



MIKE GLYER'S FILE 770

145

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Editorial Notes by Mike Glycer

Months ago when I would tell John Hertz I was working on the May issue, I didn't mean that it *may* get published in October. But here we are. (Oooh, I'm shivering already, knowing the chilly reception that awaits tardy newzines in Lillian's *Zine Dump*...)

Maydays: Diana took Sierra on a week-long road trip to Loveland, CO where I rendezvoused with them to attend the wedding of my nephew, Adam. I had seen myself using the week they were away to publish a new issue.

Instead, it was decreed that I spend those juicy days at the end of May actually doing my job. I spent weeks scripting an Appeals CPE training video and going back to Maryland to deliver it on-camera. When I came back, there were phone conferences to hold and thousands more words to write about a corporate tax shelter I am handling. Suddenly Labor Day is upon me.

Road Warriors: Diana and Sierra stayed for several days at a friend's house in Durango.

The friend was promptly won over to our vision of Sierra as the greatest three-year-old prodigy in the history of Western Civilization. So she shared with Diana that very young children can be taught to play chess.

In an e-mail, Diana bowled me over with the news that Sierra had learned to set up the pieces in their proper places on the chessboard. But I admit being pleased to read that Sierra has her own ideas about the game.

Diana wrote, "After Sierra was taught how to put all of the chess pieces in their 'home' positions, she read them a story and then laid them all down for their nap-time. A few days later, when we played a simple game with just the pawns and kings and queens, she made up her own game, which involved moving the pawns a few steps forward, then having the king and queen do a little dance across the middle of the board."

Metamorphosis: Being Sierra's parents lets us revel in a child's discovery of the natu-

ral world.

My sister Kathy, a school principal in New Mexico, clued us into the wonderful possibility of raising butterflies in our living room. Aunt Kathy sent Sierra a collapsible mesh butterfly house, about two feet tall, which came with a certificate to order caterpillars that would grow up to be Painted Lady Butterflies (not unlike the way I used to order inmates for my Uncle Milton's Ant Farm.)

Five caterpillars arrived with a built-in food supply in a small jar (with mesh airholes in the lid). They ate and grew for days until, now much bigger, the caterpillars attached themselves to the lid and wrapped themselves in a chrysalis. In the meantime, Sierra carefully gave each one a name: Jimbo, Juniper, Noogadah, Molasses and Florida.

When Sierra and Diana got home from preschool on April 29, Jimbo and Juniper finally joined the other three that had already emerged from their cocoons. All five caterpil-



Sierra is 3.5: (Left) Sierra peeks out of her new playhouse on Easter morning; (Center) Butterflies Noogadah, Molasses, and Florida moments away from freedom; (Right) Sierra wins a tricycle race with Auntie Carol.

lars had turned into butterflies. They fed them sugar water and enjoyed watching them. On the second morning, we all went into the garden and set them free.

Trufen.net: Last issue I recommended the Trufen.net fan news site. Victor Gonzalez is keeping it moving forward under an incredible head of steam by writing about 15 stories to each one from an outsider.

I'm impressed by the way he's learned all the places to look for fannish news, and disciplines himself to wade through miles of material in hope of a story. He finds items from the Smofs list, even Roger Tener's *Chronicles of the Dawn Patrol* -- which I used to think of as my own secret source. Victor has a flair for broadening and deepening stories with fannish background or historical sidebars.

Victor's friendship with Peter Weston brought in Weston as a columnist, with the surprising dividend that the column attracted controversy and regular participation from a diverse group of British fans.

The site has become a crossroads for a lot of fannish communities. See you there!

Efanzines.com: There's a reason I was just about the last person to have his fanzine on Bill Burns' excellent website. For years I've been producing *File 770* with Microsoft Publisher, which churlishly refuses to export to Adobe PDF. So I couldn't put them in a form Burns could use. And I wasn't going to buy the big Adobe program just for that.

Only this year I discovered Adobe has an online service that will do a limited number of conversions for free. The discovery made me wonder whether any software company had licensed the conversion engine to sell as a stand-alone program. At least one has. I found DeskPDF, an inexpensive piece of software which rapidly transforms old Publisher files to PDFs that can be shipped off to Bill Burns. (Now Microsoft's latest edition of Publisher can convert to PDF. Sorry guys, you're too late.)

There's a slight bottleneck in getting the issues online. The old issues were produced by pasting art onto camera-ready printouts. So I need to scan in most of the art and add it to the Publisher layouts before they can be converted. But we'll get through all that in time.

Help Wanted: While seeking material for Trufen, I stumbled across a link to "Swancon the collectible card game" and was quite amused. It seems to have been written five or six years ago and I wanted to know if it had a playable set of rules, or was it just a fannish parody of collectible card games? Not having located an answer through my Google searches, I e-mailed the Swancon committee. They recognized the game, but couldn't connect me with anyone who knows how to play it. Do you know?



Fred Patten Donates Collection to UC Riverside

Fred Patten suffered a stroke on March 12 that left the right side of his body paralyzed. Fred spent a month in hospital and six weeks in a physical rehabilitation center before being transferred to live at Golden State Colonial Convalescent Hospital in North Hollywood, CA. He had to give up his apartment, and made the hard decision to give away his extensive collection to UC Riverside. Lee Gold gathered a crew of fans to pack and clean up for Fred.

Melissa Conway, head of special collections at UCR, pointed to the addition of Patten's anime, manga, and Japanese comic books, as a coup for the university. John Hertz has pointed out that Fred may well know that field better than any other English-speaking person.

Shortly after the stroke Fred could speak fairly clearly, so Lee Gold volunteered to take down his dictation and continue publishing Fred's Apa-Lzine, keeping unbroken Fred's string of contributions back to the apa's first distribution in 1964. Fred now types one-handed on a laptop keyboard.

He resumed attending LASFS meetings regularly with the help of friends who transport him and his wheelchair.

Fred had already started the year in ill health, spending 10 days hospitalized with pneumonia in January.

His special wheelchair was paid through contributions to Glen Wooten's Donation Fund. Friends have established a webpage with news about Fred's progress and information about how to donate to the Fund at:

<http://www.kayshapero.net/FredPatten/fred.html>

The donation to the Eaton Collection made the Riverside *Press-Enterprise* in July. A story trumpeting news that UC Riverside had received almost 900 boxes of comic books, records, tapes, anime and other memorabilia. The reporter was most impressed that "Among the

donor's treasures: early science-fiction stories by a teenage Ray Bradbury and a range of Japanese comic books that could help scholars trace the history of anime, the popular form of Japanese animation."

Fred was quoted: "It was sort of heartbreaking. If there was any way I could have saved my collection, I certainly would have. I didn't have any choice -- either let it be thrown away or donate it."

Conway said it would take a few years for her staff at UCR to catalog the estimated 82,000 items that Fred donated.

University of Iowa Saves Horvat Fanzine Collection from Auction

Did you ever hear that Oregon fan Mike Horvat had one of the world's biggest fanzine collections? His 250,000-item treasure trove rivaled the Bruce Pelz and Terry Carr collections now housed at UC Riverside. Horvat's may have boasted more 1970s apazines than either, remembering that is when Horvat created and published *South of the Moon*, an index of amateur press associations that lasted until 1984.



Fred Patten: Photo on new website.

Horvat set fandom abuzz when he advertised his zines for sale online, asking \$5,000 for the lot. No one met the minimum bid before Horvat was persuaded to withdraw them from sale by Rob Latham, a University of Iowa English professor who is also an editor of the journal *Science Fiction Studies*, a move that allowed the collection to be acquired in February by the University of Iowa.

"Mr. Horvat put his collection up for sale on eBay because the rented building he stored it in had been sold and the new owner was going to demolish the building," said Latham. "The local fire department was going to burn it down to practice fighting fires, so if he couldn't give or sell his collection to someone, it would probably have been burned with the building."

"It's an extraordinary collection and a significant contribution to the resources available in our library," said Sid Huttner, head of Special Collections at the UI Libraries. "We've long collected the scholarly literature related to science fiction. As a result of this acquisition, however, we now have the largest collection of science fiction fanzines in the Midwest and one of the largest that exists anywhere." The correspondence of fan editors Gertrude Carr and Richard Geis is also part of the collection.

It would never have happened, though, if a former student of Latham's, Greg Beatty, a UI alumnus who graduated in 2000, had not stumbled across a listing showing the collection for sale while looking at online auction houses one night. Knowing how valuable the collection would be, he immediately emailed Latham.

"It wasn't too difficult to persuade him because he preferred to keep the collection intact," Latham said.

"The fact it would be available to the public and provide an important resource for academic research also appealed to him."

Joyful Announcement

Congratulations to Janice Gelb and Stephen Boucher, who revealed their engagement to friends at the Glasgow Worldcon. Janice lives in Northern California, Stephen in Australia. Janice's online announcement explains all the hurdles in her path to the altar: "To forestall the most common question: No, we don't know when. We're shooting for December but the timetable depends totally on the visa situation."

Janice would like to keep her job with Sun and hopes to convince the company transfer her Down Under. That would allow her to go on a business visa, which can be obtained more quickly than a "prospective marriage" visa, with its requirements for a criminal background clearance, medical checkups, and detailed written statements about the history of the relationship. Janice mentions, "My favorite part of the instructions say 'Exchanging photographs over the Internet is not evidence of

having met in person.'"

Other possible solutions include going on a tourist visa, marrying, then applying for a spouse visa, however she would be restricted from working until she received the spouse visa.

Besides conquering the bureaucracy, Janice must deal with the other demands of relocating. Selling her condo is at the top of the list, and "getting rid of most of my worldly goods."

Arnie Katz Ends 40 Years in the Wilderness

Having led BBB ("Bring Bruce Bayside") to a successful conclusion, fund chairman Arnie Katz is flirting with another set of fannish initials -- N3F.

You'd be wrong to think this is out-of-character for one of fandom's ultra-faanish souls, for that's where Arnie broke into fandom. And now, after a slight 40-year interruption, he has returned.

Arnie began posting to the N3F website message board last March, primarily sharing interesting bits of fanhistory with the membership. He also told how important his early friendships with Neffers were to him:

"I joined the group in 1963 at the behest of Judi Sephton. She was the first fan who contacted me after Lenny Bailes and I used the unique strategy of publishing a fanzine to bring us to Fandom's notice after other attempts to make contact proved fruitless. (We knew Fandom was there; we just didn't know how to get in touch with it.)

"Judi saw my letter in *Amazing* and, just as we'd hoped, wrote us a letter and enclosed copies of her genzine and her N'APAZine. So we both joined the NFFF and soon found ourselves swapping mailing comments with the likes of Bruce Pelz, Fred Patten, Roy Tackett and other N'APA luminaries of the mid-'60s."

Who knew?

Blank Pages on the Web

Do you remember what fandom was like before the World Wide Web? Readers of several fannish websites found out the hard way in mid-July when David Dyer-Bennett's disk drive controller failed, taking down a number of the domains hosted on his system. Chaz Boston Baden's announcement to the Smofs list reported that the web casualties include: mnstf.org, lasfs.org, loscon.org, boston-baden.com/boston-baden.com and sciifiinc.net (Fan Gallery).

Chaz wrote, "Things are slowly coming back up, but Hazel's Picture Gallery might not fully recover -- we may have completely lost pictures from 2003-2005, for example. It's sad that this happened before the nifty full-drive backup system was in place, but *c'est la vie*."

Even a paper fanzine isn't completely safe from catastrophe -- when it hasn't been printed

yet. Production of a new issue of Chaz's fanzine, *A Bear Went Over The Mountain* (#3), was also delayed by this system failure.

A month after the disaster, recovery had been limited and an expensive data recovery procedure was planned. Chaz posted on August 26, "It was a disk controller failure which munged data on the drive, not an actual platter failure or head crash. The disk drive is currently in Minneapolis, where it lived all its online life. David Dyer-Bennet's server is the one that went poof, and my website was hosted by him. DD-B has been concentrating his efforts on getting his server back online, and has now started looking at what can be recovered from the drive itself. I believe the tool that'll be used is SpinRite, which has performed near-miracles in the past. If we can't get everything back without resorting to the professionals, I'll be paying to send it in to OnTrack. I'm missing 21,000 photos; I have the most to gain or lose in the data recovery process.

"If the money people are donating isn't needed for the professional disk data recovery people (or if we have money left over after the project), the donations will go towards paying the hosting fees on a professional web hosting service. (About \$20 a month starting from July.)

"If anyone wishes to donate to the first project (which will be as massive expense happening all at once) but not towards the second (which is a smaller expense spread over time), then they should wait until we've made that decision. I'll be posting status updates on <http://www.livejournal.com/users/hazelchaz/> and <http://www.boston-baden.com/donate.htm> when we get closer to determining if we can rescue the data ourselves or not and you can decide what to donate then." *[[Portions previously appeared on Trufen.net]]*

Biggest Diamond Ever for Fannish Wedding

Quite a crowd appeared for Laurel Krahn's and Kevin Austin's wedding on September 17. That's because they were married with 82 other couples on the baseball diamond at Metrodome Stadium in Minneapolis.

Couples qualified for this radio promotion by writing a letter telling why they wanted to be married on the field. The Rev. Gary Gottfried from the Chapel of Love at the Mall of America presided over the ceremony. Twins Hall of Famer Tony Oliva served as a celebrity witness and sign the marriage licenses.

All the couples recited their vows in unison during a civil ceremony to be held 45 minutes before the Minnesota Twins game.

Laurel wrote before the day: "The cool part is how sure I am about everything. I've been in love before and thought I was sure before, but there's a certainty this time and a degree of comfort that I never had before. This is it."

KATRINA SCATTERS NEW ORLEANS FANDOM

Hurricane Katrina mauled New Orleans on August 29 as fans online around the world watched through webcams. Then, anxious for more news, fans used the internet's resources to share the scant information available about Gulf coast sf community on sites like SFFnet's Hurricane Katrina Check-in, the Smofs listserve and Trufen.net.

While the storm was still approaching, Guy Lillian III reminded readers that he and Rosy now live in Shreveport -- unlike last year, when Hurricane Ivan temporarily chased them from their New Orleans home. But back in the Big Easy, wrote Guy, Dennis Dolbear barely survived his decision to remain in the city:

"Apparently [Dennis] and his mother were trying to ride out the storm at their very pleasant and solid home in New Orleans East when Katrina made her entrance --bursting in through the front doors, tearing the doors not only off their hinges, but out of the walls. [Dennis] and his 85+ year old mother survived by clinging to the *outside* of the house, since he had too much sense to climb up into the attic -- whence they might not have escaped.... Dennis' lovely house is now so much *papier mache*."

Dolbear and his mother became separated afterwards. He evacuated to the Cajun Dome in Lafayette, LA. Regan Hall had Dennis' mother safe with her in Baton Rouge, but she posted on Trufen that they didn't know Dennis' whereabouts. I copied her Guy's note that Dennis was at the Cajun Dome. Regan wrote back: "My boyfriend lives in Lafayette and is on his way to the CajunDome to see if he can find Dennis so that we can re-unite them."

Wire service photos after the storm included one showing all the windows blown out of the north side of the Hyatt Regency, a hotel used by the 1988 Worldcon.

Many members of the old committee fled New Orleans. Those who chose to stay had better luck than Dennis Dolbear. John Guidry, the Nolacon II chair, left for Covington (across Lake Pontchartrain) before Katrina hit. Justin Winston, said Guy, "rode out the storm in his antique mansion in an old part of town, patching up three blown windows which were admitting 100-mph horizontal rain. He reports only a foot of water in the streets outside -- far less than elsewhere...." His wife Annie Winston had already left with her mother and grandmother for Alexandria, in the center of the state, joining an agonizingly slow exodus from the city: it took them nine hours to cover just sixty miles. Robert and Ann Neagle evacuated to the hotel where he works and were believed safe.

Andrew Fox posted on his Nightshade Books website that he and his family were stranded in New Mexico, having gone to Albu-

querque for Bubonicon. "From what I've read on the *Times-Picayune's* website, our neighborhood of New Algiers was spared the worst effects of the storm. We left a car at the airport, so it's probably lost to flooding out there, and my car on the street in front of the house may have also been destroyed. We left seven housecats at home, and their caretaker had to evacuate. I don't know whether we'll find any of them still alive when we finally get home again."

Nevenah Smith and a fellow cabbie drove their taxis north to Madison, WI: a photo of them parked in front of a New Orleans Take-out made the newspaper. Poppy Z. Brite evacuated, according to a post on *Making Light*. Bryan Ellis posted to SFFnet that he was safe in Pensacola, FL and still trying to phone to check on his family in Gulfport.

Grant Krueger, two hours from the coast in Jackson, MS informed the Smofs list on August 29 that he was fine but six trees fell close to his house, one blocking the driveway.

Chris Barkley forwarded news to Smofs that Bart and Rayma Kemper were holed up in Franklin, LA southwest of New Orleans, Bart's hometown where they'd gone to attend a christening. The hurricane didn't do much damage to Franklin. Bart, a member of the Army, was out on a pass and trying to find a

way back to Camp Shelby, MS.

Tom Hanlon of Baton Rouge, wrote in a widely copied e-mail that he was fine, power had just been restored. "Ironically I think the power krewe that replaced a transformer and have worked in DL's subdivision yesterday and today are from Richard Brandt's power company in El Paso. Six volts of separation, indeed."

Hanlon passed on news of some New Orleans fans: Dr. Jack [Stocker] was at an ACS convention in Washington DC and did not return before Katrina. Before the hurricane, Graham and Grey Silverton went to Orlando; Sandi Gerdes, her mother and brother went to Texarkana (and now are back, staying with relatives); Charlotte and Petri Laihonon went to stay with family in Baton Rouge; the Gus Mitchell and George Spicuzza families also evacuated and are safe. Carol Silverton was in Midcity until August 31, then she left for Atlanta. Peggy Ranson went to Memphis.

Early word from Bob Asprin on SFFnet said he remained in the French Quarter with around 500 others, where they not only had plenty of canned food and bottled water, deliveries of cold beer were still coming to the last open bar in the Quarter. He was transported to North Carolina in the last stages of the evacuation.



Refugee New Orleans taxi drivers Nenevah Smith and Joe Karczewski, posing in front of the New Orleans Take-Out in Madison, WI for Dick Russell, provide one of the few light moments after Katrina. The photo appeared in *The Capital Times* on Sept. 1.

David Levine's Rocket-Powered Career

THE OREGONIAN • FILE • THURSDAY, MARCH 12, 2004

Kate Yule and David Levine endured a three-month remodel of their Southeast Portland kitchen, and lived to tell. Yule's Web diary detailed every step of the process. The buzz her blog generated drew a huge turnout for their kitchen unveiling. They showed off all the new, including a glass-paned back door that allows a view of the garden.



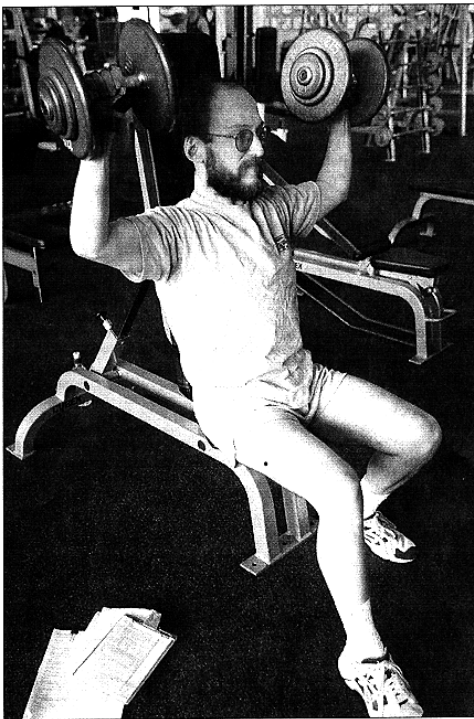
Blog on

Homeowners turn to cyberspace to chronicle the pleasures and perils of remodeling

David and Kate Levine get plenty of ink in the local paper. Kate's blog about the kitchen remodel (**above**), and David's workout regimen (**below**), filled whole pages in the *Oregonian*.

As we chart his rising star, we can say we knew David Levine back when. Back before he sold twenty stories. Before he had an agent. So long ago he and Kate Yule were still cooking dinner in a plain, old kitchen.

Now the kitchen is completely remodeled



TOM TREICK/The Oregonian

and famous in its own right. The Portland *Oregonian* ran a photo feature about the remodel, along with extensive quotes from Kate's blog about the work was in progress. See for yourself at:

[<http://www.livejournal.com/users/kateyule/6303.html>]

David's most significant news is that he completed his first novel, a science fiction thriller called *Remembrance Day*.

"It's been a real emotional rollercoaster, with fits and starts and a certain hurry-up-and-wait quality. I submitted the completed manuscript to a Major New York Publisher in May, and heard back very quickly from the editor, who said he wanted to buy it. In fact, he wanted to make it a two-book contract. I didn't have a second novel to sell, though, so I took a fantasy idea that had been simmering on my mental back burner and expanded it from one sentence to a 5000-word proposal in about two weeks. Unfortunately, although the editor liked the proposal, the publisher didn't. So... no contract yet. But the novel is still under consideration."

David's story "At the Twenty-Fifth Annual Meeting of Uncle Teco's Homebrew Gravities Club," which was originally published in the OryCon 25 program book, is now available for everyone to read (for free!) on the website Infinity Plus, at:

[<http://www.infinityplus.co.uk/stories/uncleteco.htm>]

Anthologies with his stories have been coming out. *Gateways*, edited by Martin H. Greenberg, contains David's "Circle of Compassion," a fantasy about a priestess in an ancient China that never was. *Year's Best Fantasy #5*, edited by David G. Hartwell and Kathryn Cramer, includes "Charlie the Purple Giraffe Was Acting Strangely," a serious story about funny animals (originally published in *Realms of Fantasy*). "Charlie" also got an Honorable Mention in Gardner Dozois' annual Year's Best SF anthology, along with "Love in the Balance" from *All-Star Zeppelin Adventure Stories* and "Where is the Line" from *Talebones*.

His story "Tk'Tk'Tk" made *Asimov's* twice, in a manner of speaking, appearing in the US in March, then translated into Spanish for the July/August 2005 issue of *Asimov Ciencia Ficción* where David's name was on the cover above Mike Resnick's. "The Tale of the Golden Eagle" will be translated in Swedish magazine *Nova Science Fiction*.

Upcoming publications include fantasy "A Book is a Journey" in magazine *Tales of the Unanticipated* (August 2005), humorous fantasy "The Curse of Beazael" in anthology *All Hell Breaking Loose* edited by Martin H. Greenberg (October 2005), and science fiction "The Last McDougal's" in *Asimov's* (January 2006).

David's story "I Hold My Father's Paws" was shortlisted for the Aeon Award. (The winner was Julian West's "My Marriage", announced at the Worldcon in Glasgow.)

David somehow weaves his writing career around his day job at McAfee. He says the company likes his results with user interface design and usability well enough that they have added another person to the work. "Strangely, the two of us are both busier than I was before. I think it's the same phenomenon that makes freeways get more crowded when you build more of them."

Sime-Gen Web Site

Sime-Gen is a fictional universe in which Jacqueline Lichtenberg and Jean Lorrh have set their fiction for many years. Laurraine Tutihasi, the Reviews coordinator and gate master for *Sime-Gen Perspectives Newsletter*, published monthly, is putting out the word that they are always looking for volunteers to work the related website, <http://www.simegen.com/>

Laurraine adds, "We review all genres of books, generally choosing from among the many submissions sent to us by authors, publishers, and publicists. We like to encourage up and coming authors. There are other openings doing interviews of authors and many other things. The site has been around for a number of years and is fairly healthy, especially considering that it is all volunteer work."

Please send all Sime-Gen reviews-related e-mail to laurraine@cox.net

Mike Resnick Shares His Vision

By Mike Resnick: A lot of fans have heard that I'm having some vision problems, and it's true. Since they began at the end of 2003, I've written and sold four novels and edited a couple of anthologies, so I'm not blind yet, but I thought I could answer most of the questions in one swell foop with a letter to *File 770*.

I woke up blind in my right eye one day in early December, 2003. Every doctor and eye specialist I spoke to recommended the same retina specialist, and he agreed to see me.

He spent two days of intensive tests. They took more than 300 computer scans and photos of the inside of my eye. He examined the eye for better than an hour with the brightest god-damned light you ever saw (but which I couldn't see), reading out copious (and incomprehensible) measurements to a pair of his nurses, who took everything down. Then he explained the situation.

First, I have a hereditary weakness in my eyes -- and it's true; my father had 3 eye surgeries, and was on 3 or 4 different eyedrops the last 30 years of his life. Second, my adult-onset diabetes (I've had it since 1996) has severely affected the blood supply going to my eyes, which is to say, I have incredibly poor blood circulation to my eyes. Third, the veins had sprung dozens of microscopic leaks. Some of it seeped into the eye, creating all kinds of havoc. There was a lot of scar tissue inside the eye, and eventually all the fluid in the eye had literally torn the retina. It was not the kind of everyday detachment that could be cured by tacking it back with laser surgery. The retina was *torn*, not detached.

He told me that he would have to go into the eye with tiny instruments and repair it, then use lasers to cauterize all the wounds, and even then the eye was in such a bad way that I might never see well again, though he could guarantee me *some* vision. So he performed the surgery, and I had lousy vision. One of the reasons is that the retina had suffered a severe insult (medical term; no one called it nasty names), and was swollen, and one cannot see well with a swollen retina. When eyedrops alone failed to reduce the swelling, he injected some kind of steroid solution directly into the eye with a syringe and needle...and did it about every 4 weeks for a few months. (You'd be amazed what you can put up with when the alternative is blindness.) I would Carol to leave the room so she wouldn't have to watch him sticking needles into her beloved husband's eye; she would smile sweetly, remain seated, and explain that it didn't hurt *her* at all.

I went in just about monthly for him to check me out, and one day, during the standard vision exam his nurse gives me before he shows up, it turned out that the vision in my



Mike Resnick at Context XVII. Photo by H. L. Drake

other eye was not as good as it had been. During his exam, he found that the left eye had the same condition as the right, but was not as far along...so that day I had the same 300 computer scans of my left eye, and the next week he performed laser surgery to patch 43 leaks in the veins. (It was painless. I'd been expecting the kind of thing Goldfinger used on 007; instead it was like looking into a flashbulb going off 4 inches away -- 43 times.)

During the spring he noted that the surgery had exacerbated a baby cataract I had (I had one in each eye, but the one in the right eye, the eye with the torn retina, was growing at a very fast rate). By August he couldn't see past it to examine the retina, so in September, right after Worldcon, I had surgery to remove the cataract. (Not by him; he only does retinas in this age of specialization. It was done by a colleague who only does cataracts. Thirty a day. Sounds really boring.

Now that he could see into the eye, he saw that a ton of scar tissue had formed, enough so that he had to remove it to give me an eventual chance to see better. (He had predicted this possibility on my very first visit to him.) So on Carol's birthday (November 2) I went under the knife -- well, miniature forceps -- again, and he pulled a truly amazing amount of scar tissue from my eye.

Back in August he noticed some more weakness in the left eye and said he wanted to do some more laser surgery to cauterize more potential leaks, but he wanted to do the right eye first. (Last December he gave Carol and me a couple of thick pamphlets describing the condition and the treatment, and I have nothing that isn't thoroughly described/predicted in the pamphlets. It's a combination of diabetes and hered-

ity, and I don't know if I'll ever get my full vision back in my right eye or keep it in my left, but if it can be done, this is the guy who'll do it. A recent magazine I saw in his office -- for specialists, not patients -- listed the top 10 retina men in the country, and he was one of them; I find that comforting.)

On December 1, 2004, I had my fifth eye surgery in 363 days. This was laser surgery on what is laughingly referred to as the "good" eye. In summer he cauterized 43 submicroscopic leaks in the blood vessels; this time he got 38 more.

Non-event. No pain, mild discomfort, no anesthetic.

Prior to the surgery, I underwent the usual vision test. This consists of reading a screen, maybe the size of a 15-inch computer screen, from a dozen feet away in a darkened room. Now, I'd always been able to read a few rows of letters with the "good" eye; not as many as I should, but if that's as bad as it ever gets, I'll settle. I'd never been able to see anything more than the outline of the screen and the fact that it was lit, with the "bad" eye. But this time I was able to see whether some very thick lines they ran across it were vertical or horizontal. I realize that doesn't sound like much, but it was the best I'd done since this whole thing started.

Then, in late February, 2005, I was actually able to read some 4-inch-high and 5-inch high letters. Couldn't see the 3-inchers, but hell, 14 months ago I couldn't even see the screen.

OK, you're up to date. And I hope if we pass each other in the hall at a con and I don't nod to you or say hello, you'll understand that I'm not being rude or self-centered -- at least, no more than usual.

++ Mike Resnick



Joy V. Smith in Print and Pixel

Joy V. Smith's "Building a Cool House for Hot Times without Scorching the Pocketbook" recently got a rave review from *The Midwest Book Review* -- it's on the Reviewer's Choice list in the February issue of "Small Press Bookwatch."

Joy's own blog includes helpful house hints & links & publication news --

<http://journals.aol.com/pagadan/JoysJournal/>

Her interview of Lyn McConchie appeared in *Expressions* 61 (July 2005).

She has a time travel audiobook, *Sugar Time*, available on CD or cassette from: <http://www.zianet.com/hadrosaur/bookstore2.html>

In April, Joy was interviewed online by author/host Mary Rosenblum of the Long Ridge Writers Group. A transcript of what she had to say about "Marketing via Blog" is available at:

<http://www.longridgewritersgroup.com/rx/tr01/index.shtml>

She has stories in two anthologies now available in paperback. "Seedlings," about plant mages, appears in *Magistria: Realm of the Sorcerer*. "The Princess Quest," a light-hearted sword and sorcery tale, is among the 15 stories of heroic fantasy in the *Kings of the Night II* anthology.

Joy's now at work on a story for *Magistria II*, and an sf anthology titled *The Big Black*. She admits, "I never knew they called space The Big Black..." (Did anyone?)

GUFF Couple in Glasgow

Australians Damian Warman & Juliette Woods were selected GUFF delegates to the Worldcon in Glasgow, after outpolling Sue Ann Barber, Alison Barton, and David Cake.

First place votes UK AU TOTAL

Sue Ann Barber	4	4	8
Alison Barton	2	5	7
David Cake	3	5	8
Damien & Juliet	19	18	37
No Preference	3	4	7
Total	31	36	67

Votes counted in the U.K., 31 (29 paper, 2 electronic; 1 Australian, 1 U.S., 29 U.K.). Votes counted in Australia, 36 (19 paper, 17 electronic; 21 Australian, 7 U.K., 6 U.S., 1 Canada, 1 Fiji).

Damien Warman and Juliette Woods, posted an initial version of their trip itinerary to the [guff_trip LiveJournal](http://guff_trip.LiveJournal.com) page.

They set off for London on July 15. You know you're in the 21st century, reading that the second thing their shopping list for the Duty Free in the Melbourne airport was "camera memory." (The first thing on the list was traditional -- duty free gin.)

Over the next six weeks their travels took them to the Worldcon in Glasgow, Scotland, to

Ireland and Wales, then on to the Continent to visit Stockholm, Copenhagen, Berlin and the Netherlands.

Before leaving they wrote: "We won't be hiring a car: travel will be at the kindness of strangers and the mercy of trains and planes. Probably not canal barge or steam-driven zeppelin, alas."

