improve. Fondest thoughts for fandom, but alas it looks like goodbye."

Robert Lichtman wrote in mid-July, "My auto accident is slowly receding into the past.... I was x-rayed and declared healed so far as my pelvic fractures are concerned; new young bone (visible on the x-ray print) has grown to stabilize the scene, and in celebration I retired my walker upon my return home. I'm supposed to take it easy, using one or two crutches as needed to avoid over-straining my left leg; but that's easier said than done when I find I can travel short distances with no pain. Carol serves as my reminder that 'slow and steady wins the race.' I'm doing my best to comply."

Lichtman was about to pick up a rental car and a few days after that was scheduled to begin a series of sessions with a physical therapist in Santa Rosa "who will help me reactivate my under-utilized muscles in Certain Regions."

He adds, "It's a great time to be alive, Meyer, especially since (as it was a 'glancing' head-on collision) I could've been otherwise."

Uncle Timmy Bolgeo recently had Lasik eye surgery; soon he'll be going around without his coke bottle-bottom glasses. *[[Source: Kronos 8/99]]*

Lord of the Rings

Elijah Wood has been cast as Frodo Baggins in New Line Cinema's *Lord of the Rings* trilogy. Principal photography on the first film, *Fellowship of the Ring*, is now scheduled to begin in New Zealand this October. The three films will be produced consecutively.

"I can't think of a better country to represent Tolkien's world of Middle-earth on film," says director Peter Jackson. "From the Shire to Rivendell, the Misty Mountains or Mordor -- it's all here at our doorstep." Jackson's production company WingNut Films will produce the movie for US-based New Line Cinema.

File 770's drama editor immediately contacted Wing Nuts creator, Teddy Harvia, to see if he planned to sue for millions of dollars (or zlotys, or rasbutniks -- whatever they spend in New Zealand). Harvia replied, "I do have the first WingNut book copyrighted. Unless they create alien characters by the same name, I see no violation. I intend to name my production company Hart2Harvia. Hart is Diana's pen name. Thanks for being a watchdog on my behalf. I will throw you a bone later, in the form of cover art."

Crescent City Premiere

The Thirteenth Floor opened around the country in June, and in New Orleans there was a special premiere, reports Guy Lillian III.

"Thanks to John Guidry, the local premiere was billed as a tribute to New Orleans' own Daniel F. Galouye, who wrote the novel *Simulacron-3*, on which the movie was based. Dan is revered by senior New Orleans fans for the wit and patience with which he treated us in the days of our annoying youth. He was a challenging, tolerant, thoroughly excellent soul. I spent many fun hours arguing with him about Vietnam, hippies, and other schisms of the day, but these discussions never drove us apart.

"Anyway, Dan's widow Carmel and a vast quantity of Dan's clan appeared for the show, along with a wide band of fandom. Those few of us lucky enough to have known Dan gathered



with Carmel afterwards for a photo -- which I'll run in *Challenger*. Movie was pretty good, too."

Torfen Crawl To New Pub

Yvonne Penney, wistful about *Ansible's* coverage of the 'Tun schedule and *File 770's* publication of a change in the NYC pub night, is determined Toronto should get its fair share of publicity.

"So here's one from Toronto," she begins. "After about two years in its original location, the Foxes' Den on Bay St. downtown, the First Thursday pub night crew has had to move. The Foxes' Den had been sold to a new owner who knew nothing about the industry; all he knew is that he wanted to own a pub. He promised not to fix anything that wasn't broke, but then took the private room that we used in the back and tore down a wall to make the room a large pinball/video/pool room. Our August First Thursday was held at the HotHouse Cafe on Front St. downtown, but we are looking for a more permanent location."

For more information, e-mail Yvonne Penney at; yvonne_penney@email.whirlpool.com

She will e-mail you her e-newsletter *Pubnights and Other Events*.

Fund News

The **Tiptree Fund** presented fanartist Hugo nominee Freddie Baer with a Fairy Godmother Award to attend Worldcon in Australia. *[[Source: Australian SF Bullsheet #122]]*

Did you blink? You missed it. The **1999 FFANZ Race**, to bring a New Zealander to Aussiecon Three, ended July 30. When did the race begin? Well, in the June 18 issue of *Australian SF Bullsheet*, Marc Ortlieb reported the fund administrators told him there probably wouldn't even be a race. Then the July 16 issue suddenly reported the race was already on. FFANZ must not be one of those funds that depends on voters' donations. The winner will have been -- Linnette Home, the lone candidate.

Fan Fund Report Bribery: Since 1984, SCIFI (the Southern California Institute for Fan Interests) has been paying a \$500 bounty for all newly produced fan fund trip reports. Hoping to get to read them sooner than later, SCIFI has revised its policy. As of January 1, 2000 it will pay \$500 for trip reports published within 5 years, and \$100 for reports published beyond five years.

Therefore, reports of any Fan Fund trips taken before January 1, 1995 must be published by Dec. 31, 1999 to generate \$500; after that such reports will generate only \$100. Reports of 1995 Fan Fund trips must be published by December 31, 2000 to generate \$500. And So Forth.

1999 Mythopoeic Awards

The Mythopoeic Society has announced the winners of the Mythopoeic Awards for 1999. The awards were given at Mythcon XXX/Bree Moot 4, at Milwaukee, Wisconsin, on August 1.

The Mythopoeic Fantasy Awards, for excellence in fiction "in the spirit of the Inklings" (J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, and Charles Williams), are given in two divisions, for Adult Literature and Children's Literature. The award for Adult Literature went to *Stardust* by Neil Gaiman and Charles Vess, and the award for Children's Literature went to *Dark Lord of Derkholm* by Diana Wynne Jones.

The Mythopoeic Scholarship Award in Inklings Studies, given to a work of scholarship on the Inklings published during the previous three years, went to *C.S. Lewis: A Companion & Guide* by Walter Hooper. The Mythopoeic Scholarship Award in Myth and Fantasy Studies, for a

work of scholarship in these fields (excluding specifically Inklings studies) published during the previous three years, went to *A Century of Welsh Myth in Children's Literature* by Donna R. White.

The Mythopoeic awards are small statuettes of a seated lion (intended to evoke thoughts of, but not officially named after, Aslan from C.S. Lewis's Narnian books), inscribed with a plaque on the base.

Short Waves

Congratulations to **Peggy Rae Pavlat** and **John Sapienza**, who married on August 14. They've announced that after October 1 they will be living at 5904 Chestnut Hill Rd., College Park, MD 20740. (Blows to heck the old cliché about what happens after Worldcons!)

Larry Baker and **Jacqueline Passey** eloped in mid-July to Reno, Nevada. Jacqueline Passey Baker wrote online, "We were planning a big wedding... but after just buying a house and working on WesterCon 52 there wasn't enough time, money, or sanity left to do it. So we ran away and eloped."

Jefferson Swycaffer has received the N3F's Kaymar Award in recognition of the work he's done for the organization. Jeff annually scorches his eyeballs reading entries in the N3F Short Story Contest.

The Kaymar was originated in 1959 by its namesake, K. Martin Carlson. Lots of past and present *File 770* subscribers have won it. I'm sure it's not a coincidence.

One-time *File 770* cover artist, **Craig Hilton**, is the new doctor in Airlie Beach. Those friendly townfolk, Jean Weber and Eric Lindsay, say he's been getting lots of coverage in the local Proserpine and Whitsunday papers (with photos taken by Jean). *[[Source: Australian SF Bullsheet #123]]*

Bjo Trimble made a hilarious discovery in downtown LA at Washington and Flower. A boarded up building boasts that it is the headquarters of Vampire Technology -- and the name of the firm is spelled in mirrors!

NESFA Press books now in production include a reprint of *All Our Yesterdays* by Harry Warner, Jr, with a new cover by Steve Stiles. Shirlene Ananyo-Rawlik is at work proofreading the scanned-in text. First Fandom is being asked for photos.

Of course, the last time I reported anything about this Harry contradicted me, (and the NESFA Press.) But the risk is worth it, to see another edition.

Lee and Barry Gold are celebrating their 30th wedding anniversary. Lee is still publishing *Alarums and Excursions* and *Xenofilkia*.

Scott Patri hasn't been spending all his time writing, or else he wouldn't spend half his letter complaining about pop-up ads on Internet pay sites. But really, he has been writing, mostly. "I've been cranking out the fiction, but I also have been putting my own philosophy into words. I can't wait to have it printed, then revamped, re-worked, rewritten, argued over, ignored, ridiculed, then used by militant underground activists to overthrow the governments of the world."

Errata: The correct spelling of the baby's name is **Maura Kathryn Means**. Roger Tener writes, "I think I gave you the right information spelled the wrong way."

Amazing, or Just Bizarre?

On July 15, Marsha Clarke, substituting as host on Geraldo Rivera's TV show, compared the inexplicable elements of the JonBenet murder case to "science fiction, like *The Martian Chronicles*" while her guest, a criminal prosecutor, referred to them twice as "like sci-fi." *[[Source: Forrest J Ackerman]]*

Obituaries

Cliffs and Shore

Riding the rainy wind above the beach
Swallows home in on shelters in the cliffs
Where cormorants watch choppy foam-tipped waves.

I saw them years ago. The same,
Yet not the same. No bird alive of all
That flickered in my dreams in sunrise light.

The earth erodes. This continental plate
That slides and tilts beneath my feet will grind
And grumble north, while grebe and snipe

Still follow sandcrabs shining feathered tracks
In sheets of water on whatever shores
When I am gone, and all that I have known

Marjorie Merritt Ellersieck
1957

Marjii Ellers

1918-1999

by Mike Glycer



Marjii Ellers was one of the interesting and wonderful people who make LASFS fun to stay around. She and Bill Rotsler fought cancer at the same time, and both seemed to be winning the fight of their lives. Sadly, it was a very short-lived victory for Bill, who died in 1997.

Marjii's recovery seemed more complete, more permanent. She wrote in August, 1997, "The trade of my eyebrows, hair, figure and eyelashes for this freedom from a deadly peril bothers me not a whit. Just to be alive says it all." Even

approaching 80 and despite the bout with cancer, she exuded her usual energy and personality. LASFS donors who reach "Patron Saint" level receive a three-cheer salute each year at a meeting of their choice. When Marjii triumphantly walked into the February 26, 1998 LASFS meeting, head wreathed in gold tinsel, and announced, "I'm here for my three cheers," fans roared with delight. And last November, she was Loscon's fan guest of honor.

Sadly, Marjii Ellers died at home early in the morning of Saturday, July 24, after a recurrence of cancer. She lived long enough to celebrate her 60th anniversary (last April 17). Her husband, Frank, wrote to John Hertz that she was cremated and her sons have scattered her ashes "in the mountains she loved so well."

I will miss Marjii a lot. Much like Rotsler, nobody can ever take her place in fandom, or the world, now that she's left it.

At last year's Loscon she gave me a printout of a poem she had written years before. She asked me to hold it for publication in *File 770* if I ever needed to write her obituary. Whether she was simply providing for the future, or was already aware of new medical problems, I don't know. I was deeply touched. I also thought it revealed the alloy of practicality and creativity in Marjii's character.

To many guests at LASFS, Marjii's was the first and friendliest face they met. She served more than half-a-dozen terms as club registrar. She created the original "Thousands of Thursdays" information handout, still given to guests today.

Marjii's creative masquerade entries won her fame on fannish stages everywhere. Her award-winning "Queen of Air and Darkness" is one of the best-remembered masquerade costumes of all time. The accompanying photo of her in costume, with Tony Boucher, goes back to the 1954 Worldcon, SFCon.

When John Hertz called me with the news of Marjii's passing, he summed her up as someone who had the art of making people she was with feel as if they were the most important people in the world, without excluding else anyone from joining in.

Nola Frame-Gray said online, "It seems only yesterday that I met this 40-ish housewife wearing a most unusual pair of earrings. She told me that she welcomed the chance to get out of the house and talk science fiction. That was way back in the old club house back on Ventura Boulevard. We'll not see her kind again."

There'll never be a carbon copy, but I very much hope fandom sees more newcomers with her grace, energy and artistry.

George "Lan" Laskowski

"Lan" Laskowski learned on February 2, 1998 he had been diagnosed with cancer. He was forced to leave his work as a high school math teacher to have major surgery and chemotherapy. He determined to return to teaching the next fall and succeeded despite pain and continuing treatment. Lan wrote last December, "A positive attitude, a supportive wife and good friends and students this year have helped me keep my spirits up. The doctor has recommended some strong prescription painkillers, which are getting me through the day."

A few months ago I saw Mike Glicksohn's report that Lan's health had greatly deteriorated. I wanted to believe Mike was wrong: after all, Lan still wrote letters of comment to *File 770*, *NASFA Shuttle* and other zines about continuing to work while receiving treatment. I hoped that good medical help allied with Lan's passion to go on teaching would keep him with us for a long time.

Instead, Lan's June 16 loc to *File 770* came with a final paragraph that proved to be a forewarning:

"My own health has deteriorated considerably in the past few weeks. Aside from the fatigue induced by the various drugs and chemicals I have been taking, my food intake has diminished because I just don't feel like eating. Thus I am weak, and hoping, now that school is over, that I will be able to recover, rest, recuperate and resume some of my normal activities. But I don't expect this to happen for a few weeks."

George "Lan" Laskowski passed away July 19 at the age of 50. The lead paragraph of the *Detroit Free Press'* lengthy obituary mentioned the two Best Fanzine Hugos won by *Lan's Lantern*. Sourdough Jackson rightly commented, (in *DASFAX*) that the article's detailed and respectful description of Lan's fanac "shows a dramatic change in attitude toward fandom since Lan and I were neos." But the *Freep's* obit *needed* to be long, because there is so much more to know about Lan than the hardware he won.

For over 20 years Lan used his fanzine to build a community, mainly of midwestern fans, who shared his love of discussing science fiction. Lan's convention diaries also made the *Lantern* a fanzine of record of Midwestern conventions.

And as a faned he was equally welcoming to every potential contributor as he was in person to new fans he met at conventions. Robert Sabella's farewell to Lan in *Visions of Paradise* included the observation, "More important than anything he did for me as a [fan]writer, he became a friend, which always amazed me since I was this introverted hermit with few friends while he was a renowned convention-hopper...."

Hardly any zine of the last 20 years enjoyed more success than Lan in drawing into the circle of his contributors active fans who otherwise would not have been involved with fanzines. I'll miss him most for that: his zine made people glad to be part of fandom *today*.

Lan's Lantern won its first Hugo in 1986, and with the acclaim came a certain amount of controversy. The ideal fanzine is (1) a focus of fan-nish energy, and (2) a pinnacle of excellent writing. *Lan's Lantern* was a focal point zine, but not for the same fan audience as, say, Pat Mueller's *Texas SF Inquirer*. Also, a zine that is open to everyone winds up with a broad spectrum of writing quality, and there's a degree of psychological entropy involved with the fanzine reading experience, in the way excellent material is dulled by the mediocre material around it. And there was excellent material in *Lan's Lantern*, like Mark Leeper's consistently insightful book and movie reviews.

Confronting death throws a person's deepest values into sharp relief. In Lan's case, family -- including his wife, Kathleen, and two stepchildren. Teaching, of course. And fanac. He gifted us with his letters, and also started three more issues of *Lan's Lantern*. The only one to make it into print was the Poul Anderson theme issue. This was probably the finest issue of *Lan's Lantern* ever, with contents as consistently good as in issue of *Algol*, full of interesting things about Poul written by Benford, Pournelle, Sandra Miesel, Poul himself.

"Lan" Laskowski: The Origin Story by Mark & Evelyn Leeper

We met Lan when we lived in the Detroit area. Cathy Robinson, a bookstore clerk had put up a sign in the bookstore where she worked asking if anyone wanted to form a science fiction discussion group. Other than Cathy, her husband Jack, and the two of us, the only person to respond was George Laskowski, a quiet mathematics teacher from Cranbrook High School. We discussed science fiction and occasionally even mathematics. George knew science fiction, but he did not know that there really was an organized fandom of science fiction in the area. Our other science fiction activity at the time was attending the Wednesday night meetings of the Third Foundation at Wayne State University. We thought George might like it and invited him to join us.

George took to science fiction fandom in a way we never had. His pleasant manner won people over wherever he went. Soon he took to "fannish ways." He went to science fiction conventions and to set him-

self apart he started wearing a coonskin cap. Because as a boy he loved Green Lantern comic books and the main character in those comics had a secret name Lan, and he took that as his fannish name. Very soon he started publishing his own fanzine, "Lan's Lantern." It won a string of Hugo nominations and twice won the Hugo for Best Fanzine. (That was where Evelyn's fan writings first appeared in general-availability fanzines, so she owes George thanks for giving her the visibility to get her Hugo nominations as well.)

Every year we would see Lan at the World Science Fiction Convention and get caught up on what was happening in each other's lives. We would talk to him about a trip we had come back from or would be taking. He would talk about his new house, or something similar. One or the other of us would make a pun.

More recently we heard that George had cancer and we were told dire predictions of how he would not be at one upcoming Worldcon after another. But he drew on what must have been incredible internal strength and courage to continue his routine as normally as possible. We even came to doubt the stories of his illness. But they were, alas, true, and we have lost a friend as well as a major figure of science fiction fandom.

The Magic Goes Away By Mike Glyer

[[Excerpted from my *Magicon* report.]] The 1992 Hugo ceremonies derailed when Spider ripped open an envelope and read that *Lan's Lantern* won the Best Fanzine Hugo. While Robinson was placing the trophy in George Laskowski's hands, on the screen behind him flashed a slide that the winner was *Mimosa*, edited by Dick and Nicki Lynch. Beside me, Janice Gelb cringed just like at *Raiders of the Lost Ark* when I warned her the face-melting scene was coming. Laskowski briefly said, "Thank you," and got offstage because he'd seen *Mimosa* on the award plaque, too.

As MagiCon chairman Joe Siclari and others excused themselves from the audience and headed backstage to investigate, several more Hugos were given....

Now, a shaken Spider Robinson revealed that *Mimosa* was the correct Hugo-winning fanzine and was joined by Laskowski to turn over the trophy to Dick and Nicki Lynch. Laskowski has won two Hugos in the past -- and showed extreme grace in surrendering Magicon's Hugo to the Lynches.

Not that the comedy of errors was over. Completely in shock, Dick Lynch reached the stage alone and gazed at the shadowy auditorium doors hoping to see his wife, Nicki, who had made a quick trip out of the room after the fanzine Hugo had been given. "I wish my wife could be here. What do I do?" Dick seemed even more lost without his spouse than did Samantha Jeude, which permanently endeared him to women who commented about it later.

When Spider Robinson paused to find his place our claque of fanzine fans sitting in the VIP seats noticed Nicki Lynch was back. "Bring back Nicki Lynch!" shouted Moshe Feder, and Janice Gelb. Some stood up to yell. My God, even Andy Porter stood up and shouted through cupped hands, "Bring up Nicki Lynch!" It was like a gold medal moment in a Bud Greenspan documentary, like the end of *It's a Wonderful Life*. Spider agreed, "That's an excellent idea," and both editors of *Mimosa* finally had their proper moment together at the Hugo Awards.

Andrew Brown

Melbourne fan Andrew Brown died July 8 of causes as yet un-

known. Joyce Scrivner reminded Timebinders that he was active in US fandom around Iguanacon, memorable as that very tall fan who wore a t-shirt reading: "I absolutely HATE basketball."