CUFF Sends Davis to Calgary

New Brunswick fan Brian Davis attended the 2005 Westercon as the Canadian Unity Fan Fund (CUFF) delegate. Since 1981, CUFF has provided the funds to bring a Canadian fan from one side of Canada to the other to enjoy and be part of the Canadian National Science Fiction Convention (Convention).

This year's Westercon "Due North," held in Calgary, Alberta over the July 4 weekend, also doubled as the annual CanVention and hosted the 2005 Prix Aurora Awards, Canada's speculative fiction and fantasy award.

The Prix Aurora Awards, started in 1980, honor the best of Canadian literature in both English and French, art, and fan achievement. "Convention" is the title that passes to the existing convention chosen to host the awards, declaring it Canada's national SF&F convention for that year.

Brian Davis is a charter member of the Fredericton (NB) Science Fiction Society. He was the driving force behind inCONsequential II, a local convention held in 1999 that also hosted CanVention. He has published the regional Canadian science fiction newsletters *Fixed Link* and *Comet Dust*.

Soon after the 2005 Convention, the board of CONADIAN, an organization that grew out of the completion of the 1994 World Science Fiction Convention, boosted CUFF by making a \$500.

NAFF

Zara Baxter won NAFF, the National Australian Fan Fund, and in June attended Thylacon, the Australian National SF Convention. Baxter outpolling rival candidate Robin Pen, with a total of 35 votes cast.

At Thylacon Baxter had the opportunity to chair a heated discussion of e-books, and elsewhere crossed paths with DUFF winner **Joe Siclari**. One observer wrote in his livejournal about the conrunning program item where two of the four panelists had yet to chair their first convention, but the deficit was made up by contributions from two members in the audience -- former Worldcon chair Siclari and veteran conrunner Janice Gelb.

Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund

TAFF is assembling a slate of nominees for the 2006 race. The ballot had yet to be finalized at presstime. Known candidates for the west-bound race are Bridget Bradshaw and 1/2r

Cruttenden.

Michael "Sparks" Rennie also reportedly was handing out ribbons at the Glasgow Worldcon indicating a TAFF candidacy. Fran Dowd's friends had urged her to remain a candidate, but she announced online that her health would not allow it.

The winner will presumably attend L.A.con IV, the 64th World Science Fiction Convention, scheduled for August 23-27, 2006.

Since the last *File 770*, Suzanne "Suzle" Tompkins won the eastbound TAFF race and completed her trip to Interaction, accompanied by Jerry Kaufman. She outpolling candidates Chaz Boston Baden and Curt Phillips in a race that attracted 186 voters.

Randy Byers, North American TAFF Administrator, reported that none of the three received an outright majority of the votes, but under TAFF rules two candidates were eliminated who did not get a minimum amount of support among both North American and European voters. Chaz did not receive the minimum 20% of European votes required, while Curt did not receive the minimum 20% of North American votes. This made Suzle the winner on the first pass.

Suzle wrote to the Smofs list on August 21, "Jerry and I are back from our whirlwind trip which, after Glasgow, included Birmingham, Cambridge, and London." Suzle returns full of praise for the Interaction committee. She wrote online, "We had a wonderful time and I want to say THANK YOU! to everyone involved with the con. We fan fund delegates were treated very well by the convention, like guests of the con although we weren't actually. It was really appreciated."

"TAFF and I also want to thank Interaction for its major donation to the fund by way of covering four nights of my stay at the Moat House and, I understand, will also be reimbursing my membership.

"I was really thrilled to be asked to co-present the Best Fanzine Hugo and Jerry and I both had a great time during the festivities."

Fandom has also celebrated the appearance over the past year of three new TAFF reports by James Bacon, Tobes Valois and Peter Weston, ringing up \$1,100 in donations from the Southern California Institute for Fan Interests (SCIFI, the folks who bring you L.A.cons). SCIFI donates \$500 whenever a TAFF, DUFF, or GUFF trip report is published in complete form within five years of the completion of the trip, or \$100 for reports that appear more than five years after the trip.

James Bacon wrote and published "WorldConNomicon", about his 2004 TAFF trip. Tobes Valois's "Tobes TAFF Ting" covers his 2002 TAFF trip. Peter Weston, who won TAFF in 1974 (on his third try!) and traveled to the 1974 Discon, includes these events in his autobiography *With Stars in My Eyes: Adventures in British Fandom* published by the

NESFA Press for Noreascon 4.

James Bacon wrote online, "It is my humble opinion that SCIFI and FANAC contribute in some degree to the motivation behind the publication of TAFF trip reports. Peter Weston's book may be an interesting case, as he was a fan guest of Honour at Noreascon IV, but regardless I feel that the 'bounty' definitely is a welcome reward to the fund..... Any reward is a recognition of an effort made, and that is very important and welcomed."

[[Portions of this story originally appeared on Trufen.net]]

Iron Benn

Talk about double duty. Weightlifter Benn Overkamp not only continues to prepare for the 2008 Olympics, he has become his team's mature young coach and led them to a national championship.

Benn started lifting with Ed Bielik at Kirkwood Weightlifting Club in 1997. Last December, Bielik announced that he would be taking an extended break from coaching. Benn wondered how he would continue his own lifting, and began to worry about the program as a whole. He decided to take some of the Kirkwood lifters, continue training, and begin coaching. Benn became a USA Weightlifting Certified Club Coach, worked with new athletes, qualified a lifter for the Junior National Championships, and six lifters for the School Age National Championships.

The School Age National Championships were held in June at Merrillville, Indiana. Benn's team had five lifters competing in the 13-and-Under age group, and one in the 14-15 age group. Even though for the majority of the lifters it was the first time traveling to compete, and in some cases the first time they had competed against others, the Kirkwood Weightlifting team came away national champions.

Benn is also a full time student at Webster University with a 3.8 GPA. He went to Japan in September to study for a year through the Webster University Foreign Study program. He has arranged through the Olympic Co-op program to train with Japanese Weightlifting team while he is there.

Benn's mother, Jenny Evens, asks fans to support Benn as he prepares for the 2008 Olympics. Go to his website:

<http://benn.vectorx.org/>

Died and Gone to Sercon Heaven

Fast Forward: Contemporary Science Fiction is the monthly half-hour television series about the genres of science fiction, fantasy, and horror produced by leading lights of Baltimore and Washington DC fandom. What a great entrée the show gives them to spend time with the most interesting personalities in the field today. If I could have worked on a show like this when I became a fan, I'd have been in heaven.



Champion Coach Benn Overkamp.

The show airs on several cable systems in northern Virginia as well as the city of Baltimore. Recent interviews can be retrieved online at www.fast-forward.tv.

Since the first of the year they have televised a virtual sf hall of fame.

In March, writer Neil Gaiman talked to host Tom Schaad about a wide range of writing projects, including his involvement with the upcoming film *MirrorMask*. He also discussed his books, graphic novels, writing for children, directing his first film (*A Short Film About John Bolton*), and his wildly popular web log. According to Gaiman, posting on the internet about his everyday life can lead to some odd and humorous moments: "You'll be doing a book signing for people and a total stranger will ask you after your cats by name or ask about the living room carpet or whatever it was that you put in there."

Mike Zipser's interview of Connie Willis led out the April episode, delving into her her views on comedy, her fascination with history and research, and the special challenges of writing a novel about near-death experiences and life after death.

Schaad returned in May, talking to writer Lois McMaster Bujold about her book, *Paladin of Souls*, which received both the Hugo and Nebula awards for Best Novel. Bujold described how 15th century Spanish court history influenced her in the creation of her Chalion universe. She also provides insight into several key characters from the novels, discusses details of the theology of Chalion, and talks about the next book in the series, *The Hallowed Hunt*.

Orson Scott Card was Schaad's subject in

June, discussing his recent book, *Shadow of the Giant*, the final book in his Shadow Cycle. Card spoke about the nature of human ambition in both fictional characters and historical figures. Then in July, Schaad interviewed Jonathan Lethem about his recent collection of autobiographical essays, *The Disappointment Artist*.

Every episode has additional features, for example in July Colleen Cahill reviewed the WSFA Press anthology *Future Washington*, edited by Ernest Lilly, and Marianne Petrino reviewed the classic anime series *City Hunter*.

The show has been broadcast since 1989. Tom Schaad and Mike Zipser are producers and on-air hosts. Associate producer Kathi Overton handles a multitude of tasks, like e-mailing press releases that brag about the goodies in each episode. Book reviewer Colleen Cahill's day job is at the Library of Congress. Anime reviewer Marianne Petrino identifies herself as "a member of anime first fandom, having watched *Astroboy* in its original incarnation in 1963."

Southern Fandom Awards Chalker, Fisher

Jack L. Chalker has posthumously won the 2005 Phoenix Award, presented at Xanadu 8 / DeepSouthCon 43 in Nashville on April 9. The Phoenix Award, accepted by Jack's wife, Eva Whitley, is presented to the Science Fiction professional from the Southern part of the United States with the most respected work of the year.

The Rebel Award was also presented at the 2005 DeepSouthCon. Naomi Fisher received it in recognition of her special contributions to Southern Fandom.

Had he lived, Chalker would have had the pleasure of serving as toastmaster at this year's DeepSouthCon. Eva Whitley wrote online, "I am grateful he won but you have no idea how much it would have meant to him to have gotten this award when he was alive (say, in 1996, which was the last time we came to a DeepSouthCon). But I appreciate the love that was behind this."

Those eligible for the Phoenix Award are science fiction or fantasy professionals who have, at some point, resided in the South; whose professional work reflects on the South in a positive way; or who have demonstrated friendship with Southern fandom through support of regional fan activities. It may be given posthumously.

By winning the Rebel Award, Naomi Fisher balances the family mantelpiece which already holds the 1993 Rebel Award won by husband G. Patrick Molloy. They have a tradition of sharing these kinds of fannish achievement, having also jointly won DUFF in 2001.

The first Rebel Award was given at the 1964 DeepSouthCon. Its history is retold by Guy Lillian III in a fine article available online

at <http://www.smithuel.net/sfchb/hbp2reb.html>

Hamit's New Play Staged by Bay Area Troupe

Francis Hamit's new drama "Memorial Day" premiered over the May 13-15 weekend at the Masquers Playhouse in Point Richmond, California. Betty Baker Bindner directed the production. Hamit describes "Memorial Day" as a poignant look at patriotic small town veterans whose minds, hearts, and lives are deeply affected by their memories of military service, concluding, "The play is not so much an anti-war play as it is pro-soldier."

Medical Updates

Vancouver fan **Al Betz** suffered a heart attack in March. He underwent open-heart surgery a week later, with doctors replacing his aortic valve and doing four bypasses. By May Al was back in excellent humor, proven by various comments in his letter to *BCSFazine* where he promised that the new valve will probably last 10 to 15 years, "So you are stuck with me for some time yet!"

John Bangsund, well-known Australian fan, suffered a stroke on February 18. Bruce Gillespie posted online that the mostly affected that part of the brain which controls speech.

Late in May, Sally Yeoland reported on Trufen.net, "[He] seems to have made a full recovery from the stroke, and is enjoying doing cryptic crosswords and the latest craze of Sudoku. He has recovered enough that he is keen to drive again. [...] The next stage medically is to have the abdominal aortic aneurism fixed. This was first diagnosed some 18 months or so ago."

Joyce Worley Katz had an angiogram in May, followed by an angioplasty procedure. Arnie Katz posted on Trufen, "The doctor expressed great satisfaction about the success of the procedure..."

In May, **Doug Friauf** had a pacemaker put in.

In July it was announced to St. Louis fandom that **David R. Verseman**, former Archon Chair and StLSFS club member, has terminal cancer. Local fans were given contact information to use if they wished to visit.

Howard DeVore re-entered the hospital in August to take care of "an undisclosed ailment," but was out again before Labor Day. He wrote online: "I spent six days in hospital, fluid on lung and thousands of bucks of tests. No major change so I got report. Some danger in doing anything so I didn't." DeVore, who will be one of the 2006 Worldcon guests of honor, had heart problems a year ago.

My Dinner With Sauron

Meals fit for a hungry hobbit were served while fans watched the *Lord of the Rings*

marathon August 21 at the Alamo Drafthouse in Austin, TX. The Alamo Drafthouse is famous for its dinner-and-movie combinations, and considered by some to be America's number one movie theater. It took only a few minutes to sell all 147 tickets to this special event whose menu was inspired by Middle-Earth and where Chef John Bullington served frequent meals on a schedule calculated to warm a hobbit's heart:

First Breakfast: Fresh Hens eggs, nice crispy bacon, grilled mushrooms and orange slice

Second Breakfast: Strawberries and Cream
Elevensies: Pan Seared Sausage and tomatoes with cheeses, cabbage and pickles

Luncheon: Braised Spareribs with mashed potatoes, roast carrots

Afternoon Tea: Baby greens with garlic blackberry vinaigrette, cheese herb galette, served with tea cookies

Dinner: Stewed Coney (rabbit) with taters, carrot, and leek, fresh garden herbs with crusty bread

Supper: Swirl of tomato and spinach soups wild mushroom crouton, apple pie

The creativity is contagious. Somebody is already selling an unofficial Hobbit Feast t-shirt that shows restaurant icon Big Boy – with furry feet.

Movie-themed menus are one of the regular attractions of Alamo Drafthouse theaters, and other examples of Chef Bullington's work – menus for *King Kong* and *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* – can be found online. The demand for tickets to the LOTR event was so high they will rerun the event in November.

Among their other events with appeal to fans is this one reported by Craige Howlett on Smofs, "They have also decided to do a *Firefly* marathon which was listed on their web site like this: 'Warm up for *Serenity* with all 14 hours of the beloved TV show on the big screen with trivia, prizes, Chinese swearing lessons, special Chinese menu items, and more! We're going to watch all of the episodes of the original show (in the order they were supposed to be shown in, not the wacky mixed up way FOX decided to air them) on the big screen. And we're going to learn how to swear in Chinese too!'"

[[Originally appeared on Trufen.net]]

St. Louis Stands Off Last-Minute NASFiC Rival

A 2007 NASFiC loomed on the horizon immediately after fans chose Japan to host the Worldcon in that year. NASFiC – the North American Science Fiction Convention – is provided under the same World Science Fiction Society rules that govern Worldcons, Hugos, and where Ben Yalow spends Labor Day.

Competing bids for Ocean City, MD and St. Louis, MO were initially publicized, but only

St. Louis submitted a bid in time to appear on the ballot. The St. Louis bid remained *almost* unopposed when site selection voting began at CascadiaCon.

On Friday of Labor Day weekend during the 2005 NASFiC, Chaz Boston Baden filed the necessary paperwork to qualify San Jose, CA as a write-in bid for 2007. His concept was for a 3-day "Relaxa-NASFiC" (is there any other kind?) to be held the weekend before the Worldcon in Yokohama, with programming planned to be a Japanese culture tutorial/how-to in preparation for going to Japan the following week. The last-minute campaign changed little: in light voting (161 ballots case) the final tally was:

Archon 31/St. Louis	115
San Jose	27
None of the Above	11
No Preference	8

The winning St. Louis bidders will piggyback the NASFiC onto their annual Archon. Instead of the usual fall date, the con will be held August 2-5, 2007 – a month before the Japanese Worldcon. According to bidder Rich Zellich, "This is to allow fans from outside the St. Louis metropolitan area to attend with their families before the fall school sessions start, and puts us a month before the Worldcon instead of a month after it."

They will use Archon's usual venue, the Collinsville Gateway Center and adjacent Holiday Inn. They will have two additional ballrooms in the Gateway Center for expanded programming, with construction of the new wing scheduled for April 2006 completion.

The announced guests are: Featured GoH, Elizabeth Moon; Artist GoH, Romas Kukalis, Media GoH, voice actor Billy West; Gaming GoH, Hex Games; Fan GoH, Jan Howard; Costuming and Filk GoHs to be announced; Toastmaster, Robin Wayne Bailey; Masquerade MC, Vic Milan.

Membership information is on the convention website at:

<http://www.archonstl.org/31>

Westercon Site Selection

San Jose won the 2007 Westercon Site Selection election held in Calgary. The San Jose bid polled the vast majority of the ballots expressing a preference, with 82%.

Westercon 60, "Gnomeward Bound," boasts three charismatic headlines: Writer Guest of Honor Tad Williams, Artist Guest of Honor Theresa Mather, and Fan Guest of Honor Christian McGuire.

Membership and other information may be found on the web site at:

<http://spfi.org/westercon60/>

Graphic Examples by Mike Glycer

Fans who were disappointed after last year's Worldcon that Steve Stiles didn't claim the Best Fanartist Hugo felt he was disadvantaged by not having a website to display his work to voters. That obstacle has been eliminated from the 2005 race because now there is – stevestiles.com

Steve Stiles in caricature poses beside a buxom friend promising a site “loaded with sophistication (as you can see from the broad in the foreground).” And Steve delivers in six colorful segments -- Comics Articles, Computer Art, Fanzine Art, Fanzine Articles, Professional Art and Links. Bill Burns hosts this site and receives big credit from Steve for providing help and encouragement.

Comics Articles: Stiles has collected 75 articles he wrote about all kinds of comics for CollectingChannel.com in the days when Arnie Katz was at the helm.

Computer Art: With help from his Mac, Steve can play around with colorful imagery that once he could only do with rare colored ditto masters.

Fanzine Art: Thumbnails of 33 fanzine covers are displayed to click on and see the full-size version. Steve's work has appeared everywhere in fandom, from classic faanish zines to Worldcon progress reports (“Crabs of Our Solar System” for ConStellation PR 2.)

Steve says on his site that he has done over 4,000 pieces of fannish artwork since his first cartoon appeared in *Cry of the Nameless* in 1959. “It was ghastly beyond belief...” Steve insists. I guess when you grow up to be a brilliant artist you are sensitive about these things.



Steve Stiles. Photo by Chaz Boston Baden.

Fanzine Articles: But wait, Steve is a brilliant fanwriter too. He offers a wide selection of his fanzine articles, led off by “Art School.” It was originally published in *Mimosa*, and its Joe Mayhew illustrations are done in a homage to Steve's underground style. Most impressive is Steve's report of his 1968 TAFF trip, titled

“Harrison Country.” Without a doubt, people visiting this site to see Steve's art will also leave with a new appreciation for his written work as a humorist and critic.

Professional Art: Three dozen thumbnails lead to full-sized examples of his pro comics work, for example, “Mind Siege!” published in Kitchen Sink's horror title *Death Rattle*. Steve selected a page that includes tuckerizations of [Barry] Smotroff and [Don] Keller.

As you can tell, Steve didn't need the do-it-yourself kit I had in mind. But if a visit to his website whets your appetite for more things Stilesian, friend Google can help you out. A search of the eFanzines site alone returns 115 links to documents with Stiles references, such as “The Trickle-Down Theory of Dr. Fandom” by Ted White in *Apparatchik* 72, an article inspired by experiences working at the same company with Steve.

Elsewhere on the web you can find examples of his pro art that are not collected on Steve's own site. Lambiek.net's Comicipedia has two examples, one of them from *The Adventures Of Professor Thintwhistle And His Incredible Aether Flier*, a strip he did with Dick Lupoff for *Heavy Metal* (still available from Fantagraphics Press).

Hugo nominations are nice, but egoboo is even better -- so take advantage of the e-mail address listed on Steve's new website to personally tell him how much you enjoy what he's doing.

Lasting Impressions of Fandom

Milwaukee Ditto

Not all the names on the Ditto 18 flyer are recognizable. Bottle cap inspectors LaVerne DeFazio and Shirley Feeney? Hardware consultant Howard Cunningham? These must be Milwaukee neos who are helping a Ditto committee headlined by “Brewmeisters” Henry and Letha Welch. The whole “Brew Crew” will welcome fanzine fans to the October 14-16 gathering, with LaVerne and Shirley joined by a few better-known fans including Trinlay Khadro, Henry Osier, Greg Rihn, Georgie Schnobrich, Dick Smith, and Leah Zeldes Smith.

Ditto 18 will take place at the Best Western

Airport Milwaukee. Advance memberships are \$35. For more information contact Henry Welch at 1525 16th Ave., Grafton, WI 53024, or e-mail him at Welch@msoe.edu.

Vancouver Confidential

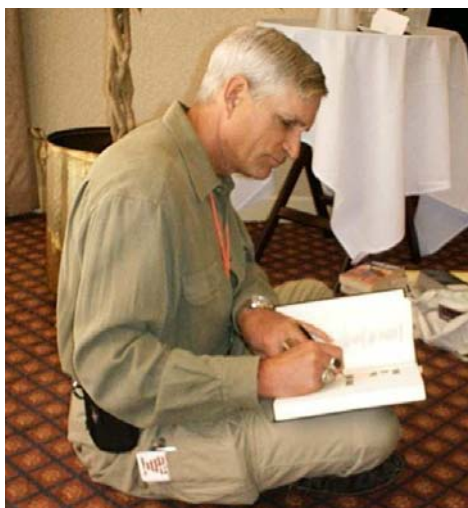
Garth Spencer, long-time editor of the Vancouver club's prolific *BCSFAzine*, recently announced he is at work preparing a candidate to succeed him when elections are held at the club's general meeting in October 2005. Under Garth's leadership, *BCSFAzine* has given encyclopedic coverage to a wide range of fan interests, and boasted a very lively letter column.

Titanium DVDs

Laurraine Tutihasi is the source for DVDs of Corflu Titanium, the 2005 gathering of worldwide fanzine lovers. It is a 3-DVD set (Region 1). With postage within the US -- \$10.50.

There are also DVDs of Corflu Blackjack still available, a 2-DVD set (Region 1). With postage within the US -- \$7.50. Both sets together will come to \$16.50.

Price covers cost of media, postage (first class), and shipping supplies. Price may fluctuate depending on media and shipping costs. Payment may be made by cheque (US dollars) or by Paypal. Contact Laurraine to order at laurraine@mac.com



David Drake

SHEVACON 13

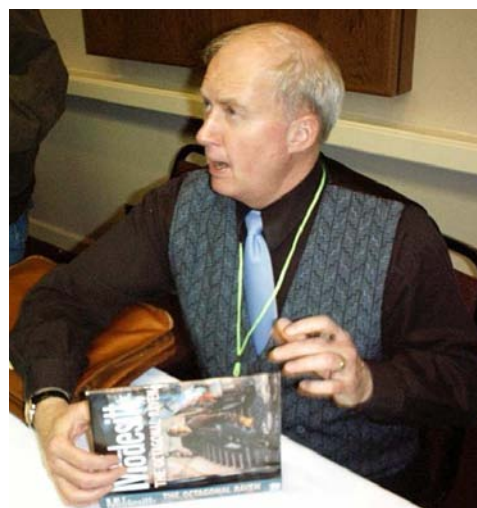
ROANOAKE, VA

FEBRUARY

25-27, 2005

REPORT BY

H. L. DRAKE



L. E. Modessitt, Jr.

By late Saturday afternoon 599 persons had registered for Shevacon 13 held at the Holiday Inn Tanglewood, a suburb of Roanoke, Virginia. Shevacon is a science fiction, fantasy, horror and gaming convention for the whole family (plus two dogs—four-legged kind—that I saw), held February 25-27. The writer guest of honor at the 2005 convention was L. E. Modessitt, Jr. Several additional authors were in attendance and selling their books, including David Drake and Eric Flint.

The 6 p.m. Friday panel presentation titled “Dude, Where Did the Science Go?” [in science fiction/fantasy] consisted of David Drake (many books in the fantasy/SF genre, including the *Hammer’s Slammers* series and *The Dragon Lord*), Steve Miller (co-author with his wife of the *Liaden Universe* series and many other short stories and books), John Ringo (*A Hymn Before Battle*, *When the Devil Dances*, *Hell’s Faire* and several novels in collaboration with other authors), Stephen E. Cobb (*Bones Burnt Black* and *Plague at Redhook*) and Alan Wold (published nine novels, several short stories and five non-fiction books about computers). In answering the panel’s topic, authors agreed that some SF writers have given up hard science, or, simply died off. Few are doing the Hal Clement approach anymore: getting a neat scientific idea and writing a story around that idea. Ringo said that a sense of wonder has gone in relation to science and technology. He also maintains that not enough hard scientists have entered the field of SF writing. Allan Wold told the audience that people reading SF today are more sophisticated than 50 years ago. Steve Miller added that what used to be a sense of wonder in scientific paraphernalia is now common for many people. And, Miller said, if we are losing readers maybe they are “home-tinkerers” of their own scientific and research projects.

“Kick Butt Babes” as heroines in SF were defined and discussed—if not defended—by Friday’s 7 p.m. panelists: Julie Cochrane

(*Cally’s War*, co-authored with John Ringo), Julie Goodman (*Hetaera*, contributing author to *The Fantasy Writer’s Companion*), Sharon Lee (co-authoring with her husband *Scout’s Progress*, *Local Custom*, *Crystal Soldier*), John Ringo (collaborative novels and several individual ones such as *There Will Be Dragons*, *Emerald Sea*, *Against the Tide*), L. E. Modessitt, Jr. (numerous novels including *The Towers Of The Sunset*, *The Magic Of Recluce*, *The Octagonal Raven*), David Coe (several novels including *Bonds of Vengeance*, *Rules of Ascension*, *Seeds of Betrayal*) and Tee Morris (*Morrevi: The Chronicles of Rafe & Skana*, *Billibub Baddings* and *The Case of The Singing Sword*). The number of persons on this panel exemplified what I considered a flaw in Shevacon’s programming; most authors appearing at conventions are talkers and I was sometimes confused and frustrated by so many persons talking/bantering/arguing and throwing out one-liners within any one sixty minute time-frame.

According to Julie Cochrane, a “kick butt babe” is a young and busty woman young enough to hold a 14 year old boy’s interest! Goodman added that such a woman takes charge of a negative situation with which she is confronted. Ringo defined a “kick butt babe” as being capable, adapting to various situations, conquering adversity and overcoming obstacles. Coe said that a “kick butt babe” is whatever his wife tells him it is!

The 8 p.m. Friday “Small Press Publishing” panel also suffered from having too many members for the one-hour time limit. However, many good points were made by Bud Webster (short stories; e.g., “Frog Level” in *Interzone* and non-fiction articles, one for the two-volume *Supernatural Fiction Writers*, 2nd Edition), Stephen Pagel (President and Senior Editor of Meisha Merlin Publishing), Michael Pederson (publisher-editor of the semiprozine, *Nth Degree*), Tony Ruggiero (several novels including *Team of Darkness*, *Mind Trap* and

contributor to *The Fantasy Writer’s Companion*), Jana Oliver (host of two radio shows, novels including *DragonFire* and *The Summoning Stone*), and Laura Underwood (a librarian and author of at least 60 published short stories and novels such as *Ard Magister*, *The Black Hunter*).

All panelists agreed with Bud Webster that small presses and independent publishing are vitally important to the SF and Horror genre; e.g., these are the only places for anthologies or single-author short stories collections to be published, as well as offering venues for new authors. Stephen Pagel said that readers turn to small press publications for material that the big New York commercial publishers do not offer. Tony Ruggiero told the audience that he would be eternally grateful to the small presses because without them, he would probably never be published. Laura Underwood said that a small press offers her opportunities to do what she wants with her writing; she has more freedom and does not have to do “cookie-cutter” writing. Underwood also made the point that now there are “bean-counters” in big New York publishing companies, instead of editors; these publishers must sell approximately 50 percent of their copies so, they must accept manuscripts on that basis. Panelists agreed on some downsides to small press and independent publishing: money, marketing/distribution, budgeting and copy-editing. Small presses are heavily represented at SF conferences in order to advertise their books and authors.

Friday night’s 10 p.m. session titled “What Should Good Fantasy Do?” got to the matter of writing and reading fantasy. Those sitting on the panel were: Eric Flint (short stories and many novels written independently, such as *Mother of Demons*, *Forward the Mage*, and the *Belisarius* series in collaboration with David Drake), Jana Oliver, David Coe, L. E. Modessitt, Jr., Julie Goodman and Tee Morris.

Good fantasy at its best is escapism, accord-

ing to Julie Goodman. L. E. Modessitt, added that good fantasy entertains while making readers think. And, Modessitt said, if a writer merely informs, he/she doesn't get published. Good fantasy for Jana Oliver involves something compelling in the story and characters that grow and change as they are being affected by the decisions that they make. Eric Flint made the observation that realistic literature is a sub-genre of fantasy. Flint maintains that fantasy is how all literature began and there is no clear dividing line between science fiction and fantasy. Modessitt is a trained economist



"Kick Butt Babes" panelists Julie Cochrane, Julie Goodman, Sharon Lee, John Ringo, L. E. Modessitt, Jr., David Coe and Tee Morris

and he finds that most SF stories contain bad economics! Modessitt is looking for an SF author who will answer: How do you put the science in this story into production in the real world? David Coe told the audience that speculative fiction's strength is that real life issues can be handled outside of the ways of our real world; speculative fiction is a lens with which to view issues in our everyday lives. Eric Flint has two basic ingredients in the fables that he writes: he tells stories of once upon a time and he informs his readers of the moral behind each story.

This panel spent some of their time discussing alternative history stories and novels that are a popular sub-genre in the field of SF. Eric Flint is a formally trained historian; it takes him longer to write alternative history because of the research that he feels is necessary for such stories. Modessitt's alternative history series, the *Ghosts of Columbia*, is based on ghosts being real and this can be proved by physics; he maintains that ghosts are physical phenomena that are found throughout all of human history. Tee Morris said that he has lots of fun writing fantasy with real history settings. This panel concluded by considering whether or not good fantasy can deviate from the standards (tropes) of fantasy. Flint said that, yes, a writer may deviate from the tropes of fantasy; he writes science fantasy and alternate history tied closely to the Christian religion with Devine powers intervening. Julie Goodman agreed that a writer can deviate from the basic fantasy tropes; but, she said that fantasy tropes are used to reach a commonality in order to arrive at a sense of comfort for readers. The panel did not provide a clear list of fantasy tropes, *per se*.

Because I have had some experience in "Electronic Publishing," I attended that session at 9 a.m. Saturday morning in hopes of being

brought up-to-date on the subject. This panel's members were Laura Underwood, Tee Morris, Michael Pederson and Peter Prellwitz (novels including *The Science of Magic*, *Promise Tide*, *Horizons*).

The panel's first job was to tell us why writers should publish electronically. Prellwitz said that he enjoys electronic publishing because a writer doesn't need an agent and isn't required to work through a complicated distribution process. Michael Pederson's *Nth Degree* semiprozine is published on the web as well as in hard copies and, therefore, he can publish more new writers. Laura Underwood said that she achieved success as a published novelist with electronic publishing, after trying to get published by the big name publishers. As far as Underwood is concerned, electronic publishing offers a wider audience for her work and more markets.

The panel discussed further advantages to electronic publishing: the various e-book readers now available provide excellent portability for readers; e-book readers usually carry a dictionary program which allows readers to quickly check the definitions of words and get back to the story; writers reach international audiences; e-books can be designed to be printed in hard copies; e-books have the advantage of impulse buying for the current generation seeking instant gratification; readers can click on hot links that many e-books have; many major libraries are checking-out e-books on readers and cancel the entire book when it is due. Panelists agreed that right now, making money from electronic publishing is questionable. Pederson offered the idea that "e-commerce" in general, has not yet found the right money making business model for publishers and authors.

I know that I have been making mistakes in writing. So, I purposely attended the 11 a.m.