Lucy Sussex and Julian Warner posted online:

"At 6'10" he was hard to miss. Anyone who had the courage to talk to him discovered that he was a gentle soul of great passions and intelligence.

"In recent years, Andrew had drifted away from fandom but was bumped into by many from time to time. Andrew was an editor of the old *Melbourne Fanewsletter* which he renamed to *Thyme*. As well as fandom, Andrew was well-known on the Melbourne band scene and even appeared as producer on an e.p. by the Brady Bunch Lawnmower Massacre.

"Some fans may know Andrew from his travels -- he was at Conspiracy in Brighton and travelled widely in the U.S."

In Passing

British fan **Chuck "Chuch" Harris** passed away suddenly at home on July 6. Harris, Walt Willis and Don Ford were among the fans who organized the Transatlantic Fund -- today known as TAFF -- to bring a British delegate to North America in 1954. Sue Harris asks that contributions in Chuch's memory be made to either the British Heart Foundation or MacMillan Cancer Release.

Jean Grennell, wife of well-known fanwriter Dean Grennell, died of a heart attack May 29, 1999. Roy Lavender reports Dean said he would rather have a note or a letter than a sympathy card. His address is: Dean A. Grennell, 26331 Esmeralda Circle, Mission Viejo, CA 92691-5301

Jean Hoare passed way on July 26 after a long battle with breast cancer. Cards can be sent to: Martin Hoare, 45 Tilehurst Road, Reading, Berks RG1 7TT, U.K., or via e-mail to martin-hoare@cix.compulink.co.uk

Clipping Service

Michael Walsh made this classic post to SMOFS, explaining the Worldcon Mark Protection Committee to a newcomer:

"All SMOFS have a special mark tattooed on a certain part of their body to allow easier identification to one another. The mark is revealed only after the Secret Handgrip of Fandom is employed.

"The committee is special group of individuals trained in the deadly art of Robert's Rules (amongst other deadly skills) who are empowered (by Roscoe and Ghu) to protect the sacred mark of SMOFS from individuals who shouldn't know about such things.

"There is no truth to rumor that the Mark Committee is made up of individuals whose name is Mark."

In the July 25 *L.A. Times Magazine* a reporter asked LASFS member **Charles Lee Jackson II** whether L.A. has a future. Charlie slapped this perjury on him:

"Within 150 years, people will leave Earth for plastic-domed cities on Mars. Experimental stations will be in orbit around Venus and the moons of Jupiter. Like the American West, there will be unlimited opportunity for wealth and riches. The mass immigration will help keep the population of cities like Los

Angeles under control... With the way tectonics work, I don't think an earthquake is going to wipe out Los Angeles anytime soon. The subway under the Hollywood Hills will collapse. That's about it for the next couple of centuries. It's really over the course of 20,000 or 30,000 years that you have to worry."

Jar Jar Binks' previously unsuspected cousin in St. Louis, **Michelle Zellich**, wrote the local club's June minutes entirely in Gungan dialect. It is painful.

Changes of Address

Chaz Boston Baden, E-mail: hazel@boston-baden.com

rich brown, E-mail: see notes below

Brian Burley to 23 Reynolds Ave., Harrison, NJ 07029.

John P. Chapman, 2192 Anchor Court, Newbury Park, CA 91320

Tommy Ferguson, 90 Carnhill, Derry, BT48 8BE U.K.

Julian Headlong, E-mail: jheadlong.freemove.co.uk

Cary Hoagland, 12767 Turquoise Terr., Silver Spring, MD 20904

Ed Meskys, E-mail: edmeskys@worldpath.net

Marie Rengstorff, E-mail: seaotter@hialoha.net

Garth Spencer, E-mail: hrothgar@vcn.bc.ca

Bjorn Tore Sund, Lobergsveien 100 A, N-5073 Bergen, Norway; Email: bjornts@ii.uib.no

John and Judith Chapman moved to Ireland on business in October 1998 and will probably be staying there until about December 2000. Mail can be redirected to John's US business.

Tommy Ferguson has relocated back to Ireland. He adds, "E-mail remains the same, although I shall be answering it infrequently."

Garth Spencer asks that all his e-mail be redirected to the address shown above after August 7.

Bjorn Tore Sund posted online, "I am leaving Oslo and moving to Bergen to start working at the University there from September 13. In the meantime, I'll first be at NASFiC in Los Angeles and Worldcon in Melbourne."

Marie Rengstorff says, "I want to write the 'tails' of Toy (9 lb. Pekinese) and I moving to Hawaii. But, for now, I have some responsibilities for a rewrite of a story for Stan Schmidt. I really want to do it well enough this time. He has been a wonderful and patient mentor.

Be on the lookout for **rich brown's** new E-mail address: "I recently purchased a new computer, not yet up and running. For various personal and business reasons, within the next few days, I will be returning to that hektograph of isp's claiming to be a Gestetner, America On Line. Assuming they will let me have my old monicker back, I will then be Drgafia@aol.com. Anything you have to say to me after Labor Day should probably be sent to that address, with maybe a cc to drgafia@pop.compusernet.com address to be on the safe side. If you get a reject, try Drgafia1@aol.com as that will be my second choice if they tell me they already have the former."



The genesis of this month's rant goes back over a year, to the lovely spring morning in April of 1998, when I logged on the BucConeer website to take a gander at the Hugo nominees. I was generally pleased with the fan selections until I got to Best Dramatic Presentation:

Contact (150)
Men in Black (133)
Gattaca (54)
The Fifth Element (53)
Starship Troopers (42)

(In parentheses are the number of nominations received.)

At the time I was rather upset that my favorite show at that time, *Babylon 5*, had been shut out of the final ballot. I also reasoned that several good B5 episodes canceled each other out and the final results from BucConeer's nomination tally bear me out:

Babylon 5 - "Endgame" (27)
Babylon 5 - "The Deconstruction of Falling Stars" (27)
Babylon 5 - "The Face of the Enemy" (23)
Babylon 5 - "Into the Fire" (22)
Babylon 5 - "No Surrender, No Retreat" (20)
The X-Files - "Post-Modern Prometheus" (20)
Babylon 5 - "Intersections in Real Time" (16)
Alien Resurrection (15)
The Postman (14)
Jurassic Park: The Lost World (11)

This in itself underscores my dissatisfaction with the Best Dramatic Presentation (BDP) Hugo as a single unit award. The problem as I see it is that there is a unprecedented amount of good media sf and fantasy available to be nominated and only a handful of popular favorites get to make the final cut. TV has been holding its own against movies; four of the last 10 BDP Hugo winners have been tv episodes, they obviously don't need help, but...there is a preponderance of intelligent, high quality shows on now than there were 10 years ago: *The Pretender*, *The (New) Outer Limits*, *Stargate:SG1*, *Earth Final Conflict*,

That's My Rant and I'm Sticking To It by Chris M. Barkley

Episode 3: Amending The Best Dramatic Presentation Hugo, or I'm Ready for My Close-up, Agent Scully...

Xena, *Buffy*, *the Vampire Slayer* and *Crusade*.

And when exactly was the last time something other than a movie or tv episode even appeared on the final BDP ballot? Exactly 20 years ago when the BBC Radio production of *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* was narrowly defeated by Christopher Reeve's rendition of *Superman* back in 1979. And it troubles me that other artistic mediums have been shut out of the Hugo for such a long period of time.

In the aftermath of BucConeer, I made a modest proposal to the members of the SMOF's listserver, to split the Best Dramatic Presentation Hugo in three: (1) Best Dramatic Presentation for Motion Pictures; (2) Best Dramatic Presentation for Television; (3) Best Other Dramatic Related Form (Play, Music Album, Musical, Book on Tape, etc., what have you).

The furor and hooaha unfolded: I counted well over 100 post the first day alone with a torrent of several hundred more following over the next three weeks. In that space of time, I gamely defended the three-tier system as being the fairest: movies and tv would get their respective awards and the third awards would honor excellence in all the other entertainment fields.

Under the harshest scrutiny possible from the SMOFs, this view did not hold. Some were pretty adamant about not changing the system *at all*. Some argued that changing the BDP Hugo wasn't necessary because the quality of the nominees really hadn't improved. Others opined that a split would be fine, but strictly along the lines of stand alone presentations and continuing episodic series.

To make a long story short, I was ultimately persuaded that the three-tier system would never garner enough support in SMOFs or in the general fannish population to pass, which greatly disappointed me.

But towards the waning days of the debate, Kevin Standlee, Chair of the Bay Area in 2002 bid, Lew Wolkoff and Skip Morris proposed a compromise two-tier BDP, based on length. Long Form would be for nominees over 90 or 95 minutes long, Short Form for anything under 90 minutes.

After a few days I persuaded myself that such a system was not only practical, but fair as well. The choice of 100 minutes was not arbitrary; I reasoned that 100 minutes (without commercials, public service announcements or station breaks) was enough time for shorter features or stand-alone one hour episodes, tv pilots or two-episode arcs, most CD albums and abridged books-on-tape.

Here is the proposal, framed in parliamentary language by the author, Kevin Standlee:

The Long and Short of It: MOVED, To amend portions of

Article III of the WSFS Constitution to have the effect of splitting the existing Best Dramatic Presentation category into two categories, Long Form and Short Form, to regulate the administration of such categories, and for other purposes, as follows. This motion may not be divided.

1. Strike out existing Section 3.3.6, "Best Dramatic Presentation."

2. Insert the following section after existing Section 3.3.5: 3.3.x: BEST DRAMATIC PRESENTATION, LONG FORM: Any production in any medium of dramatized science fiction, fantasy, or related subjects, which has been publicly presented for the first time in its present dramatic form during the previous calendar year, with a complete running time of more than 100 minutes.

3. Insert the following section before existing Section 3.3.7 3.3.x: BEST DRAMATIC PRESENTATION, SHORT FORM: Any production in any medium of dramatized science fiction, fantasy, or related subjects, which has been publicly presented for the first time in its present dramatic form during the previous calendar year, with a complete running time of 100 minutes or less.

4. Insert the following section after existing Section 3.2.5: 3.2.x: The Worldcon Committee shall not consider previews, promotional trailers, commercials, public service announcements, or other extraneous material when determining the length of a work.

5. Insert the following section after existing Section 3.2.6: 3.2.x: The Worldcon Committee may relocate a dramatic presentation work into a more appropriate category if it feels that it is necessary, provided that the length of the work is within the lesser of twenty (20) minutes or twenty percent (20%) of the new category limits.

As an experiment, I took last year's BDP nominees and applied the proposal. Observe:

Long Form:

Contact (150 min.)

The Fifth Element (127 min.)

Gattaca (112 min)

Starship Troopers (129 min.)

Alien Resurrection (109 min.)

Short Form:

Men in Black (98 min.)

Babylon 5 - "Into the Fire" (46 min.)

The X-Files - "Post-Modern Prometheus" (47 min.)

Alien Voices: The First Man in the Moon (45 min.)

Star Trek: DS9 - "Favor The Bold/The Sacrifice of Angels"

As you can see, all of the Long Form nominees were on the ballot originally. In making this imaginary Short Form list, I took the liberty of projecting my own favorites from 1997. Since J. Michael Straczynski is in the habit of choosing one outstanding episode among multiple nominees, I'm sure he would have picked "No Surrender, No Retreat" as his entry as his choice. I however, picked "Into the Fire," which chronicled the emotional and dramatic end of the Vorlon/Shadow War. The Alien Voices production and the linked *Deep Space Nine* episodes were chosen on merit.

Let's speculate again, using this year's nominees. Even though Aussie-Con III won't be releasing the complete list of nominees until after the ceremony, I could project something along these lines:

Long Form

Dark City (103 min.)

Pleasantville (113 min.)

The Truman Show (104 min.)

Star Trek: Insurrection (103 min.)

From the Earth to the Moon (10 hrs.)

Short Form

Babylon 5 - "Sleeping in Light" (45 min.)

The X-Files - "Dreamland", Parts 1 & 2 (93 min.)

Buffy, the Vampire Slayer - "Anne" (45 min.)

Earth: Final Conflict - "Dimensions" (45 min.)

Alien Voices: The Lost World (45 min.)

I can see some fans objecting because some tv shows, such as *X-Files*, don't show episode titles. My reply; if a fan wants a title, they can look them up on any number of guides and websites on the internet, which is how I found "Dreamland", the hideously funny two-part episode in which Mulder switched bodies with a lecherous NSA agent.

Another objection I can readily acknowledge is that while most nominated tv and movies will be separated, the fear will be that those will be the *only* things that will be nominated. Well, my feeling is that that will be the trend only in the first year or so. My hope is that once fans have ten things to nominate, they may become more discriminating with their choices. For instance, did you know that The Firesign Theater had an sf-themed album out last year, *Give Me Immortality or Give Me Death*? Would you have nominated it for a Hugo (as fans did two of their previous albums) had you known?

And when was the last time there was a BDP Hugo nominee from a country or continent other than North America? (The answer, this year. *Dark City* was produced in Australia)

The point is that we need more diversity in our Hugo nominees. This amendment gives a chance for that to happen.

Another thing that this new amendment will do is attract more media-oriented fen to vote for the Hugo. In doing so, we actually inspire more media fen to read outside of their usual diet of visually-oriented sf.

Which brings me to Dragon*Con, the Atlanta based sf/media convention. According to Ed Kramer of their convention committee, the con attracted in excess of 20,000(!) fans this year. I think that if WorldCon had attracted 20K in Baltimore last year, we'd all agree that sf fandom was in pretty good shape, right?

Well in fact, BucConeer's onsite attendance barely tipped the scales at 6000. Some wag suggested online last year that Dragon*Con WAS the true WorldCon. Now I'm not suggesting that WorldCon try to become as large as Dragon*Con. What I am suggesting is that our end of fandom, the so called lit-fandom, should get with it and get more media fen to support lit fandom. I don't know if the majority of you reading this is aware of this but there seems to be a growing schism between casual fans (who saw *Star Wars*, watched *Star Trek* and read an occasional book), media fen (who attend mainly media cons) and the rest of us, who know of and uphold the history of written sf.

What if Dragon*Con starts it's own set of awards, honoring books, fanzines and various media offerings? The result would be that their awards would almost immediately outstrip the Hugo in prestige due to the sheer number of people that they would have as a voting base. In some years, only a few hundred people at most decide who gets a Hugo. Will this amendment increase our voting base? That, I can't say for certain. I would hope so...

Over the years I've noticed a growing undercurrent of tension between the groups; that generally speaking media fen regard us as elitist snobs and we regard them as our popular, but low-brow country cousins.

Will this amendment end all that? No...but it is a step in the right di-

rection. It would show media fen that we take their interests seriously and that they would reciprocate by being more active with lit-fandom.

I want to end by offering yet another new idea that will be introduced at the Chicon 2000 meeting: a new tier of membership for the World Science Fiction Society, just for nominating and voting on the Hugo.

This year, I paid \$35.00 (US) for the privilege of voting on the Hugos. What if the WorldCon Committee were to offer readers a chance to nominate and vote on the Hugos for say, somewhere between \$5-10.00? Ballots could be distributed online, at conventions of all types and through bookstores everywhere.

Now mind you, in order to hold down fraud or ballot stuffing, every person would be allowed only one nomination and one voting ballot. The Hugo Administrators, ballot counters and the postage could all be paid with the proceeds from the voting. The left over cash can go to the current WorldCon, to a future winning bid or to a special trust fund.

Lastly, I hope that anyone reading this, who has an interest in the future of fandom and plans to attend AussieCon III, will go to the business meeting and vote for this amendment to be passed on to Chicon 2000. Thank you for your time and attention.

◆ Chris M. Barkley

Notes Found In A Bottle

Mark Fabi, author of *Wym*, interviews himself in the August *PSFS News* and concludes with this exchange:

Q: One last question: I understand that in your day job you're a psychiatrist.

A: That's right.

Q: What's your professional opinion of people who interview themselves?

A: It's not a good sign.

Q: I didn't think so.

2002 Worldcon Bids Autopsied

Upon hearing that the SF02 bid folded because it could not negotiate an acceptable deal with its main hotel, Roger Wells speculated on SMOFS that the SF Marriott's hard-line requirements might stem from Yogi Hutsen's statements in an article published in the December 18, 1998 issue of *Meeting News*, titled, "Sci-Fi Saga in Starwood-Swollen Seattle." Hutsen is Starwood's Regional Manager in Seattle, blamed by the Seattle '02 committee's press release for refusing to negotiate a hotel deal with them, thus crashing their bid.

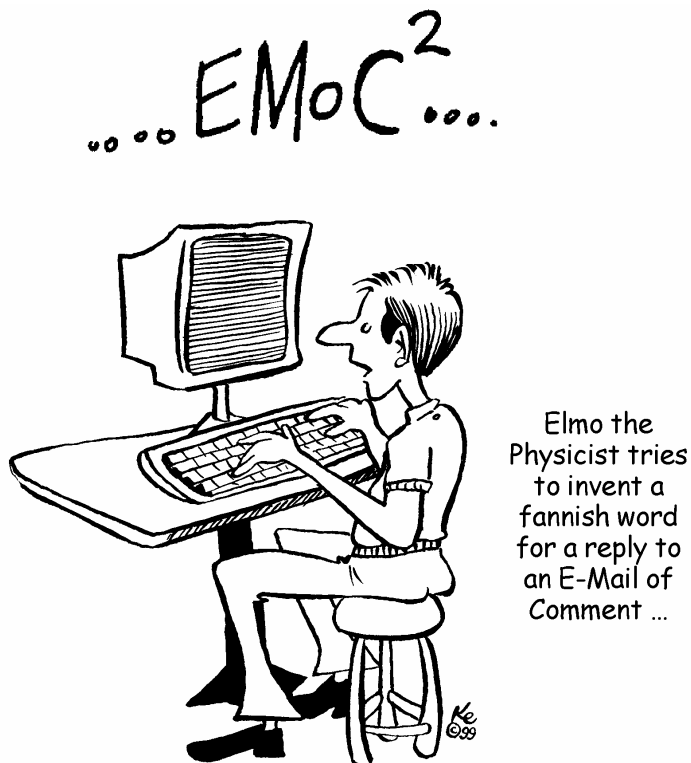
The press release prompted *Meeting News* to assign a writer to the story, who learned from unspecified sources:

"The main reason for that decision reportedly was that attendees at a separate 1997 science fiction convention, called Westercon, damaged the 840-room Seattle Sheraton and Towers and exhibited various other disturbing behaviors. Hutsen declined to address those reports directly. Starwood operates the Sheraton, as well as the 865-room Westin Seattle."

Pat Porter, chair of the defunct Seattle in '02 bid, felt: "If anything caused the SF hotels to act up this would have been the prime source. It told them that the SF in 2002 people had no where else to go."

Roger Wells lamented, "It appears that one lone individual in the industry with an apparent anti-SF con sentiment, by himself, has been able to kill two WorldCon bids."

Ben Yalow confirmed having seen the hotel damage at Westercon, and commented that since the business a Worldcon



would bring to the SF Marriott is "marginal," it's possible the article made a difference. But if that's true, then he feels the Seattle bid committee is to blame: "By sending out a press release, instead of going away quietly, it forced the industry to notice some unpleasant facts about a specific convention, and allowed them to generalize about others."

Here She Blows!

As this issue went to press, there was a last moment hail from Nick Simicich, in the path of Hurricane Floyd:

"The area of Florida that your humble servant resides in and, therefore, the location that the server that serves you this mailing list is in is under a Hurricane Warning. The most optimistic weather prediction includes hurricane force wind gusts (75 mph plus) and heavy rains. The storm is supposed to peak in the early afternoon. The most pessimistic prediction has the storm coming ashore around West Palm Beach, and then penetrating to the center of the state before turning north. That is clearly a 'worst case,' and most forecasters believe that it will turn north offshore, whacking the Bahamas and leaving us alone, thanks to the mystical power of duct tape and an approaching front with northeast steering winds. Schools have already been closed, public transportation will be shut down. There is still plywood to be had, but there is a ten sheet limit in most stores.

"None the less, this is a *huge* storm. Hurricane force winds extend 125 miles from the eye, tropical storm force winds extend 260 miles from the center. So it is pretty much impossible, at this point, that we will get a complete miss.

"It is likely that the area I live in will have a power weather failure. I have hatches (Dade County Ground Level Code), and I have battened them in so far as I can. But if you can't get your mail through tomorrow, this may be why."

Conventional Reportage

1999 Site Selection

ConJose, the 60th World Science Fiction Convention, will be held in San Jose, CA, from August 29-September 2, 2002.

ConJose's guests of honor are: Writer: Vernor Vinge; Artist: David Cherry; Fans: Bjo and John Trimble; Imaginary: Ferdinand Feghoot. The Toastmaster will be Tad Williams.

Attending memberships are US\$100 until May 31, 2000. Discounts apply if you voted in the 2002 site selection or presupported the Bay Area in 2002 Worldcon Bid.

Contact addresses: ConJose, P.O. Box 61363, Sunnyvale, CA 94088-1363. E-mail: ConJose@sfsfc.org. Web page: <http://www.sfsfc.org/worldcon/>

Site	By Mail	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Total
San Jose	247	145	161	113	666
Roswell	51	32	15	22	120

-- write-ins --

San Francisco	0	1	0	1	2
No Dams	0	0	1	0	1
Minneapolis in '73	0	0	1	2	3
Rottnest Island	0	0	0	1	1
None of the Above	2	0	0	1	3

Total with Preference Needed to Elect					796 399
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No Preference	7	3	4	10	24
Total Ballots	307	181	182	150	820

Ballot counting was completed in a record 41 minutes. Kevin Standlee reported that Liz Mortensen, the Roswell bid chair, was "apparently quite relieved."

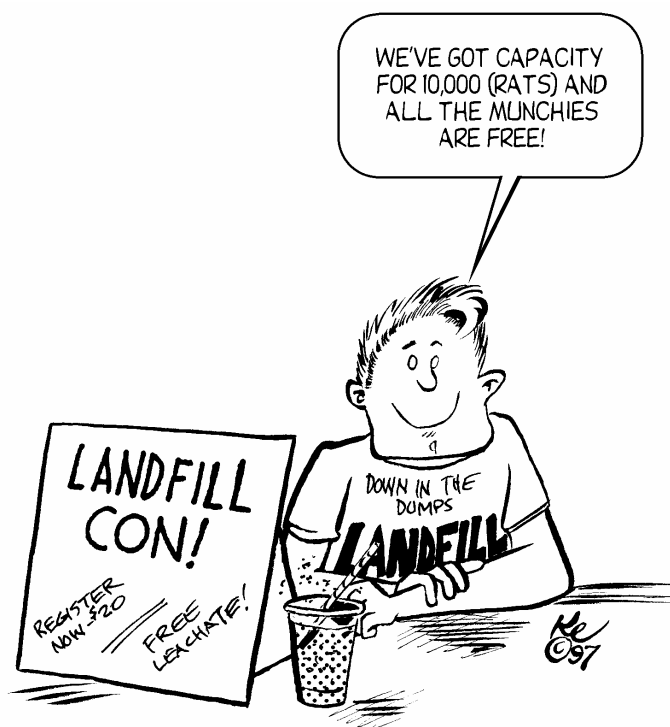
Smof Olympics

Kevin Standlee wondered on SMOFS, "Am I the only person who has/will have twice traveled to a non-North American Worldcon as a member of a Worldcon bid committee being voted on that year? I was on the SF in '93 committee, voted in 1990 at ConFiction, and I'm chair of the Bay Area in 2002 committee, voted in 1999 at Aussiecon Three."

The answer was: no. Ben Yalow was at Aussiecon (when NY in '77 was being voted on) and ConFiction (when Hawaii in '93 being voted on). And he's not the only one who shares this newly-discovered record for going to non-North American sites as part of a bid committee being voted on that year.

Bruce Pelz was at Heicon in 1970 to present the 1972 bid (it won), and at Conspiracy in 1987 to present a 1990 bid (it lost).

Next issue's trivia question is: Who holds the record for being on the most losing Worldcon bids?



Ben Yalow begins the bidding at five: "New York in '77, New York in '80 (bid pulled before final vote), New York in '86 (resigned before final vote), Hawaii in '93, and Boston/Orlando in '01. I'm not counting NY in '74, although I was going to be on the concom had we won, but I wasn't on the official bid committee."

Time for Aussiecon Three

Postcards From the Edge: DUFF traveler **Janice Gelb** barely made it to the Antipodes, but has had a great time ever since.

"For awhile, it didn't look like I'd make it, with a 2-hour equipment delay at LAX and an hour delay in Auckland because of a bomb scare in the international terminal.

"Everyone's been really nice to me. Got to visit the convention site and it is very convenient, with a mall nearby with restaurants and shops.

"I've seen everything pictured on this postcard, including an Aussie Rules football game at the stadium. Off to Hobart and Robin Johnson -- sailing ships and rainforests."

Janice was among eight Americans who made it to the Sydney Futurians' meeting on Thursday, August 19. Edwin Scribner posted afterward, "For those who might like to know, Janice was doing a great job for American fandom, and well justifying the trust placed in her when she was awarded the DUFF support."

Marc Ortlieb reported after Aussiecon that "Programming was only saved through frantic work behind the scenes by DUFF Winner and Program Operations Chief Janice Gelb who somehow created order from the chaos she had been bequeathed and still maintained a sense of humour."

DUFF Itinerary

August 1 - Leave for Australia

August 3 - Arrive in Melbourne

Staying with Stephen Boucher; (Attending Nova Mob meeting)

August 8 - Arrive in Hobart; Staying with Robin Johnson

August 13 - Arrive in Adelaide

Staying with Damien Warman; (At least one fannish get-together tentatively planned for Saturday night, August 14)

August 17 - Arrive in Canberra; Staying with Kim Huett

(At least one fannish get-together tentatively planned by Karen Herkes at Gaslight Books)

August 19 - Arrive in Sydney; Staying at Park Regis Hotel

(Attending Futurians meeting)

August 21 - August 31 Touristing

Sept 1-6 - Aussiecon Three

Sept 7 - Leave for home

Teddy Harvia is also on the road to Aussiecon Three, with amanuensis Diana Thayer. "Diana intends to take notes during our trip that I can draw on (no pun intended) to provide you some first-hand coverage of Aussiecon Three. (The presenter announces the Best Fanzine winner, 'File 007,' and the audience goes wild. Fans love typos.)"

Fans who wondered whether Australian resident and old-time Baltimore fan **Lee Smoire** would be at Aussiecon Three got their answer on August 30: "A discounted airfare I thought I had fallen through, and the best fare I can get is over \$1,000! I don't have the time to drive now, of course, so it looks unlikely I'll be making it after all!"

A week before, Lee had planned to go and was looking for a roommate, with these restrictions: "I would rather not room with a rapist or murderer (understandable) but I guess a heavy snorer would not be my top choice, also."

Lee may still get to see her old friends from D.C., Baltimore and New York if she goes ahead with her announced U.S. visit in October.

Eric Lindsay writes, "A few fans have emailed us about fitting in a visit *[[while at Aussiecon]]*, in terms that suggest they imagine we are a taxi ride away from someplace else they are visiting. I grant we are not the fastest of drivers, but when we visited Sydney in February, it took us five days to drive there, and four days to drive back. Only about 2400 kilometres each way, but despite being on the "around Australia" highway, the roads are just not conducive to high speed cruising (even if it were legal). Not that I don't hope that a bunch of fans do make it to Airlie Beach. In the hope of enticing some, I have a web page up, showing boat trips available and other entertainment in the Barrier Reef area."

The web address is:

http://members.xoom.com/eric_lindsay/airlie

Alan Stewart stepped into rescue the Worldcon's annual apa, WOOF (Worldcon Organization of Faneditors). In a recent *File 770*, Victoria Smith announced she would not be at Aussiecon Three and needed someone else to take over. This was the 24th collation of WOOF, founded by Bruce Pelz at MidAmeriCon in 1976.

Early Returns on Aussiecon Three

Thanks to Marc Ortlieb's *Australian SF Bullshead #125*, we get our first glimpses of the 1999 Worldcon.

Reminiscent of Bucconeer, a Special Guest didn't make it to Aussiecon Three. Fortunately, J. Michael Straczynski wasn't the missing man, though he did arrive a day late because his flight was turned back to Los Angeles. Rather, it was Anime Special Guest Hideaki Anno who injured himself at home in Japan and missed the convention entirely.

At the **Other Awards Ceremony**, Rusty Hevelin presented the E. Everett Evans Big Heart Award, given by Forry Ackerman, for contributions to the field. There were two winners, Peter Hassall of New Zealand and Chris Collier of Australia.

The Sidewise Awards went to Stephen Fry for *Making History* and Ian MacLeod for "The Summer Isles."

Masamichi Osako, assisted by two ladies in Japanese national dress, presented the 1998 and 1999 Seiun Awards. 1998 Novel category: *Falling Angels* by Larry Niven, Jerry Pournelle, Michael Flynn. Translator: Osamu Asai. 1998 Short Story category: "Death of Captain Future" by Allen Steele. Translator: Masahiro Noda. 1999 Novel category: *Time Ship* by Steven Baxter. Translator: Naoya Nakahara; *Red Mars* by Kim Stanley Robinson. Translator: Yutaka Oshima. 1999 Short Story category: "The Last Class Picture" by Dan Simmons. Translator: Yoichi Shimada.

Aussiecon Three Costume Parade Winners:

Best in Show: Robert Jan

Experienced:

Best in Category: Gail Adams

Best Instant Gratification: Chris Purdy

Best Comedy Performance: Widya Santoso

Beginners:

Best Presentation: Karen & David Carlisle & Megan Dansie

Best Costume Trish Ostwald & Lynette Mayer

Young Fans:

Best Ecologically Sensitive Attitude Adam McCaw

Best Contrast of Good & Evil Natalie & Michael Ortlieb

Best Choreography Shayna Lynn Waitsman

Best Hall Costumes:

Michele Jaye Solomon, Bruce & Deena MacDermott, Jason Gaffney, Heather Buck & Cathy Larson.

IT WAS THE BEST
CON MONEY COULD
LEASE



CON-VERSION 16

Calgary, Alberta

July 23-25, 1999

Report by Dale Speirs

SF Fans Are Actually Hotel Fans, It Is Said. Calgary's annual SF convention was held July 23-25 at the Carriage House Inn. The convention has been held here from time to time in the past, and I was glad to see it back in this place. There are only about three hotels in Cowtown capable of hosting an SF or philatelic convention at reasonable cost, so everything keeps going around in cycles. Since SF fans and stamp collectors are not the boozehounds that hotel management fondly imagine, they tend to wear out their welcome after two or three years and have to move to another hotel. The big money is in Shriners and wedding receptions.

Fortunately, Calgary hotels constantly change ownership, so by the time the cycle is completed, a new one can begin with a fresh set of managers. The Carriage House Inn is a family-owned hotel that does not rotate managers, but seems tolerant of SF fans. The hotel is a bit small, but I consider this a plus, as the convention seems livelier with a denser crowd rather than the empty spaces of sprawling hotels like the Coast Plaza, formerly the Marlborough Inn, and which has been through at least four owners in the last two decades. The Carriage House Inn also has excellent food and the most popular Sunday brunch in town, partly because it is the only hotel with kosher cooking.

The Convention Itself. Con-Version 16 has Ben Bova as the main Guest of Honor. Fantasy GoH was L.E. Modesitt Jr., Canadian GoH was Tanya Huff, and Science GoH was Gregory Bennett.

Most panels had a good turnout, partly from skill in selecting topics, and partly by having only three tracks to concentrate the audience. It was interesting to note how many of the panelists would refer back to other panels earlier in the convention and have the majority of the audience understand the allusions because they had been there as well.

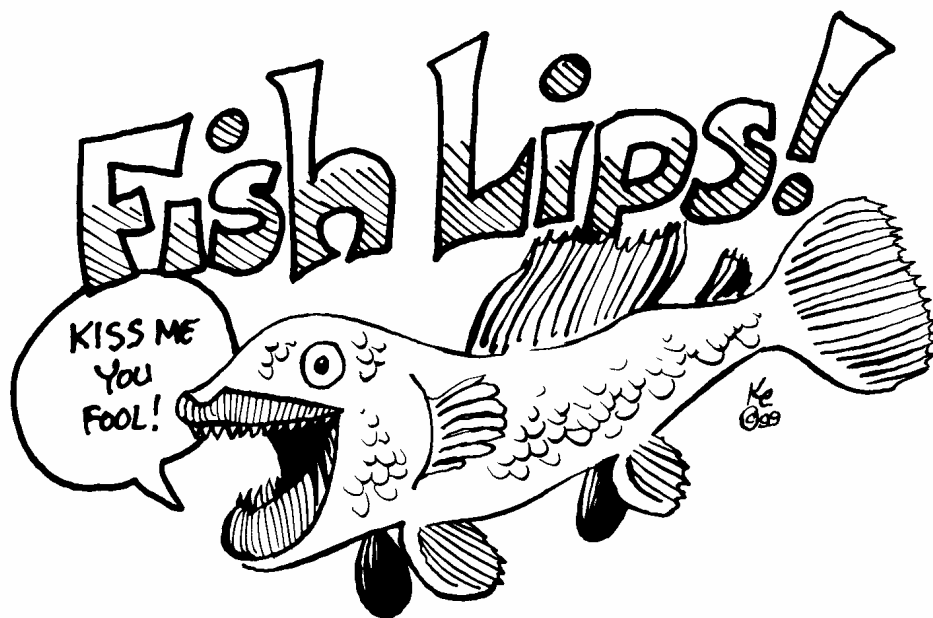
Each panel was introduced by a moderator who was prepared and well-briefed on the panelists' biographies and the topic. The moderators asked leading questions to get the conversation going and to keep it on track. Con-Version was a sharp contrast to many conventions I have been to where the panelists were left to their own ends in starting off and the discussions veered away from the topic at

hand. While many SF fans consider this sort of thing a "fannish tradition," I consider it a cheat because the audience has the right to expect to receive things from the convention as advertised. There was none of "I don't know why I was assigned to this panel" as the panelists had some connection to the topic, either via their fiction or their day job.

I followed my usual method in dealing with the problem of how to attend two panels at the same time. I attended one panel for the first half-hour, then left and went next door for the last half-hour of the other panel I wanted to see.

obese, have a thick waist and cellulite thighs. She did, however, close out the parties and drink everyone else under the table. I went home for some sleep and a shower, came back at 4 a.m., and she was the last one going in the consuite at 8:30 a.m. when I went off for breakfast before starting the day's round of panels.

Nosferatu To Angel: How The Image of Vampires Has Changed. This was the first panel of the convention and the first I attended. The panelists were Tanya Huff (a pro writer from the Maritimes who has published vampire novels), Jena Snyder (editor of *On Spec*



L.E. Modesitt Jr. was the best panelist I have seen at any convention. He was always well-prepared with notes and obvious advance planning, unlike the norm which is for the panelist to show up poorly-prepared and hung-over. At the Guest of Honor speeches, his was thoughtful and useful advice on writing SF. I recommend him to concons looking for GoHs.

When I first walked into the consuite, I thought for a moment I had mistakenly walked into the wrong room because of the airline stewardesses present. The women in business suits, however, turned out to be Scully impersonators from *The X-Files*, with only their FBI badges separating them from Air Canada flight attendants. There were no Klingons in the hallways of the convention, Star Trek having mostly died out in Cowtown.

I did see a Xena. Unfortunately, 45-year-old women do not look well in such a skimpy costume when they have leathery skin from too much sunbathing, and while not actually

magazine and minor writer), Kati Harse (local fan involved in writers' groups, who is doing her Ph.D. thesis on 19th-century speculative fiction, with particular emphasis on Bram Stoker). I'm not a vampire story fan, but I try to select a few panels at each convention on subjects outside my usual range of interest in order to force myself out of the rutted track. Snyder started off by remarking that vampires are characterized more sympathetically nowadays. Huff agreed, but felt this lessening of their dangerousness meant they would also lose some of their seductive appeal. She said that aging Baby Boomers are becoming more fascinated by death, morbidly so, as they reach their 40s and 50s, hence an increase of interest in vampires. She noted that vampire fiction readers, like romance readers, are an extremely loyal, strong market. I happened to be looking around at the audience for this panel and noted that it, like the romance market, was strongly female, with only a few men present.

Mars Or The Moon? A false dichotomy,



said Ben Bova, for he felt we can do both. The Moon is favored by economics for colonies. Mars is suitable only for exploration because we cannot establish viable colonies in any reasonable time, but the search for life is important. Whether funded by the government or private entrepreneurs, whomever pays the bills will cause all kinds of trouble for those doing the actual work. Dr. Alan Dyer (Calgary Science Centre and Planetarium) does like the idea of a Mars trip because it would turn out like the Apollo program. He prefers to make Moon colonies a priority since it would mean we would go out into space for good. J. Brian Clarke (SF novelist living in Calgary, like Ben Bova wearing a button advertising himself as part of the *Analog* Mafia) said we should walk before we run, and build up an infrastructure of space stations and lunar colonies before going to Mars.

Why Have Manned Space Flight? Was the question the following day, and as with the Mars versus Moon panel, the contestants, pardon me, panelists, agreed this was a false dichotomy. Edward Willett (SF writer from Saskatchewan specializing in young adult novels) favored manned flight for the romantic urge to satisfy human curiosity to know what was beyond the next horizon. His practical reason was that humans are better at dealing with unexpected situations and equipment failures than robots. Dr. Alison Sinclair (pathologist in her day job and SF novelist on the side) felt humans were becoming more vicarious and cyberpunkish since the dawn of the television age, and sending robots out in their place was a natural progression. J. Brian Clarke agreed with robots first, but from economic reasons. Blair Patterson reminded us that Earth is in a cosmic shooting gallery. When, not if, the next big rock comes in at us,

we need to be diversified through space. Tanya Huff said we need astronauts for marketing purposes. Willett agreed with this, saying that when people criticize manned flight as a public relations exercise, the response should be, "Yeah, so what?" There is nothing wrong with good PR; everybody does it and so should the space program.