Saturday session on "Top 10 Mistakes New Writers Make" in hopes of maybe straightening myself out. This panel was comprised of Steve Miller, Jana Oliver, Julie Goodman, Paul Dellinger (many short stories published, script writer of a radio series, co-author of a nonfiction book on UFO's in the Wytheville, Virginia area), Peter Prellwitz and Tee Morris.

Steve Miller began this panel's presentation with what sounded to me like excellent advice: Do not assume that the sale of one story or book will change

your entire life; live the rest of your life outside of authorship. According to the panel, common mistakes made by new writers are: not reading other authors' works; procrastination in setting up a regular schedule for writing; don't always argue with editors/publishers who want changes in a manuscript; the misconception that when a contract is signed the author has finished working. Tee Morris said that new writers should not forget the following three basic verbal ways to communicate in public, including bookstore signings: "Please"; "Thank you"; and, "Hi! How are you?" Jana Oliver said that it is important for new writers to sit down and listen to higher-level professionals at conventions. Steve Miller said that the best advice that he received as a beginning author was to write three or four short stories and then do a novel. According to Prellwitz, new writers should respect their readers by not cutting corners; e. g., use factual science upon which to build a story—attention to detail is crucial. Panel members seemed in agreement that if a writer begins a story and then does not like it, *stop writing*; your readers won't like it either! All panelists agreed that a new writer should not worry about the word count for a short story or novel; write the story and finish it.

The idea of researching science in science fiction and alternate history stories is vital, according to the authors who comprised the panel on "Researching Your Story," which was next on my agenda at 1: o'clock Saturday. Panel members were Tony Ruggerio, Eric Flint, Allen Wold, Stephen E. Cobb, David Coe (novels *Bonds of Vengeance*, *Shapers of Darkness*, *The Outlanders*) and Sharon Lee (co-authoring stories with her husband, Steve Miller).

On the question of when to do research, Sharon Lee said that at a point in her manu-

script when she knows that she must check facts, she puts brackets around the words [LOOK THIS UP]. David Coe anticipates some basic material that he must research before he begins a book, then, researches as he goes along in the manuscript. Allen Wold's formal training was in research; he keeps research constantly in his mind as he writes. Wold uses brackets for subsequent items that need to be checked and keeps on writing. Eric Flint begins researching a year ahead of time if he is going to write a historically based story; while writing he uses capital letters "NOTE" at items that need to be checked later and keeps on writing so that he doesn't break his train of thought. Stephen Cobb reads nonfiction for fun in his everyday life and, thus, he thinks that he doesn't have to do as much research as he otherwise would have to do. Sharon Lee's rule of thumb is that the devil is in the details and an author must get the details right. Flint cautioned that what a writer sometimes thinks is going to be simple in research, turns out to be more complicated and time-consuming than expected. David Coe echoed Flint's point by saying that he often gets caught up in research and doesn't get his writing done.

On the subject of research sources, panelists agreed with the following: the internet is good for quick research but is untrustworthy and must be substantiated by multiple sources; and, sometimes, a children's non-fiction book can be helpful because they are usually accurate and are not cluttered with minutia. On the question of how much is too much research, Flint said give only that amount of researched factual data to enable the reader to follow the story. And, continued Flint, if the author has some really interesting data, then put it in the story using no more than two paragraphs.

The 2 p.m. Saturday afternoon session was the most vociferous audience and panel exchange of all the programs that I attended at Shevacon13. The topic was "Alternate History: Plausibility vs. Exoticism" and presenting authors were Eric Flint, Greg Eatroff (editor of FAANS.COM and his fiction and nonfiction has appeared in *Changing the Times* and *Old*



"Small Press Publishing" panelists Bud Webster, Stephen Pagel, Michael Pederson, Tony Ruggiero, Jana Oliver, and Laura Underwood

Dominion Historical Review), L. E. Modessitt, Steve White (*Forge of the Titans*, *Demon's Gate* and other novels co-authored with David Weber) and Tom Kratman (instructor at the Army War College in Carlisle, PA and author of *A State of Disobedience*, *Watch on the Rhine* with John Ringo).

An example of alternate history stories is *The Ghost of Columbia* series by L. E. Modessitt, Jr. Although alternate history has been around for many years, alternate history seems to have expanded as an SF sub-genre in the past 10-15 years. Why is this? Because of its "sense of wonder—what if?" according to Modessitt. Eric Flint said that alternate history is popular because there is a shakeup now with America's technology and industry and readers' are uneasy about this. Also, Flint reminded everyone that the big commercial publishers have stopped historical fiction as a genre; thus, a lot of readers have drifted into SF. Greg Eatroff listed three types of alternate history: (1) straight alternate; (2) *Connecticut Yankee*-type stories in which a character tries going back to change history; and, (3) aliens or magic history, which is different from our own.

During Saturday's 3 p.m. session on "Anglo-Saxon Influences on Modern Fantasy" Greg Eatroff told us that modern fantasy is strongly influenced by Celtic culture. All authors on this panel write at least some fantasy:

Jana Oliver, Greg Eatroff, L. E. Modessitt, Jr., and David Drake. Modessitt said that our modern fantasy has everything coming out well at the end of the story. But, in Norse history and literature, said Modessitt, things do not end well for humans. The panel spent some time in discussing Celtic, Greco-Roman, Japanese, Chinese, Arabian Nights, and Germanic influences in contemporary fantasy novels.

The 5 p.m. panel titled "Has SF Changed Since Star Trek" was a Trekkie minutia can you top this approach and the last program that I attended at Shevacon 13. The panel consisted of Vickey Holt (short stories, novels—*Vengeance is Mine*—and nonfiction) in her pirate's costume, Tony Ruggiero, Michael Pederson, Peter Prellwitz and Gregg Eatroff.

The panel was quickly overcome by questions and statements from the audience and a free-for-all ensued which could only be properly appreciated by those who have watched all episodes of the original "Star Trek" and "Star Trek: The Next Generation" television series. As someone who doesn't give a rat's butt about whether or not Spock should have been commander of the Enterprise while Kirk mopped the decks, or that William Shatner is a C-minus—or, at least nothing higher than a B-level—actor...I did take away some basic ideas that answered the panel's title. Yes, SF has changed since the "Star Trek" mass media/mass hysteria phenomenon; SF is in a constant state of flux. Both "Star Trek" television series introduced tremendous amounts of people to the SF field. Those shows popularized an optimistic view of the future, while showing better factors to be found in our human race. "Star Trek" helped SF to become more acceptable among mainstream publishers and readers. And, an outstanding factor now, the "Star Trek" series dealt with morality. Panelists and audience members agreed that currently, there is no television show that sparks interest among an international public as did "Star Trek." Eventually, an SF television series will become as popular as "Star Trek" and will not have to compete with fans remembering the original series. Because of "Star Trek", SF is here to stay!



"Dude, Where Did the Science Go?" with David Drake, Steve Miller, John Ringo, Stephen E. Cobb, and Alan Wold



OBITUARIES

Bill Bowers

Bill Bowers died April 17 after several years of failing health and a struggle with emphysema. Bill had been living in an assistant living facility and put most of his immense fanzine collection in storage, selling it bit by bit on eBay with the help of Mike Resnick.

Bowers co-published the *Double:Bill* with Bill Mallardi in the 1960s, culminating in *The Double:Bill Symposium*, a milestone publication in which 94 writers and editors responded to a questionnaire, creating a fascinating mosaic of sf in one of its most vibrant eras.

Bill went on to publish over 70 issues of *Outworlds* during the next three decades, a perennial Hugo nominee. He was the Fan Guest of Honor at the 1978 Worldcon in Phoenix.

Stephen Leigh's online tribute insightfully called Bill "a man of lists, who recorded the books he read, the movies he saw, the words he published; who wanted nothing more than to live surrounded by the books, the music, the movies he enjoyed so much; an intensely private individual who would still rip open his heart and display it publicly in his fanzines..."

Art Rapp

Art Rapp died at the age of 80 on March 24, 2005. He had been under care for Alzheimers for several years.

Rapp's focal point fanzine *Spacewarp* originally premiered in March 1947, 8 pages of hectographed prose. By 1950 the zine was coming out every two weeks and being distributed to 125 readers. Rapp's military service in the Korean War ended that phase of the zine's existence. When he returned, he continued publishing *Spacewarp* as an apazine in SAPS.

Among his many claims to fannish fame, Art was the promulgator of "Roscoeism," one of fandom's many burlesque religions. As described by Harry Warner in *All Our Yesterdays*, "Roscoe was Art Rapp's revelation, a gay young beaver who is invisible, protects fans wherever they may be, can be seen flying his spaceship across the sky on Independence Day, and must be toasted on his birthday, Labor Day, at worldcons, which really

only exist for this purpose."

Rapp married well-known fan Nancy Share in 1961. She preceded Art in death on May 4, 2002.

Cy Condra

The passing of long-time LA fan Cy Condra on November 30, 2004 was first announced at a

LASFS meeting in March. Condra's widow, Helen, wrote:

"I hope you will forgive me for letting so much time go by before writing. As you may know, Cy died November 30. On November 23, I found him on the floor seemingly lifeless, but the paramedics managed to get a heartbeat and he was put on life support; but too much time had gone by and when it was removed, he slipped away. As he wished, there was no memorial service.

"Since it was so unexpected, there was much unfinished business to take care of and Christmas activities were put aside.

"Family and friends were important to Cy, and his file cabinet has folders filled with bits of family history. Thanks for keeping in touch through the years."

I knew Condra back in the 1970s when we were both part of the Petards, a rotating-host party group that included Dean Grennell, Dave Hulan, and Dave Locke as well as a number of LASFSians. Meetings at the Condra home

were a treat for jazz buffs, and they would crowd into the small building behind the house where Cy kept his record collection. Charles Burbee, a friend of Cy's since the 1940s, joined them now and then.

Mike Farkash

Michael R. Farkash, 53, died June 9 at his Granada Hills home. Farkash had been ill and was under a doctor's care when he died.

Growing up, he was one of the many protofans from the San Fernando Valley in the late 1960s, and I first saw his name in a magazine from the young adult arm of the LA Public Library that published our reviews. I met him at an organizing meeting for a convention his high school friends wanted to put together. I wasn't quite ready to become an actifan, but less than a year later we had all joined LASFS.

Rip Rense's wonderful online tribute contained this incisive description of his appearance: "This was a roly-poly guy with a soft, insistent voice, protuberant soft-boiled egg eyes that stared at you like Nosferatu, dark wavy hair (when he had it), and a slow, loping walk that prompted his indefatigable friend Scott Paul to occasionally hum the theme music from the old Alfred Hitchcock Hour."

Farkash often worked at local papers published on the periphery of Los Angeles: the now-defunct *Simi Valley Enterprise*, the *Ventura County Star*, the *Antelope Valley Press*, the *Santa Clarita Signal* and *The Hollywood Reporter*, where he continued to freelance until his death. At those publications, he worked as

Fred Kuhn

By Tim Marion

Tim Marion recalls Fred Kuhn, who passed away April 29 at the age of 61:



"Just writing to tell you about Fred Kuhn. For the last few years he was the receptionist at WBAI (New York Pacifica radio). He was the writer, principal singer and leader of the group Light,

who recorded an album in the late 70s (for which Freff kindly provided the artwork), an album of horror and regular folk songs. He had apparently been suffering from bone cancer for a year (had I known, I would have tried to pay my respects while he was still alive). He was a fixture at many of the regional conventions I went to along that time. It took me a while to appreciate him; his

brilliant album certainly helped (he was very, very talented --- he should have had a career at recording his music)."

As Fred Geobold, he hosted "The Light Show" on WBAI. The show featured live musicians, improv groups, comedians, actors and professional wrestlers.





Michael R. Farkash, playwright.

an editor, entertainment reviewer and reporter.

Farkash's passion remained science fiction. Though frustrated in his attempts to break into print, he was the author of numerous plays performed in small theaters. He also wrote and produced a direct-to-video film "Street Vengeance" (1997). His stage plays often concerned topics like the cryogenic preservation of heads or astral projection.

One of the plays Farkash had written, "Stolen Time," was advertised as "about alien abduction, salvation and the joys of reptilian sex." It's clear his rich sense of humor continued to find other outlets long after he became less active in fandom.

Ray Gish

Ray Gish passed away July 31, of prostate cancer. Gish was an active Phoenix fan for decades known particularly for his service on Arizona con committees as art show director, the position he served on the 2004 Phoenix Westercon committee.

Gish was a factor in West Coast fanpolitics over the years. He campaigned with Terry Gish, then his wife and chair of the bid, for a Phoenix in 1993 Worldcon. (It was won by San Francisco). Ray and Terry two sons: David and Sean.

Richard Hubbard

St. Louis fan **Richard Alan Hubbard**, 52, of Columbia, Missouri passed away February 5 after he lost his battle with esophageal cancer. In the fall of 2004, he had been inducted into the Archon Hall of Fame in celebration of his 25 years contributing to St. Louis Fandom. He is survived by his wife, Robin, and daughter, Corrine.

Richard worked for 30 years as a medical laboratory technician. He was enrolled as a full-time student in Biological Sciences department of the University of Missouri-Columbia

with plans to become a medical laboratory researcher.

The StLSFFS made a donation to the Missouri University College of Arts & Sciences in memory of Rick. Missouri University has a tradition of honoring enrolled students who died during the academic year. They held a memorial service for Rick and several other students on April 11 at which they added a brass plaque inscribed with Rick's name to the existing memorials and rang the bells of Switzler Hall.

Bobby Gear, 1942-2005

Barbara Ann Butcher "Bobby" Gear died June 25, from cancer. A premiere member of the fandom's costuming culture, she won awards at every level including CostumeCon and Worldcon. In 2004, she and her husband Marty were part of the "Not the Usual Unusual" presentation that won the Best Humorous award at the Noreascon Four masquerade.

She often served as masquerade judge, and directed the Masquerade at BucConeer, the 1998 Baltimore Worldcon. She was also distinguished as a fanzine editor, receiving a nomination for the Best Fanzine Hugo in 1986 for her *Greater Columbia Fantasy Costumers Guild Newsletter*.

Bobby Gear taught 7th grade social studies. Elspeth Kovar wrote online that Gear was teaching school up until five weeks before her death. Gear suffered a stroke just before Balticon this year, and was diagnosed with cancer shortly afterward. She remained in hospice care for her final weeks.

Friends gathered to celebrate Bobby's life August 6 in Columbia, MD.

Al Turner

Al Turner, a frequent guest at Midwestern conventions, reportedly died of a self-inflicted gunshot on May 1.

(<http://www.livejournal.com/users/seantaclaus/153612.html>).

Turner was an artist in several mediums, legendary for building a life-size spacecraft interior in his basement. He was strongly interested in martial arts, trained in Japanese swordsmanship, and also medieval-style archery using an English longbow. He is survived by three daughters.

Andre Norton

Andre Norton, 93, the "Grand Dame of Science Fiction and Fantasy," author, poet, editor, whose published works span seven decades, died in her sleep of congestive heart failure in her Murfreesboro, Tennessee home, early Thursday morning, March 17.

"Norton requested before her death that she not have a funeral service, but instead asked to be cremated along with a copy of her first and last novels." Her last complete novel, "Three

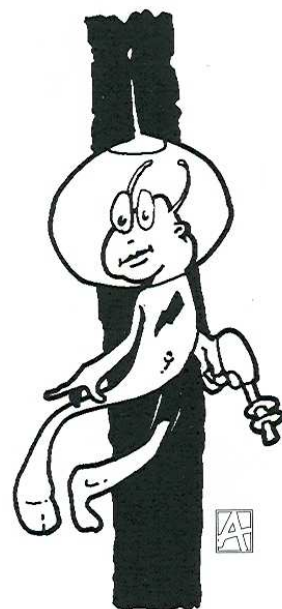
Hands of Scorpio," was set for an April release, so Norton's publisher, Tor books, rushed to have one copy printed so that the author, who had been sick for almost a year, could see and hold it. "She took it and said, 'What a pretty cobalt blue for the cover,'" said Jane Jewell, executive director of SFWA.

James Doohan, RIP

Comments by Mark R. Leeper

[[The obituary column rarely contains anything with a lighter touch, but Mark Leeper found a way in the following tribute to a beloved actor:]]

Science fiction fans will miss James Doohan who played Phil Mitchell in the 1953 [Canadian] TV series "Space Command" and who died the morning of July 20, 2005. The cause of death was pneumonia and Alzheimer's disease. Doohan was 33 when he created the role of Mitchell and was rarely able to escape the science-fiction type-casting from that point of his career on. Later he played in such action films as the 1965 film *Satan Bug*. The following year he once again was involved with science fiction with a part in the TV series "Star Trek." Several other action or science fiction films followed, many of which were connected with the "Star Trek" series. But to the real fans of the genre he will always be Phil Mitchell. I just haven't been able to find many of them. [Reprinted from *The MT Void*, 7/22/2005, number 1292]

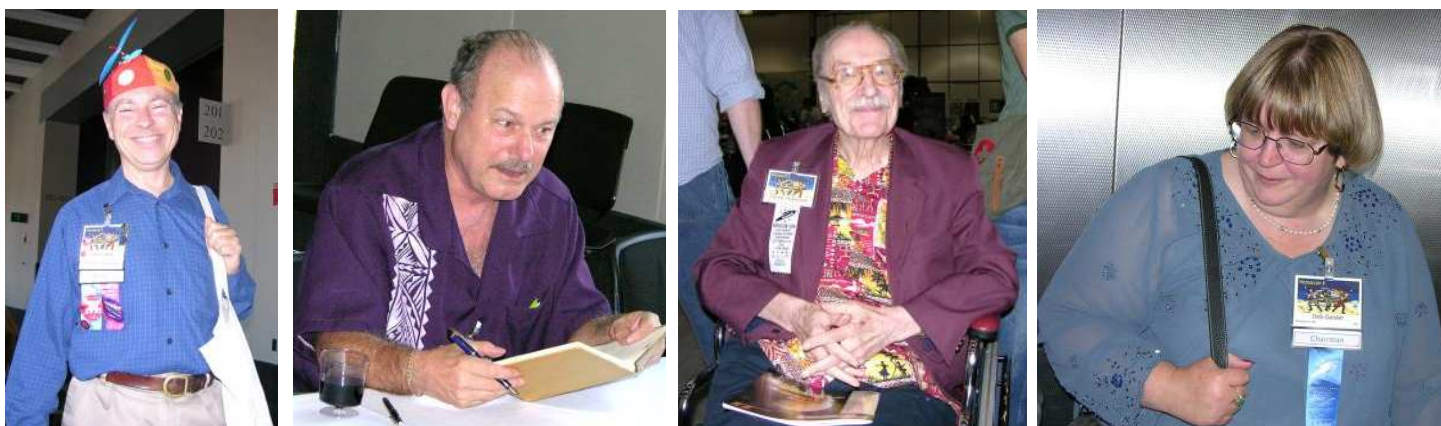




Noreascon Four Star Final

THE VERY LATEST NEWS FROM NOREASCON 4

By Mike Glycer



Glad To Be At Noreascon 4: (1) John Hertz; (2) Joe Haldeman; (3) Forry Ackerman; (4) Deb Geisler, N4 Chair

The Bloody Hugo: A week before Noreascon 4, Jim Hudson asked for the loan of one of my Hugos. He was sure he'd bagged all 52 Hugos to complete his exhibit, then came a disappointing e-mail from Audrey Price-Whelan: "The only one we can't bring is the 1989 Noreascon 3 one. It got very rusted and lost some parts from cleaning ladies and toddlers over the years, so it ended up in the basement. It's pretty much trashed. Luckily that should be an easy one for you to find from someone else."

Not so, Jim actually had a terrible time borrowing a Hugo from the last Boston Worldcon. Remember the Noreascon 3 Hugo base, decorated with glass marbles and brass studs, with its conic cross-sections, including the green "toilet seat" shape that appeared to revolve around the rocket?

Jim talked over the problem with N4 Chairman Deb Geisler. She said, "Well, you know, for purely nostalgic reasons, I'd love to have Glycer's. I left some blood and part of a fingernail on that one (and got a lot of glue on me from reattaching bits)." Every owner of an N3 Hugo knows how fragile they are, so it's interesting to find out the problem started before we ever got them.

Diana lovingly prepared my Hugo for its debut, polishing the rocket and using her glue gun to fasten a loose marble to the base. Then I shipped the Hugo to Laurie Mann. Now I could be certain of bringing home a Hugo without having to win it (a detail I'd be sure to

omit when making my prediction around Guy Lillian.)

Wednesday: Holding the Bag: Since my Hugo had gone on ahead by UPS, I was supremely confident there were no bomb-shaped objects in my luggage when I arrived at LAX.

Airport security was unconvinced. I was pulled aside, my bag opened and its contents inspected. Three times a guard swabbed cotton squares inside the bag and ran them through a chemical analyzer. She said the tests kept indicating there was some kind of suspicious residue. I decided not to helpfully volunteer that in June my suitcase passed customs without incident in Turkey, Greece and France. After 20 minutes of watching this, a supervisor came over and told the guard the equivalent of "These aren't the droids you're looking for," and allowed me to catch my plane.

In the waiting lounge I saw two assistants pushing Forry Ackerman's wheelchair to the gate. It was Forry's first trip to the Worldcon in three years, a gallant comeback after two life-threatening illnesses. He recognized me and made a couple jokes. ("A beard in the hand is worth two in the bush" - that's a joke, right?) Joe Moe said appreciatively that the committee had sent Forry the tickets. I said that was a great thing for them to have done. (When I checked, they claimed no credit for doing so.)

Flying Finish: I didn't tell my taxi driver I was on the way to a science fiction convention, so I don't know why he seemed to think I'd

appreciate a re-enactment of the way Luke and Biggs chased womp-rats through the canyons of Tatooine. He hurtled into the Big Dig tunnel toward downtown Boston on the bumper of another taxi, matching the other cab's randomly swerving course, then changed lanes to pursue freight trucks at speeds that only made sense if he really did have a way of disintegrating them at the last second to avoid collision.

It all nearly ended within sight of my destination. The driver rushed upon two cars blocking our path, then braked so tentatively he must have supposed at the last second he was going to rotate the cab 90 degrees and drive between them. Apparently this was just a special effect, for we actually stopped before crashing. A few moments later I was in front of the Sheraton Boston standing on wobbly legs. Getting there was not half the fun of this Worldcon.

Christian McGuire waited at hotel registration to help with any problems, clearly visible in the throng because he wore a soft hat covered with convention badges and ribbons, the full panoply of smoffish knight-errantry. I didn't tell Christian my cab story, everyone already at the hotel must have his own, maybe worse than mine.

Keith Kato came by the check-in line and let me know that his 30th anniversary chili party would take place after the Hugos. Yum! I did a quick mental calculation -- yes, it was the 1974 Westercon where I first experienced a Kato chili party, fragrant smells radiating

through the hall outside his Francisco Torres dorm room, despite a towel stuffed in the door-sill. Yum!

Where's Registration: Thursday morning I was ready to get my badge and begin collecting all the other ephemera we bring home from Worldcons. I traced the steady stream of fans with nametags to its source. Rounding into the Hynes Auditorium, I passed the security checkpoint and entered a main hallway. I expected there to be a sign pointing to my destination. Surprisingly, there wasn't.

In the middle of the hallway was a whole bank of monitors. I looked to see if they displayed convention information. Nope, they were running slideshows of wildflowers. Craig Miller came along and asked, "Where's Edgar G. Robinson, isn't he dying in here?" My search was over anyway, because underneath the monitors was the entrance to registration.

Which was incredibly efficient. In less time than I used to write down Craig's joke, I had my membership badge and was at the program participants' desk where Saul Jaffe handed over the rest of my stuff.

Poaching and Perching: Next I wanted to take a leisurely read through all the publications and plot out the rest of my day. Where to sit? The outside hallway was pretty bare, no surprise if you know what decorators charge for benches and such. There was an empty table and chairs near the escalators that looked like it had the potential to turn into something official later, but was presently unoccupied. I poached one of the seats, and repaid the loan by directing everyone who came asking, "Where's registration?"

Jamie Kress, daughter-in-law of Nancy, was not deterred from using the other empty chair just because a graybearded fan was parked at the table. We took turns directing

people to registration and reading our schedules.

Guy Lillian III passed with a cartload of stuff for the Fanzine Lounge. Despite the many times I'd rehearsed the taunt in my mind, when the opportunity came I couldn't bear to tell him about my guaranteed Noreascon Hugo. Larry and Fuzzy Pink Niven stopped by. Jim Young and I conferred on employment tax issues. I laughed at his t-shirt's motto, "The Only Good Republican Is An Irish Republican." Craig Miller broke the news to me that this Noreascon wasn't doing silly badge ribbons. Evidently this surprise did not render me speechless, because I told Craig everything I thought about a Worldcon committee that would squelch one of its members most famous talents.

A colonial drum corps hung around waiting for directions to opening ceremonies. Deb Geisler came to give them. When Deb she saw me said, "Thank you for loaning the Hugo trophy I got blood on." Thank goodness Deb made sure mine stayed together all the way home from Noreascon 3. She spared me the notoriety Connie Willis inflicted on another winner, telling everyone how "Charlie Brown lost one of his balls."

Kevin Standlee inspected my Hugo nominee pin and ribbon, saying the committee had done well to make the rockets on each look alike. Somewhere along the way Jamie Kress left, and the vacant chair attracted Lee Gold to stop for a chat. Unfortunately, the moment she sat the chair tumbled her right on the floor. She was okay and promptly climbed back in the saddle. It turned out not to be an isolated incident, because these rented chairs did the same to other fans throughout the con.

Lee and Barry Gold, Fred Patten and I talked about the 40th anniversary of APA-L,

coming in October. Lee said its first Official Collator, Dian Pelz ("Bruce told Dian to do it") was still active on The Cult's e-mail list. We named various fans in connection with early APA-L history, and soon found ourselves carrying on a Len Bailes appreciation program, especially for his unforgettable (by the other three, who saw it) impersonation of Ted Johnstone at a LASFS Halloween party where the theme was "Come as another LASFSian."

Where the Streets Have No Name: It was time for me to follow the directions to the Concourse that I'd been repeating to others, "Go up the escalator to the second floor." The escalator ride still reminded me of the rocket gangway in *When Worlds Collide*, as it had at Noreascon 3.

Noreascon 3 invented the Concourse out of necessity. The committee had been forced to plan everything in the Hynes because the 1987 Boskone had incited the Sheraton to ban sf conventions. Litigation made the Sheraton honor its contract for the 1989 Worldcon, however, most plans for using the Hynes were kept in place.

The 1989 version of the Concourse presented in a unified way many of the Worldcon's smaller happenings that formerly got tucked into hotel corridors and small meeting rooms. One of the Hynes' big halls was dedicated to the Concourse, divided by a few avenues of carpet, along with some couches, artificial plants, and other cheap decorations. The inspiration of the Concourse has been repeated at nearly every Worldcon since 1989. Like many brilliant inventions, in hindsight it seems obvious.

Noreascon 4 didn't name the carpet avenues in the Concourse, and I missed that extra touch Noreascon 3 had given them, names like "Warp Drive" and "Alice Way" (a reference to their Alice in Wonderland bidding theme.)

The Fanzine Lounge occupied prime real estate right inside the hall entrance. The "Lounge" was simply a space partitioned off by two-foot-tall pipe-and-drape. The pillars in the fanzine lounge were decorated with posters of witty quotes. The first one I saw read: "My novel had all the marks of a best seller, except failing to sell. - G.R.R. Martin."

John Hertz did heroic duty getting it set up, assisted by Pat and Roger Sims and others. Keith Lynch arrived, as always wearing his collected Worldcon name badges as a chain, one that has finally grown so long that, to keep from stumbling on it, he must carry it in one hand like the fold of a toga.

Across the aisle from the fanzine lounge was a half-acre of small tables and folding chairs. Some fans stopped there to eat the personal pizzas and wrap sandwiches they bought from the concessionaire. It was also an easy place to sit down with a friend or two and talk until the time came to see a panel or





Leading Men: (1) GoH Terry Pratchett; (2) Hugo host Neil Gaiman; (3) GoHs Peter Weston and Jack Speer; (4) GoH William Tenn. Photos by Keith Stokes, used by permission.

event.

That's where I took Cheryl Morgan aside to say I had just read *Emerald City #108* and once again had been impressed with the zine and her writing. I told her it deserved to win a fanzine Hugo, but a few things were holding it back. Cheryl listened patiently to my suggestions. Who knew my advice would work so quickly? Just 48 hours later she won the Hugo. Note to self: Use this power only for good!

John Mansfield and Don Ayres soon joined us. John was promoting his own idea: "Have a Retro Hugo for late issues." I'd be in the running for that one. Don made a pun about self-publishing, and I reminded him *Selden's Plan* had already been used. Don looked over my shoulder and observed, "Cy Chauvin just walked in." Remarkable: mention *Selden's Plan* and its editor suddenly materializes. Note to self: Use this power only for good!

Opening Ceremonies: Major events are "must see" for those of us who like to write long Worldcon reports. Cheryl and I walked together to the Hynes Auditorium about five minutes before starting time and ran into an obstacle. Hundreds of fans stood outside the closed doors of the auditorium in a growing line that circled the wide atrium where the escalators ascended. The line soon extended back into the hallway we had just traversed. The Winnipeg Worldcon avoided such scenes by opening the doors *two hours* ahead of time. "It's a glitch," said Priscilla Olson coolly as she passed. (Not her glitch, as far as I know.)

I offered to let Larry Niven jump the queue, but he preferred to find his wife (and succeeded). Cheryl and I compared notes, literally, agreeing it is delightful when we get to use exotic words like "queue" in our reports.

Lois McMaster Bujold passed by wearing a distinctive necklace composed of a large number of Hugo nominee rocket pins, and a few other pins for Nebulas and World Fantasy Awards. Reportedly, Bujold had paid a jeweler to make the pins into a necklace, and as fans were enthusing over it Bujold told them, "I can't wait to see Mike Resnick's face."

In a little while the auditorium doors opened and we found seats. I didn't hear a single complaint about the delay all weekend. I've already written (in my Millennium Philcon report) why people don't really want Opening Ceremonies to start on time anyway. Like Philly, Boston satisfied everyone by running late.

There was time to enjoy the novelty of two large video screens running multiplex-theater-style ads for panels, dances and other events. "We want you to join Noreascon Tech. Like to wear black?" The slides used a variety of graphic styles that all looked good and suited the medium.

When Deb Geisler came onstage the action began. In the balcony, two trumpeters played a fanfare. Then the patriotic drum corps marched in, a collection of men and women who looked unnervingly like clones of Jay Kay Klein. Peter Jarvis joined Deb onstage to pass the gavel from TorCon 3. Deb set it aside and produced her own giant gavel. This signified either that all things would be in great order at N4, or that Deb had borrowed her leadership style from comedian Gallagher and large watermelons would be an endangered species at the con.

Concourse, Part II: A false front decorated as a colonial-style tavern named "The Mended Drum" created a triangular space in a corner of the Concourse beside the Fanzine Lounge. Fans could go there for a beer, watch the big video screen or live performers.

Tom Galloway was on his way to a panel on AI (artificial intelligence) with four other panelists named David. Tom said he was going to get the obvious joke out of the way – quoting Hal from *2001*. I was surprised he thought that was the obvious joke, but it turned out Tom hadn't seen Spielberg's *AI*, whose robotic protagonist is named David.

I wandered over to the Concourse's public-use internet area to check how my SimLeague baseball teams were doing. Badly. Elsewhere I discovered the Hoax Exhibit, a table displaying hoax convention newsletters. I was interested to see I had produced half the zines on display.

Hoax Exhibit curator Seth Breidbart has also been a conspirator in these productions – and one must share discredit where it is due.

If you're the kind of person who doesn't believe in coincidence, you can smugly nod when I point out that the next person I talked to was Sharon Sbarsky, who I'd hoped to dun for a list of the silly ribbons produced by the committee. She astonished me by saying there was only one silly ribbon, and she left me guessing who had it.

Thursday Programs: I went up to the Hynes third floor on one of those tall escalators that seemed to reach heavenward to a window on the sky. A couple of angels happened to be passing, Teddy Harvia and Diana Thayer, so I followed them.

Slideshow: Teddy was on his way to a one-man panel that he said the committee hadn't told him was a slide show, so in effect, he was about to do a radio broadcast about his art career.

Fortunately, Teddy is an excellent storyteller. He gets a lot of practice because he lives only three miles from Brad Foster and they get to compare notes on a lot of fannish subjects. The two once debated what kind of artwork faneditors want most. Brad said nudes, Teddy said cute aliens. So they put it to a test. Foster drew a nude with a dumb caption. Teddy drew an alien with a clever caption. They sent both cartoons out. Teddy admitted, "The nude was published first." More surprising to him, the faneditor who published it is a woman!

Artists need their share of recognition, but after winning a Hugo in Glasgow Teddy was a bit deflated when a woman told him she was glad "an Australian" had won it. It seems she had seen so many of his cartoons with marsupial characters that she assumed he came from the land Down Under.

Teddy has actually spent the past year concentrating on his writing. He has decided that his approach to fiction and artwork are similar in that he also writes a novel a scene at a time.

Your Dream Convention: I joined Andrew Porter, Roger Sims, Dave Howell and TAFF

winner James Bacon in creating a convention with a \$20,000,000 budget where money was no object -- or was it still?

Bacon made the panel with his quick wit and his Irish charm. His dream convention GoHs would be Alan Moore, J.K. Rowling and Tim Burton. Porter said Rowling wanted nothing to do with fandom and asked how he would get her to agree. Bacon started counting imaginary money, "Ten thousand, eleven thousand...."

I agreed that money would be the lubricant to get some dream guests or program participants. And with an unlimited budget we could finally do a proper Hugo base. Peter Weston's company that makes the rockets also makes hood ornaments for Jaguars, and who would mind getting their award in the same format, a Hugo with a Jaguar attached?

James Bacon planned a lot of special treats for his con. Every member would get a convention trunk and a batman to handle it. You could specify what's packed inside - whiskey, chocolate, signed first editions. There'd be a sweatshop making masquerade costumes on demand.

Porter wanted to hire a train and tour the country, bringing the Worldcon to every great fan who was prevented from traveling, and hiring all the medical support they needed to enjoy the con. He and Roger reminded everyone that it's the people at the con who make it great.

Dealer's Room: As advertised, the dealer's room was full of books. The bonanza began at the front door, where Larry Smith's island of new hardcovers and paperbacks dominated the scene. I picked up a Bujold novel I didn't have and, while waiting to pay, talked to Sally Kobee and Joey Grillot. I was so absorbed in the conversation I almost got carried away and shoplifted the book. While we've heard stories about thefts at conventions, I wonder how often Larry Smith has distracted customers sheepishly come back later to pay him.

Ariel Shattan and I talked about childrearing. She had in hand a program participant ribbon for her 12-year-old, who was running a game in Children's Program. A conversation about child discipline took off from the question of what kind of kids we wanted ours to turn out to be - a little weird, like ourselves, but still very nice to be around...

Friday Program: When Fandom Hurts: Elaine Brennan, Geri Sullivan and I might have prepared to talk about obituaries, feuds, and the SFWA Emergency Fund, but in hindsight I suppose it should have been obvious that a panel by this name would attract people who wanted to tell how fandom has wounded them. So there was a lot of audience participation. Elaine had good insights. Geri had great empathy, as when she asked this rhetorical question about a con she'd worked: "What would it be like to chair this convention if



there was one department head who's not on antidepressants?"

Fan Gallery: The corridors of the Hynes third floor were quite wide enough to set exhibits in the middle without interfering with the heavy flow of people to program rooms. The Fan Gallery and Christine Valada's venerable gallery of writer photos created islands of visual interest for people walking the length of the building. (For the first time ever, someone stole one of the photographs from Christine's display.) Chaz Boston Baden really distinguished the Fan Gallery by blowing up some of the fan photos to poster size. He varied them day to day. The poster children included Janet Wilson Anderson in a masquerade costume, Christian McGuire in a tux, a Japanese fan in traditional attire, etc.

Secrets Revealed in the Fanzine Lounge: In the Fanzine Lounge Paul Pesico was quizzing Milt Stevens about whether Don Fitch's hearing loss is congenital. We didn't know. Paul left wondering what kind of insensitive louts could know somebody for almost 40 years and be unable to supply these personal details.

We tried to overcompensate for our ignorance by immediately listening to some secret info about national intelligence. This mainly consisted of hearing Bill Burns' explain how he once sold the CIA a copy of Paul Linebarger's book on spying.

Milt decided this was the right moment to share a secret of his own. The Noreascon 4 committee produced a bulky, 8-1/2 x 11, 110-page program schedule. Milt Stevens (and many others) would have preferred a schedule fits in a pocket. Milt got what he wanted by

ripping out the pages for the day and folding them to fit in his pocket.

GoH Event: On Friday night, Noreascon's "Time Travel Machine" sandwiched together GoH interviews conducted by Peter Weston with Retro Hugo presentations emceed by Bob Eggleton.

Dancing bobby soxers put us in a retro frame of mind. So did an explanation of Bob Tucker's traditional, alcoholic "Smooooooth!" Eggleton delivered the first couple of Retro Hugos, Best Fan Writer to Bob Tucker (accepted by Keith Stokes) and Best Fanzine to *Slant*, accepted by Joe Siclari and James Bacon.

Peter Weston interviewed guest of honor Jack Speer, mentioning he had seen Speer jumping in the bouncy castle at the 1995 Glasgow Worldcon. The youthful Speer in turn reminded Weston, who didn't know, that Speer's famous *Fancylopedia* is available online.

The Retro for Best Professional Artist went to Chesley Bonestell, accepted by Eggleton. The announcement that John W. Campbell won the Best Professional Editor was followed by a pregnant pause. "Not here!" shouted Andrew Porter.

Peter Weston led guest of honor William Tenn through great stories about H.L. Gold and John W. Campbell.

Clips were shown from the Best Dramatic Presentation nominees. People applauded when *The Best From 20,000 Fathoms* bit off a lighthouse, but *It Came From Outer Space* reminded us that in 1953 the effects were often less than special. Craig Miller accepted for the winner, *War of the Worlds*.

Weston interviewed guest of honor Terry Pratchett, complimenting him on being awarded the Order of the British Empire. Pratchett admitted the title is less significant now that there is no British Empire, but insisted there is still one piece of empire left, "... a little island in the middle of the ocean with puffins on it. Those puffins damn well have to do what I say!"

The Best Related Book for *Conquest of the Moon* was accepted by Pat Molloy and later transmitted to a space museum in Huntsville. Clarke's "Nine Billion Names of God" was the winning short story, Blish's "Earthman Come Home" and "Case of Conscience" winners of the novelette and novella Retros, respectively.

Weston bantered about Terry Pratchett being on his knees trying to get a Hugo, and having told Terry "If you want a Hugo it won't cost you any money at all. All you have to do is write a *science fiction* novel."

Pratchett's skepticism must be forgiven - the very next moment, Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* claimed the Best Novel award.

Saturday Programs Not Seen: There was some great stuff on Saturday's program, and it was all in demand. I planned to see Mark

Leeper *et al* on a “Great Moments in SF Movies” panel, but every seat was taken. A science panel across the hall was stuffed even fuller.

I wandered the corridor of the Hynes third floor and found Chaz Boston Baden admiring Filthy Pierre’s Worldcon guide from the 1980s, saying it is full of “Best Practices” that are never followed by East Coast Worldcons.

Chaz was filling the vacuum for silly ribbons. In his box were ribbons saying: Hot Bipolar Babe, Vanilla Pride, Space Cadet, Space Cadette, Gender Outlaw, LASFS Member, Death Will Not Release You, Herbangelist, Seeker of Ghu, Unofficial Hoax (for Seth Breidbart), Beefcake, Cheesecake, First Church of Roscoe, Pretty Boy, Flexible, Pan Galactic Minion, Jailbait, Burning Fan, Straight But Not Narrow, 2d Generation Fan, and 3d Generation Fan.

Not jokes by any means, I was amused by Noreascon’s official child care ribbons “Comet,” for a child permitted to go and come back, and “Satellite,” for one who wasn’t.

Accompanied by a sign on a six-foot-tall pole announcing “Village Tour,” John Hertz led a group and pointed to me as an example of heaven-only-knows.

Kathi Overton stopped listening to her radio long enough to give me the inside scoop on IRS video training: it’s *always* rewritten at the last minute. Then she had to move on: “The voices in my head are telling me....”

Keith Stokes, mercifully remembering I’d been unable to decipher the advance clues about the KC in ’06 bid, made sure I knew KC would have “an important announcement” on Sunday.

Art Show: I turned in my bag at Security and for my claim check was issued half of the two of clubs.

In a row of sculpture the breathtaking centerpiece by Chesley nominee Johanna Y. Klukas was “The Colony Ship Oengus Oc,” made of multicolored wood and standing over six feet tall.

Even if many technically well-made art show entries were not easily distinguished

from the ordinary run of commercial fantasy art available in tourist towns from Cambria to Eureka Springs, a few stood out like Trudy Rosenberger’s pyrograph word pictures, Marilyn Pride’s wonderful miniature acrylic paintings on stones, and Margaret Organ-Kean’s print “Hunting A Theorem” with its compelling S-shaped composition. Daphne Gould’s excellent jewelry included “Forest Pools” made of green new jade, aventine, and pearls.

Noreascon 4 hosted a student sf&f High School Art Contest. I realized I had a tendency to enjoy the humorous efforts more, because other kinds of subjects depend more on successful use of technique. A clever example was “A Donut’s Life,” showing a chocolate doughnut with hands and legs, carrying a briefcase in one hand, then walking its éclair-shaped dog before getting into a coffee cup-shaped car.

Continuing to roam, I enjoyed John A. Stebnicki’s “View From A Starliner,” Aaron Campbell’s “Dead Knight,” oil on paper showing an armored figure fallen in a snow-covered field, and H. Ed Cox’s “Modest Fairy,” capturing a very interesting facial expression in an oil-on-wood composition.

I toured the Retro exhibit of memorable sf art on loan from collectors, many works displayed beside the prozine issues in which they originally appeared. John Schoenherr’s “Wings of a Bat,” a flying dinosaur in shades of ochre. Fourteen superb pen-and-ink interior illustrations for *Double Star* by Frank Kelly Freas. John Berkey’s “Cloud Walkers,” of a hot air balloon decorated as a voracious green shark, flying above galleons on a glassy sea. Schoenherr’s cover art for a Pern dragon riders story. Ed Emshwiller’s “Season’s Greetings” of alien kids watching a four-armed Santa hanging candy canes on a tree. Dean Ellis’s iconic red-planet-on-black-universe cover for *Martian Chronicles*. Schoenherr’s pen-and-inks of characters in Garrett’s “Too Many Magicians,” reminiscent of Rembrandt’s portrait of the Dutch syndics. Tim Kirk’s “Three Baroque Spaceships” with lots of glass windows, the

way Captain Nemo would have liked it.

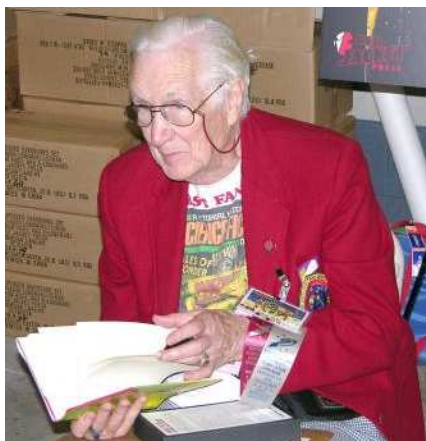
Considering afterwards what I noted, the group seems chosen to justify my tastes as they were when I first saw these pieces years ago. I can hardly argue now that Jeff Jones’s art was less incredible, or Richard Powers’s paintings evoked any less emotional response. And was there really no Walotsky on display at all? Actually no, according to the catalog posted at the N4 website... though I could easily have overlooked him because it’s true I am still more impressed by representational art.

Re-entering the main art show I could see that Jody Lee was asking merely \$4,000 for “King’s Dragon,” a very attractive arrangement of a door hinge, constellation and knight mounted on a white dragon. Karl Kofoed’s “Galactic Geographic Display” consisted of a series of illustrated articles based on sf and xenological ideas. Mike Conrad is a master of eye-grabbing, colorful scenes that seem to jump out at you from the paintings.

Unlike some conventions, it took me awhile to find anything pedestrian in this art show. I haven’t written about any of it, to save room for the good. For example: Jill Eastlake’s quilt, “Friendship Star.” Barbara Armata’s “Journey of the Sorceress,” where characters are hanging onto a shattered mast in an ocean of violent turquoise waves (gouache on watercolor board). Michael Dashow’s painting “In the Skeleton Forest” depicts a young girl fleeing through monstrous skeletons, all incised with scrimshaw, leaving you to wonder is she more afraid of the bones or whoever decorated them? B. L. Black displayed preliminary sketches made in the white space of a convention daily newzine – I knew they must be good for something....

Concourse: In the food service and eating area, one of the tables became headquarters-in-the-field for Bobbi Armbruster, Glenn Glazer, Nancy Cobb and the rest of the Facilities Division. They attracted lots of other visitors, too. This late in the convention folks at the Facilities table in the snack area were a bit giddy. When a Revolutionary War marching band

Looking to Party: (1) James Murray and Margene Bahm relaunching the KC bid; (2) Dave Kyle; (3) Mike Glycer.





Fanhistory: (1) Joe Siclari, James Bacon with James White's Retro Hugo. (2) Cheryl Morgan accepting Best Fanzine. (3) Erwin Strauss with his Special Committee Award.

passed by, Glenn Glazer insisted to Bobbi Armbruster "No, it's pipe and *drape!*"

No wonder they were giddy. During last night's artists reception Glenn had caught a rodent. Holding it by the tail, he carried it out of the reception past the con chair, convention center manager and chief of security, who backed up a step. Glenn smirked, "Shortly before I gave him a 'burial at sea' in the men's room, I named him Nemo."

There had also been the problem that the cake for the artists reception was supposed to say "Noreascon 4" but the baker left out the C.

After the con, TR Smith told about her own encounter with the Hynes: "At some point during the Masquerade, the engineer in the Hynes (who was enjoying it tremendously) decided it was too good not to share and flipped a switch. Fans channel surfing in the Sheraton Boston were quite surprised to see the Masquerade show up on their TVs. Sheraton management had told us there was no feed from the Hynes into the Sheraton, so at our wrap-up meeting, we told them where to look to see the video and audio cables clearly running from the Hynes into the Sheraton and that the Hynes engineer controls them."

At an afternoon tea in the Fanzine Lounge, James Bacon boasted about his growing ability to decipher US state abbreviations, correctly naming the states on the badges of various fans. On the other hand, the Irishman couldn't resist mistranslating the place abbreviated on Mark Plummer's badge, UK, as the "Ukraine."

I saw Ro Nagey for the first time in years. He's living in the UK, too – Wales in his case. Ro was at the con with his wife, Heather. They married in December 2003 and live in her home area. We looked over the posted copy of George Flynn's newspaper obituary, and disbelieved its report that George had ever been young enough to be a child prodigy.

Doug Friauf always rates how navigable Worldcon facilities are in his wheelchair. He

said that Boston had smoothed some of the sidewalk bits since the 1989 Worldcon. But when trying to use the T, the light rail system, there was a gap between the car and landing that once caused him to lose balance and tip over.

Dana Siegel said the party was out of hot water. Although I saw enough smofs to get any con in hot water, John Hertz avoided that by going for water himself.

Hugo Nominees Reception: When they introduced the Hugo base artist and showed the base in public for the first time, Charlie Brown smiled across at me. He's done this too many times to get excited. And wasn't he going to be taking one home soon, anyway?

Regardless that almost every Worldcon does the same, I believe it is a wasted opportunity when committees wait until the nominee reception to unveil the Hugo base. Committees should be showing off the work of art they've invested such effort and expense to achieve, using the image as a recurring motif from the start of the con to build anticipation for the awards.

Scott Lefton was justly proud of his Hugo design, mounting the rocket on a spindle of laquered brass flames, 16 pieces in all. (It would have made the Platonic ideal Hugu Award, the parody always described as a wooden base that looks as if the rocket has just taken off. Lower budget artists usually settle for scorching a spot in on top of a wooden block.)

My decision to grow a beard was fully repaid when Robert Silverberg walked past smiling in approval as he gestured at stroking his own beard.

DUFF winner Norman Cates looked quite like James Bond in his formal white jacket. John Hertz went all-out, with a top hat he collapsed and carried under one arm.

Connie Willis claimed to be worried that she might nod off once the lights went down.

"I'm hoping I can stay awake. I didn't get much sleep last night."

James Bacon was genuinely nervous about his assignment to present the Best Fanwriter Hugo. I assured him nothing more was involved than to wait at the podium until Martin Hoare took the rocket out of his hands. Well, and correctly reciting the names of the nominees. We quickly verified that James could pronounce them.

Hugo Ceremony: My seat in the nominees section was near enough to Rich and Nicki Lynch that I could hear Michael Burstein quizzing them about the 1992 fanzine Hugo mixup.

Host Neil Gaiman's material included a warning against using bad language during acceptance

speeches. (If I lost, was it okay?) Throughout his monologue he kept flicking his tongue every time he paused to let his setup line sink in, which was rather alarming when magnified on a 20-foot-tall screen.

The First Fandom awards were introduced by Keith Stokes and the Zelliches. Dave Kyle presented the Big Heart Award to Filthy Pierre Strauss, who came onstage to a standing ovation. Not much later he was back on stage to get a Special Committee Award, presented by Tony Lewis.

Robert Silverberg reminisced about the first 50 years of Worldcons, momentarily veering into some "Liars Panel" material as he pointed out, "Only two of us have attended all of them. The other one is Connie Willis." I'm sure that woke Connie up.

When the Campbell Award nominees were read out by Stan Schmidt I paid attention to the volume of cheers for each of them, which proved to be no predictor of the winner, Jay Lake.

Norman Cates presented the Best Fan Artist Hugo to Frank Wu. Fan Writer Hugo presenter James Bacon followed my instructions and let Martin Hoare do the heavy lifting. Before Jack Speer could finish reading the Best Fanzine nominees, the winner *Emerald City* flashed onscreen. This year it was Peter Weston's turn to relay the Best Semiprozine Hugo to *Locus*. The first winner of the new Best Dramatic – Short Form category was "Gollum's Acceptance Speech at the 2003 MTV Movie Awards." Ironically, the Hugo acceptance speech was a generic talking-head video with a spokesman reading Peter Jackson's grateful words. The Long Form Hugo also went to Peter Jackson, for *Return of the King*. (Now remind me why we split the category?)

Winning another Best Pro Artist Hugo, Bob Eggleton once again galloped to the stage, his mane flying. Jack Dann had to accept Gardner Dozois' umpteenth Pro Editor Hugo because

Dozois had been forced to miss the con by an auto accident. Host Neil Gaiman wondered how to carry on after winning the Short Story Hugo, and decided to set it on the floor beside him. The name of the Best Novelette winner, Michael Swanwick, was flashed before presenter Catherine Asaro could open the envelope. The evening ended after Vinge won Best Novella and Bujold accepted her Best Novel Hugo.

An extraordinary number of people had packed themselves into the Hugo nominee seating, and now many of them headed for the official Hugo Loser's Party hosted by Glasgow. Two elevators had been dedicated to deliver them to the suite, then one broke down. Jim Mann took groups around to a freight elevator.

Upstairs, Janice Gelb was on the door turning away non-nominees and limiting nominees to two guests. One arrived with five guests and ominously declared that Janice was alienating powerful editors and writers. I guess that person didn't know Janice always gets the last word in her online conreport. I'd be a lot more worried about that!

Sunday in the Park with Fans: I arrived in the Concourse early enough to see Japanese fans setting up a 2007 membership table – they had won their Worldcon bid. I learned from Peggy Rae Sapienza there had been 23 finalists in the bid's *haiku* contest.

Kansas City's bidders were back in harness. They had lost their bid for 2006, so now were going for 2009. If nothing else, they could keep using all their '06 material if they simply turned it upside-down...

I took another shift at the FANAC table identifying people in photographs that mainly had come from the collection of Bruce Pelz. Joyce Scrivner was working, too. John Hertz dropped by with word that a Vermont fan wondered if FANAC was interested in Zelazny personal photos in his possession. John Novak visited, and I turned over to him the Herban-gelist ribbons Chaz had given me, suggesting he distribute them to fans at the Ranquet hap-

pening at lunchtime.

After my shift I spent the next few minutes admiring Jim Hudson's Hugo display. I noticed Whelan's 1984 Hugo base had been glued back together, while Gilliland's alongside was still pristine.

Ron Salomon was posing for a photo with Brian Aldiss and John-Henri Holmberg.

On my way to the TAFF-DUFF auction, I passed Michael Sinclair and Chris Barkley, each standing in a different long autograph line. The fans in one line told me with conviction they were waiting for Connie Willis to sign their books, yet at the head of the line a hundred yards away someone else was signing. I don't know how that worked out. Perhaps better than my plan to see the fan funds auction: when I arrived the room was already jammed and Peter Weston was enthusiastically hawking merchandise.

That afternoon I joined the "Future of Fandom" panel with Moshe Feder, Edie Stern, and Geri Sullivan. Geri claimed she was dressed in Jim Murray's honor, and whatever that had to do with the Kansas City fan required Geri to wear a green net wrap, purple top, red shoes and an orange feather in her hair. We all waited to see if the audience would outnumber us. Perhaps the word had gone out that I'd been on the same item at the 1992 Worldcon and since then three of the five panelists had died. The fannish counterpart of King Tut's curse? Yes, I'm certain that's what kept fans away from our panel....

Monday: I helped John with the final day's Fanzine Lounge setup, which meant hauling out all the fanzines for sale. There were at least four tons of *Mimosas* and *Challengers*. A couple of copies of *Warhoon 22* -- the Willis issue, a great buy at \$22 -- had no takers after four days on the block -- Did we all have the issue already?

At the end of my shift in the Lounge I ate lunch with Fred Lerner. On our way down a flight of stairs we passed a galloping fan wearing a t-shirt that said: "I am a bomb technician. If you see me running, try to keep up."

Over sandwiches, Fred asked to see Sierra's baby pictures. We had a laugh together when he claimed to have seen two books in his work as a librarian: *Your 3-Year-Old: Friend or Foe?*, and *How to Raise Children in Your Spare Time*.

Fred said he was put out that the press kit distributed at the beginning of the Hugo Ceremonies contained the list of winners, albeit in an embargoed press release.

Joe Major stopped by, carrying two canvas bags full of paperbacks. All that reading material would just about last him til he got home. Joe mentioned a few details about the Heinlein Society dinner, including

that there was a Mrs. Heinlein before Leslie, and that Bill Patterson would be upset if he said the name of the first Mrs. Heinlein.

Fred has been busy transferring the audio tapes of his old radio shows to CD. These interviews with sf pros included James Blish. He offered a copy to Blish's son, who was at Noreason to attend the Retro Hugos. The son surprised Fred by saying he had a copy of the old tape and, in fact, recognized Fred's voice.

Before I had to leave for the airport I spent a few more minutes in the dealer's room looking for a book Diana would want. Joe Moe was there and asked how Forry was holding up. Surprising well -- he was outpacing Joe, telling him at 10 he wanted to be here, at 11 he wanted to be there, and at noon somewhere else.

After Hurricane Francis, Pat Sims was expecting the Orlando airport to reopen during the day, before she and Roger would fly home. She was anxious what condition their home would be in, especially since they had not finished cleaning up after the recent Hurricane Charley.

Parting Notes: I left the con with a melancholy feeling that I hadn't done everything I wanted. I never do, but it hasn't bothered me before. I have this recurring dream of it already being the middle of the Worldcon and I haven't yet made it to any programming. This bothers my dream self quite a bit. Perhaps it has something to do with the Worldcon reports I once wrote for *Locus*, with Charlie Brown wanting to know what happened on the program -- how can I write what I haven't seen?

What bothered my "awake" self is that I hadn't spent any time with Boston fans, except those I'd managed to greet when we were heading in opposite directions. I guess if I wanted to hang out with them, I should have gotten a job on the committee, d'oh!

Peroration: So many Worldcons get subjected to the "Is-this-the-worst-Worldcon-since-Nolacon?" treatment that you'd think fans are disappointed when there isn't a train wreck. But fans generally subjected Noreason to the opposite expectation, and harped on whatever fell short of perfection, exactly as I did in my story about the line outside Opening Ceremonies. They needed to make a microscopic search, however, for it had been a well-organized and highly creative Worldcon.



Hugo historical display in the Concourse.



Noreascon 4 Passes Along

Deb Geisler, chair of Noreascon 4, reports that in a four-month span earlier in this year the committee passed along \$75,333 of its surplus to future Worldcons.

This was done to fulfill N4's commitment under the voluntary Pass Along Funds arrangement. Participating Worldcon committees are entitled to part of their three predecessors' surpluses, while they promise to share at least 50% of any surplus they have with their three successors, provided those committees promise to do the same.

Surplus funds are those remaining after expenses and customary reimbursements to program participants, committee, staff, and volunteers.

Noreascon 4 made a preliminary Pass-Along Funds disbursement of \$10,000 in February 2005 to Interaction, L.A.con IV and Nippon 2007. When almost all of the major bills had been paid, the committee sent another \$14,000 in May 2005 to these upcoming Worldcons. They also turnover over their share of Millennium Philcon's extremely late pass-along, dividing another \$3,333.33 among the next three Worldcons.

Altogether, Noreascon Four's Pass-Along Funds disbursements total \$75,333.33.

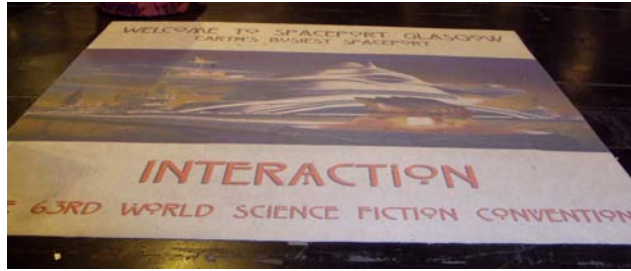
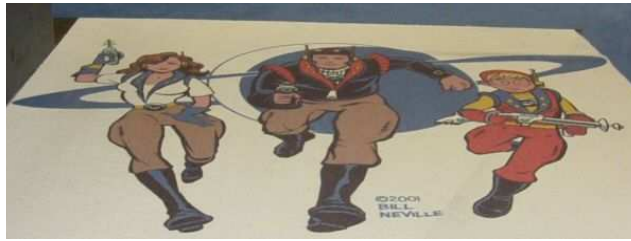
Deb Geisler concluded, "We'll have a full accounting of our books, of course, in Glasgow at the WSFS Business Meeting. That accounting is just the cash -- and does not adequately reflect how very rich we all feel with the memories we have of working with such an amazing group of people in crafting the 62nd Worldcon. Damn, that was fun."

Worldcon committees are legally and financially independent from each other. Pass Along Funds was devised by fans in 1988, and first funded from the surplus of Noreascon 3, the 1989 Worldcon. Since then, every Worldcon except 1991 has participated, receiving donations from its predecessors and making donations from its surpluses when available. *[This article previously appeared in Trufen.net]*

Worldcon Welcome Mats

At Noreascon 4 I trampled a new Worldcon tradition underfoot. You probably did it too. And again at Interaction, if you made it to Glasgow. When I read somebody's notes from the Noreascon 4 Gripe Session the following exchange between a questioner and Deb Geisler revealed what I had missed:

"Deb: Did you like the rugs? Were



Heavy Traffic: (Top) Noreascon 4 entrance rug. (Bottom) Interaction entry rug.

they neat?" What rugs, and where were they?

Deb Geisler was happy to explain: "The rugs (carpets for our friends in the UK, not blankets) were 9' x 9' squares with our lens family logo on them. They were located in three places in the convention -- in Hall C (the ConCourse) and in Hall A (registration).

"Our decorating company made them by running carpeting through a gi-normous inkjet printer somewhere in the wilds of Chicagoland (I'd love to see this thing). They charged us \$300 each for them -- quite a bit less than Interaction had to pay a UK supplier for a similar item. (Freeman were willing to make some for Interaction, too, but their printer had problems and they couldn't guarantee to make the Boston-based oceanic shipment, so we had to go to plan B.)

"Wicked spiffy. The first one cleaned up pretty well, considering it'd been tramped on for 6-7 days by 5,600 people or so. (Expensive



Hugo reception: Hugo base designer Scott Lefton, Vince Docherty (middle), Dalroy Ward (right).

to clean, though.) I'm going to check with the folks who put in my own wall-to-wall and see if they will bind it for me. If you ever come to a party at my house, you'll be able to see it in the basement after that."

2004 Worldcon Available Now on DVD

Noreascon Four's crack technical crew has done something new: they've taken the film from the cameras used to record Noreascon's big events, and done lots of post-production work to create DVDs giving the full flavor of the events. If you missed one of the events (or the whole Worldcon), or want to be able to enjoy a particular event again, here's your chance!

Individual DVDs are \$11.99. The five-disc boxed set containing the entire week's programming in the main auditorium is available for \$59.95. Note: Shipping and handling is an extra charge, based on the weight of the package.

Noreascon 4's Official 5 DVD set contains the entire week's programming in the main auditorium.

Disc one is the Noreascon 4's Official DVD of the Opening and Closing Ceremonies. In addition an edited highlight reel of all of the events is included, and also a time lapse video of the build, shows, and teardown. This disc is only available as part of the 5 disc set.

Disc two contains Friday night's "Noreascon 4 Time Machine" with the 1954 Retro Hugo Awards Ceremony hosted by Bob Eggleton, and GoH interviews hosted by Peter Weston.

Disc three contains the Hugo Awards Ceremony, hosted by Neil Gaiman.

Discs four and five have the Masquerade, hosted by Susan de Guardiola. Disc four includes the masquerade presentations and a montage of the awards. Disc five is the masquerade awards including young fan, special Discworld, and the main awards. Each disc has chapter stops for each presentation.

These DVDs are produced from the same camera vantages as shown onscreen at Noreascon, with added high fidelity audio and the slide reviews of each presentation. This multi-camera recording has been edited in post-production to provide a more complete record than that which was shown on the auditorium screens.

Purchase info is on the No-

2004 Worldcon Masquerade Report

by John Hertz

This report of Noreascon IV was written for *Chronicle*, although not printed there. Since instead the December 2004 issue (No. 254), which did have “Worldcon Masquerade Report” on the cover, carried four full pages of Charles Mohapel’s color photos after my main con report, I don’t complain. But the text of my Masquerade Report wanted a home. It was published in Sandy & Pierre Pettinger’s *Costume & Masquerade* No. 20 (Autumn 2004); *File 770* is its first general appearance. For *Chronicle* I write to a wide audience, whom I do not expect to know as much as you.