Dinosaurs In Fiction. Alberta is the richest source of Late Cretaceous dinosaur fossils in the world, so each year there are panels on the subject. Dr. Phillip Currie, Curator of Dinosaurs at the Royal Tyrrell Museum of Paleontology (Drumheller, Alberta; it is the largest fossil museum in the world) covers the fact end. Dr. William Sarjeant, a paleontologist at the University of Saskatchewan, covered the fictional representation of dinosaurs. He writes SF under the pseudonym of Antony Swithins. The scientific concept of dinosaurs originated in 1841, and the first mention of them in fiction was in 1853 by none other than Charles Dickens. Sarjeant showed slides of novels about dinosaurs written in the early 1900s. He advised us to save the trouble of hunting them down, as they are all unreadable today.

In North America and Europe, Edgar Rice Burroughs had the greatest influence about dinosaurs, and in Russia it was Orbuhev's hollow-earth novel *Plutonia*. As a sidelight, Phillip Currie is an ERB fan and in his teenage years published a fanzine about his work. Dinosaur fiction is often responsible for perpetuating misconceptions and errors about them, sometimes due to changing paleontological thought, other times due to ignorance by the author. Modern dinosaur fiction often features alternative history, such as dinosaurs co-existing with humans.

Water on the Moon. Recent satellite surveys have shown that there is a possibility of water on the Moon at the poles. The overriding importance of water on the Moon is that no lunar colony will be successful without it in large quantities, even with recycling. Some mountain peaks at the South Pole are always in sunlight, an important point for running solar power to any colony. Dave Duncan (SF novelist who lives in Calgary) was not as optimistic about the satellite results since the actual evidence is for H₂, not H₂O. Gregory Bennett (former NASA engineer now working for Bigelow Aerospace on spacecraft design) said there do not appear to be any sheets of ice, just scattered water molecules in the lunar dust, but there may be ice deposits below the surface to be mined at some distant date. However, it is not cost-effective to mine ice for a newborn

lunar colony, and it would be cheaper to ship it from Earth.

The Non-Economics of Fantasy and SF. The panel started off first with bad economics in science fact, but then finally shifted to fiction. Dave Wolverton (SF writer and workshop instructor) said people don't mind buying lottery tickets to support a charity but object to the space exploration budget. L.E. Modesitt Jr. said readers are often vocal about technological veracity of books, but express no similar concern for economic veracity. Modesitt was a venture capitalist before becoming a writer, and said that investors want at least 25% return on investment. Space hasn't provided it other than communication satellites. Ben Bova was sitting at the back of the audience but refused to be drawn into any arguments about privatization of space. Modesitt mentioned that in a society of immortals, compound interest would not be paid, since it only works in our kind of world where few people invest for the really, really, really long-term. Interstellar trade would be minimal since it would be cheaper to manufacture everything in the home system, although information might be traded. There would be no currency exchange rates between stellar systems with only sublight technology. Any economic expansion into space requires massive new energy production to succeed.

Is Technology Changing Our Values and Morals? The panel started off with J. Brian Clarke remembering how it was when he was young, just before World War II, when nuclear families stayed together. Now the children scatter across the continent as a matter of course, not just as an exceptional thing such as emigration. Conversely, however, the Internet is helping families communicate better and more often by e-mail. There is more letter writing than ever before, except it is done by computer. Ed Willett said technology will require the basic morality of not doing something that will hurt others. Since high technology is developed by the West, the moral imperative is on us to think things through, but unfortunately this is almost never done and is subject to random politics. An audience member commented that one reaction to technology is attempts to be anonymous on the Internet.

Is There Anything New After Cyberpunk? L.E. Modesitt Jr. said cyberpunk was the latest dead end in a long series of literary dead ends. All such extremes fail to amount to anything but do help to push out the boundaries of the genre a bit. He named a new trend called techno-pornography, nothing to do with

sex, but rather a false glorification of the technological world. (Too bad Ben Bova or other members of the *Analog* Mafia weren't there.) He felt that many writers killed their careers by writing too many books that depress the reader and make him give up early on the writer's books. Another panelist said writers do not consciously start a movement or get together to coordinate a trend. It happens and is recognized later, assuming, of course, that it is an actual trend and not just false correlation.

Modesitt said the most dangerous trend is that few publishers now accept unsolicited manuscripts. The result is a small in-group selecting via agents and editors, but the only way to find new talent is via the slush pile. He attributed Tor's rise to the top of SF publishing to them being one of two major publishers who still accept unsolicited manuscripts.

Teaching SF In School. A vigorous panel of educators faced off against/with an equally vigorous audience of whom many were schoolteachers able to quote chapter and verse of the Alberta Ministry of Education curriculum. A very participative panel indeed. The general consensus was that things are better than they used to be because the optional reading list of the curriculum now includes many SF and fantasy titles. Teachers thus can sneak a lot of it into their classroom time, but it leaves quite a bit of variability in a student's chances of being exposed to literary SF. It is wisest to refer to it as speculative fiction, not science fiction, and certainly not sci-fi.

Janis Svilpis stirred up a firestorm when he remarked that a major difficulty he has teaching SF at the University of Calgary is that many of his students are ignorant of science and history. As most of the schoolteachers in the audience were the Calgary ones supplying him with his students, there was palpable resentment against this slur, but it did not divert attention from the topic.

The Commercialization of Space. The 1967 Outer Space Treaty prohibits sovereignty but not property rights. Gregory Bennett's day job with Bigelow Aerospace is to design, within a timeframe of 15 years, a cruise ship capable of going around the Moon. They are not in the launching business and therefore leave plans for a booster to other companies. It is expected to carry 100 passengers plus 50 crew, remain in space permanently, and be supplied by shuttles. Ticket prices are estimated at \$100,000 to \$200,000 per person. Since launch technology runs at around one loss per 100 launches, it is well to buy travel insurance. All through the panel, Ben Bova kept bugging Bennett, "But what

about the booster?"

Space hotels would be a voracious consumer of resources. Bennett said to note the loading dock of any hotel and the constant stream of delivery trucks in and out, then think about getting all those supplies into orbit. For space industry, the only effective place is the Moon, where factories can mine the resources and ship products up out of a shallower gravity well. Currently the major commercialization of space is communication satellites, but Bennett predicted the eventual extinction of the business because fiber-optic cables and microwave towers are cheaper and better quality.

Immortality: Would It Be A Freedom Or A Curse? Ben Bova said, "I wrote the book on the subject: I'm an expert." (laughter from audience). His latest book is indeed on that very subject. Dave Duncan replied, "I haven't read the book: I'm waiting for the movie." (more laughter). The panel was mostly a dialogue between Bova and Duncan, the former optimistic and the latter skeptical. Bova kept trying to reassure Duncan (whose day job is being an old-age pensioner) that immortality would not make him a feeble 200-year-old fool, but healthy as a 20-year-old. Bova mentioned that it is already possible with existing techniques to extend life to a healthy 100.

Heyden Trenholm (playwright and SF writer) pointed out that the rush to immortality may be stymied by patents on human genes. Although patents expire, trade secrets don't. The net effect may be to slow down the arrival of immortality.

Guest of Honor Speeches. Tanya Huff noted that Calgary has more Ph.D.'s per capita than any other Canadian city. This explained to her why she found Con-Version took the most rigorous approach to SF, both panelists and audience, of all the conventions she attended. L.E. Modesitt Jr. said he is the most widely-published anonymous author in SF. He has not yet graduated to the stage of people asking him, "Didn't you publish a book somewhere?" despite his millions in sales. I should note that throughout the convention, Modesitt dressed in a three-piece suit and looked like the stereotype of an accountant of middle management. He reaffirmed Huff's remark about the sercon nature of Con-Version.

Ben Bova had a humorous account of what he called his personal FAQ, the questions non-SF people ask him when they discover he is a writer. This included such classics as "Where do you get those crazy ideas?" to which Bova replies -- they come from Schenectady, where

a man sends him a batch once a month on a subscription service. Other questions are: "How long does it take to write a book?" (A year at least but I type it faster.) "Have any of your books been made into movies?" "What is your favorite novel?" ("That's like asking my favorite child.") And, "How do I get published?" (by following Robert Heinlein's famous rules about first you must type something on paper, then circulate it through editors.)

Worldcon Bid Updates

Charlotte '04 News

Charlotte in 2004 WorldCon bid co-founder and co-chair Kelly Lockhart is stepping down to handle the real-life obligations of his computer consulting company. Kelly posted online, "I came to the realization that I cannot co-chair a Worldcon bid and run a fast-growing business at the same time, so commerce won out over pleasure." Kelly remains with the bid as head of the publicity division. Irv Koch is still the Chair.

Lance Ozsko is the new Vice Chair. Ozsko is best-known for his role in organizing many of Baltimore in '98's bid parties, and for his current publicity campaign encouraging overseas fans to attend Eurocon in Gdansk, Poland.

However, John Tackett has been named their party coordinator.

Bid Launched for Dallas in 2006

The new Dallas in 2006 is more than just smoke and mirrors: they have a terrific web page, too. On the other hand, co-chair Jason Middleton has never attended a Worldcon, although the other co-chair, Shirley Soto, has.

A committee of five launched the bid: Middleton, Soto, Arnie Gantt, Toni Steger and Christy Cooper. They started active recruitment of fans interested in a Dallas Worldcon bid at a potluck dinner on August 21. The bid has two advisors: Edith DeGolyer and Teresa Patterson.

The five bidders are long-time fans who have worked on Stellar Occasion and the Project A:Kon anime con, now in its 11th year. The last A:Kon drew 3000. According to Mark Woosley, "Some worked on the Dallas Fantasy Fairs held in the 80's. By reputation, they know the ins and outs of planning and running a fairly large con."

The 2006 bid web pages is at:

www.rubberrodeo.com/dallas2006

The bid announced its presupport rates, but is still in the process of renting a P.O. box where money can be sent.

A long time ago, in a fandom far, far away, the late Tom Reamy tried to bring the Worldcon to Dallas in 1973. When Toronto won, he gave that up in favor of something easier, like winning the Nebula for "San Diego Light-foot Sue." Fans from Minneapolis still haven't given up their '73 bid, and if they aren't careful we will soon pretend to forget what century used to be in front of those two digits.

Texas finally got its first Worldcon in 1997, and some veterans of the San Antonio committee reportedly are thinking about a sequel sometime in the next decade.

Nieuw Amsterdamerung

New York City is the last place that still has capital punishment for Worldcon bidding. Or needs it.

Robert Sacks and Brian Burley have announced they are bidding to hold the 2004 Worldcon in "Nieuw Amsterdam." A load of other New York area fans promptly jumped in with questions and criticisms about the suitability of their site and committee.

Nieuw Amsterdam is the Dutch settlers' original name for what is now called New York City. Rip Van Winkle is the Dutch settlers' term for how long somebody sleeps after smofs hit them on the head that many times.

Sacks and Burley propose to hold the con over the traditional Labor Day weekend at the Marriott Marquis and the Milford Plaza, hotels at opposite ends of adjacent city blocks. Sacks posted online, "We will be working to add other properties to the package, very nearby. We will *not* be using the Javits Convention Center, and the Coliseum should be being torn down any year now in a vain attempt to force business to the JCC."

Stu Hellinger, on SMOFS, compared Nieuw Amsterdam's proposed facilities with those planned for the (unsuccessful) New York in '86 bid. The '86 bid would have used the Marriott Marquis and the New York Hilton (prior to the recent expansion). Hellinger feels that without another large hotel in the mix they would not have enough function space for a modern Worldcon.

Other writers asked if this is a two-man committee, or if not, why the names of its other members had been withheld? Sacks replied, there are other members, though he did not explain why they have not been named publicly.

A random sample of conrunners at NAS-

FiC failed to uncover any other Nieuw Amsterdam committee. But an MCFI director disclosed the group -- which last bid for Boston/Orlando -- is investigating East Coast sites for its own '04 bid.

Serious, Or Not? Three new Worldcon bids have been announced this summer, Charlotte, Dallas and Nieuw Amsterdam. And there are rumors a fourth is in the works -- Marc Ortlieb reports Greg Turkich just launched plans for a 2007 Australian bid.

So long as a bid only consists of a web page and an occasional e-mailed press release to the Plokta News Network, it can campaign indefinitely for less than \$25 a month. Any bid that wants to be taken seriously, however, needs to do much more.

Charlotte and Dallas have splashy web pages. They include lists of current committee members, but the Dallas committee admits only one member has ever been to a Worldcon. Then again, Ruth Sachter quips, a member of the Nieuw Amsterdam bid has been to every Worldcon for years, and does anyone see that as a plus for them?

It isn't a prerequisite for a committee to be loaded with well-known convention-runners. Name-recognition can be achieved during the campaign. The Dutch fans bidding for Con-Fiction became well-known by working North American and British conventions at the same time they were bidding.

What is required for a Worldcon bid to be taken seriously? Fans look with a jaded eye on a bid that lacks conrunners who have worked successfully on 1000+ person conventions. They also know that a competitive bid needs a strong financial base: it costs tens of thousands of dollars to run all those bid parties. Much as everyone likes the parties in their own right, people also see them as a means of testing a committee's organization, creativity and long-term endurance. A bid won't be taken seriously until it hosts a series of bid parties to show there are people to do the work and contribute the resources to have a decent campaign.

Tropicon 18

Bwana Mike Resnick is Tropicon 18's guest of honor. Tropicon is the South Florida Science Fiction convention with an omnivorous approach to the field, focused on literature, and featuring an Art Show, Dealer's Room, videos, gaming, and even an alien casino.

Tropicon 18 will be held November 19-21 at the Clarion Hotel in Hollywood, Florida -- right across the street from the ocean! Room rates are \$60 single thru quad.

Other guests include Lynn Abbey, Adam Troy Castro, Barbara Delaplace, Joseph Green and Jack C. Haldeman II.

Memberships are \$24 until October 18, \$28 at the door. Contact: South Florida Science Fiction Society, P.O. Box 70143, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33309.

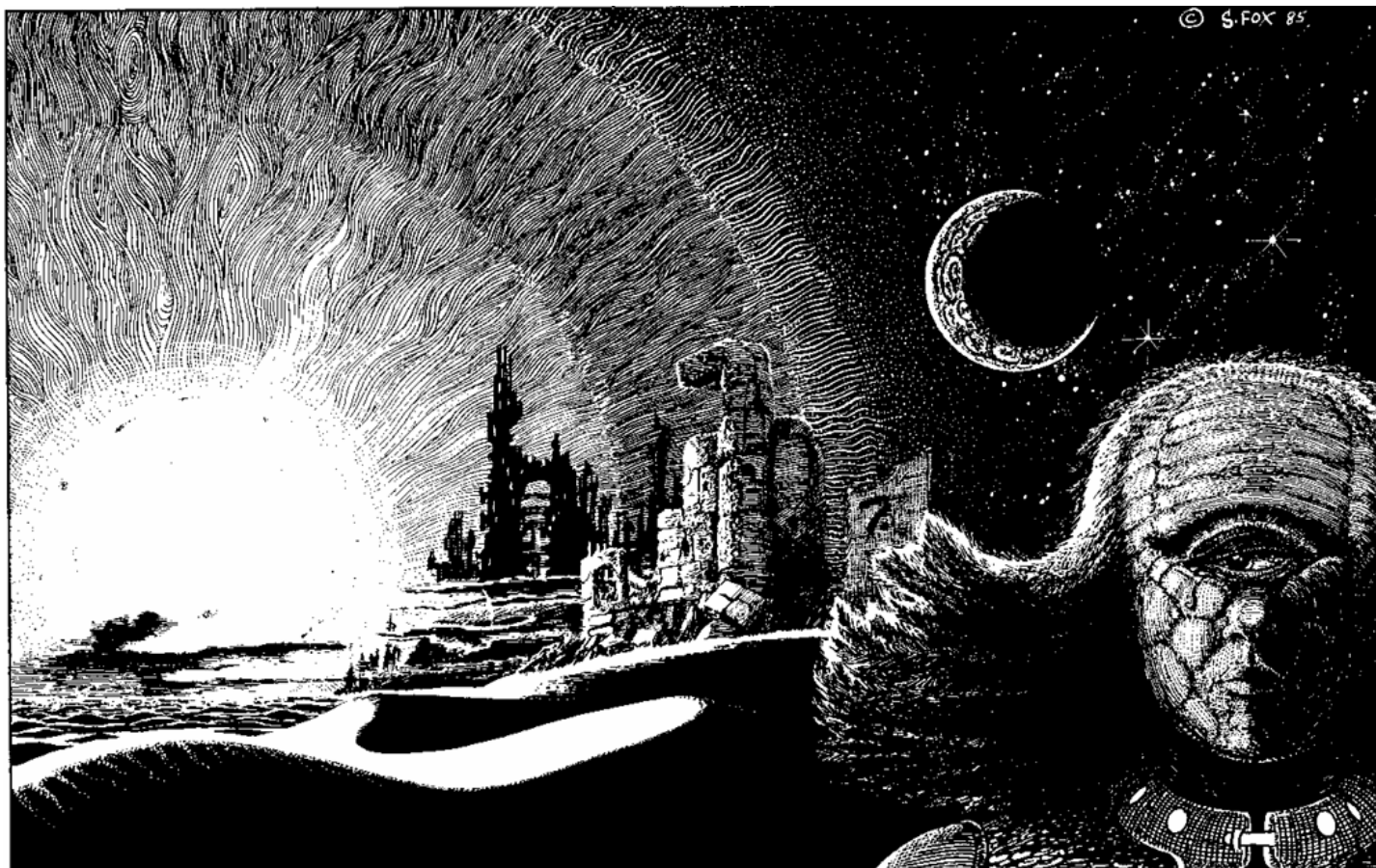
Hasbro To Acquire Wizards Of The Coast, Inc.

Hasbro, Inc. will acquire Wizards of the Coast, Inc., the world's largest publisher of hobby games and a leading publisher of fantasy and science fiction literature. The purchase price is approximately \$325 million, subject to adjustment based on the audited net assets of Wizards of the Coast at closing, and certain contingent payment rights.

Privately-held Wizards of the Coast was founded in 1990 by Peter D. Adkison, and is best known for *Magic: The Gathering*, the world's all-time best-selling trading card game. Since its release in 1993, more than six million players worldwide have embraced this game, which is now available in 10 languages and played in more than 52 countries. Other well-known products include the popular *Pokemon* trading card game, currently the number-one game in the U.S., and the *Dungeons and Dragons* roleplaying games. The company also sponsors a worldwide tournament program for hobby game enthusiasts, owns and operates almost 70 retail game establishments and operates the Wizards of the Coast Game Center in Seattle.

"Wizards of the Coast will enable us to significantly expand in the fast-growing games arena, which is a cornerstone of our growth strategy for the new millennium," said Alan G. Hassenfeld, Chairman and CEO of Hasbro, Inc. "This acquisition brings us not only incredibly popular content and exciting future gaming initiatives, but also a visionary senior management team and creative talent, expanded distribution channels and an opportunity to participate in location-based entertainment."

"We are very excited about this merger of the world's two greatest game companies," said Peter D. Adkison, President and CEO of Wizards of the Coast. "We are proud to become part of the Hasbro tradition and culture, and look forward to working together to build on the strength of Hasbro's rich library of intellectual properties," Adkison added. Adkison and his senior management team will continue to run Wizards of the Coast, which will remain based just outside of Seattle.