* * *

The Masquerade at a science fiction convention was a costume party once, decades ago; today, a competition on stage, with a panel of judges and a full house. Entires in the Original Division are things we haven’t yet seen, from s-f, or legend, or the entrants’ imagination. The Re-Creation Division is faithful to existing sources, in film, television, graphic novels. Novice, Journeyman, and Master (plus often Junior) Classes are based on experience. Review by a Workmanship Judge backstage is optional.

It’s a grand event. I know nothing quite like it. Drew Sanders (Masquerade Director for the ’88 Worldcon, Nolacon II) calls it a cross between *kabuki* and Little Theater.

At Noreascon IV this year, as a friendly gesture, standing outside Registration was “Irving”, the 50-foot dragon that closed the show at the Millennium Philcon Masquerade (’01 Worldcon, see *Chronicle* 220). But this year’s Masquerade was held the night *after* the Hugo Awards, as if they were its warm-up act, perplexing the costumers.

Masquerade Director was Richard Hill; Master of Ceremonies, Susan De Guardiola; judges, Rae Bradbury-Enslin, Laurel Cunningham-Hill, Terry Pratchett, Julie Zetterberg; workmanship judges, Heidi Hooper, Kevin Roche, Carol Salemi, Andrew Trembley; 35 adult entires, 12 juniors. Pratchett’s publisher gave \$500 as a prize for the best entry from Pratchett’s work; Pratchett kindly added \$100 of his own to make three prizes of \$100, \$200, and \$300; all this was generous but distortive.

The auditorium had been built by the con committee. Large video screens at either side of the stage helped. Audio was troublesome all weekend. Hill delayed starting half an hour after his published time, then actually began half an hour after that. Video was fed to some hotel rooms, and to the Mended Drum tavern

in the Concourse (central hall of the convention). This year John Maizels and his crew were able to show two freeze-frames of each entry after it left the stage.

De Guardiola, the fine M.C. of the LoneStarCon II Masquerade (’97 Worldcon, *Chronicle* 195), was largely free from her personal plague of sheep, perhaps because she kept a stuffed Vampire Sheep mascot conspicuously on the lectern. There was baa-ing in the audience, which she eventually invited; at Closing Ceremonies, when next year’s concom as a stunt replayed the weekend, a caption read *Maaah-squerade*. Her voice is like burnt honey.

Sara Weinstein in “Do Your Magic” (Best Presentation, Junior; Workmanship Award for tailoring) showed timing and focus placing a basket and raising a ball she made glow. Talis Thorndike Love showed poise as “Star Sprite” (Judges’ Choice). Stephanie Kastan was the night’s first Pratchett joke, “Death of Rats Goes to Worldcon” (Best in Class; Workmanship Award for papier maché), promptly topped by Eric Weingart, “The Grim Sweeper” (Most Humorous; Workmanship Award for props).

“A Pale Rider” (Chris Kramer, Matt Ragsdale) won Best Master, Best Workmanship of Show, and the 2nd Place Pratchett prize. The rider was Death, a hooded skeleton from *Discworld* – on a motorcycle, followed by the Luggage, a trunk with two dozen human feet. The Luggage, under remote control, had been all over the con, so was technically ineligible, but rules get exceptions.

Sionna Klassen for “Dragon Priestess” wore floor-length white chiffon sleeves (Most Beautiful, Journeyman; Workmanship Award for precise re-creation). David Ramsay for “Eight Seconds” (Master) rode a bucking cockroach, with Kimberley Ramsay as a rodeo clown. Gadgetry of the night was “Adventures in Time” (Best Journeyman; Workmanship Judges’ Choice; Clinton Alvord, Brian Culver, Amy Johnson, Bonnie Kenderdine, Cheri & Karl Walker, Carol Zelman), a tall time machine that flashed and revolved, as Louisa May Alcott, Amelia Earhart, Annie Oakley, Mary Shelley, Mark Twain, H.G. Wells, and the police all got into the act.

For a pageant it’s the Pettingers. Their “FutureIkons”, following four Hannah Shapero paintings – displayed in the Art Show – brought a new Raphael, in yellow, angel of Biotechnology; Uriel, in green, Ecology; Michael, in red, High-Energy Physics; Gabriel, in blue, Telecommunications (Best Re-Creation,

Master; Best Workmanship in Class; John Blaker, Jeannette Holloman, Sandy & Pierre Pettinger).

What could be next? Mountains could; in the cold, a ritual dance, a brandished sword, a woman in spring gold, and the summoned Sun. This was “Arctic Circle” (Best Workmanship, Journeyman; Carol Botteron, Jill & Don Eastlake, John Hatch, Rob Hupp, Janet Johnston, Allan Kent, Pat Vandenberg, Kate Waterous), winning Best of Show. And Don Eastlake chaired the Business Meeting. It’s fannish to swim in many waters.

Best Novice was David Agro, “Blight, Unseelie Fey” (Workmanship Award for hair, make-up, prosthetics), dark with strange hands and rags, bending, reaching, grinning, crouching, fluent and eerie. A Masquerade entry needs a sense of event, usually contrast, or change; it can, with exceptional posture and movement, be character. “Blight” was wonderful. I hear Agro acts him at a local fantasy fair. Yvette Ciancio’s “Chimera” (Master), in a feathered headdress, scales over her body, was pensive: what does the Chimera think?

A boy with a book knelt outdoors. As he read “the Old Ones” or “Cthulhu”, a monster behind him came more and more to life. Something horrible might have happened, but just then “Howie! Time for church!” This was “Lovecraft’s Inspiration” (Most Spellbinding, Novice; Workmanship Honorable Mention; Joanne Bruno-Miller, Donna Drapeau, Tam & Deale Miller, Will Pett, Adam Tuchman). A similar lot had won the 3rd Place Pratchett prize, “Inside the Mind” (Novice; Workmanship Award for three-dimensional costume craft; Matthew McNally, Jennifer Michalicek, Nicole Smith) of Pratchett, who sat in thought while a turtle with four elephants and a disc crawled by.

Finally, in an ecstasy of Pratchettizing, “Not the Usual Unusual”, with Cohen the Barbarian and a dread cargo which, opened despite warnings, proved to be Tom Jones (Most Humorous, Master; Workmanship Award for construction and distressing techniques; Jennie Faries, Bobby & Marty Gear, Jeff Poretsky, Ron Robinson, Mark Van Name, Vicki & Ken Warren). This cracked up many, won the 1st Place Pratchett prize, and was the end.



[[Editor's Note: Working in a warehouse in 1977 left me with plenty of time to think about the imminent launch of File 770. On the back of blank inventory cards I wrote an ambitious list of what I wanted to see in this zine. Over the years I was lucky enough to publish almost every type of material on the wish list -- from a Worldcon GoH's speech (Race Matthews, 1985) to fanartist portfolios -- with one ex-

ception: a chapter from a TAFF or DUFF trip report. Now in 2005 James Bacon has granted that wish. And more: he has written a about his heart for TAFF in an introduction to the excerpt. Thank you James!]]

WorldConNomicon, £3 or \$5. James Bacon, 211 Black Horse Ave., Dublin 7, Ireland; E-mail: piglet@indigo.ic/;

How I Miss It Already



by **James Bacon**

My Taff trip seems so long ago, and yet is so fresh in my mind. I met so many good people, and had such a great time. It was a roller coaster experience, and I enjoyed writing my report. I am very proud that Mike has offered to reprint some of it here, but then he would.

In Ireland, a rather small country on the other side of the Atlantic, where fanzines are a rarity and good fun SF conventions are the norm, there is often mention of Mike Glyer's *BIG TENT* philosophy. Over the last couple of years, when a group get together to chat over a pint, the conversation may turn to the move of some con runners here to have conventions just focus on Literary aspects of SF and eschew the conventions I and others would have considered norm. The SF convention that encompasses many aspects of fandom. No harm to them of course, each to their own and all that, but sure, it's a bit bloody motivationally minded at times.

And then up will pop the *Big Tent* Philosophy, and sure, we mightn't know who this Glyer fella is, but he has a good idea, doesn't he. There's more than enough room in here for all of us, and there's no problem with gamers or comic fans coming in, there is no shortage of space for Robot makers, model makers and costumers. There is always a seat at the bar table for opinions, alternative viewpoints and a sense of humour and sure, if you want to jump up and down on a bed in a room party all the better. That's the *Big Tent* for ya. Feck'in bril-

liant yoke so it is.

Will it fit in my back garden?

While I was on my Taff Trip everything I saw at Noreascon 4 would have been textbook *Big Tent*, from the gaming room, to the copy of *Challenger* which seemed to be mostly about Comics, it was all there. Everyone was welcome and so was I.

Now I am home though, and with an Eastercon under my belt I have started to take note of some opinions. Despite the amount of TAFF winners that I met or was introduced to in the fan lounge at Noreascon 4, who seemed to think they broke the mould when it came to Taff, as they aren't all that big a fanzine fan, there seems to be a different tune emanating from lists and those more vocal, and to be honest it worries me.

We are all fecking fans. All of us. Those who do fanzines, those who run games rooms, the con runners I feel affinity with, web designers, letter hacks, writers vying to get published in everything from *Banana Wings* to a book deal from TOR. All are fans, we are different, diverse, a brilliant lot, sometimes misunderstood, mocked and ridiculed by the outside world, but in here, in this place, we are strong, together, arm in arm at stupid o'clock in the morning, in a room party, where one realises that George RR has some fairly cute fans.

Why do we need to knock an aspect of fandom, do we need to become more exclusive

till membership numbers no one? I don't have much time for Filk, but I ain't gonna take their room away if I run an Eastercon again. I don't see anything right with it, but sure, than I'm a not right myself, and they would probably think that bouncy castles have little to do with SF. Its got feck all to do with SF.

But it has lots to do with fandom.

When James White and Walt Willis first corresponded on what is known to me as Irish Fandom day, the 26th of August 1947, it was the start of something special. Following a letter from James to Walter Gillings Pro Mag Fantasy, Walt contacted James, their motivators were all rather simple - seeing who had what magazines. A good SF motivation there.

Although then came Ghoddminton and water pistols of doom, and Candle Bra's and reports about conventions, that's not exactly SF is it?

In Peter Weston's Book, he writes about his first meetings in other fans houses, that he attended, where there would be talk about recent purchases of SF and then games of Risk would commence. Now what's that got to do with SF.

Nothing but isn't that Fandom. The socialising, communicating, the good times, the nice feeling as you read a letter, a Fanzine, share a pint, have some sport.

Isn't that Fandom. Can I point a finger at it, and say that's it there, for sure.

From certain quarters, one would think that

people who are not fanzine fans may not actually deserve to be a Taff winner, and I was stunned by that attitude. I run cons.

As stunned as I was when an eminent fan, whom I would hold in great respect, lost his temper and asked in a shouty sort of way at this years Eastercon, what had Toga's got to do with Science Fiction.

Not much, but it sure has a lot to do with fandom.

Within days of this outburst fans were on Live Journal (its an abomination) with links to Bill Burns E-fanzines website where in 1957 odd (toga-ish?) clothes were worn to a London Worldcon. Fans are intelligent, resourceful and clever and it showed up the hypocrisy and arrogance of the outburst, if it was all right in '57 why not now?

Although exactly what was Mrs. Hammet up to in a school Uniform. Now that's my sort of convention, and I thought having a school disco was new! It looks like fun. I wish so much I could be the 1957 Taff delegate, now that would have been good.

Why do people who I respect make it difficult for me to pass on the respect and lore that surrounds them by making contradictory statements that alienate younger fans who see through their arrogance, or who just shrug their

shoulders and walk away. I try to pass on, gently, that there is more to fandom than the here and now, but unless those who deserve respect make some effort to earn it from today's neos, and if they don't have the courtesy to look around, ask questions and maybe interact, well its hard to explain why someone should show respect or appreciate a person when they seem like an aloof arse.

At Noreascon there was so much about the greying of fandom, but I didn't see it, I met loads of people much younger than I. At a future of Eastercon panel it again came up, and at the same meeting, passions went overboard and people lost their temper, and it was all rather unsightly. Not really a recruitment poster.

But back to Taff.

Taff is not just for Fanzine Fans, sorry, its there for all fans, no doubt sometime soon a web genius will win. It will be up to me to get to know them, and if I initially don't like them, or what they do, surely it's a lack of understanding. How often over the years have I grown to respect and appreciate fans, who have done so much before, but with out the inquisitiveness of my mind, they knowledge of others passed onto me, they would be just an older person.

I met so many fans, who were fans of something, I mostly have no idea what that something was, but it must have been SF, the conversation, never got there, we were too busy partying or chatting, or drinking or generally having a good time, but its what we were there for.

Taff is a magnificent thing, I felt that's I was integrating US and European fandom, allowing people to meet, to share something special, something that only fandom could achieve raising funds to send someone across the Atlantic, isn't it just wonderfully altruistic and amazing in today's world, and we have it, you have it, its yours and ours and theirs, and I had the great honour of doing it, and I learned loads, and met loads, and it was brilliant. I just wish I could do it again.

It's a welcoming and warm experience, and that's what all of fandom needs to be, if those who actually worry about the greying of Fandom, are genuinely concerned rather than just blowing their goat, then they should look to the Big Tent Philosophy.

It's good fun in the tent.

I wish everyone could experience being a TAFF delegate. It's the bestest tent of all.



Ray Capella's depiction of O'Mara and the baby Hudlar from "Medic" in James White's *Hospital Station*.

Except from James Bacon's WorldConNomicon 2005 TAFF Report

Sparks's Mad Idea: I have a lot of time for Sparks. I met him at Lazlar Lyricon 2 in 1998, I think, and he was good fun; although I think his wife isn't as appreciative of me, for some sort of transgression no doubt. Anyhow, he allegedly had another plan which, after the Trial, was going to be a laugh one way or another.

Interestingly Sparks was in charge of 'Fun' programming, as well as involved in other aspects of Noreascon as so many other Brit fans were, as they learned their craft on the Worldcon scale.

Essentially the closing ceremony is a farewell from Deb Geisler, with thanks to those who helped, where she passes on the gavel to the new Worldcon Chairmen. Sparks's idea was to show the highlights of the convention to Deb, since she'd have been too busy to have seen it all.

So I started to get ready to redo the judge bit; Terry Pratchett and others were on hand, as were a host of props and bits and pieces. Meanwhile, Norman was showing a video from New Zealand of New Zealand fans; now, wasn't that a good idea? He had loads of good ideas; he brought cool New Zealand stuff and everything. He said he was going to thank everyone for the welcome and, since I was busy being strapped into a judge's costume, he would thank everyone on my behalf as well. Anyhow, this was all preceding the official closing ceremony, which was timed to start at 3 PM, so I expected there would not be many people there.

When Norm started thanking people and stuff he mentioned I was busy as usual and I realised I could run on, as I was mostly clothed. So I did: I ran on stage, at speed; he looked up, and I gave him a huge hug which resembled a rugby tackle, shouted stuff at the mike, and ran off. As I did I realised there were a lot more people there than I expected, but it got a cheer.

Later, the closing ceremony proper began. Deb said her thanks and everyone was cheering and the hall was full of applause. And then



she had a band, all drum and flute – you know, the Independence Day types, with flag and all – and it sounded great. Onwards it went; Sparks did a great job and all the Americans laughed loads as he almost single-handedly retold most of the convention's highlights. Deb thanked him.

She then passed everything over to Colin and Vince. Vince was in a kilt, which was interesting. And they spoke about Interaction. There was a video of the Viceroy of Scotland or some sort of other pseudo-colonial home rule type person. Then a pipe band boomed into the hall!

With great majesty and presence, the hall was filled with the rousing sound of pipes, as the pipers went at full tilt. Various airs and reels were played and the drummers drummed; there was electricity to the performance as they marched in a synchronised pattern. At that moment I was proud, I tell you, to be a volunteer for Interaction. Then the pipe band led off and those who wanted to join the next Worldcon followed the pied pipers of Boston.

Then it was over, incredibly, all over. The end. A moment for pause.

Then I went out and found Norman, and suggested that we thank Deb for her efforts on our behalf. In fairness to the committee they

looked after us so well. It may appear that I was on a lot of panels, but I had insisted that I wanted to be involved as much as possible; I had pleaded to be on more panels, to be used rather than to be an ornament, and with their acquiescence it was brilliant for me. The hospitality was just brilliant, as were the courtesy and the helpfulness. Ben Yalow, TR Smith, Deb Geisler, Elaine Brennan, Priscilla Olsen, Janice Gelb: these people made things happen – sometimes small, sometimes personally big – but it allowed me the opportunity to be the TAFF delegate that I hope reflected the fan I am, a conrunner.

We went up and thanked Deb; Norman was a bit up-

set, I was sort of happy and pleased. It had gone well. I had already heard on the inside track, from quite a few people who were in attendance at the daily committee meetings, both that Children's was being hailed as a huge success, and that the TAFF and DUFF guys were making a bit of an impression and getting involved. So my day was made, to be somehow involved in something that was making people happy.

I was worried I would be a shite TAFF delegate; it was a real concern. So after our thanks, dinner was arranged; and of course concerns don't move boxes, people do, so I headed back to Children's Services.

We had everything packed down and we had clearly marked them for Arisia or Boskone or Persis. These boxes had to go to the same places all the Arisia and Boskone stuff was going, and then it would be loaded onto a truck and taken henceforth. There was also a truck going to Pennsylvania and further – incredible logistics.

I had said goodbye to Sandra and Amy Sue, the girls from the child-minding services. I then said good bye to Bill – someone who, although 15, I would gladly have on a committee of a convention – and Bridget who, although 14, I would have asked out for dinner if

I were 15; and I was sad to see them both go, such hard workers. Bridget was there 'just because' her Mom was at the convention; that was Thursday, but now she was sad to be going home. Bill had volunteered – my god, the man was a dynamo – and hadn't stopped volunteering all weekend; he, like Bridget and I, had found a niche down here in kids'. It was good, and they liked it, and we did good.

My only disappointment was that I didn't have a beer with these two. Fuck the law; it would have been nice, and just the one.

Onwards went the juggernaut. Other cons would need the stuff we had boxed and, mostly, it was theirs; it was a loan, co-operation on a vast scale.

We went to Rick who was in charge of logistics, and as usual we stood around until someone came to help us; a presence means you can't forget. It was busy; the whole of the concourse was coming down, as was the entire tech in the auditorium, at such a pace that it was vital everything went in the correct direction. After a while Rick decided on where the stuff should go, and myself and a couple of Dads and a photographer were there to make it happen; I was keen to not allow the girls to do any of this work.

The boxes were mostly packed, and I lugged them out of our office and onto trolleys. So we loaded up trolleys, big flat-bed ones with stock, and we left the Arisia stuff in Gardner, and then brought the Boskone stuff through into the concourse.

I started hauling the totes from kids' through the Sheraton up a slope, which was hairy – shouting 'Coming through, COMING THROUGH, GET THE FECK OUT OF THE WAY!' – and around a corner into the Concourse. Then, knowing what was in the boxes, I literally tossed them into a neat position; they were heavy, loaded with cloth, craft stuff, you name it, but we got it done, and with gusto.

I was sweating.

We closed up kids'. People were heading home; flights, hours in length, had to be caught. As I said goodbye to the lovely Inger I was more than a bit upset, although I didn't show much of it; she was so wonderful to me from the outset, always there, chatting, advising when something seemed odd, pointing out things to look for in kids like what they might have as an ailment. She was a great laugh, and a hard worker. I held her tight. She had to go.

I said goodbye to Persis then, and again I was rather sad to be saying goodbye; she was so wonderful to me. I had emailed her before the convention and asked if it was OK to work two or three hours in kids' to familiarise myself with the area, as I would be doing the same with all areas. We laughed about that: two hours. She was very happy that Children's was deemed a success; many people had been feeding back positive stuff, and Deb had thanked her. It looked like Noreascon 4's

groundbreaking aspect might just be the excellent children's programme.

Many people commented that Noreascon always does something new, something outstanding and unique, but what was it this time? So much about the con was bloody good, what stood out? Kids', I would say, and there would be knowing nods, or fervoured agreement – depending on nationality!

I said goodbye to Persis. It took a while. It was evening. Children's was now closed.

I then had a shower and met up with Norman, and with Janice Gelb and a group of other excellent fans, and we went to dinner. Again I was in odd form. This time, though, my stomach was actually churning; I felt ill. I was physically demonstrating my upset at sitting down, at relaxing; I wanted it to go on. After the main course, I made my apologies and left early. I wasn't happy about it, but Norm was an excellent dinner guest, and could do it for both of us. I just needed to, I dunno, not relax yet or something. I should have had the sense to turn down Janice's offer after the previous night, but I thought manners would prevail over mere feelings. It was a low moment for me, personally.

I went for a vigorous walk. I walked around the block, I stopped at a bar and had a shot of bourbon, and I walked again. In the dimming and balmy Boston air, I walked. I felt better. It all felt better; I would apologise again to Janice for such a poor show. My stomach settled and I felt invigorated; I called into my hotel room, and had two Diet Red Bulls. My supply was also drawing to an end. I went over to the Sheraton. I felt better; as I went I skipped and bounced and punched things, you know, getting the energy flowing.

I could hear the noise as I entered the Sheraton. I went up to the con suite, my first proper time in there, and I got a soft drink and scanned the room; there were many people about whom I knew and I went about.

Norm was there; I questioned him like the sounding board he had become for me – as I for him – about my departure from dinner. He looked at me as if I was being an idiot.

Geri arrived, and not only that, but she had all her correspondence from James White. I sat down and spent an hour or so looking reading about it all, and a fact came to light. The Sector General logo for LACon III, where James was Guest of Honour, had been the logo he had conceived himself for Sector General, and he had described it to the people who were going to use it.

This was important news, as it had been alluded that this Sector General logo was a Worldcon concept and image. Therefore, because of the shape of it, and the issues revolving around the image copyright of the Hugo, and a renewed effort to curb anyone using something that looked like Worldcon imagery in awards, it had been put to me earlier that the

James White Award logo might have to change.

Now it seemed that was wrong, and I was in a position to defend the logo of the JWA; I had solid proof that this was a concept and design imagined by James White himself.

When no one was looking I punched something, really hard, and my hand sank through it. I was jubilant; I explained so to Geri, who was bemused about my inner concern about what had been brought to my attention.

I read the other letters and wondered at how things I remembered so well myself got mentioned; it was heartening. Geri and I had become very good friends, and I was surprised when she told me her age!

I popped up to see what parties were on; Tom in room 708 treated me and my compadres to a great selection of booze. I visited the rowdy room, where I was rowdy, and I brought some booze discreetly down to the dead dog party.

After this I flitted about the room, meeting and greeting, and got some illicit booze here and there. I had a good chat with Paul Treadaway, and we spoke about the James White Award at Interaction. He then kindly introduced me to Kevin Standlee and Cheryl Morgan who were looking after that aspect, and I networked more.

It also came to pass that they were looking for me, as they were now on the Mark Protection Committee (MPC) of the WSFS and were charged with the issue about logos and awards. Things had changed in two days.

I told them first of my news that the logo was a James White design, in quite a robust manner. They were actually OK, and we came to an acceptable solution. I had informed them that I am usually a much more volatile character, but as administrator of the award we would have to proceed with a 'James White' attitude, of conciliatory and gentle tones. It was good to sort that out; although later, when I chatted with Dave Stewart, he reminded me that the MPC had given me permission for the logo in 2000. I had forgotten, but he remembered that at the time it was important to me not to tread on anyone's toes. Anyhow, we talked things through and it went well. Kevin and Cheryl had just taken over, so the previous discussions with a predecessor that had upset me, slightly, as anyone could imagine, were quickly forgotten.

The night wore on. It was good; we were fooling about, our crowd of degenerates. I mixed and chatted with loads of people, and then there was some horseplay, as I had sorted something else out for Norm and myself.

You see, everyone who gets nominated for a Hugo receives a pin badge as a memento; so to speak, a mini Hugo. Now Norm and I had presented Hugos, and by dint of deputation had also been there to receive a Hugo. But we would both soon be Hugoless; they were after

all other people's. I wanted a memento, something more than a memory, if possible. I found it, somehow, by means variously fair and frowned upon; two pins were given to me, in knowledge of their purpose, and so Norm and I had our token memory.

I showed Norman's to him, and would have let him have it; and we lepped about up and over chairs, and then we broke a table. As we did, Deb came in and asked me outside. I was apologising for the damage and she

seemed non-plussed. She spoke to me outside in quiet tones, gently. She was thanking me. Me, a fan of dubious heritage and honour, being thanked by the Chair of the convention for my efforts, both with Children's Services and as a TAFF delegate and in general. It was an awesome and humbling experience; I was shocked, stunned and chuffed.

She then told me about a hero medal. This was something Noreascon 4 was not taking lightly; they had fifteen made and were only handing out eleven, to people who went above and beyond, as you might say, who added to the convention. These people would normally be committee members, or high echelon staff, and the odd individual, like... me.

She put this 'unattached lensman' medal on me, and invited me to the 'Old Farts' party for ex-Worldcon Chairs. I asked if Norm could come along too, and she was very agreeable. I was told I should wear the medal tonight, despite my misgivings.

I walked back in, and people noticed; Sheila Perry had one too, as did other stalwarts. And me: an Irishman, off the boat just a mere six days previous, the ultimate neo.

Geri congratulated me – she had known! – as did others, and I proudly went to Vince and Alice and they were impressed and pleased. I did feel proud that my mentors were happy; it was in a weird way important. Vince took a picture of Geri and myself. He had an amazing look, a proudness too, like when James White had won a Hugo. It was deadly.

I didn't think at the time that I could write about the medal myself so first I asked Claire Brialey to describe it for this report, and that piece follows.

The night went on and we partied hard and late; there were still parties going on. I got to bed at about 6 AM, which wasn't too bad.

Short Waves

Robert Lichtman closed the books on the **Bring Bruce Bayside** auction in June, report-



Noreascon 4 Hugo Winners group picture.

ing that it in \$1,665 altogether. Fundraising efforts yielded over \$5,400, which paid for Aussie fan Bruce Gillespie's visit to America in February 2005.

Guy Lillian III, after telling what he knew about friends uprooted by Katrina, ended an e-mail with this comment about life since he moved to Shreveport from New Orleans many months ago. "I like my country parish public defender job -- have won a trial outright and secured a lesser verdict in another, more violent case. Rosy busies herself at home -- she got our new-in-quotes computer up to speed this week. The website is still going: www.challzine.net."

Former Minneapolis/Washington DC/now in California fan **Jim Young** played a wrestling coach in an episode of "The Bernie Mac Show" that aired September 23.

Births

Roger Tener, editor of the online *Chronicles of the Dawn Patrol*, became a grandfather on May 12 but explained "it's been the best of times and the worst of times" because twins were expected but one was stillborn.

Caleb Ryan Tener came six weeks early, weighing 4 lb. 14 oz., and slightly over 18" in length. He spent some time in the newborn intensive care before moving to the Special Observation Nursery. His mom's doing great too!

A Neofan's Guide, of Sorts

An intriguing website presents info about congoing for neofans. According to the home page the content was originated by someone for the 1999 Westercon. So it'll be news for those of you who are at least six years behind in your web reading like I am...

<http://www.locksley.com/neofans/mainpage.htm>

This content is on a site run by Joe Bethancourt.

Clipping Service

Mark Leeper, *MT Void 1271*: " In Daniel

Keyes's novel *Flowers for Algernon* we see the world through the eyes of Charley Gordon, who goes from being mentally retarded in a world he cannot understand to being a genius with a vision to see and know the world. But late in the novel we discover his ability to see and understand the world is only temporary and he must inevitably return to what he was. This condition of going from a position of perception to return

to blindness is sort of how I feel over the decision to bring down the Hubble Telescope.

Mark Leeper, *MT Void 1292*: For whatever reasons we got into the Iraq war, we have found a weapon that has some effect, albeit slowly and weakly. The weapon is the desire for Democracy in some of the same countries that are the cradles of the insurgency. I think Democracy is the right thing for these countries in principle anyway, but it may be also a weapon to bring the conflict to an enemy that more often than not we otherwise cannot find. The approach may be too weak and too late, but it is battling an idea with an idea, which is the only way strategy that can be effective. That in a nutshell is how I see the situation.

Changes of Address

John Mansfield, 333 Lipton St, Winnipeg, MB, R3G 2H2, Canada

Jeff Schalles, 749 36th Ave. NE, Minneapolis, MN 55418

Eva Whitley, 266 Pittston Circle, Owings Mills MD 21117

Ben Zuhl, The GateHouse in Thornwald Park, Carlisle, PA 17013

Jeff Schalles writes with his good news: "Marjorie Magidow and myself were married [in February] and have moved into the new house we bought... She already has three kids, and we do not plan on having any more!"

Robert Lichtman passed along the story behind **Ben Zuhl's** exotic new address. As Zuhl told him, "Thornwald Park was an estate that couldn't be kept up so they donated the land and buildings to the city. The city of Carlisle made a park out of most of the grounds and kept the gatehouse to rent out. (There is always a large transient population due to Dickinson College and the U.S. Army War College both in Carlisle.) We saw the gatehouse on the internet when we were looking for a place for a year and it tickled our fannish fantasy to rent it."

INTERACTION'S 2005 HUGO AWARD WINNERS

Best Novel

Jonathan Strange & Mr Norrell by Susanna Clarke

Best Novella

"The Concrete Jungle" by Charles Stross

Best Novelette

"The Faery Handbag" by Kelly Link

Best Short Story

"Travels with My Cats" by Mike Resnick

Best Related Book

The Cambridge Companion to Science Fiction
Edited by Edward James and Farah Mendlesohn

Best Dramatic Presentation, Long Form

The Incredibles, Written & Directed by Brad Bird

Best Dramatic Presentation, Short Form

"33" - *Battlestar Galactica*,
Written by Ronald D. Moore and
Directed by Michael Rymer.

Best Professional Editor

Ellen Datlow

Best Professional Artist

Jim Burns

Best Semiprozine

Ansible, Edited by David Langford

Best Fanzine

Plokta, Edited by Alison Scott, Steve Davies and
Mike Scott

Best Fan Writer

David Langford

Best Fan Artist

Sue Mason

Best Web Site

SciFiction (www.scifi.com/scifiction)
Edited by Ellen Datlow. Craig Engler, general
manager

John W. Campbell Award for Best New Writer

Elizabeth Bear

Special Interaction Committee Award

David Pringle

A Mighty Convoy

Once it was harder to win Hugos than to bring them home with your baggage. After *Aussiecon II* in 1985, I went through airport security in Melbourne with a Hugo in my carry-on. Approaching the x-ray machine I dropped the gym bag onto the conveyor belt and got my big excuse ready. The guard deflated my dramatic moment when he looked up, smiled and said, "Oh, you've got one of these, too." Fred Pohl and Charlie Brown had already passed through with their awards. Three years later, my *Nolacon II* Hugo was too big to fit in a carry-on so I just walked aboard the plane with it in my hand and stowed it in an overhead compartment.

Glenn Glazer shepherded four Hugos home from Glasgow. Do you want to know how much the world has changed since 9/11? He described the experience online:

"Our bags were inspected on three separate occasions, twice in our presence. We had carefully packed [the Hugos] in a box with lots of bubble wrap, newspaper and peanuts, only to have it opened twice (once by Customs and

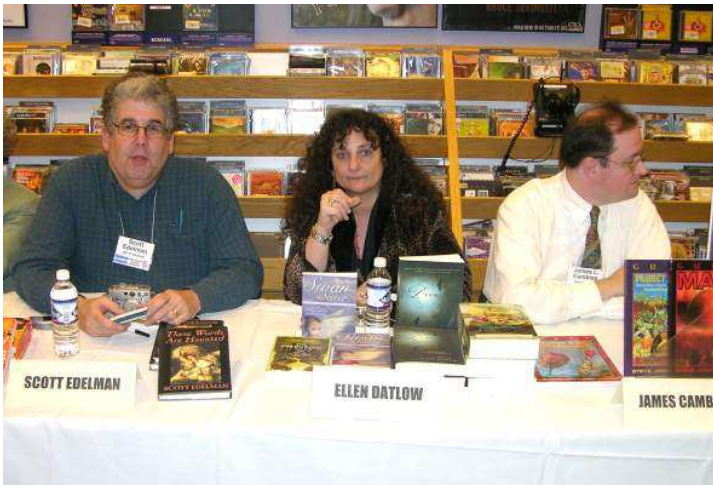
once by the TSA). Good news: Customs keeps rolls of packing tape for folks to repack their boxes with. I'm thankful for that service.

"....If you are carrying something that it is harmless, but might look suspicious, full disclosure is your best friend. The minute you act like you are trying to hide something, the worse it will probably get. Even with the two inspections and all that, we still made our one hour connection in Minneapolis, though we were worried about time. If you are honest, you can usually get the agents to understand your situation and even help you out. For example, the Customs agent who first inspected our stuff, volunteered to walk us through

the checkpoints and vouched for us to the TSA. The TSA then just did a quick chemical swipe and we were on our way.



Rocket Smuggler: Labels cover Glenn Glazer's oft-inspected carton of Hugos.



Left: Autograph session with Scott Edelman, Ellen Datlow, James Cambias. **Right:** Michael Ehart, Diane Turnshek, Joe Haldeman, Gay Haldeman

Nebula Awards Weekend 2005 Report and Photos by Keith Stokes

SFWA's Nebula Awards Weekend was held at Chicago's Hotel Allegro on April 28 – May 1. It was organized by a team of Chicago area fans and professionals led by Jeffrey Liss and Steven Silver.

I flew into Chicago on Thursday afternoon. The flight into ORD was slightly delayed, but otherwise uneventful. The crowded train into the city from the airport took 50 minutes and cost only \$1.75. The Hotel Allegro is about two blocks from the Clark & Lake Stop in the Loop.

I checked into the hotel minutes too late to take advantage of the daily free wine reception in the lobby, but the lobby was still full of friends and I greeted a few people before going up to my room.

Programing had begun early on Thursday with a Continuing Professional Education

seminar on Publishing Contracts. Thursday evening's only event would be "SFWA in the City," a pizza party designed to give Chicago area science fiction conventions a chance to meet SWFAns who are potential guests at future conventions.

I dropped by the hospitality suite to register and pick up the free books. This year's take included a couple of Dell's magazines and some books: *Finders Keepers* by Linnea Sinclair, *Orphanage* by Robert Buettner, *The Autumn Castle* by Kim Wilkins, *Market Forces* by Richard K Morgan and the anthology, *The World Turned Upside Down*. *Orphanage* is the only one I have read so far. I highly recommend it to fans of military SF.

At 7 p.m., hospitality shut down to move people to SFWA in the City. Since I wasn't looking for that type of networking, I left the

hotel and wandered the nearby River North District. After passing at wide variety of restaurants, I settled on one of the restaurants where I ate during the 2000 WorldCon - Gino's East. I couldn't remember what I thought of the food five years ago, but Gino's still has a good reputation. It was even one of the stops in the final episode of last Fall's "Amazing Race."

Returning to the hotel after supper, I found that the reception had moved into the far end of the room and an appreciative crowd was listening to Sean P. Fodera read from *Atlanta Nights* as "Travis Tea." Then as things wound down, the crowd moved back hospitality for conversation, and Michael Ehart and I put together plans for a live Internet chat from Saturday night's banquet and ceremony.

Things quieted down fairly quickly and the

Left: Cordelia and Connie Willis. **Center:** Elaine and Steven Silver. **Right:** Lee Martindale and Karen Meschke.





Left: "Dinosaurs of SFWA, " Gene Wolfe, Joe Haldeman, Gardner Dozois, Fred Pohl, Mike Resnick, Stan Schmidt, Ginjer Buchanan, Phyllis Eisenstein. **Right:** Tom Doherty, Patrick Nielsen Hayden, Corey Doctorow, Gene Wolfe.

hospitality suite emptied out before midnight.

There were a couple of options on Friday. Some people left at 7 a.m. to spend all day touring Argonne and Fermi Laboratories. At the hotel there was a track of interesting sounding science related programming.

But after grabbing a muffin from hospital-ity, I met Joe and Gay Haldeman in the lobby and we took a taxi to the 1869 water tower at Michigan & Chicago. It is the meeting point for Bobby's Bike Hike. Thirty-five people took Friday's tour, but only three were men. Joe and I concluded that Bobby's is the place to meet women in Chicago.

We had a enjoyable three-hour bicycle tour which included Rush Street, the old Playboy Mansion, Lincoln Park, Lincoln Park Zoo (I saw flamingos, camels and ponies), Old Town, St. Michael's church, the lake front and the only wooden street remaining in Chicago.

During one of the stops, Joe was introduced to the group as a famous science fiction writer. One of the women said that her husband is a big SF reader and had her picture taken with Joe and Gay. Following the tour, we walked with her to a nearby Border's Bookstore where

Joe autographed a copy of *Forever Peace* to her husband.

The balance of the afternoon I attended programming. "Real Mars: Report from the Mars Rovers" with Geoffrey A. Landis, and "Report from Yesteryear: Whatever Happened to the Solar Guard, Space Patrol, Video Rangers, et al.," with Joe Sarno.

Friday evening was full. First there was an autographing session at a different Border's Bookstore with 24 authors attending. The turnout seemed light. The big name -- Anne McCaffrey -- had a line waiting when she arrived, but she was able to sign for everyone in line and finish in less than an hour.

Supper was a sandwich at a nearby Togo's, then I spent the balance of the evening at the Grand Master reception for Anne McCaffrey at the hotel. It was fun and low key. Particularly fun was a speaker phone call to Jack Williamson, where we all sang "Happy Birthday" to him (his 97th). Following the presentation of Nebula Awards' pins to the nominees present, Betsy Mitchell explained how much she appreciated Anne's long relationship with Warner Books and brought out a cake with a Michael

Whalen cover.

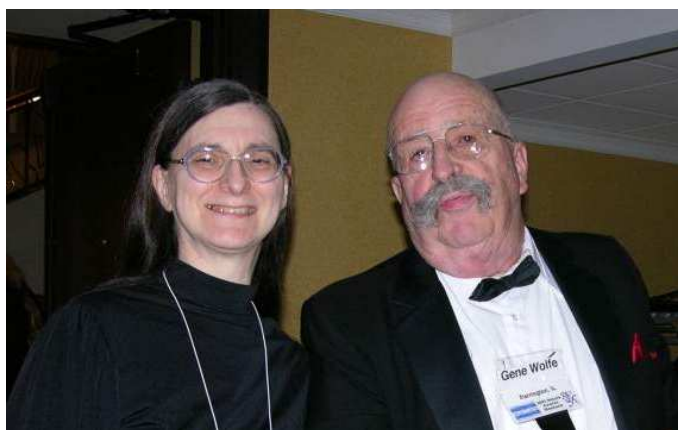
Following the reception, a few people moved back to hospitality, but I returned to my room to prepare a few pages of photos from the weekend before calling it a night.

Saturday morning was the SFWA Business Meeting. Uploading pictures made me about 10 minutes late, but the only thing I missed was the announcement of the site and dates for the 2006 Nebula Awards Weekend (Tempe, AZ on May 5-7).

The meeting was unusually short, in large part because the various committee reports were omitted. The most notable item was the announcement of the officer election results. Since wifi was available from the meeting room, I posted the results to the SFF.net SFWA lounge and in an e-mail to the new President as soon as they were announced.

The Saturday program items didn't appeal to me as much as Fridays, so after preparing and posting news articles on the Election results and 2006 Weekend to the SFWA website, I headed out to sightsee with the Architecture River Cruise on the Chicago River. It was a nice chance for photography and not too cold

Left: Benjamin Rosenbaum, Mike Moscoe, Mike Resnick. **Right:** Phyllis Eisenstein, Gene Wolfe.





Left: Todd, Anne McCaffrey. **Right:** Ellen Moscoe, Mike Moscoe, Kevin Anderson, Rebecca Moesta, Diane Turnshek.

until the boat turned toward Lake Michigan and into the wind.

Following the cruise, I walked over the Bridge to the nearby Goat Tavern of Saturday Night Live fame and had (of course) a cheeseburger. It is still much like the old John Belushi skit.

Then back to the hotel where I caught the tail end of the programming and took a break before the evening events.

The Nebula Awards began with a cocktail hour in a crowded room that had been used for some of the other programming. My dinner included one drink ticket, but I passed it along to a friend. I was too busy taking photographs.

At 7 p.m., the crowd moved to the ballroom, an attractive room that was the right size for the 170 or so people attending the banquet. The food was good. Though the salad wasn't a hit with the folks at my table, the main courses were a bigger hit. My grilled tenderloin medallions were tender and had good flavor.

When the actual ceremony began, I took my chair and moved up to the front for photo taking. A few other photographers did the same.

The ceremony began with welcome remarks from the chairman, and was then turned over to Toastmaster Neil Gaiman. Neil did a good job, but didn't really add anything to his recent performance at the 2004 Hugo Award Ceremony.

The first presentation was the previously announced Service to SFWA Award to Kevin O'Donnell Jr. His acceptance was an impassioned plea to SFWA members to not accept bad contracts and to complain long and loud when they are mistreated by publishers. It was well received, though I wondered what the editors and publishers at the ceremony thought of it.

Next was the presentation of Anne McCaffrey as the Grand Master. There were a couple of minor miscues, but it went well. It was pretty sentimental. First Anne's US Agent, Diana Tyler, made a few remarks. Then

Anne's son Todd made a moving speech. He closed with several salutes from dead family members and had Anne crying.

The actual award was presented by Anne's grandchildren. Then they covered her with silly string representing the "thread" that figures prominently in Anne's Pern series of books. Anne's acceptance speech brought tears to many in the audience, particularly when she showed her necklace which had been made by the late Andre Norton, and explained that Andre was responsible for Anne writing *The White Dragon*.

The actual Nebula Awards were each presented by Chicago area writers. The first was Jody Lynn Nye, who presented best script award to *The Lord of the Rings*. No one associated with the movie was present, so Steven Silver accepted it, reading brief remarks and doing a brief Gollum impression about "my precious."

The best short story award was presented to Eileen Gunn by Richard Chwedyk.

Then the program was interrupted by an activity designed to fill out the program. There was concern that with no keynote speaker, the ceremony was too short. Jane Jewell brought up 8 of the earliest members of SFWA and a cake for SFWA's 40th birthday. First everyone sang "Happy Birthday" to SFWA, then several of the "dinosaurs" shared antidotes about the early days. Many of the antidotes involved the new Grand Master.

Back to the awards -- Gene Wolfe, Phyllis Eisenstein, and Fred Pohl presented the remaining three awards, with Gene and Phyllis stopping their presentations make the nominees squirm and to share stories of early encounters with Anne McCaffrey and SFWA. Lois McMaster Bujold and Ellen Klages were present to accept their awards. Gardner Dozois accepted for Walter Jon Williams.

As soon as the awards were finished, I pulled out my computer and uploaded the results to the News Page. After taking a few

more pictures, I returned to my room to add a photo of the winners to the article and then went to the hospitality room for chat and to take more pictures. The party was fairly good for a dry party, but it died relatively early since many of the better known people were at a private party in the other function space.

Sunday was a lazy morning. I posted more photos from the weekend and checked out of the hotel.

First stop was Border's Bookstore where a second autograph session was being held. In the 30 minutes I was there, I didn't see even one person getting autographs, though the writers did sign the store's stock in hopes that will reduce returns and help future sales. The 14 or so authors read, chatted with each other and with friends that dropped by.

The autographing was the final scheduled event, so I finished my weekend with the matinee performance of "Wicked" at the huge, ornate 1920s Ford Oriental Theater.

The staging of "Wicked" is impressive, both the sets and a large dragon above the stage that juts out into the theater and occasionally moves. The witches flying and the "Wizard" were particularly impressive. The music was already familiar from the soundtrack and I enjoyed it very much. There were significant plot elements that I hadn't picked up from the sound track, including a surprise ending that I am not wicked enough to reveal here.

Another surprise treat was Carol Kane in the roll of the "real" wicked witch. I purchased my ticket on the strength of the musical's reputation and hadn't paid attention to who was performing in it.

Returning to the hotel, I relaxed for a while, said goodbye to Lee Martindale and a few others in the lobby one more time, picked up my luggage, and then caught the train back to the airport, getting home near midnight.

Millennicon 19

by H. L. Drake



"Darker Pen" panel: People from left to right are: Terri A. Jacobs, William Levy, Lucy Snyder, Gary Braunbeck.

Millennicon 19 was held March 18-20, 2005 at the Clarion Hotel and Suites in Blue Ash, Ohio, a suburb of Cincinnati. Author GoH was David Drake, artist GoH was Lawrence Allen Williams and Tom Smith was fan GoH. Christy Johnson served as Chair of Millennicon 19 with Julie Hanslip as Vice-Chair and Chief Recording Officer. Dan Ryan—CEO of the Miami Valley Fandom for Literacy organization—was present and kept busy with various duties as well as being Con-Suite Director. By 5 p.m. Saturday afternoon 362 persons had registered for the con, according to Johnson.

Christy Johnson officially opened Millennicon 19 at 7 p.m. Friday evening when she introduced GoH's and some staff members. An hour later David Drake cut the author GoH cake in a crowded con suite.

At 9 p.m. I attended the panel titled "Also



Fan Goh, filker Tom Smith.

Known As...." which featured Mike Resnick (multi-Hugo and Nebula award author of SF, his sex book titles and pseudonyms still remain a secret), Joe Martino (author, world traveler, authority on Technology and space program applications), Anne Harris (novels such as *The Nature of Smoke* and *Accidental Creatures*) and Juanita Coulson (*Children of the Stars* series, several novels and short stories, filker, songwriter and publisher). Harris and Martino said that they had never used pseudonyms. Resnick said that SF is a quarter of his writing output for which he uses his real name. For three-fourths of his writing, Resnick writes fast and is facile and can make a living in full-time writing by using pseudonyms; he has written over 200 books with 150 of them being sex books. Resnick has also written syndicated articles with bylines such as Jane Mansfield and Jesse Owens, by contractual agreement.

According to Resnick, if an author's books don't sell in a particular genre, that author had better use pseudonyms in order to make sales in other genres. There is another very practical reason for an author's use of pseudonyms, according to Resnick: if an author is prolific and writes three or more books per year, reviewers seem to automatically think that none of the books is any good because not enough time was spent writing them! Therefore, publishers recommend pseudonyms for their very prolific authors. Some publishers also get into the act of pseudonym-use, said Resnick, because a "house author" name may be used by several writers who sell to that publisher only with the contractual agreement that their work will be published with the name of the house author. Subsequently, if the house author dies, the pub-

lisher allows other people to write for that house author! Martino has been selling since 1960 and wishes that he had started writing SF with a pen name; his nonfiction technical engineering books don't seem to fit his name to SF. Panel members agreed with Martino that some important names in SF use pseudonyms because of their professional lives. But a good point was agreed to by all: faithful readers would purchase and read anything written by a particular author whom they like. A downside to using pseudonyms is that sometimes authors can't be found by their pseudonyms in order to send them a check or a contract!

The 10 a.m. Saturday morning panel, "A Darker Pen," was comprised of Teri A. Jacobs (dark fantasy novelist and short stories, editor *Flesh & Blood Magazine*), William Levy (fan, artist, gaming designer and first erotic romance novel has just been contracted for by Mundania press), Lucy Snyder (nonfiction, poetry and SF and horror short stories) and Gary Braunbeck (short story "Duty"—published in the anthology *Vivisections* by Catalyst Press—won a 2003 Bram Stoker award, novelist and instructor of creative writing).

According to Braunbeck, all horror stories are based on fear; i. e., the characters are fear driven. The panel agreed that the original "Twilight Zone" television series of stories exemplified this idea. Panelists also said that the earlier Stephen King stories provided good examples of fear-driven characters. Braunbeck's way of defining horror also includes exploring violence and grief and reconciling them with the universe. It is interesting, said Braunbeck, that most people are at their worst when they are faced with fear!

William Levy backed up Braunbeck's thought by adding that horror stories start with

characters at their best and then they descend into their worst. Levy also approaches horror as moral tales; “transgress and you will be eaten by the beast.” Snyder maintains that horror is always very nasty and not acceptable for kids or anyone else!

Jacobs told her audience that most of us are afraid to die because we think that there is something out there that is really going to eat us. Jacob further maintains that we all carry a primal fear from our evolutionary backgrounds; horror stories explore that basic fear and cause readers to feel really horrible. Horror stories can explore without boundaries, not like SF and fantasy where there are rules and readers expect those rules to be satisfied, said Jacobs. A positive way to consider the value of horror stories, said Braunbeck, is that readers emerge with a new respect for human life.

Levy gave his audience a different example of how to get a novel accepted: he sold the first three chapters of his novel as part of a fanzine in dealers’ rooms at conventions. All panelists agreed that Edgar Allan Poe is a classic author of horror stories. Good horror stories do not contain gratuitous gore, just for gore’s sake. After the panel concluded, Jacobs told me that she thinks all of Shakespeare’s tragedies were horror stories; the term “horror” didn’t become popular until Stephen King, she said. Later in the day, I met William Levy in the dealers’ room and he told me that Shakespeare’s “A Midsummer Night’s Dream” is a true horror story because of the alien-type creatures who come along and say, “Hello! We are going to take you away and kill you!”

Saturday’s 12 Noon session on “Space Opera” included as much audience participation as that from the panel. Panelists were Susan Baugh (retired librarian and fan), Ron Sarti (author of the *Chronicles of Scar* series) and David Drake (latest Hammer’s *Slammers* novel is *Paying The Piper*, Baen Books).

Panelists and audience members began this session by attempting to define the term “space opera,” but, finished the hour by pretty well agreeing that the term has many different definitions depending on writers’ and readers’ points-of-view. Baugh said that space opera is what she understands and has fun reading. Drake agreed that space opera is fun to read, but can also have serious themes. Drake writes some space opera that, he said, uses more color and greater sweep and flow as compared to the “mud” (rules) of his military stories. Later, Drake said that his Lt. Leary series is space opera (*Lt. Leary Commanding*). Sarti said that to him, space opera deals with a larger scope: solar systems and galaxies with a fascination for a created world and the operating system of that world. Drake said that we shouldn’t forget the “larger than life” characters to be found in space opera. And, added Baugh, sometimes space operas contain more compelling villains than heroes.

Panelists agreed that any American western would do just as well for a space opera. Drake compared “space opera” with “horse opera”; the latter being a low-end western. The word “opera” is pejorative, said Drake; a term generally applied from outside the genre with the intention of putting it down. The panel then attempted to identify required elements for a space opera. Baugh said that for her, if she likes reading a particular SF story, it’s space opera. Drake said that requirements for a space opera include action, adventure SF with a strong central character. All three panelists—and the audience—agreed that the old Ace double-novels were excellent examples of space opera. Do not look for “reality” in space opera, everyone agreed. One of the new approaches to space opera is crossovers, said Baugh; e. g., romance and SF, mystery and SF, etc.

For the first-time in my life, I attended a con filk concert. During Saturday’s 3 p.m. program I was delighted with Tom Smith’s guitar strumming accompaniment to his wonderfully irreverent humorous, mad science and satirical lyrics, often set to well-known melodies. I noted such one-liners and titles as: “Fenton—Death Sheep from Hell”; “The Curse Of My Existence Are The Movies”; and, “When I Grow Up, I Want To Be Peter Lorre.” Smith’s changes of voices and facial expressions were popular, especially with children in the audience.

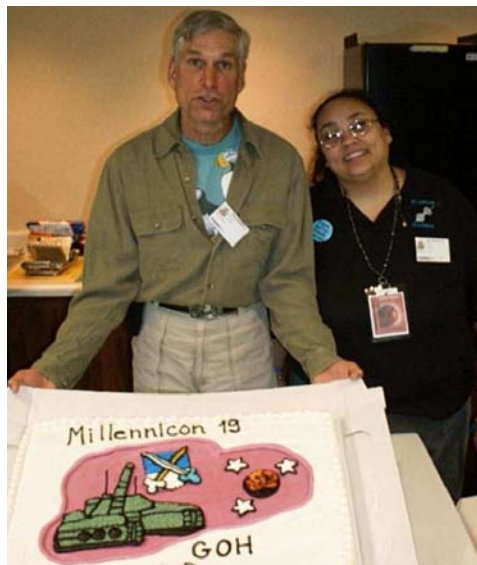
At 4 p.m. Saturday, David Drake gave an informative and inspiring presentation to a packed ballroom. I had heard him say earlier in the day—and he also repeated it at the outset of his Saturday afternoon’s appearance—that he had no prepared remarks and would just as soon go out to the lobby autograph table and sign books. But, almost immediately Drake had questions—to which he said he would give

honest answers—and he had no trouble filling his hour-long allotted time.

Drake was drafted and spent two years in Vietnam and spent a great deal of time talking about his experiences, for which he was given “a couple of hours” training in firing an M48 tank gun. “They needed tank gunners in the field—there was never a full crew—so, that’s where I went.” He had been trained as an interrogator. When he returned to civilian life Drake went back to Duke University and began his fourth semester in law school. After graduation, Drake was an assistant town attorney in Chapel Hill, North Carolina during which time he sold two books. After eight years, Drake “quit lawyering in order to quit lawyering!” He was a part-time city bus driver and part-time writer. He still has his chauffeur’s license that allows him to drive a city bus, but he does not maintain his bar membership. He can’t stand lawyers.

Based on his Vietnam tank experiences—“we all rode on the outside because it was too dangerous to be inside”—Drake eventually wrote the *Hammer’s Slammers* series of military SF stories; his 11th Armored Cavalry unit of tanks was known as “the hammer” in the field. His tank unit was an elite group: “...It was a unit in which everybody did his job. It didn’t matter if you thought the Vietnam war was a good idea, or not; you didn’t let your buddies down and they didn’t let you down.” He learned to trust people in his unit; his experience with trust has given Drake something that he’s glad to have, after the fact. Drake didn’t like “the brass” during his Army experiences and he said that he has nothing but contempt for the Vietnamese. Although he didn’t know it at the time, writing the *Slammers* (Baen) stories also provided psychological therapy for him, a type of healing that many Vietnam veterans have not had. After completing *Redliners* (Baen, 1996), Drake was over the hump; he had worked things out in his mind about Vietnam. During an eighteen-month hiatus where he couldn’t sell anything, he was encouraged by editors to use Vietnam as the background for what he was writing. All of the stories that he wrote during this selling dry spell eventually sold. It seemed to me that David Drake’s Saturday afternoon presentation was just as therapeutic for the audience as it was for the speaker. People lined up to have Drake sign books after his presentation.

David Drake had signed books for me before his presentation. While signing some of his books for me earlier that afternoon, I told Drake that I had just finished the original *Hammer’s Slammers* novel (Ace, 1979) and, unless I was misreading it, I did not like Colonel Hammer. “You’re absolutely right!” Drake replied. “Hammer is a Hitler-like dictator; he’s not a nice guy. Readers sometimes think that authors have to like the characters that they write about. You read it correctly!”



David Drake and Christy Johnson (Millennicon19 chair), by H. L. Drake.

NOTES FROM TECHNICON 22: *THE AGE OF CHIVALRY, BY H. L. DRAKE*

Technicon 22 was held April 1-3, 2005 at the Ramada Limited in Blacksburg, Virginia. Technicon is the work of a sub-committee of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University Science Fiction and Fantasy club. By 5 p.m. on Saturday, April 2, 260 persons had registered. The Con is held off-campus because Virginia Tech doesn't have facilities for large groups of people. According to the Con's 2005 Chair, Brian "Vond" -- his 1995 handle when he did on-line roll-playing and lifted from Lawrence Watt-Evans's *The Unwilling Warlord*, (Del Ray, 1989 & Wildside Press, 2001) -- Maloney, each year's Con attendees are usually about 50% Virginia Tech students and staff and the other half are civilians, like me.

The 2005 Technicon theme was "chivalry" and Literary GoH Lois McMaster Bujold reflects that theme with some of her SF & F stories which feature a "chivalric setting," according to Brian Maloney. And Artist GoH Pete Abrams has presented some chivalry fantasy material in his *Sluggy Freelance* web comics (www.sluggy.com). After Friday night's opening ceremonies Con attendees met the two GoH's and other guests. Abrams signed some of his *Sluggy* books and "Bun-Bun & Kiki" plush dolls for fans. Bujold—she pronounces the final "d" -- conducted brief conversations and photo opportunities for her readers. One of the Con's workers asked if I wanted my picture taken with Bujold, to which I replied, "Yes, if I can kiss her." Bujold informed me that she doesn't "do that." (It didn't work for Mike Resnick either -- as far as I know -- when I sat at a luncheon table with he and a female author at Context XVII in Columbus, October 2004!) So, I had to settle for sitting beside Bujold and resting my left arm on her chair back; for which she seemed a bit nonplussed as I remained all smiles!

The first session that I attended Friday night was titled "An Hour With Bujold." The location was in a corner of what was once the hotel's bar and night-club and conversation resulted from an informal Q & A session. Bujold informed her audience that in June of 2005 her third novel in the Chalion series will be published -- *The Hallowed Hunt*, Eos/HarperCollins -- and for which she will



Technicon 22 guest of honor Lois McMaster Bujold.

embark on a six-city/nine-day tour in the same month, beginning on the west coast and concluding in Dayton, Ohio and Chicago, Illinois.

Friday night Bujold told her audience that between writing her own books, she reads mostly outside the genres of science fiction and fantasy; mysteries, some romance, and friends' manuscripts. SF and F writers are history buffs, she said, and she does a great deal of nonfiction back-ground reading in preparation for writing novels; e.g., reading about medieval Spain for the Chalion stories.

Bujold books are written one-at-a-time; she remains extremely focused on a single book project until it is completed. When writing one book, she does not get bogged-down in thinking about future projects. She loves cats and those animals continue to pop up in Bujold stories.

Friday night's audience was comprised predominantly of her readers who constantly wanted to know answers to their minutia questions about scenes, characters and character development. Bujold was asked which character surprised her the most. She responded that they all do, and that this is what makes writing interesting for her! When her characters do

something wrong for them, they have a sit-down strike in her mind. With every book, Bujold experiences three to five weeks where her characters are not going in the right directions and she has to stop writing; e. g., perhaps scenes belong to another character in the book, or, a character doesn't belong in the current story but another one.

While writing, Bujold experiences a continuous flow and feedback process in her own mind; she has only vague ideas about where she is going with the story. Things develop as she writes; no one "can hold a whole novel in their head," she told her audience. She can only hold a paragraph at a time in her head while writing. Bujold does a lot of pre-outlining and notes to herself before beginning to write. She can sometimes work out ideas and scenes that each chapter will contain. Bujold may go through three or four levels of outlining before sitting down to write the final version of the story. But she is always open to further changes and development as she writes what she

thinks will be the final draft. She does admit to choreographing dialogue; she never writes dialogue sequences until they are all mapped out from beginning to end.

Some fans commented on turns and twists in Bujold's stories; to which she replied that those are partly because she doesn't know, herself, where characters and action are going while she writes. "That was predictable!" is something that she "hates to hear" readers say. "If it was predictable, why did it take me six months to figure it out!" And, endings are tricky, Bujold added. Endings that just stop are disappointing, she thinks. "Beginnings get practiced more than endings."

Bujold defines "genre" as being "any group of works in close relationship with one another." That's why there are common properties for anyone to use in a genre, starting with language itself. "We are always standing on the shoulders of others." But, individual styles can be developed over a period of time, and that's what Bujold seems to be concerned with for herself. (On Saturday when I asked her what type of writing that she did—science fiction, science fantasy, feminist approaches to both -- she responded that she writes "Bujold

stories.”) However, during Friday night’s discussion with her audience, she said that as a female writer she has female elements in her work such as technologies in reproduction and women’s issues in society. An audience member complimented Bujold on her “intelligent, competent and active women” characters in her stories. Many audience members agreed. Later, during the convention when I was talking with a book dealer who seemed to have read much of Bujold’s work, he said that up to now, Bujold’s female characters were not as fully developed as are her male characters. Fiction characters are in the eye/mind/sex of the reader! Bujold alluded to this phenomenon during her Friday night presentation.

At mid-morning Saturday I had an impromptu interview with Bujold in the hotel’s breakfast area outside the con dealer’s room. Bujold told me that she has done hard science fiction, fantasy and cross-over types such as mystery, coming of age and military aspects. However, she said that she is trying to write her own style. She disagreed with my identifying *The Mountains Of Mourning* (Baen free library at www.baen.com) as science fantasy with aspects of feminism. *Mountains* takes place in Count Vorkosigan’s native district in the world of Barrayar. During the story there are allusions to ground and air cars, plus audio receivers and government broadcasts from the capital, “powersat receptors” and off-planet travel. But none of these technologies are explained or dwelled on. The story takes place mostly in mountains containing an antediluvian culture. “Barrayar is a futuristic novel that contains a combination of future technology and primitive living conditions, just like on earth today!” Bujold told me. But there was no “feminism” in the story, she insisted. *My reading* (in the eye/brain of the reader) of the story included what I thought were feminist proclivities regarding what the character named Harra

could do to save herself and move forward at the end of the story.

Saturday afternoon during her signing session, Bujold told those present that she was the Technicon GoH several years ago. From what Brian Maloney had told me earlier in the day -- and a Con member said during the signing -- Bujold was GoH at Technicon 4. That Con was small enough to be held on the Virginia Tech campus and Bujold said that she was so new at GoHism, that she washed her own dishes in the dorm-like atmosphere. She didn’t know then about the “pecking-order” system that prevails which involves others who were supposed to do her dishes! Technicon 4 took place eighteen years ago in Blacksburg!