John Hertz's Westercon Notebook

Westercon 52, "EmpireCon", July 2-5, 1999
DoubleTree City Center Hotel, Spokane, Washington

Friday at 1:30 a.m. I arrived from the airport, a reasonable time, or so my airline, baggage handlers, and shuttle driver evidently thought. The first moments of a con at that hour are babe-like. One as yet knows nothing. While I peered hopefully at a kiosk of flyers, down the elevator came Dave Howell lamenting that the Cheeko party, last of the night, had closed. We sat in the lobby. He had chaired the Foolscap literary con, as he put it "about flat things," and has been running the on-line service Alexandria Digital Literature. Why do people read? He said, I like to relax. I said, I like to be invigorated. And so to bed. A few hours later when I first ran into con chair and warlord Bob Ladd, the name on his badge was "Sounds like an Ops problem", in, I hasten to add, big fat letters.

Attendance was 1,423 including one dog. The con was fresh and vigorous. It brought Yuri Mironets, a professor of English in Vladivostok who has been teaching American and British s-f. It was run by people who, at Jon Gustafson's warning "You're a bunch of maroons if you do this," achieved enlightenment. "Yes! We're maroons! We're Team Maroon!" and they put on khaki shorts, maroon polo shirts, and straw boaters with TEAM MAROON upside down. It was full of art demos and workshops, and even had a Fanzine Lounge. It drew A.J. Budrys, Aileen Forman, David Hartwell, Robin Johnson, Connie Willis, and Ben Yalow. A river ran through it (well, almost), there was

a Charles Looff carousel in the park, and amazing astounding fantastic fireworks on Independence Night. There were too many Guests of Honor, but they were Alicia Austin, Larry Baker, C.J. Cherryh, Ellen Datlow, Barbara Hambly, Wendy Pini, and Kristine Kathryn Rusch, and besides, isn't it a proud thing we have so many women worth honoring?

Well before the con it was plain the committee was not long on experience. This hurt the crops, and I think kept people away. For some while the challenge in fandom has been managing one's ignorance. The burden lies especially on concoms. How do we arrange for "I didn't know that", "I didn't think of that", to be not last words, but in the middle, with something wonderful to follow? Eventually a more-knowledgeable fan or two, unasked, made suggestions. Mostly the concom took it well. Some were adopted, and the result was probably an improvement. There is, after all, no one here but us chickens.

At the crack of dawn, i.e. noon, I went to moderate "Everyone is an Editor" with Hartwell, Howell, and Edd Vick. On the Web no one is an editor, which was our topic: is that good or bad? So we asked what editors are for, and whether, where they do not exist, it will be necessary to invent them. Hartwell said editors are responsible not to the writer, but to the reader: since publishers hire them for this, Web publishers may find a need to spend resources likewise. I said, people try to



Garth Spencer
Passed out in the fanzine lounge
Saturday, 7:45pm, Westcon 52/Empirecon, Spokane

escape editing for fear of wrong rejection. From the audience: we don't want to SUBMIT. Vick said, I want to publish something better than I have before. *The Economist* ran a report that the Web isn't selling products, but services, most of which are finders. We'll believe in finding, but we won't believe in refining. Editing is itself art, and art is part of life, I said; the Inter-

My love of God has barred me from occupying myself with the hate of Satan.

Rabi'ah al-'Adawiyah

net, a labor-saving device, clarifies and reveals quality. Howell said, just after Gutenberg there were presses everywhere; all that shook down, as the Web may.

The hotel untangled my room snarl, putting Fred Patten, Art Widner, and me across from the Fanzine Lounge; who could complain? There Graeme Cameron and Garth Spencer were in charge. Various folk, including me, had brought handfuls of this and that. There was no duty roster to arrange for someone present and in charge whenever the room was open; that would have allowed a display of historic fanzines or a sales table, but as it was, two racks held a reasonable sample, and people dropped in. Sometimes there was refreshment. In Operations, seeking rosettes to give as a hall costume judge, I found buckets of roses for strewing before Emperor Jon Gustafson. I pondered this as I went to moderate "The Case for Reason." There Budrys said he quit the *Chicago Sun-Times* almost the same day

as *The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction*, so Rusch said "I was the editor when he quit. I'm irrational." Budrys said, "Mr. Spock pretends, but he's as emotional as anyone. Most so-called emotionless characters wouldn't work without emotion." Baker said we like to see characters overcome competent enemies by spunk. I said, when religion was fashionable, we mocked monks and priests; now, wanting new fall guys, we write pratfalls for the more-rational-than-thou. Walter Parker in the audience said, maybe Rational People Having Trouble with Emotion are written by emotional people having trouble with reason. Rusch said, we rarely see an s-f creature wholly emotional. From the audience: because we don't assign emotions where we see no intellect. Willis said Mark Twain made the case for reason: after a hot stove a cat won't sit on a cold one either.

After Opening Ceremonies there were hundreds of glass dishes of vanilla ice cream, pots of caramel, chocolate, whipped cream, peanuts, cherries. Forman confessed dropping *Glamour*, to start a new zine, *Bebop*; "Have you ever tried to think of a fanzine title with Arnie Katz in the room?" At dinner Widner, like me a single-malt-Scotch fan, told how Gary Farber drank Michelle & Harry Howard's Lagavullin; also how Harlan Ellison took exception to a story Widner ran in *YHOS*, phoning to Widner's cabin early one morning, and flooring him with this evidence Ellison read his fanzine. On the party circuit Baker's fiancée Jacqueline Passey waited impatiently to turn 21 at midnight. Eight belly dancers arrived with bowls of candles. Lance Oszko threw a Gdynia for Eurocon 2000 party with mushroom caviar and *pierogi*. The filkers sang "So if you have to be a frog, I'll be a frog with you" and "The heart of the Apple Lisa never died." Steve McDonald in his oaken brassbound voice japed,

I will not sing along.

Keep your stupid song.

We're the audience!

It's you we came to see.

You're not here to train us; you're here to entertain us.

So get to work, and leave me be.

Saturday morning I went to see Elinor & Buz Busby, Janice Gelb, Mike Glycer, and Roger Wells do "The World of Fanzines." Gelb said the Internet satisfies needs. Glycer said, so do cons, with travel cheap: people who do fanzining enjoy it as an artform. Wells said, paper and print encourage reflective thought. Gelb said people lurk on the Internet; on paper we can be more personal, knowing whom we talk to. Milt Stevens in

the audience suggested letters in con Progress Reports. At lunch Gelb told George Alec Effinger she has the Daredevil he wrote. We all acknowledged Effinger as a man without fear. On to moderate "The Worst Future You Can Imagine, and How to Get There", i.e. how in writing to work up to a disaster the plot needs. How do people arrive at a horrible result they don't want? One way, observed Ray Vukcevich, is "Good for me bad for you," e.g. creatures who appear to us, but not themselves, as implacable incomprehensible hostiles. The Wombat asked, "Who's going to be the bad guy?" Another way, said Jan Lars Jensen, is "Be careful what you wish, it may come true." Another is lethal precautions, as in *Level 7* (1959); or else "Oops, no countermeasures." Another, said Cameron in the audience, is cover-ups, as in Philip K. Dick, Robert Shekley, Jack Vance. By way of writer's technique, an author can control the focus so characters only ask what the author is prepared to answer; e.g. in *1984* the focus is held so close on Winston Smith and Julia that much escapes our notice. The other shoe would have dropped if anyone had remarked how much escapes our notice in fandom.

There were 86 artists in the Art Show, with 1,041 pieces and 288 in the Print Shop; 58 went to auction with 5 bids; total sales \$11,497. When a con com first asked me to lead a docent tour, I worried how I can't draw a straight line, until Kelly Freas admitted he'd recommended me. You seem, he said, to be able to say what you see. I'm recruited to organize them too. For this con I signed up Kev Brockschmidt, Lonnie Davis, Mark Ferrari, myself, Rachel Holmen, Margaret Organ-Kean, Thor Osborn, and Wendy Pini. Pini cheerfully agreed to do hers just before an autograph session, which as expected had a line a mile long. Holmen from the publisher's perspective described trying to perceive what would "read" on a cover, and hold inter-

Made dangerous by ignorance.

Larry Niven

est a year later. Ferrari pointed to composition and focus. Cornered into discussing his own work, he stood at bay before a cave troll whom a boy came and read to, surrounded by hundreds of purple crystals whose magic was no substitute; all this and more done in colored pencil. Ferrari beamed when we on his tour put into words what he'd tried to put into the troll's face. Elsewhere, in a Lela Dowling cartoon, two cats in fishbowl helmets landed on Earth to ask directions, and stopped a dog. A Judith Rauchfuss mask, diaphanous white cloth and feathers with tendrils curling two feet out, won Best 3-D and the popular-vote Best Wearable. Becky Thomson bought an R.L. Dietz astronomical, with coronas and Jupiter and lightning. Ruth Frey showed eight or nine Northwest Indian images. Mark Roland showed his etchings of forests with enchanted paths, and acrylics of strange cities bathed in gold light. "Battle's Aftermath" by Rena Bassilvergoran, a nude female human and male Klingon lying comfortably after their exertion, could have been Best Monochrome, and won Best S-F Theme: huge white space, strong figures delicately modeled, deep shadow. A more careless artist might have been cloying. Gail Butler's "Jurassic Tropical" tied for Best in Show, plesiosaurs and other cavorting water beasts that achieved color variety in a

narrow palette of blue and green -- tied with another piece of her own, and Ferrari's "Trying to Fit In", a weary teenage elf with his jeans and baseball cap, skateboard, and yard-wide butterfly wings. Ferrari also won Best Body of Work, and "Trying" won the popular-vote Best in Show.

Technical glitches were solved in time for Regency Dancing, but I missed the *Locus* Awards again; the Avram Davidson Treasury won Best Collection. Ladd arrived in Scots evening clothes. Mironets came; later in the con I gave him a couple of issues of *Vanamonde*. The room was chosen so people could drift by, and look if they wanted. I don't know why that always

A mind is not a vessel to fill, but a fire to light.

Plutarch

means crowding the door so as to block it for others, but there you are. Seeing a bevy of hotel staffwomen watching, I asked one to dance. In my hat someone left the hoax newszine *Love Among the Runes* (neat Minneapolis reference), which noted how the con com alphabetized under "T" panel titles that began with "the", and left room numbers off the real newszine's open-party list. The Pocket Program was a hundred pages long. *Love* duly fomented ire against the *Daily Frefanzine*, which I could not join since Konkin had, by Roscoe, quoted me accurately. Unlike him, strictly a bheer man, I was impressed by the cordial reception everyone had from the Arizona Westercon '02 bid (not "Phoenix", still considering Tucson), who brought their trademark home-made liqueurs, including root beer and mango. At the Toronto Worldcon in '03 party Tom Veal asked about quadrilles in Trollope's novels. At the Conolulu party James Daugherty thought he was beginning to reach locals in Hawaii.

Sunday at noon Holmen and I did a sort of presentation, "The Historical Perspective," with a costumer's flavor: how to learn about people in the past from their clothes, and thus reverse-engineer a future. Compare data, we said. Ask "What's missing from this picture?" A recurring muffled noise proved to be roars of laughter from the Business Meeting next door. I

Enlivened by wine, he shouted at the Moon to make it walk backwards.

Li Ho

attended as soon as I could. Dozens of fans addressed each other with exquisite propriety. The battle over substituting *Sturgis* for *Robert's Rules* was pyrotechnic. Close votes were taken by serpentine, all voters standing, then one by one resuming seats as they counted off. At length Kevin Standlee trumped Ben Yalow, and David Clark and I went off to the Fanzine Lounge. Later I found McDonald with Callie Hills in a corner outside the Art Show. He sang, "I need time to heal, I need time to grow, I need time to find out what I know." Hills took out the bass flute and they tried "October Sky." Down the hall were con and club tables. San Jose for Worldcon in '02, having fully, finally, and forever lost their San Francisco site, sped on under power of a disintegrating chocolate bar, like the space drive of Skylark Three. Judy Bemis leaned over to Bruce Pelz at the Los Angeles in '02 Westercon bid table. "What do you



think of a Sergeant at Arms with a Super Soaker?" Pelz said, "I think it's all wet." Portland, winning the 2001 Westercon, threw its own ice-cream social. Waiting for the ice cream, Walter Parker said "The new Foundation books lack Asimov's minimalism." That afternoon was Widner's First Fandom slide show. Here was Cyril "Hot-Foot" Kornbluth, a practical joker like a backwards pickpocket: he added things. The Chicon I committee in 1940, Bob Tucker, Walt Marconette, Mark Reinsberg, Richard Meyer, you've seen in *All Our Yesterdays*, but was you dere, Sharlie? Then E.E. Smith, whom Widner called the grandfather of George Lucas. Widner drove a 1928 Dodge, the Skylark of WooWoo, last model made by the Dodge Brothers. Jack Speer drove the Skylark of FooFoo. "Speer is still with us. He's hardly changed a bit. I hate him." A later no-space ship was the FooFoo Special, a car without a trunk, in which five fans drove on the Widneride from Boston to the Denvention in 1941. And we gripe about costs.

With Independence Day on Sunday, the Masquerade was that night, Don Glover the Younger directing; Betty Bigelow, Bridget Landry, Richard Stevens, judging; Kate Morgenstern, Julie Zetterberg, workmanship judges; David Bigelow, master of ceremonies. Darren Bost, Cheryl Glover, and Jeff Larson made a not-in-competition "Moosterpiece Theater" with big fuzzy anthropomorphic animal costumes, one of which was a cardinal mistake (i.e. bright red bird); later they brought another round as "Furry Tale Theater" (Master). The cartoony headpieces had nice clear lines. Also not in competition were the Royal Maroon Beer Belly Dancers, a surprise to all who missed the tip-off cartoon in the Art Show, a shock to all. Lisa Satterlund and Terri Sprecht, "Straight from the Fairytale" (Novice), won a Huge Trophy and Very Special Award for Extensive and Skillful Use of Expensive, Rare, and Beautiful Materials, i.e. miming "The Emperor's New Clothes." Glycer later asked "Isn't there a rule, 'no costume' is no costume?" but I certainly did not see anyone undressed. Linda Cronquist won a Workmanship Award for Historical Completeness, and Best Historical

(Journeyman), as "Sophia Mellisaiades, Court Lady of Byzantium," turbaned, robed, and appliquéed, which I couldn't appreciate from the back of the hall. Lori Hillard won the Gypsy Rose Lee Memorial Award (Journeyman) for "Ferengi Female", disrobing to reveal three cheeks. Stacy DeLoe won a Workmanship Award for Best Construction Details (Novice) in "Mei Mei's Coat of Stars." Cherie Harris won Best Novice as

The precision of poetry, and the passion of science.

Nabokov

"Kiddy Phenil" in white knee-boots and a blaster. Best in Show, Best Workmanship, and the truly striking entry of the night, was Lori Edwards, Anita Taylor, and Wayne Wallace, "Guardians of the Tarran-Tulla" (Master). In iridescent robes they glided on, staffs topped with glowing spheres. They posed. They turned. On their backs were satin sunbursts, into each of which crawled the kings of these guardians, three giant spiders. At the Foolsap party I saw the fireworks, with as many false codas as if orchestrated by Beethoven, and as breathtaking. This was also the Amy Thomson stamping party -- i.e. for a passport game running through the con. At the Vikingcon party, Bandit demonstrated "Telepresence", a headset with a videocamera image that allowed viewing by turning one's head as if on the scene. In the hall Ladd observed how my teaching Regency dancing resembled his teaching snowboarding. He was drinking with various beautiful women, which may have affected his judgment. I shouldn't make such puns.

Breakfast with Robin Johnson, who inquired after Lee and Barry Gold, and came to see me do "The SF Writers' Wish List" with Michael Scanlon. Scarce needing mention were more money for writers, and desire to read s-f; how about literacy? So we wondered what writing was, and what it's good for. Scanlon said, it's a means of transcending intermediaries. I said, it's explicit. From the audience: it's durable. Scanlon: it's low tech -- one forgets how valuable that can be. Can we increase literacy? From the audience: we can give people books. I said, we may have to sell them: gift books sometimes aren't even looked in the mouth. From the audience: we can write for kids. I said, literacy is rooted in love of the apt. Yet for all our woes, more books are sold than ever. Scanlon said they're coffee-table books. Johnson, in the audience, said they're manuals. Then there's more s-f sold than ever, too. From the audience: a lot is fantasy. I asked, why should that be easier? Scanlon said, it demands less rigor. From the audience: science fiction must show how it's possible, fantasy needn't. Scanlon said, we expect an archetypal fantasy landscape, so "urban fantasy" is a surprise. I cited Niven's Law that s-f is harder than mainstream because it can't merely refer to what writer and reader have seen. Then, in a few minutes, I was alone. Austin, scheduled for "Uses of Myth and Legend in Fantasy Art" with me, had fallen sick for a few hours. She sent a note saying she couldn't appear. Gulp. The audience stuck, and said "Try it." Sometimes I thought of the next contribution, sometimes another fan did, and we threshed them out together. Here's one use of myth and legend: as a peg to hang fantasy on. Here's another: to signal the presence of fantasy. What of cross-cultural images we don't recognize? That may be media-sensitive. Glycer in the audience

remembered a Howard Waldrop story where a fisherman caught a kraken; since it was in a book, Glycer could put the story down and go look up what a kraken was. Listening to a bard, that could be harder -- maybe the king could stop him; with a painting, one could walk away and return later. Or the art might have to introduce the legend, not vice versa. Another use: the artist might want a combination of features different from ordinary life. Another: to help redefine archetypes, or as I said "to persuade people to repack their baggage".

Long have I wondered "Why is Everything so Dark?" S-F was once a city of light; now Batman is a dark knight. The con put on Don DeBrandt, Howell, Kevin Murphy. Howell

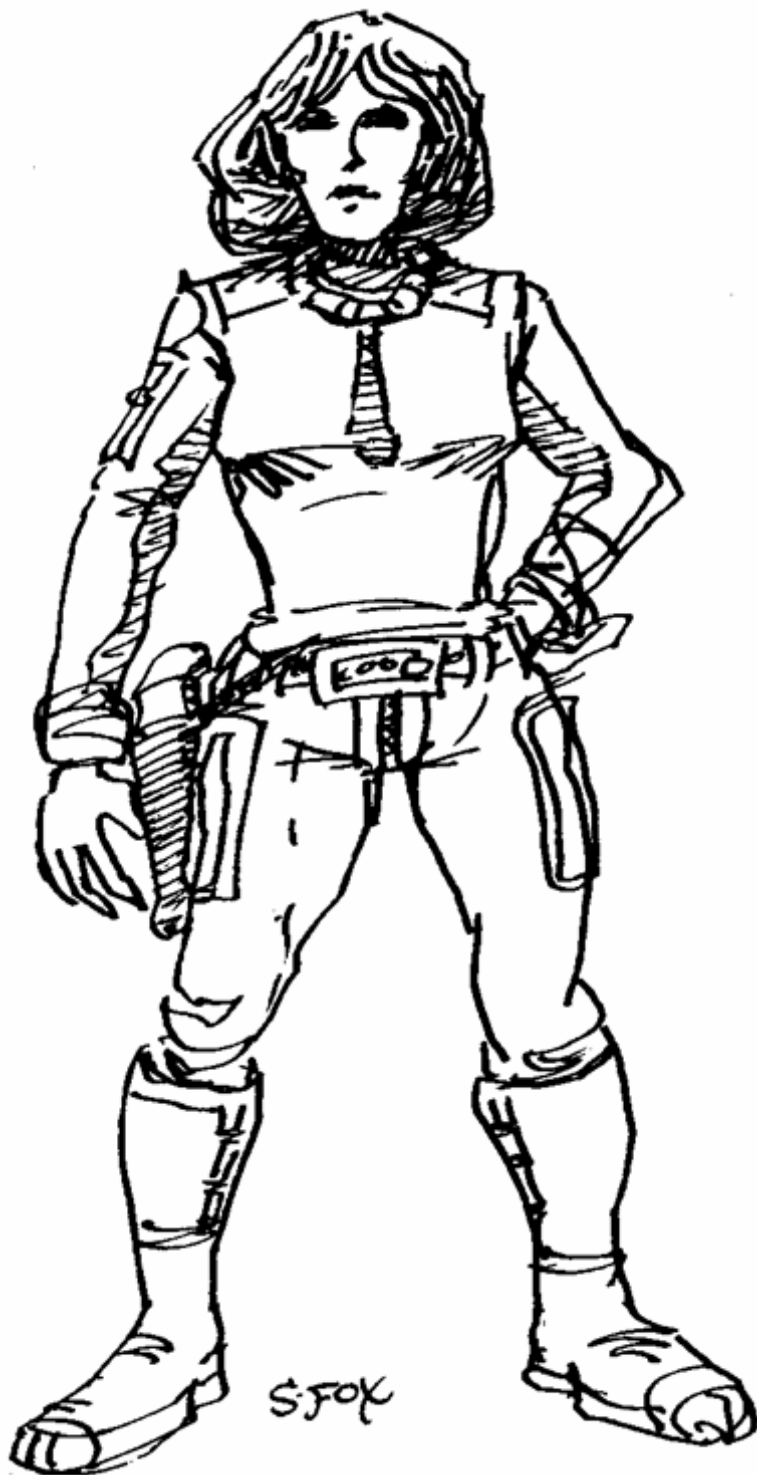
When that day comes I will try to prevent others from oppressing them, as I now try to prevent them from oppressing others.

Macaulay

said "Because we're wearing sunglasses." This was a stroke. DeBrandt said "I like dark fiction." Murphy said, Goths have always been around. Howell asked whether KISS of rock music were dark stars. Murphy: if there are action toys, no. From the audience: freaking out the norms has grown harder. DeBrandt said, to freak former flower children, who were colorful, we go black. From the audience I suggested, we've bought the psychs' put-down myths. Someone cracked, "and you're wrong." Howell said there will be a next step. I was thus fortified for "How to Be a Middle-Aged Fan and Keep Your Dignity," the sort of topic about which Jerry Pournelle needles me "You know you wouldn't go to that panel if you weren't moderating it." Glycer, Scanlon, and Wells tried to help. Gelb and Stevens sat in the audience and leered. "Dignity?!" I moaned. People snickered agreeably at the propeller blades turning above my head. But turn the topic, and note how youthful fans are. We thought that no surprise when everyone was seventeen, but now First Fandom is eighty. Widner here in Spokane, and about to do Melbourne. Or Bob Tucker, said Gelb. We tend to disregard physical shape (though when Marjii Ellers left for After-Fandom three weeks later, her masseur said she had the muscle tone of a 30-year-old), but upstairs, citizenship in the Imagi-Nation is good for something. The discussion turned more profitable when a neo in the audience delivered her line, with courtesy and pathos: "I've been coming to these things for years and I can't figure out what they are." Of course we couldn't either, but she was right. We've never made it easy, but now that we fret whether fandom is graying, shouldn't we do a little better? Pretend you don't know anyone, and look at a Program Book, or a con flyer.

The hotel was friendly, but the food was outshone by Westercon 50, and I began to thirst for good coffee. The espresso stand in the Convention Center, which I patronized at the Masquerade, was closed. I found Sean Smith and went for a stroll. It was late on a Monday-off afternoon. Shops outside were closed. We reached the river, and some brick walks, and a cart with espresso and cakes. We talked of whether pigs have wings. Smith went on to see scenery,

and I went back for Moroccan dinner with Ladd, Holmen, and Howell. On the path I heard unmistakable music. It was the carousel. Never say we lack folkways. Loeff built it in 1909, thirty years after making the first one on Coney Island. It has a dragon and a tiger and two Chinese dragon chairs. Each horse is detailed to the nails in its shoes and the teeth to show its age. There are beveled mirrors, and rods sleeved in fluted brass. It runs on the original engine. I went round and round.



Conucopia: the 1999 NASFiC

August 26-29, 1999

Anaheim, CA

by Mike Glycer

Conucopia was only the sixth NASFiC, but the third in Southern California. It honored favorite son Jerry Poumelle, editor Ellen Datlow, and fans Dick and Nicki Lynch. It felt to me like a good '80s Westercon -- and I probably need to explain that's a compliment. Attendance was 1686, with 2248 total members as of close of registration on Saturday. There were 96 dealer tables. The Art Show attracted 102 artists, who displayed 1311 pieces and made about \$31,000 in sales.

Two months beforehand, when Conucopia seemed to be shaping up as a rather small con, the Anaheim Marriott reported they had filled 120% of the room block. It's become a typical pattern for major conventions with comparatively high membership prices to get a very late rush as people finally decide they'll be able to afford the time and money to attend. The penalty of paying the graduated price seems to be no incentive to join early, preventing an accurate forecast of membership and budget.

Expectations are everything, in terms of fan response to a major convention. Did you expect L.A.con III? Then you must have wondered where the other two-thirds of the con went. Did you expect Loscon? Then you must have been blown away. Did you expect a NASFiC? Well, just what is a NASFiC anyway? A Worldcon without the name or the Hugos? That was the original expectation, almost never realized (with the possible exception of Austin in 1985.) In every other instance, NASFiC has most resembled the typical regional convention in the area where it was held. NorthAmericon '79 was rather like a Rivercon, the NASFiCs held in L.A. and Phoenix have been very like Westercons, etc.

The main difference between the 1999 NASFiC and an Anaheim Westercon is that Conucopia had the kind of strong committee infrastructure that only a Worldcon tends to mobilize, composed of the very best people from everywhere. The techs included Kathi Overton and Bill Parker, the operations staff drew Robbie Bourget and John Harold from England, Kathleen Meyer and K.T. Fitzsimmons ran the info desk, Crickett Fox, Ben Yalow and Ruth Sachter headed departments in the Facilities division. And the "local



talent" have worked Worldcons all over the world.

But somebody told Conucopia chair Christian McGuire the importance of saying "thank you" and "I'm sorry," and he wasted no time. At the first panel of the convention he announced, "I am chairman of this convention, for which I have yet to apologize to everyone." So he did.

Butchering the Sacred Cows: The rest of the panelists were satisfied to briefly introduce themselves: John Hertz, Ruth Sachter, Ben Yalow, John Trimble. When they got to Lee Whiteside, he said, "I guess I'm kind of the newbie on the panel," a sobering thought considering his own gray fringe of hair.

Everyone admitted the panel's title was code for "kill the masquerade," though they politely avoided the showdown for half an hour by naming noncontroversial things conventions can eliminate, like 16mm film programs.

Ben Yalow finally took off the kid gloves and declared the masquerade is in decline because of the falling number of entrants. Master costumer Pierre Pettinger challenged him from the audience, saying that in reaction to complaints about the length of the 1984 Worldcon masquerade (130+ entries) the costumers had begun pushing other forms, like hall costumes, to cut down the numbers of fans in the main masquerade. He said it was a calculated result. I added that many entries

have multiple costumes, so it's misleading to focus on the number of entries. Ruth Sachter said the problem in Portland is that no one is stepping forward to run the masquerade. They have only 10-12 entries. And the hotel is getting more difficult about the equipment they put up.

Conventions 101: Baby Steps These orientation panels are a nice idea in theory, but newcomers never get there because they've spent two days figuring out how to read the schedule before discovering there was a panel and they already missed it.

Panelists Chris Weber, John Lorentz, Elizabeth Klein-Lebbink and I appointed Keith Lynch to be our official neofan. He thanked us by standing and unrolling a strip of membership badges from cons he's been to that was as long as Dr. Who's scarf. We couldn't have picked Erwin "Filthy Pierre" Strauss: he's written a book on conventions and was a likelier choice to replace one of the panelists. We were rescued before long by a genuine newcomer who'd flown to the NASFiC from London(!) and had quite a curiosity streak.

Why Do People Write For Fanzines: On Friday morning at 10 a.m., Dick Lynch, Ulrika O'Brien and I were appointed to answer this question. Tom Safer was starting a cartoon show across the hall, and all of us but Dick would have been willing to defect to be part of his audience.

Dick Lynch said, "Some people don't know

they can write and need stroking."

Ulrika got her start a different way. "Gary Farber got Pam Wells to send me an Attitude." Kate Yule smirked, "You didn't have one?" Ulrika nodded, "I had an attitude, but I didn't have that one."

Kate Yule said she had picked up a copy of *How to Write For Fanzines* in a dealer's room, but it was all about Kirk & Spock.

Ulrika thought that people don't write because there aren't enough people who want to edit.

Fading into the inevitable discussion of electronic fanac, Ulrika astutely observed, "There is a lot of spiritual continuity between what goes on paper and what goes on online."

I wondered whether the atrophy of interest in fanhistory is because reading it is no longer a preparation for meeting people who are still functioning in fandom. When I first read *All Our Yesterdays*, it wasn't only informative about fandom's past, it was an introduction to fans I would later meet at conventions. Ulrika agreed history tends to be less interesting when you're reading about dead people.

I also wondered if the Internet of the near future could add streaming video and sound to posts on listervers like SMOFS, would we want them? Don't people actually like the semi-impersonal medium of text which lets them be rude and curt to other fans without "facing" them?

Mimosa Live Fanthology: Fan Guests of Honor Dick and Nicki Lynch hit on a clever way to draw an audience to the marathon read-aloud of great articles from *Mimosa*: inviting a whole bunch of fans to be readers. Bill Ritch, Leah Zeldes Smith, Dick Smith, Kurt Erichsen, Lowell Cunningham, David Bratman and I could not resist the lure of the theater. Cunningham was of particular interest. One of Dick's oldest friends, he wrote *Men In Black* comics. His experiences having a movie based on his comic became an article for *Mimosa*.

On the Newsdesk: If running the daily newzine is the best job at a large convention, and I assure you it is, then the second best job is staffing the newsdesk in a high-traffic area of the con. A lot of people have figured this out, too, so I took it when I could get it.

It's simple and fun, typing drafts into the laptop, helping fans phrase their announcements, talking to passersby and making news out of the conversation. Rewriting the ghoulish stuff added to the open doc-file by the earlier shifts. Injuring my arm patting myself on the back for doing such a great job.... Yes, I'm sure David Bratman was complimenting my con-

tributions to the newzine when he said, "If we can't have Langford, at least we can have the guy Langford keeps beating."

The newsdesk is the best place to monitor the pulse of the convention and find out what people think is truly important. For example, Chris Marble came to show off his elbow, autographed by Tippi Blevins, saying the Sff.net authors were signing body parts.

It's a little too convenient at times. Kent Hastings made sure we all had our second or third copy of *NASFiC Daily Frefanzine* containing its genius analysis of fanpolitics, including assurance that Aussiecon Three was on its way to set a record for non-North American Worldcons. (Should somebody tell Kent that the U.K., where two Worldcons have drawn 5000+, is not part of North America?)

But that meant we were equally accessible for Eylat Poliner and her assistants from the Con Suite, who were plying the fine art of smuggling refreshments to fans on the front lines. They had quite a menu of stuff in a pair of innocent-looking cardboard boxes when they arrived at the newsdesk. We did all we could to lighten their burdens.

Science Fiction Playhouse: A fan production of John DeChancie's *The Demolished Fan* was the main event on Friday night. It was the Faust legend transposed to actifandom. Two LASFSians in the cast have acting experience with the Camarillo Community Theater, and the lead, Tadao Tomamatsu, is a LASFSian with Hollywood credits to his name -- a speaking role on *Diagnosis, Murder* and a dinner role as one of *Godzilla's* victims. The devil, "Microsopheles," was played by Chris Carnicelli, another Camarillo veteran.

Things started unconscionably late. At 7:30 p.m., when the Pocket Program said fans would be allowed to take seats, techs had just started hanging stage lights on temporary poles. The play got off sometime after 8:30, otherwise it would have lost its audience to the parties opening at 9:00.

Scott Beckstead narrated the play in character as "J. Igor Stravinsky," a Straczynski-and-Serling hybrid. Beckstead in a black hat and windbreaker is a dead ringer for the *Babylon 5* creator.

Tadao's "Harry Trufan" was a true megalomaniac, working his way up from faned to Hollywood power broker. The play wonderfully showcased Tadao, a rubber-voiced actor able to mimic celebrities in rapid-fire order.

Pournelle GoH Speech: Jerry Pournelle drew on the unlimited examples in our recent national experience to show why we are in "a

moral crisis of unbelievable dimensions," adding the refrain, "and nobody cares."

His critique was familiar but the refrain was surprising, coming from him. In the 70's, when there was good reason to despair about the collapse of space exploration, his was the voice inciting us to the ramparts, to exert our personal power as activist citizens to bring about a better future. He was among the few politically-connected people who understood there was a vast, frustrated segment of Americans in favor of more government support of basic technological research.

In fact, the message has not changed, only the tone. Pournelle still believes in "x-projects" to develop new technology that can then be turned over for commercial production. "The tax dollars you spent on these projects were the best dollars you ever spent in your lives."

Perhaps Pournelle feels that by being involved in aspects of national science policy of the Reagan administration, and during the brief Speakership of Newt Gingrich, he got frustratingly close to having the impact he wanted.

Now, when it comes to government, he advises, "Make them think small, not big. Trying to solve the problem of getting into space is too big. But you can build a plane that will get you into space. You might be able to solve the problem of making a craft that will fly out of the atmosphere three times in one day."

Green Room: Shaun Lyon greeted program participants and got them to autograph a copy of the *Souvenir Book*. He was still deciding what charity to auction it for. Harlan Ellison scoffed, "It's probably for the Craig Miller pocket fund."

Looking around the Green Room on Saturday I saw Jerry Pournelle, Larry Niven, Fred Pohl, Harry Turtledove, Steve Barnes, Gardner Dozois and Barbara Hambly. I knew I'd been reading too much alternate history because I thought: If they'd blown up the room 25 years ago, it would have destroyed science fiction.

Harlan Ellison: At the first *NASFiC*, Harlan Ellison was given a ballroom one afternoon and drew almost the entire membership to hear him extemporize. It was a classic hour. I remember Harlan upbraiding an entire audience of fans who couldn't tell him why *Blood*, in "A Boy and His Dog," was so named. (After Yeats' line, "blood's a rover.") And verbally gunning down fans who tried to top his lines, while he taught the rest of us why we should "Never argue with the man who has the microphone."

Did I mention that expectations are everything?

I would like to strangle the fan in the front row who yelled out "Charles Platt!" when Ellison called for "old business." I did not need the 40 minutes that followed on that topic. Still, there were wonderful ad libs.

The overall plan was to sell loads of books, tapes and CDs to the audience when Harlan was done talking. Even before he began, he shouted for Susan Ellison to move the sales tables up front so fans would have to go by her before they got to him for autographs. "That is called marketing!" Ten fans immediately leaped from their seats and moved the table for Susan.

Harlan also warned, "If I get too bad, have somebody come up and tighten the screws on my neck."

Halfway through his diatribe on Platt, Harlan stopped for a drink of water. He examined all four glasses beside the water carafe, rejecting each in turn as too scuzzy. So he picked up the metal carafe and chugged ice water straight from it.

On a later topic, Harlan urged the wholesale annihilation of the human race because it's too stupid to be allowed to live. He pulled out a list of actual queries made to research librarians. The first was, "Can you tell me why so many famous Civil War battles were fought on National Park sites?" Another was, "Do you have any books with photographs of George Washington?"

Harlan ended by exulting about the ABA where his autograph line extended all the way through the convention hall. Newt Gingrich, who had about 11 people lined up for his autograph at a table nearby, apparently wanted to

find out who had this enormous line. He got up and waved. Harlan took this golden opportunity and gave Newt the finger.

Masquerade: Kathy Sanders took up the challenge of creating a good masquerade on a NASFiC budget, and it came off very well. I'm sure one key was using the generic and entirely serviceable equipment available from the hotel -- the low-rise platforms that made the stage, for example. (Most masquerades in "the good old days" used them.)

There were about 20 entries. The children started things off, then came the competitive entries.

A recreation of the climactic lightsaber duel in Phantom Menace ended with a slight variation: all three combatants quit fighting so they could decapitate the annoying Jar Jar Binks.

Two entries showed extremes of feminine beauty. One was a sort of Brunhilde done in tinsel with a tight purple skirt. On the other hand, there were the scrumptious Ladies of Star Trek, shadowed by catchers at the edge of the stage who may have been hoping one would fall into their arms. With one exception -- last on stage was a mother Horta, looking like a giant chocolate sundae Twinkie.

The daily newzine staff had assembled a costume made entirely from the giveaway Harlan Ellison mousepads -- including the bra -- an entry titled "I Have No Mouse And I Must Scream."

There was a "Road Warrior Amerind Shaman" who looked like he'd been dipped in glue and made to run through a Wal-Mart, his costume consisting of all the merchandise that stuck. And the "Star Wars Newlywed Game" was desperately in need of better jokes.

The most excellent entry was "A Bard's Inspiration." The bard was presented gifts by a series of deities from the Celtic pantheon. Not only was each costume a thing of beauty, each costumer expressed his or her character in unique gestures and movements. An extraordinary effort.

Portland in 2001 Party: I spent most of Saturday night at the Portland party, but never got around to trying the beer although John Lorentz seemed pleased, "We flew a thousand miles, then drove out today and found beer made within five miles of where we live."

Glenn Glazer heard a joke at the party and asked me to include it in my conreport so he wouldn't forget it:

Heisenberg, Godel and Noam Chomsky are in a bar. Heisenberg: "It's apparent from the setup we're in a joke. The question is, is it funny?" Godel: "We can't tell if it's funny or not -- we're inside the joke." Chomsky: "Of course it's funny,

you're just not telling it right!"

Gerri Sullivan told me that, coming soon, with scanning by David Dyer-Bennett, would be a production of a CD of ATom art. You're all welcome to contact Gerri, but you're not going to get it in return mail.

In the wee hours of the morning, Jerry Pournelle burst into the Toronto in '03 party across the hall declaring, "I've been initiated into the Secret Feminist Cabal!" This proved to be true!

TAFF & DUFF Tales: Ulrika O'Brien said, "I always missed the horror stories of the English breakfast by the expedient of sleeping through it."

Patrick Nielsen Hayden had witnessed it. "The last time I was in England, I took a digital camera to photograph it -- they really do eat black pudding for breakfast."

Ulrika and Patrick exchanged legends of Gary Farber's stay in England that they heard from hosts on their own trips over there. Ulrika explained the fans don't use toasters but make toast in the grill. You have to watch it pretty carefully. Gary was engrossed in reading Dave Langford's fanzines when Dave came into the room and noticed the toast Gary had put in the grill was now on fire. Dave threw open the window sash and hurled the flaming toast into the yard.