Saturday at 4 p.m. I attended the “Web Comics As A Medium” panel discussion that included Chris Impink, Pete Abrams (*Worship The Comic*, Plan 9 Publishing, 1998) and Barb Fischer. Fischer is the writer and Impink the artist for *Fragile Gravity: Summertime Brews* (Unseen Productions Publishers, 2004) plus their on-going web cartoon (www.fragilegravity.com). Abrams has already been identified in this article as the creator of the *Sluggy* web cartoons and books. There were no opening remarks by panel members and so this session was a Q & A format. In answer to the question about the role of new technology in web comics, Impink said that technology is fairly gimmicky, experimental and still developing. Comparing web comics with traditionally published cartoons in newspapers, Abrams told the audience that the internet provides cartoonists with freedom to do and say whatever they want. Impink agreed and added that he went on the internet with his cartoons because it’s cheaper than traditional publishing and there is the potential for a larger audience. Fisher likes the idea of the immediacy of web comics and cartoonists can communicate more closely and more timely

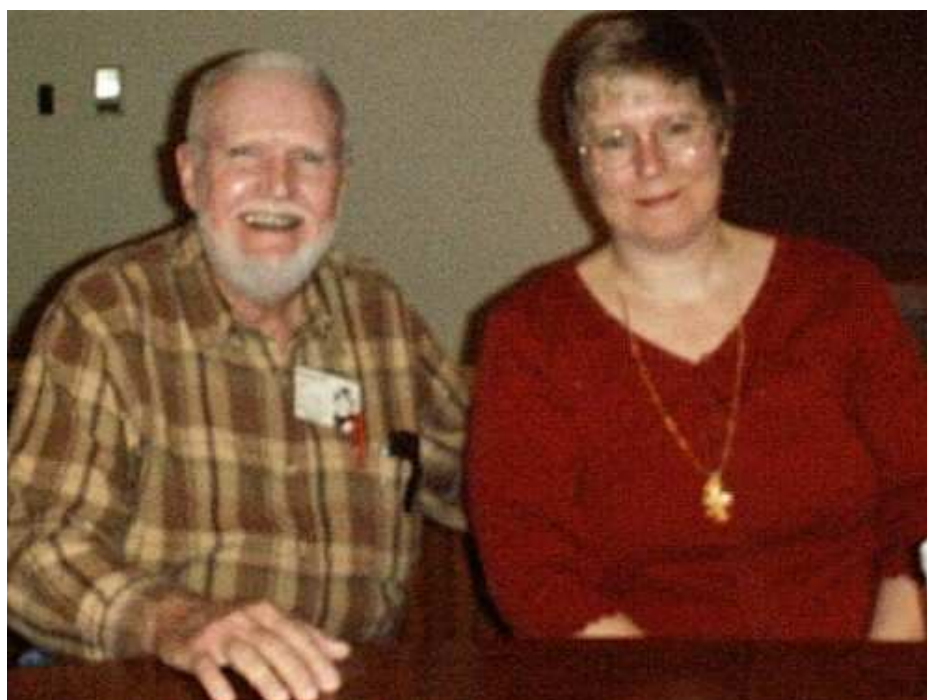
with their audiences than they can with syndicated newspaper publication. Most audience members indicated that they read lots of web comics; one person said that she regularly reads thirty-five such comics! Panelists said that their web sites contain archives of previous comic strips; a new viewer can quickly catch up, if they so desire.

Lois McMaster Bujold’s excellent enunciation, articulation and pronunciation makes her a person easy to listen to as a reader. Her Saturday 6 p.m. reading of chapters one and two from *The Hallowed Hunt* (Eos/HarperCollins June, 2005) kept her audience’s attention, and even included some slight changes of voice to suggest the featured female and male characters.

From her reading, Bujold went into her 7 p.m. session titled “Bujold’s Universes.” World building in SF and F has to include economics that make sense, as well as feasible travel and technological methods, she said. Bujold’s Chalion and Vorkosigan/Barrayar universes are well known among avid readers of her novels. As an example, the theology of Chalion is a Bujold original creation; she wanted to construct a non-dualism (good versus evil) religion in that story. Chalion’s world contains an uneven number of gods; and, those gods are evolutionary in that they grow and change over time. Thus, the gods become human. There is no damnation, as such, in Chalion. The inhabitants of Chalion wouldn’t say “damn!” but “cursed!” In the world of Chalion there is the existence of non-existence; a person can refuse a god upon dying and drift off into nothingness. The world of Chalion is interior experience that cannot be proved. Bujold explored two aspects of religion in the Chalion series; (1) mystical emotions and (2) social functions as a church and organization to get jobs done. The Vorkosigan world is a descendant of ourselves. The Vorkosigan life



Co-chair Robert Ligouri and Con Chair Brian “Vond” Maloney with guest of honor, comics artist Pete Abrams.



Your reporter, H. L. Drake, with Lois McMaster Bujold.

and the entire world of Barrayar -- she used the family and world names interchangeably -- have lost most of their religion along the way of their continued existence. The Barrayars are Russians of four-hundred years in our future and their government is fiction.

Bujold said that she was working on a new universe for a fantasy with magic story that

does not contain gods. As of Technicon 22, Bujold had twenty-nine chapters that she had worked on since the Summer of 2004. She explained that this universe story has a central romance plot with adventure; it involves the two main characters dealing with their pre-industrial world. Bujold is writing this book on speculation -- not yet sold -- because she wants

to take a break from contractual deadlines.

Focusing on characters instead of technological details is what she does in stories, Bujold told her audience. However, the biology is always correct in her stories. She uses physical observation as well as reading and published pictures to enhance her intensely visual writing. Bujold subsequently used her observations of Spain's landscapes (on a trip there) for land descriptions in *Paladin Of Souls* (Eos/HarperCollins, 2003 & paperback by HarperTorch, May, 2005). Descriptions of alien landscapes in *Shards of Honor* (Baen,1986) were based on her 1971 biology group trip to Kenya, East Africa. (She did not become a biologist, however.) Nothing gets wasted as research in writers' real life experiences, according to Bujold.

Bujold finished her "Universes" session by telling her audience that she is trying not to "mortgage" her future (multi-book contracts) to old ideas; that's why she is not fond of contracts to write more of the same characters and universes and story continuations as those which she has previously produced.

Technicon are family-oriented and include children's programming, costuming, white elephant auctions, art auctions, dancing, filking amateur/independent film festivals, and gaming. Ed Holohan, 2005 Con security chief, will be the Technicon 23 Chair, and 23 has been tentatively scheduled for March 31-April 2, 2006; the theme then will be "Children of the Night." Check at www.technicon.org for updates and further information.

L.A.con IV General Meeting and Site Visit: (Left) Christian McGuire, chair L.A.con IV; (Middle) Glenn Glazer, Bobbi Armbruster; (Right) Tadao Tomomatsu. Photos by Chaz Boston Baden.



Westcon 58: Report by Dale Speirs

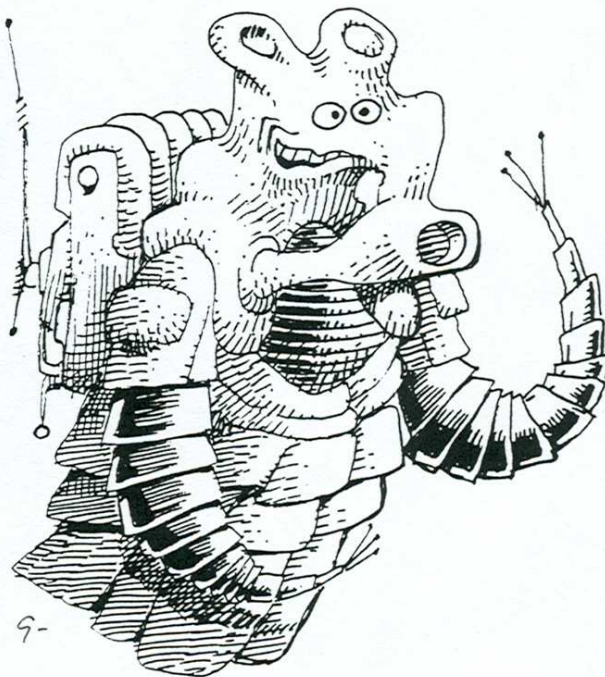
Calgary hosted its first Westcon on the weekend of July 1-4, 2005, at the Westin Hotel in the downtown core. The dates neatly encompassed both the Canadian and American national holidays, although the actual start of the convention began the Thursday night of June 30, since us Canucks got Friday off as Canada Day. Westcon is a science fiction (SF) convention that perambulates around western North America, mostly in the American states but twice in Vancouver. It is a regional convention, not a local one, and so is larger and longer than a local convention, with more tracks of programming and events.

The previous week, Calgary had suffered a once-in-200-years flood, but fortunately the downtown area was not seriously affected. The record rainfall (a year's precipitation in one week) was followed by a week of sunny weather, which in turn produced a record crop of mosquitoes. In the adjacent Rocky Mountains, a late snowmelt meant more grizzly bears than usual on the valley floors (two hikers killed plus several wounded up to date of convention). In short, a good reason to stay inside a hotel and discuss Shakespeare in the original Klingon.

Registration, for those of us who pre-registered, was quick and easy. I was given pause though, when the volunteer waved a hand punch at me and asked if I wanted my badge punched so that I could buy alcoholic drinks in the Consuite. Since I was a few months short of 50 years, I took this as a compliment, accustomed as I am to being mistaken for Terry Carr or Rip Torn. In the actual event, I told the volunteer that I was a teetotaler and the punch was therefore irrelevant. However, it was a good idea for the younger set, as the convention committee would otherwise be at risk of criminal charges for serving alcoholic beverages to under-18s.

When attending conventions, it is my policy to have a huge breakfast and coast the rest of the day while at panels. The Westin Hotel had a nice breakfast buffet, so every morning I stuffed myself before the first panel. I told you that so I could tell you this; every morning when I went into the restaurant, I saw at least one person eating breakfast while reading an SF paperback. Only at an SF convention!

Throughout this convention report, if I mention people by name they are panelists, unless, of course, the context says otherwise. Although there were microphones available, panelists seldom used them and I often had



difficulty hearing them. There were no name cards, but most panelists were the usual suspects I have seen at previous Calgary conventions so I knew who they were, and the rest I identified by logical deduction from the program booklet.

Space Elevators 101. This was my first panel of the convention, on the Thursday night. Jeff Krehmer reviewed the history and current status of space elevators. The basic idea is to orbit an asteroid about 115,000 km from Earth and use it as a counterweight to a carbon-nanotube cable anchored to a floating rig in the eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean. The space elevator was first proposed by Soviet scientists in 1960, and has since become a popular theme with SF writers. NASA did a study in 1999 which concluded that the space elevator would not be built for at least 300 years at the earliest. One contractor estimated it would cost \$7 billion for the technical end, and the same again for legal and regulatory approvals under international law, if built now. Personally I think \$14 billion is ridiculously low; Boston is spending that amount on its Big Dig subway system, which is ordinary technology. Proponents of the space elevator talk about how it is doable with off-the-shelf technology, but off-the-shelf doesn't work in space travel.

A space elevator would use climbers boosted by laser beams. The anchor rigs would be similar to deep-sea oil rigs, and would be mobile because the cable will have to be moved every few weeks to avoid orbiting de-

bris and satellites. It would take about 8 days for a climber to reach geosynchronous orbit and another week or so to reach the end of the tether. The cable would more probably be a curved ribbon rather than a spherical cross-section.

The advantage of a space elevator is much lower freight costs to and from orbit. It could also be used elsewhere in the solar system, such as the Moon and Mars. Hazards include oscillations in the cable, induced electrical currents, atmospheric wind, and atomic oxygen. All told, I feel safe in prophesying that it won't happen in our grandchildren's lifetimes.

But Aragorn's The Good Guy!

This panel featured fantasy novelists Dave Duncan and Rebecca Bradley on the topic of why fantasy favors absolute monarchies. The hero(ine) goes on a quest to claim the throne from a usurper, not to establish a democratic republic where just anyone can get elected. Bradley, an anthropologist in her day job, mentioned that humans like

to kid themselves that they are social primates who do not behave instinctively but have free will. In fact, we have a strong instinct for pecking orders and to follow leaders and let them do the thinking for us. Fantasy kings are also largely wish fulfillment; nobody yearns to be a ploughman.

Duncan started off his comments by asking why we read fiction at all. He answered his question by saying that life is one crappy thing after another, but fantasy is about special people who do things and get someplace. Readers are interested in the high and mighty, not the ploughman's daily routine. He mentioned that aristocracies have one advantage in that because they are not thinking about the next election they can therefore take the long view and think in terms of dynasty.

Audience members commented that democracy requires active participation, which is work that most people don't want to do. It couldn't exist in the old days because it requires communication. As transport and communication increases, it becomes more difficult to suppress democracy.

Disasters Large And Small. The first panel I went to Friday morning was of particular interest to us Calgary fans, what with the recent floods in southern Alberta. The context here was natural disasters, not terrorist attacks or incompetent human behavior. Panelist Blair Petterson said that ultimately the only way humans can survive is to disperse into space, so that if a nearby supernova blows or we get

an extinction-level event, then our species can survive. He remarked that we are in a period of more and bigger natural disasters.

James Glass said that climate change is not a disaster now, but could easily trip over into exponential change. He cited as an example the melting of the Arctic Ocean ice, which might not raise sea levels much but could switch the Atlantic Ocean currents in a different direction. No Gulf Stream would put Europe back into another Little Ice Age and trigger release of methane hydrates from the Atlantic Ocean, which in turn would trigger runaway warming. Glass also mentioned that one little-publicized impending disaster is a shortage of clean fresh water.

Lost In Space. Hugh Gregory started off by saying that the Russian, American, and Chinese space programs are adrift. "Why go into space?" he asked, then answered his own question by saying "Because it's there". Unfortunately he then went off on a rant about how the space programs are stuck with expendable rocket launches instead of reusable X-planes because of a conspiracy of defense contractors, politicians, and bankers. At this point I checked out of the panel.

Frankenfoods. Paula Johanson is an organic farmer who has a market garden in central Alberta. She noted that not all agricultural chemicals are bad, nor are genetically-modified organisms (GMOs) necessarily bad either. Barb Geller-Smith, a science teacher, commented that genetic modification of crops has been done for millennia, but in the last century there has been a sudden loss in genetic diversity of crop plants as farmers standardize on certain hybrids and GMOs. She pointed out that the long-term behavior of GMOs is still unknown.

From the audience, I added in my particular expertise (B.Sc. Horticulture and previous research work) and said that while GMOs are safe to eat, the real concern is genetic drift. Many GMOs with herbicide or insect resistance have already passed those genes on to related crop weeds via pollen flow. An audience member who is a Saskatchewan farmer said his problem was that the only seed available for large-scale farms like his is GMOs and hybrids. Like Internet users who have to keep upgrading their computers to get videos and MP3s, farmers have to plant only GMOs because they can't afford not to.

The Growing Influence Of Anime. Lai Zhao had the absolute newest anime imports for this panel, as she had just flown in from Hong Kong a few hours before and was still jet-lagged. She said anime manga is extremely popular in Hong Kong. (Manga are comic books in trade paperback format.) She said that manga is not considered a fine-arts form in Asia but North Americans have elevated it to a cult. Tee Morris said he sometimes had trouble understanding anime in the same way that he

did with 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY, but eventually he caught on to the internal logic.

An audience member who is a librarian said that when the library introduced anime manga, their circulation increased 30%. This was not just because of readers checking out manga, but because the manga was shelved next to SF novels, the readers also picked out some of those as well. Another comment from the audience was that long-form anime suffers from being episodic; there are no true novels in manga.

Chicks In Chain Mail. A very popular panel with a packed room. There were seven panelists, which I think is a record for Calgary. Six were women, and the lone man was Tee Morris, who was promptly declared the Token Male. He was there because he has one fantasy novel with tough chicks and romance in them, and he announced mock defiantly to the room: "I write romantic fantasy; get over it!"

A panelist asked how many women in the audience had ever worn chain mail. Only four admitted to it. I noticed that none of the costumed women in the audience were actually wearing brass bras or chain mail; they were all in medieval gowns or Regency dress. It was agreed that chain mail needs a layer of cloth underneath because it is painful to wear. It chafes, pinches, and binds. Another panelist pointed out that medieval knights wore chain mail over plate, with padding underneath. Chain mail can defend against slashing but is useless against rapiers. It is, however, no sillier in fantasy than Gonad the Barbarian fighting in battle wearing nothing but a loincloth.

From there, the panel shifted to the damsel in distress, a factor which had long kept many women from reading SF and fantasy. The damsel is slowly disappearing in recent years. One panelist, who is in her late 60s, said that when she was a girl, she could only find male hero SF. The first mention of Emma Peel by a panelist brought loud cheers from the room. In modern SF, a female lead character should not just be a male fighter pilot with boobs, but should be shown in all aspects of her life.

How Possible Is Time Travel? Forward time travel is trivial, said the two panelists who were physicists, and backward time travel is not against physics at the quantum scale. Paradoxes arise only in single, closed-loop universes. If the universe is open, where time travel creates a new timeline, then there are no paradoxes. If you go back to kill your grandfather before you were born, you will still exist because you and your dead grandfather are on separate timelines.

The wormhole method of time travel is not practical because humans could not survive the gravitational stress. One panelist remarked that the great accomplishment of modern physics is that we have precisely defined the limits of our ignorance by sweeping the anomalies into catchall bins labeled dark energy or dark mat-

ter.

Spintronics. Canada's national SF and fantasy awards, the Auroras, were presented this year at Westercon. I was nominated for the Aurora Award again for Best Fanzine, but after 13 years of losing, I decided I wasn't going to sit through the ceremony just to watch someone else walk up to the podium. Instead, I went next door to a talk given by Kevin Roche, an IBM researcher from California, on spintronics. This is a developing field of electronics based on electron spin, not the normal flow of electrons in a current. Electron spin is the rotating electrical charge of the electron. Half of them rotate one way, half the other, and the spin is arbitrarily called Up or Down spin. Spin is the source of magnetism. Electrons can be polarized like light by applying an external magnetic field, which separates the Up electrons from the Down electrons.

Roche discussed devices using electron spin. The basic element is thin layers of magnetic and non-magnetic material. Electrons flow in one side of a layer, are sorted en route into Up and Down spins, and exit the other end. The most common use is in multi-gigabyte drives, because these devices can read smaller signals than regular electronics. This allows data to be compressed into smaller bits on the disk. Another application of spintronics is electron tunneling, which conserves spin (that is, does not sort them). By controlling the currents on either side of the device, this can turn it into a high-speed switch.

Thank You, Thank You. As I exited the Spintronics panel, I was surrounded by well-wishers, having won my first Aurora Award, for Best Fanzine. Cliff Samuels accepted the award on my behalf, after everyone in the audience had been looking about the room for me. Robert Sawyer told them that he knew I was around somewhere because just before the ceremony began, he and I passed each other going in and out of the men's washroom. Peter Jarvis was worried he would have to carry the trophy back to Toronto just to mail it back to me in Calgary, but all turned out well. A pleasant end to Canada Day. I look forward to getting my next Aurora in 2019.

Writers At The Improv. Always a popular feature at Calgary conventions, the Imaginative Fiction Writers Association, a Calgary writers group, hosts this event. Several pairs of pro writers and IFWA members are given a word by the audience, and then have 60 seconds to write a sentence using it. The sentences are read off, the audience votes on the best one, and the process is repeated until a short-short is built up. The result was as follows; the underlined words are the audience suggestions.

"As far as explosions go, it was a small one, but considering the exploding object was his left testicle, it was an event of some magnitude. He tried to get it into the waiting testicle receptacle and even though it was tricky, he

pulled it off. He passed the receptacle to the next person in the pew, reflecting as he did so that he was reconsidering his membership in the Universal Ecumenical Church of Mandatory Organ Donation. “Mandatory, schmandatory”; he’d only stumbled into the dark crowded church hung over and broken-hearted, merely on the promise of pie and one of them sparkly ball things.* But as he looked down, he did feel sorry for the tarantula; he might only be half a man now but the poor spider was on its last legs. As the suppositories were passed about, he decided this was too much of a pain in the ass; forget religion, he’d turn to science. He leaped to his feet, and whipped from his blood-stained pocket a hyperbowl, a small bowl-shaped container of condensed space time.** Upending its contents, he reversed time in the church to before the testicle catastrophe, and walked out a free, whole man, a man about whom, and without hyperbole it could be said, he knew how to keep one eye on his balls.

* A reference to one of the Westercon dealers selling bouncing balls that sparkled and glowed as they bounced.

** Actual word suggested was ‘hyperbole’.

Them Bones Gonna Rise. This panel discussed the plausibility of cloning dinosaurs from fossil DNA, as in *Jurassic Park*. Dr. Phil Currie, of the Royal Tyrrell Museum of Palaeontology in Drumheller, said that palaeontology attracts people who are not interested in science but just spectacular animals. Fossilization can occur rapidly within days and preserve soft tissue in anaerobic conditions.

Sandy Fitzpatrick, a DNA specialist with the University of Calgary, said the main problem in reconstructing species from fossils is getting good DNA. It starts decomposing at the moment of death. We don’t even know how many chromosomes a given species of dinosaur had. A lot of it is ‘junk DNA’, called that originally because scientists thought it was useless, but now understood to be DNA whose purpose we simply haven’t yet discovered. Most DNA recovered from samples is fragmentary, and must be pieced together bit by bit by looking for overlaps in gene sequences.

Fitzpatrick said the bane of her life and other DNA specialists is the television series CSI, which is very misleading. Old bones (ex., a 10-year-old murder) do not necessarily yield DNA, and tests take three days minimum. Although most of the CSI science is true, the timelines are ridiculously short (laboratory tests within a couple of hours) and laboratory technicians do not visit crime scenes (it is the job of police to collect the evidence).

Fanzine Kaffeeklatsch. This was hosted by John Hertz (Los Angeles), who brought along samples of current zines and explained to the novices about how to get involved in the scene and how zine ex-

changes work. He mentioned that the Internet has been good for zinedom in one respect, in that crudzine publishers are now rare because most of them are on the Internet. He said that Webzines are not necessarily less work than paper zines, but rather a different kind of work. I mentioned that no one can Google the Paper-net as they can with the Internet, which means your employer can’t go fishing for your name or his.

Convention AGM. The annual general meeting of Convention, Canada’s national SF convention, was chaired by John Mansfield. Convention is where the Aurora Awards are presented, and alternates between western and eastern Canada (the dividing line is the Manitoba/Ontario border). Usually it runs as part of another convention. The only major business was to accept Toronto Trek’s bid to host Convention in 2006. A Vancouverite in the audience suggested that V-Con might be bidding for it in 2007 when Convention rotates back into the western zone.

Challenger, Columbia, And Hubble. This panel discussed what was learned from past mistakes and where to go from here. Larry Niven said the shuttle was built by committee, hence its fatal defects. He said that a big problem in spacecraft design is parasite control, keeping out people who want to add their projects to the spacecraft. An audience member who is a Boeing engineer said there was too much interference from politicians, who are not interested in space but rather in spreading dollars around to constituencies.

Blair Petterson said Mir and the International Space Station were like camping in your back yard; they should be out in deeper space where they could be useful way stations. The Americans’ mistake was to use man-rated shuttles to haul freight, instead of separating the two duties as the Russians do with Soyuz and Progress spacecraft. The shuttle disasters showed what happens when the margins of safety are pushed out further with each launch because nothing happened the last time a piece of foam fell off. The ill-fated Biosphere 2 experiment showed that we can’t make artificial ecosystems work on Earth, much less in a spacecraft.

Bad Religion And Odd Religion. Rebecca Bradley started off by remarking that the dif-

ference between a cult and a religion is about 2,000 years. She said that outsiders view cults as odd, while cults view outsiders as bad. Cults and religions are subject to natural selection over time, and are constantly being winnowed down. Bad religion does not refer to morality or ethics but to the internal structure and organization of a religion, which is what helps it survive and prosper or else fail.

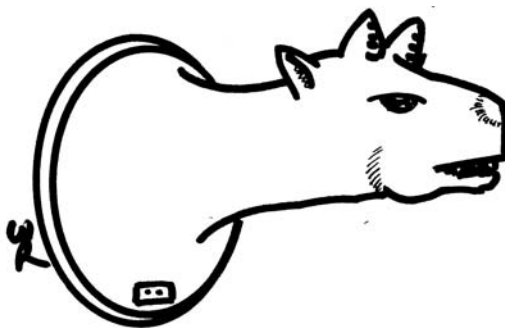
Marie Jakober said that until recently religions were not subject to the same scrutiny as other organizations, and could get involved in politics. She felt that a major part of religion in controlling sexuality and determining who has access to mates and how children are raised.

An audience member pointed out that most SF novels show the author’s view of a religion, not as that religion may actually be practiced. Publishers are only interested in what sells and their view of religion in SF will over the long run match the philosophy of SF readers. It had better, otherwise the books don’t sell and the publisher goes out of business, another case of natural selection.

Evolution Of The SF Convention. This panel was not on the past evolution but the future development of conventions. Kevin Standlee said the graying of fandom is mostly a reflection of the general population’s graying, plus the fact that fans tend to stay longer in the hobby than they used to. Some increase in age is due to the expense of conventions, as only older fans can afford the hotels and travel. Convention running as a hobby is also expensive. Standlee said that anime fans are the latest injection of new blood into fandom. He found from asking them at publicity tables he manned at conventions that they don’t think of anime as SF, and thus have no interest in SF conventions. [Speirs: Technically, anime is a type of media, not a genre, so anime fans are correct.] Fandom does not attract marketing people, of which it could use more.

An audience member who is a 30ish convention runner said that media fans are the future of conventions. It is important to educate new and potential fans that volunteer-run conventions don’t sell tickets, they sell memberships and expect active participation. He is on the Con-Version committee (Calgary’s annual SF convention), which three years ago had a complete change of blood. The greybeards all departed at once, and the new committee chairs had to start from scratch. Another audience member who recently retired from the military said that he noticed in his last five years of duty a sea change in the way the younger generation thinks. They are accustomed to 5-minutes video clips, not half-hour training videotapes. This new generation is not used to the idea of thinking out the consequences of actions and of planning ahead for an organization such as a convention.

Bobbie DeDefault said she watches for new



faces wandering around the convention and asks them if they would like to help out as volunteers. She targets specific markets of fans with different types of flyers. A generic flyer doesn't appeal to all groups. She is a goth and recruits from that community, and knows the prejudice against them. She said if you are not willing to accept other fandoms, you cannot expect others to share your fandom. John Hertz mentioned it is better to promote the good in fandom than to waste time railing against the bad. Ordinary publicity about SF conventions often does not explain itself to the general public.

People For The Ethical Treatment Of Mars. The question put to this panel was whether it is a good idea to terraform Mars, but this turned out to be almost entirely audience discussion, not the panelists. It was mentioned from the floor that if life is discovered on Mars, there is fear that it might be a plague, or in the alternative, terraforming might destroy something useful. The concern would not be as great if it were archaeobacteria but if multicellular organisms were discovered this would be an issue.

A panelist whose badge name was Ctein (no real name given) said that he would be concerned about his generation's terraforming ethics but not future generations, since he wouldn't be around for them. Terraforming has to be done on a large scale, because small ecosystems are too unstable, as demonstrated by Biosphere 2. Terraforming Mars shouldn't take place until after several centuries of exploration and research are done. There is some current contamination of Mars from the landers but this is not the same thing as terraforming. Danita Maslan said we can't afford the mistake of terraforming Mars into something that humans can't live in.

From the audience, I threw in my viewpoint that we have been terraforming the Earth for centuries. The Canadian prairies are nothing like they were before Europeans settled en masse, and of course eastern North America has been heavily urbanized. The result is that agricultural operations are plagued by pest problems. Imagine trying to control pests on Mars that were inadvertently introduced and whose control depends on chemicals that take six months to be imported from Earth. It is difficult to be ethical about Mars if we aren't about Earth. If there was native life on Mars, we would put some into wildlife reserves and steamroller the majority of the planet's life-forms, just as we do on Earth.

The Future Of Energy. Steve Lopata started off this panel by worrying about the dwindling nuclear power in the USA. When the electrical shortages start developing, there will be a sudden scramble to get more nuclear power plants on line, resulting in bad compromises on safety. He was gloomy about the future of energy because corporations are only

interested in the bottom line of the current fiscal year. Blair Petterson said that historically North America and Europe were the world's energy gluttons, but that is starting to change as India and China ramp up their industrialization. Karl Johanson pointed out that we have centuries of uranium supplies available, so nuclear power plants will come regardless of the Greens.

Hayden Trenholm felt that the major problem with energy supplies is not technical but political. Electricity is hampered by inefficient distribution because it is not treated like a commodity. Enron had the right idea about trading it on an electronic market, but unfortunately the crooks took over due to lack of oversight. The general consensus of the panel was that the future of energy supplies depends on what China and India do. An audience member said that long before the oil runs out a couple of centuries from now, the social effects will be felt in advance, because the price of oil will increase rapidly. People will have to reduce gas consumption and lower heating costs well before declining energy supplies make it compulsory.

Viking Costuming. At every convention, I try to attend one or two panels on subjects about which I know little and do not participate in, hence my being in the room for the subject of Viking costuming. Gail Glass was the presenter, her interest deriving from her Norwegian ancestry and a genealogical link with the Vikings. She wore the traditional garb of a Viking woman. No helmet with horns, which were not worn by Vikings except in Hollywood movies, operas, and comic strips. She showed replica jewelry, swords, and other pieces.

The early Vikings were pagan but were eventually Christianized. They created havoc throughout Europe in the first millennium but eventually vanished. They disappeared mainly because of absorption into the cultures they colonized. The word started out as a verb; 'viking' was what young men did to get money and a bride. The Viking women were strong too; they were the ones who carried the house keys. The sudden outburst of Vikings was due to over-population in their home fjords. Agricultural land is scarce in Norway, so they had to go pillaging to gain the booty they needed for survival. Vikings did not use massive swords a la Hollywood (few people did anywhere) since the best sword is a light piece that can be swung quickly to parry an opponent's blow. They also had skis.

Deep Impact. The last panel of the convention, on Monday afternoon, was about NASA's Deep Impact project. There was a full house in the ballroom for this one. A few hours before the panel began, the space probe launched a projectile on a collision course with the comet Tempel 1. The projectile didn't aim directly at the comet, but instead swerved in front of it

and let itself be run over from behind. Astronomer Dan Hladiuk had the latest downloads from NASA, some only an hour old, showing the impact and subsequent plume of ejecta. Very spectacular photos; this is what the Internet is for, not downloading stolen songs or spamming people. The impact half of the probe was of course vaporized, but the flyby spacecraft may next target Comet Boethin in 3.5 years.

Summary. The convention's daily newsletter was titled *Gnik's Gnews*, which may have meant something to somebody but sounded too much of an in-joke. It did the job though, and also appeared as supplements to announce award results. Besides the Aurora Awards, the Locus Awards were presented, and there was a supplement for the masquerade results.

The paid attendance was about 800, twice the size of a normal Calgary convention. It didn't feel that way though. There were a few more panels and events, but nothing that made me feel I was attending something big. I only met one American zine publisher, John Hertz; there were a few Canucks who occasionally publish. I put out a batch of surplus zine exchanges of mine onto the freebie table and they all went, but I suspect it was collectors taking them, not zinesters.

All told, it was an enjoyable convention for me. If there were any disasters, they were well hidden and not apparent to the public.

Next Year In Ramada. Calgary's regular annual SF convention was skipped this year because of Westercon. Next year will see Conversion 22, but it is moving to a smaller hotel, the Ramada, on the opposite corner of the downtown core from the Westin. The convention committee mentioned they may move again in the future as they are looking for a place where they can get multi-year bookings. They'll be lucky, I think, if they manage this feat. Calgary is a boom town and the hotels are not as desperate for our business as they used to be.

Looking further down the road in both time and space, Montréal is bidding for the 2009 Worldcon, which they would call Anticipation. Pre-support memberships are \$25, from Anticipation, C.P. 505, Succursale NDG, Montréal, Québec H4A 3P8. They propose to use the Palais des congrès, which has about 20,000 square metres exhibition space plus 65 meeting rooms. As well, there are various hotels with lots of floor space.