Hogu Ranquet: Elst Weinstein convened an impromptu Ranquet on Sunday afternoon in an empty program room, which became virtually the last event of the NASFiC. There was no food, and nothing from McDonald's either. Elst had a small dish of hard candy and John Novak brought a beer. Neither shared with the distinguished guest of honor they had roped in. Steve Stirling explained, "Elliott told me I would be presented with the Hugo and several thousand dollars in contributions. And I knew by their open, honest faces I could believe them."

The Hogu selection process moved comparatively quickly in the absence of Brian Burley, whom Elst likes to work for outrageous bribes to determine some of the winners. There was the usual range of tasteless and funny mock award winners. Best Professional Hoax went to Gov. Jesse "The Body" Ventura; a mournful Doug Friauf admitted that was his governor. The Devo Award for Most Harm Done to Science Fiction went to Jar Jar Binks. The Best Bumper Sticker was a close race between "Hang Up And Drive" and "Handicapped UCLA Football Player On Board."

Adieu: Christian McGuire told his committee, "The gripe session was filled with compliments and admiration for the efforts of the committee and staff. In the halls many had been accosted and thanked by the membership for a good convention, a great weekend, a gathering well worth the time and effort to be a part of."



The Fanivore



Harry Warner Jr.

Mark Leeper might like to know that the new television set I bought this summer (my old one expired at the age of 17 years and eight months) is scrupulous about the language problem. It has the peculiar problem of suffering amnesia every time its plug is pulled or there is a power failure, and before it can be used again, the owner must reply to a long series of questions on the screen about what is hooked up to it, does he want to name the channels it can receive, and does he want to set the clock. The first of these queries is whether the television set should communicate to the owner in English, French or Spanish.

Practically everyone of my age should know where Azusa is. Azusa was one of the destinations that the loud-speakers in the railroad station included in the list of cities the train now leaving would go through, in the old Jack Benny radio show.

I can't follow Elizabeth Osborne's reasoning about the greying of fandom in this issue's letter section. She claims that older fans drove off younger fans when convention attendance increased in the late 1970s and now these older fans are quoted as asking, "Where are all the young fans?" The fans they allegedly drove off would be middle-aged now and attendance at conventions continued to grow in the 1980s, leaving me to doubt that there were serious efforts to

drive anyone out of fandom simply for being young or new to the field. The problem fandom is having attracting young recruits seems to be a national problem shared by many mundane organizations. The local newspapers published recently a long survey of service clubs, women's organizations and other community groups that showed most of them suffering from lack of young persons to replace the

older ones who die or move away.

In the June issue, I could empathize with Robert Lichtman; and Ted White's problems, thanks to two falls in the 1960s that put me in the hospital for awhile and even involved in the second accident a stay at an old folks' home to recuperate. I'm sure medical science if able to rehabilitate accident victims much faster and more efficiently today than it was when I had my problems.

It's encouraging to see that the two living new members of the Science Fiction and Fantasy Hall of Fame are both graduates of fandom. But it's discouraging to find such a lack of Hugo nominees in the pro fiction category who started out as fans.

The Mythopoeic Society's nominees for the best writings of the millennium seem unduly slanted toward the English language: only two of the ten works were written in other languages.

By chance, I saw a little of Nicole de Boer one evening when I was watching snatches of *Deep Space Nine* during the between-inning commercials of a baseball game. She reminds me very much of one of my favorite actresses, Kim Darby, when the latter was at the beginning of her adult acting career. I share Francis Hamit's indignation over the sniping at her during the autograph session. I can only conjecture that it's possible Star Trek enthusiasts are like the way bees and wasps become in the autumn in Hagerstown, angry-sounding and more inclined to land on humans,

apparently because they're aware of the cold weather ahead. Except for possible feature films, there seems to be no new Star Trek material for its devotees to watch in the immediate future, and this may have made them bitchy.

I wish desperately I could have retained strong enthusiasm for favorite things as the years passed, the way Chris Barkley has done. (Only Guy Lillian seems to have discovered the way to preserve this perishable ability to hang onto the precious characteristic of young people, among other fans.) I enjoyed immensely his account of his experiences and reactions involving the first showing of *The Phantom Menace*. But I still haven't read anything about this film that tells me why such a dumb title was chosen. *The Phantom Menace* is exactly the sort of title that would have been given to one of those cheap 15-part serials shown before the weekend westerns back in the 1930s. I know *Star Wars* events are supposed to have happened a long while ago, but this must be further back than my boyhood.

In your fanzine reviews I was particularly pleased with the great amount of praise and space given to *Challenger*, which somehow hasn't received the prominence it deserves in fanzine fandom and particularly in Hugo competition.

Joseph Nicholas is right about the fact that people "require air, water, food supplies, sources of heat and light, clothing and companionship" in space, but exactly the same things are necessary for people flying across oceans and I trust the former people will soon be as real as the latter already are.

Chris Barkley

In response to Alan White's comments on my column in issue #130, I offer this analogy:

Suppose you were to make disparaging remarks in public about the mother of New York Yankee pitcher Roger Clemens. Then you find yourself in the batter's box, with him staring you down, 60 feet six inches away with a hard, tightly wound baseball in his hot, sweaty grip. Golly, what do you think is going

to happen next...?

My reaction, Mr. White, to *Entertainment Weekly's* Sci-Fi 100 article was along those lines. I had several choices; I could: (a) Grumble, "Gosh darn it, there go those mainstream journalists again getting it wrong again..." and kvetch to fellow fans, (b) Write them a nice puffy letter saying, "Hey fellas, you forgot, blah, blah, etc..." or (c) A good old fashioned, high, hard fastball to the ribs.

I chose (c) because I, other fans, working writers and editors don't have to take this sort of crap any more. I have been in fandom for 23 years and reading writing and watching sf for over 35; there's something about ranking *The Jetsons* but not Walter M. Miller's *A Canticle for Leibowitz* that just inherently rubs me the wrong way.

Mr. White, if this doesn't bother you, fine. But it really bothered me. My only motivation in compiling my list was to come up with a better list (flawed or otherwise) and convince other readers of this august publication that it was.

I chose to speak up because this article just about exhausted my patience with *EW* in general. And to think that my subscription helped pay for this drivel.

When I received my copy of #130, I faxed a copy of my list to *EW's* editorial office. I haven't heard back from them nor am I likely to anytime in the near future. They don't give a damn. Why worry about *EW* at all? I don't, but on the other hand, I wanted them to know that not everyone is swallowing their gladhanding hype without question.

I've studied broadcasting and journalism in college. Having worked as a media liaison at nine Worldcons, I know the mindsets of video and print journalists. It has been and will be a never-ending battle to show them that sf and fandom is more than just a collection of kooks, loose nuts and weirdos in costumes and that sf is (in my humble estimation) literature, too. Mr. White, I don't have to be told about being positive and "gracing" the media. I've done so repeatedly and will continue to do so when called upon.

As for *The Phantom Menace*, I've acknowledged in my review that its influence and its effect on sf readership and fandom will probably be nil. But don't underestimate the ability of kids to

connect the dots. We can only hope that out there somewhere, there's is an enthusiastic child who's decided to fill in the time between now and the release of *The Clone Wars* and discover who Andre Norton, Robert Heinlein and Isaac Asimov are. That much I think we can agree on.

Alan White

Yes, Chris, you do have to take this crap and you have to take it because you give your power to others by venting your spleen needlessly over the worthless for nothing.

You are powerless for at least two reasons. One being, you mistook the *EW* article for something that matters. Secondly, you respond by writing a letter to a fanzine -- preaching to the flock that will have as little effect on the world as the *EW* article. Don't come in crying later on shoulders as powerless as your own.

Your list was fine, nothing wrong with it, and should have been presented as such, served up with some humor and dignity, not a vile rant that reached from Forry Ackerman to Wall Street.

Your analogy of baseball violence is equally empty. Your several choices range from passive to violence and by-pass practical. I realize you have good intentions, but waving your arms and blowing smoke is of little value. By your own admission, you merely traded one flawed list for another, the only byproduct has been raising your blood pressure and in the end, what have you accomplished?

Why would you show journalists anything? They are not your target audience. I've known Phil Yeh for 30 years. He thought comicbooks were getting a bad rap and began comic based reading programs that have taken him to Washington and classrooms all over the country. He has not only become a hero to the genre, but has influenced the next generation in positive ways.

If you are really more than hot air, try setting up similar programs with SF publishers, artists, publishers, local TV shows -- Involve people who can help you -- never come to fans for anything. This is a good time, for the SciFi Channel's "I am SciFi" marketing has aligned the genre with people your target audi-

ence already knows. At least if you fall on your face, you'll be falling in the right direction. God knows you have plenty of time.

No, I guess we can't agree on anything. I doubt *Phantom Menace* will have kids connecting dots or anything else. The first movie came out 20 years ago, and from your last letter, readership is down -- how long will this dot-connecting take? Kids will not learn who Asimov, Norton or Heinlein are by you writing letters to fanzines.

Tell you what -- to keep Mike sane, Chris, let's end our debate here. Quit spinning your wheels and come up with a positive plan. After all, YOU went to college. I will be glad to help you in whatever will work, OK? The ball is in your court and this will be my last response.

Allan D. Burrows

Regarding Alan White's socially constipated *jihad* over Chris Barkley's socially constipated *jihad* over *Entertainment Weekly*; I agree with Chris. When pronounced the way I believe 4SJ intended that it be pronounced, the term "sci-fi" makes my favorite literary and media genre sound like a cheap stereo set. Its internal rhyme, while mnemonic, is grating and more than a little bit twee. Only by pronouncing it "skiffy" can I keep from grinding my teeth, (unless I'm referring to *Godzilla*, of course.) The term "SF" is much less jarring.

As for Mr. White himself, a certain trufan of forty years good standing and a certain fanartist of thirty years good standing, along with the creator of the first media cons, a past vice president of The Count Dracula Society, and a co-founder of The Academy of Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror Films, should all **GET A LIFE!** (I'm sorry for my tone in that last, Mike. I've been trying lately not to be this severe and tactless... let's face it, this *juvenile*... but judging strictly by his LoC, these gentlemen seem to have more respect for attitude than for intellect.)

Finally, I'm still sorry to hear about George Laskowski. Lloyd Penney was badly shaken, according to Yvonne. I mentioned that getting him to write about it might help him; it did for me when my mother died last December.

Maybe he'll send you the result; I hope he does.

As to the fake news [in F770:130], Milwaukee's existence is entirely your choice. If you want it to exist, then simply believe that it exists. As far as you're concerned, it will. What else do you need from the place? (Personally, I have trouble wanting to believe in a place with such a silly sounding name.)

Finally, regarding Gene Stewart's letter, it's all very well to say tell people *right now* how much you enjoy them! I don't want to wait for Mike Glicksohn to die before I toast him at his wake! I want to mark his passing now! No, wait, I mean... oh, never mind. I just mean, why not do something more formal, maybe on a regular basis? That way, when the time actually comes, there'd be something to refer back to instead of having to write something when you're mourning and really don't feel like it.

Alan White

"I can't make a movie as good as Seven Samurai, so I should retire." — George Lucas

Chris begins his latest tirade with a warning from Lucas "Hey, it's only a movie" then proceeds to show why fans as a group have no credibility with the media.

Riddle me this: Why is *Phantom Menace* like a Big Mac? A: It's huge,

expensive, tasteless and unsatisfying.

Lucas borrowed the original story from *Hidden Fortress*, characters from a kiddie book by that gal who sued him for millions, music from Holst's "The Planets", removed everything of substance; added some Vaughn Bodé, state of the art effects and made a movie vacuous enough to spoonfeed the nonthinking again and again. It has all the elements of what fannish drones refer to as "Sci-Fi" but won't admit it.

Is *Phantom Menace* really the best Lucas could come up with in twenty years? The irony is, in the future someone will watch this series in order - and won't get past Episode 1! Fifty years ago *The Twilight Zone* would take one person, put them in a cheap set armed a good script and create something new and wonderful. *Phantom Menace* took twenty years, millions of dollars, state of the art technology and wound up with a half-baked toy commercial.

What point was there in telling us of a bomb implanted into Anakin the slave, yet not remove it when he's freed? What is the point in leaving your potential destruction in the hands of that flitting junk man? If he was so dripping with the Force, why couldn't he find an explosive device in his own body? Thanks to a Pepsi bottle I finally found out who the real princess is I think. But why would they waste film time on such pointless meanderings that add nothing? Why

inhabit your movie with emasculated, cardboard heroes gliding mindlessly from scene to scene dribbling bogus banalities? Force this, Force that in the end, it's the biggest toys as usual. Talk about editing, losing 30 minutes could only make it better. Oh well, who really cares, "It's only a movie", remember?

Perfect example of missing the point is Chris excoriating critics who claim there is "no plot" and says the film "barrels and ricochets" from planet to planet. Which, of course, has nothing to do with the plot, as all Hitchcock fans know this to be another "McGuffin" (i.e. Alfred's convention of having characters travel from one place to another to keep the story from collapsing but having nothing to do with the basic plot as seen in *39 Steps*, *North by Northwest*, etc.).

OK, it's time for Jar Jar, the intergalactic Stepin Fetchit. This is where Mr. Barkley turns on himself! "Without him (Jar Jar) the result would have been an oppressively grim affair" At last we agree. The film is indeed a grim affair and the only difference being, if it had been a good story, it wouldn't need a buffoon!

The secret I think, lies in this Gungan message hidden in Mr. Barkley's letter: "I became jittery and annoyed easily. It occurred to me that maybe this just wasn't a movie after all this had all the makings of a full blown cultural event! I had to take drastic steps, of course."

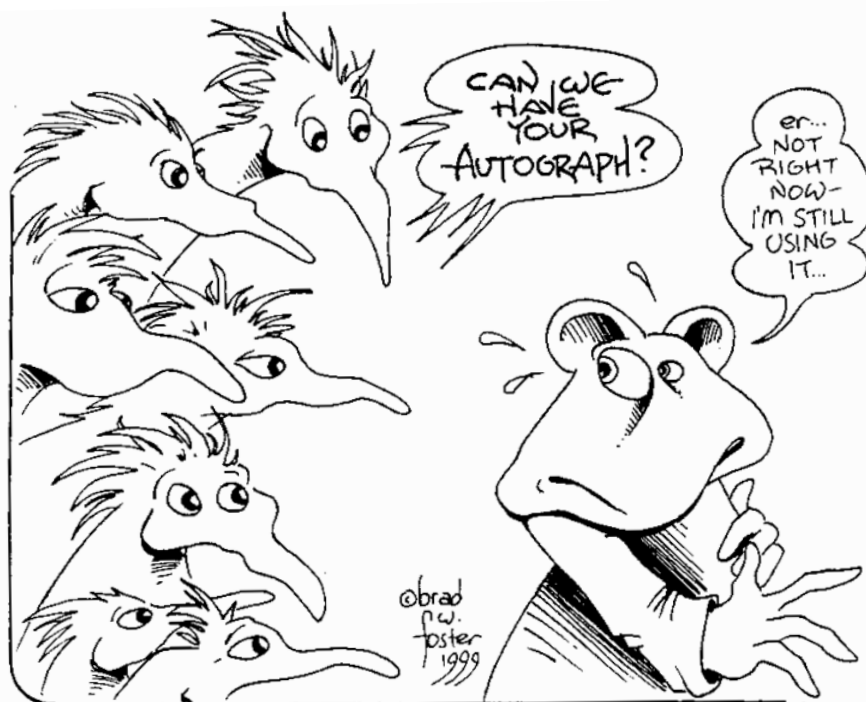
English Translation: "I fret if not given instant gratification. I'm completely snowed by clever marketing ploys along with millions of others leading empty lives. I've made a fool of myself."

No, Mr. Barkley, *Star Wars* won't change the world's opinion or desire for science fiction, but opinions of fans will be made by those who see kids in costumes camping in front of theaters for weeks to see movies that suck.

But then, anyone who can see Ghod in a two hour toy commercial is a wetter fan than I, Gungan Din.

Brad Foster

File 770:131 slid into the mailbox this week, and another one chock full of interesting news. Continues to be one of the few zines that I find myself trying to sneak peeks at when I stop for red lights



on the drive home from the post office!

Hey, I've actually started to get a handle on some of the basics of HTML, even got a few lines up on one of my free web sites. The big stumbling block at the moment is trying to figure out, sans any manual, how to get my scanner to work and get images from paper onto the screen. *Highly* infuriating, considering the hours I've already spent to know that, in the end, it will probably be a total of a half-dozen steps that will be all I need to do what I want -- just trying to figure out those six things is going to take half my life, it seems!

The web stuff is cool, though! I'd not heard of Freddie Baer here in my isolation, so plugged in her name for a search, and found a couple of sites with interviews and some small art samples of her fine collage work. (Still a new idea, I guess, since I never heard personally from the Worldcon regarding my own nomination, simply found out I was on the ballot when a friend e-mailed me to say they'd seen it. After all these years, though, things change from year to year and committee to committee, and I'm simply amazed and flattered that enough people even recall my *name*, let alone how to contact me!)

I've seen *Phantom Menace* once and *The Matrix* twice, and that's all I've got to say on the whole Star Wars thing. (Oh, and *South Park*...I wonder if declaring war on Canada to save American children from dirty words qualifies this as a science fiction movie for next year's Hugo?)

Thanks for your very kind comments in the opening of "Graphic Examples" about my efforts on that last *Texas SF Inquirer*. Felt like dropping it into a black hole with the almost total lack of response we got, so nice to see it did get to a few hands who enjoyed it. And weren't those covers by Teddy for *Mainstream* absolutely *incredible*! I pored over those for quite some time when that issue arrived, amazed both at the basic idea of it all, and the wealth of detail Teddy put in there. Some of the best work I've seen on a fanzine cover!

Teddy Harvia

Discovering my artwork inside *File 770* after seeing no mention of it in the art credits is a little disconcerting. I suppose using it to illustrate a fanzine review does fall vaguely under fair usage rules, but it doesn't seem fair to take art I sent to another fan editor, reprint it at a size approaching that of a postage stamp, and

make mention of the artist only in a putdown line buried in the text of the review.

[[I could understand how you feel, except the entire thrust of the column was "here are three beautifully-designed fanzines with great art"!]]

I brainstormed about having the WingNuts take to you task in a multi-panel postcard cartoon strip (if only you could imagine the alien mythology that evokes), but their creator is busy elsewhere at the moment drawing a plumed platypus for the Cancun ad to appear in the Aussiecon Three souvenir book and iguanas for a posthumorous GUFF report.

I may forgive you, but my beasts will come back to haunt you. Chat is already questioning the taste of a West Coast BNF.

[[I'm getting nervous -- "taste" is not a double-entendre in the mind of a sabretoothed fillo.]]

Guy H. Lillian III

Mike, that was undoubtedly the most perceptive -- as well as personal -- review of *Challenger* I have yet read. Can't thank you enough. Neat that you should key onto my favorite self-written piece of the nine issues, the Van Houten interview. Never had the courage to send it to her.

Jerry Kaufman

Thanks for the egoboo! You wrote a very flattering review and we fawningly appreciate it. Suzle and I especially liked your highlighting of our request for a spare copy or two of the previous issue of *Mainstream*. Too bad nobody has volunteered one yet, but on the other hand, it might mean that no one wants to part with theirs.

Your contributors on film and television sf boggle me. Francis Hamit thinks that *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* is a worthy competitor to Tolstoy's *War and Peace*? I've seen the first and read the second, and can't see ST:DSN as more than entertaining tv fare with a little more depth and complexity than its predecessors. But Tolstoy? It's not even a worthy competitor to *Homicide: Life on the Street*, much less a Russian novelist.

I also have to disagree with Chris Barkley on the Wonders of Star Wars: The Previous Generation. Overall, I didn't adore it. The pod race was a big arcade game waiting to happen, most of the actors were stiff (though they've been good in other things), the animated characters were more silly than funny, and I've been having these funny thoughts about just

how "democratic" Princess Amidala really was. (The immense wealth suggested by her clothing and hairdos, and by the monumental sculpture around her palace, screams "bloodsucking absolute monarchy" to me.) I did enjoy the general look of the movie and all those special effects, and I agree that Jake Lloyd was good as Anakin -- probably the most natural actor in the thing. (I agree with Lucy Huntzinger, who pointed out in her on-line journal that, despite Yoda, little Anakin seemed to have no fear at all.)

Joy V. Smith

I enjoyed Taral's beautiful cover on *File 770:131*. And your amusing editorial notes. (I didn't know e-mail could activate a beeper! Funny too about the hole inhabitants pushing the weeds out! Isn't gardening fun?! Re:PLOKTA, thanks for giving the meaning of the acronym, or I would never remember which way was right!)

I always appreciate your fandom news reports, especially the ASFS meeting which was almost bombed out, the twister reports, the opportunities to sell domain names (I'd do it in a flash, I think), the web sites, and award lists. (I was pleased to see my novella, *Hidebound*, mentioned too. What a pleasant surprise!)

Thanks to Francis Hamit for his reminder about manners and character changes.

I enjoyed Chris Barkley's article on *The Phantom Menace*, and I admired his endeavors to see it as a completely fresh experience -- unburdened by reviews and plot revelations. (I, on the other hand, learn all I can about a movie before getting trapped in a theatre with it.)

I really liked your column on art and graphics in fanzines. (Yes, *Challenger* is great!)

Joseph T. Major

Ted White said: "If it hadn't thunderstormed, Kit would have mowed my lawn for me." And no doubt have had thots while doing it.

Medical Updates: "In May, LA fan Matthew B. Tepper was hit with a rare and unusual and fortunately temporary disfigurement." Rare? My mother had Bell's palsy, Grant McCormick, the publisher of *Fosfax*, has had Bell's palsy, and now I have Bell's palsy.

The Trill Next Door: Francis Hamit quotes David Milch about how the cast of a TV show is a family. Odd families, I think. *Mad* did a satire of shifting in a long-

running show, which started out as being about three guys in high school and ended up being about a crotchety old man who ran a bowling alley, with only one minor character being in the series from beginning to end. This was, of course, a satire. Yet every shift from season to season was based on an actual turnover of an actual series.

This identification with characters is not, in spite of Nicole DeBoer's hard experience, limited to SF series. The late Dan Blocker told a story of being advised to tell his daddy to get ride of that Chinese cook at the Ponderosa and hire an American, and no amount of pointing out that *Bonanza* was a fiction and Ben Cartwright, or even Lorne Greene, was not his real father, could correct that. And so on, down to the actor playing the villain in a Brazilian soap opera getting assaulted by fans of the show. This imagery coming into our lives makes for a certain dissociation in some people's psyches. Those legendary 500-channel cable systems could probably have space, and make great profit therefrom, for Ray Bradbury's interactive soap operas from *Fahrenheit 451*.

That's My Rant: Perhaps the reason that the audience was so lacking in sensawunda enthusiasm was *because* they had had so much preliminary hype. To take a parallel; when I was young, every trip to the bookstore was a thrilling adventure. Who knew what might be available there, what was coming out. Nowadays, with the Forthcoming Books lists in *Locus* and *SFC*, and even the Paperback Advance, I already know what is coming out, and the trip comes down to, "Is it out yet?" The thrill of discovery has been replaced by the confidence of security, and frankly the two emotions are not interchangeable.

Another point is the revolution of rising expectations. The tide of revelations creates a virtual *TPM* that the real one will have a hard time living up to. This is the same with all long-awaited sequels; Tolkien fans will recall how *The Silmarillion* that was published was not the anticipated *LotR*-sized, *LotR*-depth sequel that was expected. And even *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi* were not up to what some people had imagined they would be. The theater of the imagination had present sfx and is never over budget.

I thought the pod race was more NASCAR than Indy 500, but your mileage may vary. Of course, there was also the fact that it featured Anakin Ben Hur, but.

The Fanivore: Gene Stewart forgets something in the discussion of who would serve on the permanent Worldcon staff. Those who did not serve on it would bicker endlessly about

how unrepresentative it was. "That's a good idea, *you* do it! – I'll just complain about how I could have done it better!"

George "Lan" Laskowski

My, how time goes by. It seemed like only a couple of weeks ago I received #129, and was going to respond to it. Well, #130 showed up, so I better get my word-processor in gear and write a loc.

Joe Siclari wrote up a lovely conreport of Corflu. The laid-back atmosphere and general tenor of the convention made it sound like a most enjoyable weekend, something all cons should have, but too many don't.

Thanks for the list of the Hugo nominees for this year. It will give me a started of organizing the reading I need to do to vote appropriately. I have, however, not yet received (on June 16) the final list or ballot from the Aus-siecon committee. I was wondering if they are going to be sent out in a timely fashion to give everyone who is eligible to vote the opportunity to do so. On a personal note, I was hoping that my fanzine, *Lan's Lantern*, might have received a few nominations. The Poul Anderson Special was copyright 1998, and I hope to have at least one out for this year, so I hope that one will be good enough to have a good "look-at" and be considered.

Chris Barkley's tirade against *Entertainment Weekly* magazine has definite merit. But when I read the list, I considered it as a listing for the general public and made up by those who have little contact with the real literature of SF/F, and are considering the pure entertainment and special effects values, not the storyline/plot/social issues/alien viewpoint aspects that many fans read the literature for. His breakdown of Fandom reading/viewing into various categories is laudable, and I could go through and challenge him on several of his selections, but I don't have the time nor energy to do so. Suffice it to say that it is a good stab at a task that has daunted so many others before him, and any new viewpoint brings about a fresh approach and a new round of controversy to the field.

Robert Lichtman

In No. 131, I was amused by your confusion over the correct spelling of *PLOKTA* since I had the same problem myself when it first began appearing. I entered it in my computerized listings for my fanzine collection as *PLOTKA* and then didn't notice the error until I was using "Search" to locate it and came up

empty-handed.

I quite enjoyed Francis Hamit's article on the Electronic Entertainment Expo, and agreed with his sentiments regarding Nicole DeBoer and the rude Trekkies who upset her. I saw the movie *Trekkies* and found myself embarrassed by our fellow fen. Although one can try to dismiss their rudeness and lack of *A Life* by saying, "Oh, they're only Trekkies," in fact in many respects they're not unlike us and, as Hamit points out, we should consider holding a mirror up to our own behavior at conventions. Of course, that's a global "our," not you and me. (Did you see the movie and its credit at the end to Ben Yalow for some of the footage?)

Finally, thanks for the delicious helping of egoboo for *Trap Door* No. 19 and its artistic elements. You captured exactly my editorial stance in its appearance. Hope you liked the writing, too.

Lloyd Penney

Three skunks in the backyard, hm? Sometimes, the Postal Service isn't as picky as you might think. Wonder how NESFA got them in the box? Could have been worse...you might have found a large carbon rod in your backyard.

I am looking further into the ever-later Aurora Award nominees and final ballot. It was due for general distribution in Canada in late July, but nothing yet. Paul Valcour, the current administrator, has announced nothing yet, probably as a result of a car accident earlier this summer. Assistant administrator Dennis Mullin has promised that any ballot that arrives at his e-mail address will be posted to his website.

We've all written up our thoughts about the newest Star Wars movie, about it being great eye candy, too fast, too much, etc. I know Chris Barkley was a little pessimistic about the movie, but I'm glad he enjoyed it as much as he did. As sfinal as it tried to be, it was more of a nostalgia trip for many of us. I was 18 years old when I first saw Star Wars in 1977, so as a 40-year-old, there were traces of that sensawonda I experienced waybackwhen, and it felt good again. I hope that the Mace Windu character will have lots more to do in Episode Two; Samuel L. Jackson was wasted here, even if this is the kind of role he always wanted. The only black spot on this movie for me was the merchandising, as Alan White alludes to in the locol. There was just too much of it, and unfortunately, merchandising opportunities will influence how the movie

itself looks. I think the merchandising is failing, hurray! I do predict, though, that this year, JarJar Binks pinatas will be very popular around Christmastime. Especially with the adults.

I can't disagree with your descriptions of and compliments to *Trapdoor*, *Mainstream* and *Challenger*. I enjoy all three zines when they arrive. Part of my journalistic training was an attempt to teach the aesthetics behind a well-designed and eye-pleasing publication, and they all please this eye.

No pressure from me, Brad Foster, on a website. I just think that given the quality of your mad graphics, a website would be an ideal medium for you. Given some of the graphics you have printed, a service like Freehosters.com (might be Freeservers.com) might be what you need. They announce that they don't care what content you place on your website, unlike Geocities, WebJump and others that will check out your content, and will bounce you off your own site if they don't feel that what you've put on your site is suitable for all audiences.

Henry Welch

To help clear up the *MSFire* thing. This is the breakdown of the names:

Lloyd Daub: Real person (I've never met him)

Lucinda Borkenhagen: Not a real person (as I understand it this is an NPC from one of Lloyd's Bureau 13 games)

Oino Sakai: Not a real person (some people thought this might be Richard Tucholka the game designer for Bureau 13 given Oino's return address, but actually another NPC)

Sue Burke: Real person (I've met her)

I feel kind of guilty for breaking the story as it were. I had never met Lloyd, but immediately saw through the subterfuge and thought others did as well. I had joked with Lloyd once or twice in my locs with him about it. It appeared to confuse many which is one sign of a good hoax. Had I known others were fooled I probably would have kept my mouth shut, but Lloyd never asked me to. As you probably also know Lloyd is no longer editing *MSFire*. I think in part due to this, but I think that loss of club funding and increasingly longer delays between issues is a factor. Some have criticized me for pubbing as regularly as I do, but I'd seen too many zines die the "irregular" death.

I found the *SF Top 100* interesting in that much of both lists I have never read/seen/otherwise experienced. Perhaps I'm too young,

but there is just too much for me to go back and read or see that is supposedly classic. In the long run this is probably good for SF, but in a rather naive sort of way it shows the diversity that SF fandom has become. Would agree with much of either list, doubtful, but I trust my personality is unique enough. I also suspect that my list would change with mood and age. For example, the first time I saw the movie *Short Circuit* I thought it was great, but it has not borne up well on repeated viewings. Others like *Time Bandits* hold up better, but I'm just not the kind for cultish repeated viewing or reading of anything. I prefer new challenges and experiences.

Francis Hamit

Two things I got this week may interest you. The first was a newsletter from The University Of Iowa's English Department announcing that the new Chair of the department will be Brooks Landon, the author of *The Aesthetics of Ambivalence* (1992) and *Science Fiction after 1900* (1997). He has a web page there you might look up. This is the same department where Joe Haldeman and I both got our MFA degrees in the 1970's and were considered very odd ducks indeed because we even admitted that we read S.F.

The second is the current issue (August 23-30) of *Business Week*. The cover story is a bit futuristic, "21 Ideas for the 21st Century." In the center of that, however is a fold-out faux 50's S.F. magazine "Astounding Tales That Might Come True." It lists 26 novels which the editors of BW consider worth reading. Check it out.

Marty Cantor

Reading that *WOOF* editor Victoria Smith is not going to be able to travel to Worldcon in Australia and is going to have to get somebody else to collate the apa at that con brings to mind a happening at Denvention II in 1981.

Bruce Pelz had "invented" *WOOF* a few years previously. Having gotten tired of being OE of the apa, he looked around to find another, er, sucker to take over the reins. At the time I was running *LASFAPA* and I had put in stints running *Apa-L*, so I guess that I was the perfect candidate. Bruce told that he had a present for me (or did he say that I was "it") -- it made no difference, I was, suddenly, the second OE of *WOOF*. Just what I needed. In less than 5 minutes I managed to turn over the OE-ship to somebody else -- I think that it was Arthur Hlavaty (although it might have been

Lan). At this late date I disremember who it was even though I remember that I was in the main hotel lobby and I was in conversation with both of those worthies at that time. I believe that the OE-ship devolved upon Robert Sacks.

Looking at the Hugo ballot, I want to take this opportunity to thank all of those who nominated. I notice that my fanzine, *No Award*, has been nominated in every category -- as I requested. In fact, the nominators seemed to have gone overboard, nominating my zine for the John W. Campbell Award. I am deeply moved. I thank them, one and all.

Robert Whitaker Sirignano

I've had skunks out here and caught them in live traps. They're nearsighted, so you wrap up the trap with a plastic garbage bag and walk it about a hundred yards away. (Don't use your car. Starting the engine could startle the critter.) Set the release and lower the cage and run.

[[Diana used mothballs to drive off a skunk that lived under her old house in Missouri. So I went to WalMart and bought a packet of mothballs, came home and dumped them into the hole. That was almost two weeks ago. There's been very little of the familiar 10 o'clock skunkiness wafting through the night air since then. I think they've dropped us off their itinerary.]]

Phantom Menace suffers from being kind of old-fashioned in that it looks terrific. Why wasn't it made then years ago? A decade earlier it would be regarded as a classic. Now it seems like it's been done before.

Gene Stewart

Taral's use of secondary sex characteristics and other cues to evoke that fuzzy response is almost alarmingly effective and always makes me feel faintly dirty. And is this a NESFA skunk, by the way?

Sorry to hear of Lichtman's crash and White's fall. Ted's write-up shows that he's not about to let mere gravity get him down, let alone a broken bone. I enjoyed Elmore Leonard's *Cuba Libre*, too. Both youse guys mend quickly, huh?

Glad to hear the ASFS meeting wasn't unduly curtailed due to the dire threat of an OSHA air monitor. We're fast becoming a nervous, jumpy, hysterical society. Ain't it fun?

Get well soon, Robin Bailey, and next time just crank down the window and barf on

passing mundanes.

What? A mere by-pass and already andy offutt's not smoking? Good for you, and keep walking, it's good for you. I know -- I had a heart attack last year. While it was great fun, I wouldn't advise it for everyone. The nitro headaches are a bitch, for one thing, and when they zero out your BP from too much morphine in the mix, well, it's just a thrill a minute, let me tell you.

So the lesson we learn from David Dyer-Bennet's experience is that we should all quickly register as many obvious and succinct domain names as possible, in hopes big money will flow toward us as companies wish to buy them, right? Sort of the cyber equivalent to grabbing up real estate on the rumor of a new development being planned, but much less costly as a form of speculation.

R.I.P. Charles Williams Stokes. Best Fan of All Time.

Chris Barkley is right about Harlan Ellison's "'Repent, Harlequin,' Said the Ticktock-man" being one of the best of all time, and he's right, too, about Updike's pathetically narrow-minded view of what makes for good writing. Should come as no surprise, though, given Updike's ducking of even basic research and his flowery, self-indulgent prose. Imaginative literature shames descriptive literature, and optimism outshines pessimism every time. A snap of the fingers to the gloomy snobs.

Khazad-Dum Alert: *The Prince* by Machiavelli is of course not fiction, alas. Good list, though. And I'd endorse Dante's inclusion, too. Once again this shows the futility of trying to think of Bests in any but a cursory, temporary way. It's basically usage that determines what lasts, anyway. If it's still in use after several or many generations, then it's both a good and a lucky work that somehow touched the basics of what it means to be human. Or whatever we are.

Someone should give Glenn Glazer some career advice so he can get some education that might prove USEFUL. I mean, really -- Pure Math Specializing in Computing and a Ph.D. in Computer Science? What does he expect to do with such degrees? -- Seriously, though, congratulations.

Francis Hamit's comparison of ST:DS9 to Tolstoy's *War and Peace* took my breath away, but eventually I settled down. Tolstoy's probably still spinning, though. Yes, fans are often rude. Many can't escape their own heads or rise above the concerns of their enthusiasms, precisely because too few of them can make the distinction between actor and role, or drama and event, or even Entertainment and

Real Life. They forget what really matters, or maybe they just plain don't know. They're not deluded, exactly, but tend to take things way too personally, and to fail to consider all the outside influences that affect the object of their fixation, as Hamit stated so well in this fine article.

When *Star Wars* came out, I took my little brother to see it. We went back every night that week, for the entire run, delighting in finally SEEING, instead of having to imagine or, worse but more typical, having to make allowances for clunky, stagey sfx. Lucas pioneered the use of technological advances that eliminated the hokey quality of sfx and gave us a space opera we could marvel at. And he's continued to push the envelope, although he's not come up with a breakthrough to match that first one.

Now audiences are more jaded. Contrast the original *Star Trek* to any modern TV sf, for example. We're used to spectacular sfx that allow for easy suspension of disbelief. Until the next big breakthrough changes visual entertainment's technology once more, and until the experience it offers is raised by at least an order of magnitude, we'll continue to see somewhat jaded audiences. The novelty wore off and new standards were set to define state-of-the-art. Resetting the criteria of what passes as professional will require a whole new approach, most likely.

You're right, Mike, about coherence of vision adding to a layout design. Great reviews, too. I've been a fan of GHLIII's *Challenger* for a long time, and it deserves notice. Oh, and put me down as one of the many who are impure to the word Friendly.

Many thanks to Alan White for defining "neologism", which no doubt would've baffled damned nearly all of us forever otherwise.

Philip Jose Farmer's remark about McCaffrey cracked me up. Persistence, indeed. And one hell of a loyal fan-base still buying the stuff, too. Writers like Farmer, for whom variety and seeking out fresh areas to explore is *raison-d'etre*, are all too rare and even more rarely supported by publishers, editors, and book-buyers, who tend to want More Of The Same once something sells.

By the way, Farmer's recent mystery, *Nothing Burns in Hell*, is sharp, funny, tough, and just plain wonderful. Check it out, folks. It's not sf, but it's damned good stuff anyway. So how come you're not in the phone book, Mr. Farmer? Last time through Peoria, I checked, thinking maybe an interview might be in order. Ah, well.

We Also Heard From

Craig Engler: I really really really meant to send a letter about the shibboleth article (Cthulhu being my favorite), but never managed to make it to the keyboard in a timely fashion. Sigh. The next time something strikes a chord with me, I promise to rush directly to my computer and let you know.

Eric Lindsay: I was delighted to see Corflu given such a large writeup for such a small con. Good to see the traditions being kept alive.

Joe Mayhew: Ray Capella (*F770:131*, p. 10) is right, my signature is frequently upside-down either way you look at it. However, I sometimes sign it perpendicularly so that it is illegible from either the right or left. The whole thing began as part of my dyslexics' rights activities (which also includes misspelling, irrational grammar, and ideas that are the wrong way up, no matter how patient you are.)

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