Epilogue. The convention ended Monday afternoon, a regular business day in Canada but the American national holiday. I took the #13 bus home and noticed a commuter sitting in front of me was reading a Robert Sawyer novel. As the bus went past the American consulate, I saw it had a large American flag hanging from the balcony, and dozens of small flags on the boulevard. Also two security guards pacing back and forth.

THE FANIVORE

Phil Castora

Allow me to thank the hell out of you. I've never been a fanzine fan, but I'm delighted to make an exception for *File 770*. (Though a year or so ago someone up north sent me two issues of a very good zine; unfortunately, there wasn't much in it that interested me — which is why I've forgotten its name, I regret to have to say.)

Oh, I don't think your zine is quite perfect, as superb as it is in so many respects. All readers have different criteria, of course. Having been a very-often-attending LASFS member since late 1962 and participated in APA-L for a number of (rather scattered) years, for example, I come close to being put off by the near total lack of silliness.

And thanks for running things I'd have to find on the net. One reason (of several) that I use this antique (1989) version 5.1 of WordPerfect is that it runs in DOS. Aside from not having to worry about it crashing, I don't have to wait for Windows to come up, then almost anything I use Windows for. (I have a Pentium II with Windows 98. When Jack Harness died, I helped his sister clean out his apartment and she let me have one of his computers — he had several. Well, Jack had a magic touch with computers; unfortunately, it worked the wrong way and I had to pay \$50 to get it working right.) When I win the big lottery prize, I'll get some faster hardware and software, and won't have time to eat dinner before getting on line. In the meantime, I check my e-mail almost every day and not much else.

As for your daughter, I wouldn't say her smile (yes, even in the photograph!) lights up the room, but I'll bet your electric bill is a lot less since she came into your life.

I'm glad the BSFS finally got a good tax ruling. Hearing about those two lower court adverse rulings, I'm beginning to wonder if the courts don't qualify as bureaucracies in some sense. Bureaucracies do not obey Murphy's Law, you know. Murphy's Law says that if anything can go wrong it will; in a bureaucracy, even if it can't, you still have only about a fifty-fifty chance.

David Levine is quoted as saying he and Kate Yule have been eating in restaurants constantly for some time. Wish I could afford that oftener than several times a year. (You've heard the expression "flat broke" — would you believe "concave shattered"?)

I sure hope Howard DeVore gets better! Never met him, but I was in SAPS with him for about a year around 1957, and he im-



pressed me as being a Vhery Ghood Ghuy!

Boy, that's a terrible picture of me in that article about LASFS's and APA-L's anniversaries! Oh, and Larry Niven, too. Of course, Forry has been showing his age since his serious heart attack a couple of years ago.

As for APA-L, I remember raising the copy count from 70 to 75 — and Bruce Pelz objecting. I didn't argue with Bruce (I may be crazy, but I'm not stupid! Or is it the other way around? — I keep forgetting), so when he brought precisely 70 copies of his zine next week, I took them home, retyped it on two of my own stencils, ran off 75 identical copies, and put it in the following week. Bruce was blown away! He always had a poor opinion of his own writing, for reasons I've never understood.

H. L. Drake's description of Darrell Schweitzer seems awfully unlikely — tasseled hair?!? I've seen ponytails, pigtails, dreadlocks, and hair that looked like it was combed with an egg-beater, but never tasseled. I'd like to see a picture of that — I think...

In any event, I'm not personally concerned about the problems of selling my stories, since as soon as I try to plot one, my mind goes completely blank. I did manage to complete a mystery once — all of 3000 words. And about a dozen years ago, I was thinking about a twelve-part *Doctor Who* epic, whose plot took a sickening lurch in the middle when the actor playing the recurring villain died; I got to thinking about the several plot threads that had been left hanging, and suddenly I was writing a story which comes to 12,478 words, including chapter titles and the overall title "...Who Helps Himself." Not exactly impressive for someone aged 70.

And, of course, the obituaries.

In the case of Allan Rothstein, I hate clichés I can't make fun of, and I'll even risk "nudge-nudge, wink-wink" from some of your readers if you print this, but it was true: To know him was to love him.

As for Jack Chalker, I never knew him, but there'll always be a soft spot in my head heart for the author of Scrooge McDuck's biography.

I met Kelly Freas — he was Frank Kelly-Freas, then — just over fifty years ago. I was already impressed with his art — and so was the Pittsburgh Art Institute where he'd studied; they were on the second floor of a downtown building at the time, and the wall on one side of the staircase leading to their office and studios had a series of his cover and interior illustrations its length. The third and last time I met him was at a North Hollywood book store where I spent \$30 I couldn't well afford for the book published a couple of years ago. I mentioned one of the stories he'd illustrated years ago in which nothing physical happened, and there really wasn't anything to illustrate, but he'd managed to do something clever and effective anyway. He told me he was always the one that was given that type of story to illustrate. And just from the few times I talked with him, I suspect that all who ever knew him, even as little as I did, feel as though he autographed their hearts.

Then there's Michael Mason. For some reason I've never understood, there are a number of truly good people I've known that I've never liked; Michael was one of them. But I have to agree with all the complimentary things that have been said of him since his death, and I can't think of anything he ever did or said that I witnessed — or even just heard of

— that was any less. Even aside from all his hard work for the LASFS, he seems to have given everyone excellent reason to miss him. I don't what *my* problem is, but I wish I knew how to fix it!

And I'm glad that you got John Hertz to write so much of what you didn't write yourself.

Francis Hamit's article about on-line publishing reminds me of something I heard from late fan Ted Johnstone (who conducted his social life under a pen name, and wrote books under his real name David McDaniel). On the occasion of the first moon landing, he said "We're living in the future." Hey, I can adjust! (Well, I have to, so I can occasionally go on line and listen to a couple of radio programs from the 1940s and '50s.) And that reminds me: There were some mentions among the letters of olde-tym fannzeens. The Second Law of Thermodynamics guarantees that they won't be around forever. But their lives can be very considerably extended by putting them on DVDs. This is especially urgent for those done on hecto or ditto with inks that fade a tiny bit more every time someone takes them out of their light-proof containers to look at them.

All my best to you and your lovely ladies, to your other readers, and to the artists who turned out all that great work.

Steve Stiles

Thanks for *File 770*, which we received yesterday. I'm going to have to take it to work, however, in order to read it in full inasmuch as we had no electricity last night --quite frustrating because I had hoped to download an FTP program for the purpose of uploading my site (*finally* finished!) to Bill Burns.

I'm offline right now, probably because of last night's storm here in Maryland, so I'll be saving this in Drafts (which will probably mean this will be reformatted in some unpredictable way, sigh).

Re Lasting Impressions: I'd like to reiterate that my current fannish status is not a permanent gafiation, but rather a sabbatical. Lack of time, plus a rather shaky financial situation, dictates that I cool it for a bit while I try to develop new freelance possibilities.

Still, I've got enough art (unpublished yet) in circulation, art commitments prior to my announcement (like for the LA folks), and loads of new art on my web site, to satisfy any generous and discerning fen who might want to nominate me for a Fan Art Hugo over the next 2-3 years. And I applaud such tasteful folk!

(So get off your butts and do it already!)

Not that I expect to ever win, but it is nice to get those little lapel pins.

Ted White feels that I gafiated because of disgust over not winning the Hugo, but I don't



think I'm quite that petty. As you may recall, my announcement came *before* Worldcon.

Robert Lichtman

Contrary to Phil Castora's opinion, probably quite a few readers of *File 770* are aware that Walt Willis wrote *The Improbable Irish* long ago -- it's copyright 1969. If he wants to replace the copy he "unfortunately...lent to an acquaintance," there are currently quite a few copies available. Go to www.bookfinder.com to see the list. There are half a dozen paperback editions available for \$5 or less. The cheapest hardcover is \$12.00, and for \$46.75 one can get a hardcover actually **signed** by the author.

Greg Benford writes, "My first two fmz, *Vacuum* #1 and *Void* #1...were done on hecto, and are barely readable today." My own copy of *Void* #1 is still, for the most part, quite brilliant. I think it was Boyd Raeburn's.

Joseph Major is quite right when he complains that eBay has led to price inflation in the used fanzine marketplace. However, this only seems to apply to certain hot items, and one can still get old *Yandros* and the like for very little money. Indeed, I got six early issues of *File 770* last month for 75 cents apiece.

One wonders which library's special collections department was interested "a few years ago" in Harold Drake's van Vogt collection. If it wasn't the Eaton SF collection at UC Riverside, I would recommend he place them there, and if it was I have to wonder about his statement that "Now I do not want that library to be the repository for these possessions."

As for Lloyd Penney's query about "more updates on the disposition of the Warner estate," several months ago my Hagerstown contact reported a rumor her husband had heard in which Sotheby's was named. However, it seems to be Only A Rumor. My feelers con-

tinue to be out, and I'll report anything further I might learn.

Mike Resnick

Got the current *File 770* today. Fine issue, as usual. I must say that what I have said has never been misquoted so inaccurately so often as by the neo who wrote up ConText for you -- but what the hell, even misleading publicity is better than none at all.

Darrell Schweitzer

Dear Mike,

One of my spies passed along *File 770:144* with H.L. Drake's not entirely flattering account of me in the midst of a Context report. I don't remember meeting Mr. Drake, though I know the name. Is this the van Vogt expert? A person of some scholarly accomplishments, then.

Whatever Mr. Drake may think of my fashion sense or grooming (something which causes my wife occasional despair -- maybe I should just grow a moustache and go for the Einstein look), I am very surprised that he is "angered" at being told some really basic stuff about story-writing and particularly about manuscript format. An editor lives by his eyes. A manuscript is designed to be READ, on paper, as is, under which circumstances UNDERLINING is indeed the standard, not italics, because underlining is much easier to read, particularly on a double-spaced manuscript. Perhaps in a generation, standards will change, but for now the correct format is as typewriter-like as possible. If you use italics, we will tell you not to. If you use lots of fancy fonts and elaborate spacing, with letters swirling all over the page like some of the passages in *The Stars My Destination*, we won't read it.

Of course Mr. Drake should use italic in his report, as it is published in *File 770*. But a pro knows the difference between manuscript format and typesetting. An issue of *File 770* is not a manuscript. Drake doesn't seem to see the difference. If he wants to be taken seriously, he must put his work into a professional format.

If he wants to write novels before he has sold a short story (another point he seems to take umbrage over), then all I can say is, good luck Sir, you are made of sterner stuff than me.

As an editor, writing teacher, (and sometime literary agent) I can tell you from experience that there are few things more heart-rending in this world than to be handed a thousand page novel manuscript by a bright-eyed novice -- first volume of a trilogy, already completed -- and when you go to read it, it's the sort of manuscript which any pro can tell within ten pages (or maybe within two) is completely unpublishable. The author doesn't

know grammar, has never heard of point of view, doesn't know how to describe or set a scene, or whatever. I often describe the experience as being like dipping your foot into water to see if it is warm. It's not. You don't have to sample the whole pool. Think of the dead trees that went into that manuscript, the wasted years of effort. This sort of frustration is likely to make the writer stop writing, or, worse yet, head for the nearest vanity press. There are enough correctable mistakes in the first ten pages that the next 3000 might as well be blank. Until you've learned the basics, there is no sense going on to 3000 pages. Think of it this way: if it takes you thirty tries to get a publishable story, which would you rather do? Thirty novels or thirty short stories? I know of a couple people who went the novel route. Braver souls than I, I repeat. But once you have sold a few stories, then at least you know you are writing on a professional level, that your prose is, page-by-page, minimally workable. At that point, it's time to think of writing something larger. You might have an actual chance of being published.

Applying this to my own career, I sold about 30 stories before attempting a first novel. And sold that. I don't have the traditional closet full of unpublished novel manuscripts. People who seek to conserve our forests will appreciate that.

H.L. Drake is a pretty good reporter overall. He quotes me as saying several things I actually remember saying. The one thing he gets wrong is the "anthology" I had just finished. It was *Weird TRAILS*, not *Weird Tales*. The full title is *Weird Trails: The Magazine of Supernatural Cowboy Stories*, April 1933. Long-time fans know the name of M.M. Moamrath, author of such "classics" as "Riders of the Purple Ooze" and "The Shuffler from the Stars," many of which were "reprinted" in Tom Reamy and Ken Keller's magazines circa 1975. (*Nickelodeon* etc.) "Riders" is in Mike Resnick's *Shaggy BEM Stories*. There is an elaborate mythos about how M.M. Moamrath, a contemporary and blatant imitator of H.P. Lovecraft, wrote for such marginal pulps of the day as *Spicy Zeppelin Stories*, *Depraved Tales*, *Aryan Atrocity Adventures*, and, yes, *Weird Trails: The Magazine of Supernatural Cowboy Stories* (*Nickelodeon*#1 even contained an interview with the editor of *Weird Trails*, Durango Fear.) Moamrath had a "Hollywood period" too. Howard Waldrop "discovered" his lost screenplay "Cthulhublanca" and published it in the 1978 worldcon program book.

What I did for Wildside Press was produce a facsimile of an actual issue of one of those legendary pulps, in fact the very one in which "Riders of the Purple Ooze" is featured on the cover. It is well known to pulp scholars that the editor at that time, Abner Gibber, was found mysteriously dissolved in 1938. It is also known that most of the staff and contributors

perished in a manner too hideous to be described at a shoggoth barbeque and sing-along at the Durango Fear Ranch in 1940. It remains a mystery that this issue seems to contain material by many writers whose careers continued beyond that point, including Ron Goulart, Ray Faraday Nelson, Gregory Frost, Jim Harmon, and, Mike Resnick. The present publishers are at a loss to explain this.

The facsimile reprint is available from Wildside Press for \$19.99. Wildside does many pulp reprints, often of very rare stuff like *Submarine Stories*, *Tales of Magic and Mystery*, *Spicy Detective Stories*, etc. But nothing quite as exotic as this.

Joseph T. Major

Cover: I hope those furries don't have too much trouble changing the tracks on the Koenigstiger and Abrams.

rich brown: I get the impression, having seen his latest blast (the one subsequent to the one you mentioned), that this difference of opinion has been going on for some time. Best Fanwriter? Yes, and deserving for her description of the Torcon mess. Best Fanzine? Welll

Amazing: Which has been temporarily suspended, says Berkwitz, because it was so successful. Uh-huh. And here I was hoping he would quit getting people to nominate him for best fan writer, because he was a pro.

The problem is that the field is now large enough to sustain people who are not within the bounds of fandom as we know it, but who write about SF & F for a living. Peter Jackson called *Starlog* a "fanzine" and from his point of view it was: a magazine about science fiction that published nonfiction, not fiction. In a sense, these people are competing out of their league.

Tsunami: And the wreck site on the Great Basses Reef was certainly exposed to the air, for only the second time since the ship was sunk in the seventeenth century. (See *The Treasure of the Great Reef*)

News: I think I told Guy himself, but Enterprise, Alabama built a monument to the boll weevil because it forced them to diversify and get away from a monoculture economy. They had hard times for a while but in the long run were better off.

LASFs 70th, APA-L 40th: Forry looked so feeble at Worldcon, I'm glad he's better now.

Fandom's Tangled Web: It was quickly explained that the typewriter was one of those rare ones that had special superscript keys. You and Gary must be some of those flunkeys of the Mellon Scaife Foundation. I expect to see *File 770* unmasked on the Hatewatch site very soon.

The Past Is Prologue: With St. Louis the

only filing bid for NASFiC 2007, Kansas City about the most likely one for 2009, and Denver a hot competitor for 2008, it is entirely possible that we may end up taking I-64 west from Louisville for three years in a row.

Graphic Examples: The Eaton Collection, which will last as long as it doesn't get put in boxes and stored in a damp basement by a new curator who needs space for a collection of punkzines.

Short Waves: I was under the impression that Ed Kramer was not permitted to communicate with the public at all. The twenty-first century's *lettre de cachet*, so to speak.

Jan Stinson

I was very pleased to see my copy of 144 in my mailbox yesterday, and read all of it then as well. Not standing by the mailbox, of course, I read it at home. Liked it so well I just had to send a loc asap!

Taral's cover of the furry tank brigade members prompts me to ask if the number 52 on the topmost vehicle has any flannish significance. The tank in the foreground is a very good likeness of the M-1 Abrahms the U.S. Army was using when I was in service in the 1980s.

John Hertz, H. L. Drake and Dale Speirs wrote great conreps. Thanks for those, and for the LASFs and APA-L anniversary coverage and photos.

I also appreciated seeing the ballot breakdown in the 2004 Hugo results. I find it very interesting that of the over 5,000 people who attended or supported Noreascon 4, only about

YOU CALL THIS
A LETTERPOL
?



4 percent of them voted for Best Fanzine. The other categories hardly fared much better. For an award with so few voters, the Hugos carry far too much weight in the book publishing world.

Compare this paucity of interest among Worldcongoers with the explosion of fanac going on at efanzines dot com, and it's obvious that the fanzines which debuted in the last 3-5 years aren't getting read by very many people. Being relieved of the cost of printing and mailing all their copies has given several faneds (myself included) the motivation to Pub An Ish more regularly than they might otherwise have done. Now that new postings to efanzines are being announced on at least one fandom-related newsgroup, perhaps more readers will "discover" the efanzine gold mine. Will that change next year's Hugo nominations? Stay tuned.

Brad Foster

Here I just got finished complaining in a loc to someone at how I had hardly seen any paper zines arrive this year, and then *File 770* shows up along with four other zines the same day in the mailbox. When it rains, it pours! Okay, so maybe it's still just a sprinkle, but it certainly got me fannishly wet.

I've had a hard time finding my way around many of the online newsgroups and such. Seems I have to spend too much time reading tons of postings to find the nuggets of interest to me. I agree with your comments here that, when I get a paperzine, I can at least figure the editor has done a weeding process in their selections, and gotten rid of much of the chaff to publish the wheat. I've been to Trufen.net a few times, but unless I am looking for some topic in particular, the mass of choices, of having to click through so many things to see what is there, and never actually knowing if I've seen it all, keeps me from spending much time. I get a zine, I can immediately see how much material it contains, can do a quick scan and know I *have* scanned it all. The beauty of the on-line zine for the creator is you have no limits or boundaries to your content... that can also be a hindrance for a potential reader. Or am I just too damn old to be able to handle this new way of passing on info?

Thanks too for the comments in this ish on things to consider when thinking of donating fanzines to a library. I've got a couple of boxes of zines that I was thinking of finding another home for one day. Nothing highly collectable or rare, but it is a mass of print I'd hate to think would just turn into recycled paperpulp.

Fred Smith

Many thanks for *File 770:144* - Hey! Just real-

ized; you've actually produced 144 issues. There's dedication for you! Over how long a time has that been, anyway? And how often do you actually put out an issue?

The most interesting item to me, this time around, was the LaSFAS 70th anniversary celebrations since I used to get *Shangri L'Affairs* fairly regularly and it was nice to hear about, and see photographs of, some of the folks from "my" time - folk like Arthur Jean Cox, Len Moffat, the USS John Trimble etc. Nice, also, to read about more recent members such as the APA-L crowd that I "encounter" in John Hertz's *Vanamonde*.

Enjoyed all the various con reports, especially, as before, John's on the Westercon. These reports make the cons sound like good fun but a semi-recluse like me might be somewhat intimidated by those thousands of strangers (especially media fans!), I feel, although there are a number of fans I would like to meet. In fact I've only attended a few regional and one national con in my time in fandom but stuck my nose in the door (so to speak) on the last day of the Worldcon when it was last in Glasgow.

Your news items and, sadly, obits are also of great interest even if, as somebody said, the news is a little out of date on account of the year's gap between issues! Pay no attention! It's still worth telling!

All for now, so I'll just close by offering my congrats to Bob Tucker on reaching his 90th birthday. Nice to hear of some of the old gang surviving in the face of all the losses we've had in the last few years.

Eric Lindsay

Good to see that *File 770* continues, albeit somewhat slowly. Given I'm not exactly setting speed records in getting copies of *Gegen-schein* out, I can't complain.

I wonder how many fans work for the tax office? In Australia there is Gerald Smith. I try not to think about taxes, now our tax act has reached 7,000 pages. I doubt anyone understands it, including the people specializing in rulings.

Thanks for the report on Janice Gelb for governor. Sounded like fun.

Alas, the story of the Warner collection did not. I'm glad fans were able to keep some eye on what has happened, and I'm sorry it didn't work out better for preserving the material on hand. Thanks to Robert Lichtman, Rich Lynch and you.

Good to see someone collecting the whole set of Sierra Grace photographs. When I moved to a digital camera my photography rate went way up, with 6000 photos in the past 18 months. Thanks to computer technology, I can ever find them all! Never mind the quality, look at the number!

Thanks for the article on why publishers use freelancers. Finding publishers rely on stolen copyright to get more profits should surprise no-one. Copyright was said to be to protect authors, but it is publishers who take advantage of it. Some things don't change, whether it is over the web, or predates it by a hundred years.

I am still being troubled by spammers. My previous address of fijagh lasted three years, then someone put in a PDF zine that was on the web. I now figure I'll change my email address each year, to help cope with such accidental releases. I'm sure fans can figure out how it works.

Chris Garcia

Haven't read an issue of F770 in almost a decade, and once Bill Burns put it up on eFanzines, I knew that I have been missing out. It's nice to see an actual fanzine talking about Trufen.net. You make a point that "Right now, Trufen.net strikes me as a fast moving fanzine, which may be slow by the net's activity standards but is pretty satisfying to fans." I always have the trouble that I feel like so many things in fandom move like glaciers. I love fanzines, and am becoming more and more hooked by the paper variety after years of only screen-based zines, but there's a lack of speed. I can see why many of the recent strings of fen have gone to things like LiveJournal (Third Row Fandom in the UK being a prime example) so that they move at the speed that folks like me tend to appreciate. I put out *The Drink Tank* once a week, and I feel like I don't really put out enough material, and a lot of fanzine fans seem to think I'm working like Mercury to get this stuff out. I think that'll be the future of fanzine fandom: less paper but great frequency.

Your girl just turned three. My girlfriend has a 5-year-old that I take care of most days and her mother thinks I'm poisoning her with fandom. My dad taught me to read using his fanzine collection and I'm doing the same with her. She likes *Chunga*. I've taken her to one convention and she loved the name badge. She's very excited for hangin' around with me when I'm Toastmaster at BayCon. She thinks that will make her a Princess.

At times it gets hard to read some fanzines and even Trufen when I read so much about great humans who I've read over the years passing away. It's a sad fact that I came in young, got to meet a lot of great faneds and writers and artists and I've been reading over and over of their deaths. Recently, it was Bill Bowers passing. On the other hand, it was great to see the article of the LASFS 70th Anniversary party where Forry and Roy Test and the Moffatts attended. It's nice to see continuity in fandom.

Great coverage of the various bids. I'm all about the Montreal bid. Rene and I had a nice long chat and I really think that Montreal is a perfect city for a WorldCon.

The look at the various fanzine archives was nice. I've had a chance to use the fanzine collection in the Eaton Collection and its spectacular, though poorly organized. Working at a museum as a curator, I know how hard it can be to get a handle on a large collection, and errors like *Grandfalloon* and Bob Bergeron are understandable, though if it happens more than once, then that's a problem. I've heard of Temple's collection, though I've never heard of anyone doing a serious amount of research there. The Australian collection sounds interesting, but I doubt that I'd find it useful for what I tend to look into. There's a Swedish collection too that I understand is pretty good, with most of the important Scandinavian zines and more than a few important US, Swedish and other zines. I really wanna see that collection with my own eyes.

A great read with this issue. I hope to get to read more

Eric Lindsay

Thanks also for *File 770:144*, somewhat more recent.

I liked the Von Braun two-stage Hugo.

Like you, I like the idea of Victor Gonzalez's Trufen.net news site. Now what I need to do is ensure I actually read it more frequently. Victor has done a great job on it.

Speaking of fans knowing how to party, as you do on page 8, Alyson Abramowitz brought a bunch of her political party fanzines to a party Alan Baum and Donya White put on. At least she was sure of an audience who knew how to collate, staple and fold.

I know I was one of the earlier fans to have a heart attack fanzine in 1997, but this trend should not be emulated, nor continued. You hear that David Axler, Dave Locke and Howard DeVore?

Amygdala isn't my sort of blog, but it was interesting where Gary Farber had gone. I recall checking the rasff newsgroup many, many years ago. As usual, I obscured my email address to reduce spam. Gary sent me an email telling me how offensive that was to internet standards. I dumped rasff and have never gone back.

John Hertz does his usual fine job of convention description. Some day a substantial part of

his writing will be in collections of quotations. I was delighted to hear Westercon was graced by a Keith Kato chili party, and a Sam Konkin III party and Guinness tasting.

Francis Hamit mentions the high cost of ISBN numbers in the USA, thanks to the R.R.Bowker monopoly on issuing ISBN. I note the cost is far more reasonable in Australia.

However convenient to publishers, I will never buy a book that has effective digital rights management on it. I have no idea what Microsoft Reader is, but I bet it means some proprietary format for books. I'm just plain not interested in books I may not be able to read. Things are different if the books are in html or pdf or Postscript, all standards that are now open (even if they started out proprietary). I didn't buy a DVD until I had access to ways to break that ridiculous region coding and Macrovision interference.

Baen manage to release electronic books without any copy protection. I haven't bought their electronic books (who has time to read them all), but I'm so impressed by their attitude that I'll buy their paper copies when I notice them, even if I suspect the book in question a marginal good read.

Joseph T. Major has the right idea about not giving your email address to stores. Someone at their head office will be making a little money on the side selling email lists. I use a throwaway email address, like may2005@ that works for only a few months when places insist that they need a working email address.

Lloyd Penney

It's taken me a while to get to it, but at it I am. I've got issue 144 of *File 770*, and I've also got the time to loc it. Might have to make it fast, but we'll see what happens. (144...the only opportunity an issue might ever be described as gross.)

I check out Trufen.net to see what news there is, but seeing what kind of correspondent I was for the *File* years ago, and for *Ansible* now, I don't think I'd have anything of interest to add to it. I check it for news, and carry on. I think rich brown has shown some remorse over his blast at Cheryl Morgan in subsequent writing. I think his main vent is about Cheryl not having a letter column in *Emerald City*. Well, neither does *Ansible*... I loc them both anyway, and who knows, maybe my writings have a tiny bit of influence.

I can't believe Sierra is three years old already. She sounds like she's as sharp as a tack...maybe she could be your associate editor for getting the next *File* out quicker. Faster schedule, and you still get to spend lots of time with your little sweetie. No kids have we, but we do have nieces. Our niece Nicole, who we used to take to local cons, and even to the 1992 Worldcon in Orlando, just gave birth about a week ago to a boy named Jakson, which makes us great-uncle and great-aunt for the third time.

I see Bill Bowers as a reference to David Axler's medical problems...a shame that Bill himself is now gone. Only met Bill once, and that was at a Midwestcon.

Your article on the Westercon/Canvention



reminds me that the final Aurora ballot has yet to see the light of day. I was on Dennis Mullin's Aurora website this morning, and Dennis announces that the ballot will emerge no later than May 23. As soon as it does, I can relay what the final ballot says to you.

I can only hope that Torcon 3 can be as good citizens as Con-Jose is. I know the members of the current post-Torcon board of directors as they attempt to wind down the corporation, but the cash in the treasury...who knows where it may go? I have heard nearly nothing about where the cash may go, except to a approved convention or two, or possibly to the Friends of the Merrill Collection. Passalong funds have yet to go out, to the best of my knowledge.

It's always good to see that more Worldcon bids are rising up to give the voters something to think about. However, Yvonne and I have given up on Worldcons...too expensive, and the politics we've suffered through have put us off them, at least for now.

I knew that George Flynn and I had proof-reading in common, but also our length of time in the first grade. I had been there for about a week when a teacher took me by the hand into the second grade room, and I was at least a year younger than my peers for the rest of my primary and secondary schooling. The results? Both positive and negative. I never knew anyone my own age.

In Jim Fox-Davis' piece, I think when he refers to a Toronto SF museum, he might be thinking of the Merrill Collection, which has used Kelly's signature Gremlin in its promotional pieces.

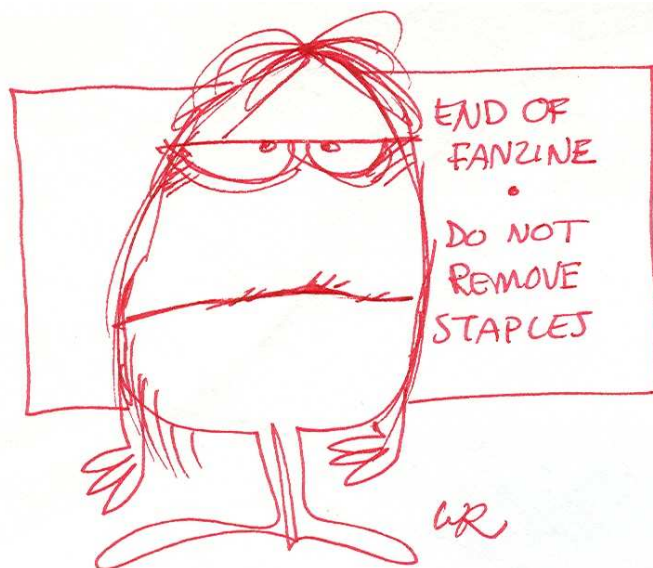
Have a look at www.sectarianwave.com, and you'll see more about this CD project I've been prattling on about for years. That's all for now, take care, and I look forward to another issue RSN.

Jeff Schalles

Thanks for the *File 770*! My fanac has fallen behind in recent years, and I pretty much stay away from the various online and email sources of fannish news and gossip. It's just not... that important... any more. To me, anyways.

But when a *File 770* arrives, I read it with great pleasure.

Here's some news of my own: Marjorie Magidow and myself were married 3 weeks ago and have moved into the new house we bought.



P.S. the 12 Gestetners were successfully moved from my old house last weekend and are safely sitting down in my new basement.

By the way, need any mimeos? I need to pare down the collection...

Got three e-stencilers, too! And everybody sent me their old ink and stuff over the last decade or so as they were moving or cleaning out their basements. Basically, I think I have most of the remaining mimeo equipment and supplies left in fandom. And I still need to finish running the art on the collector mimeo edition of the second Burbee anthology. I distributed 300 or so of the Xerox version of the edition, but the mimeo pages I ran off from Terry's stencils are still boxed up and waiting for me to find time to add the art.

Tim Marion

Just wanted to add that I'm glad I called you and bugged you for those missing issues of *File 770*, especially since I seem to have a vague note in one of them. I also appreciate all the news of fandom, mainly because it's just about the only place I have to keep up with such things. Reading *File 770* gives me a very bittersweet feeling, however, both due to all the announcements of fans passing and due to all the attention various jerks seem to receive in fandom. But I must be philosophical about such things --- merely because I have found someone to be a jerk, that doesn't mean they haven't been nice to others, otherwise they wouldn't be popular at all. And I have to consider that although I try to be a nice guy, my actions may have been interpreted as rather "jerky" by others in the past. But these two disappointments are very discouraging, and lead me to think that no matter how disgusted I may get with fandom, I don't actually have to

drop out of it --- in a few more years, almost all of fandom, or those fans I know, will have died, leaving me lost amidst a sea of unfamiliar names. (I guess part of the reason I "sound" so depressed here is that a neighbor just told me Bill Bowers had passed. There goes another Big Part of Fandom. Or at least, the Fandom that I knew.)

We Also Heard From

James Young: I enjoyed it a lot, and like the cover art, unusual to see a King Tiger on the cover of a fanzine, or maybe it isn't and I know little.

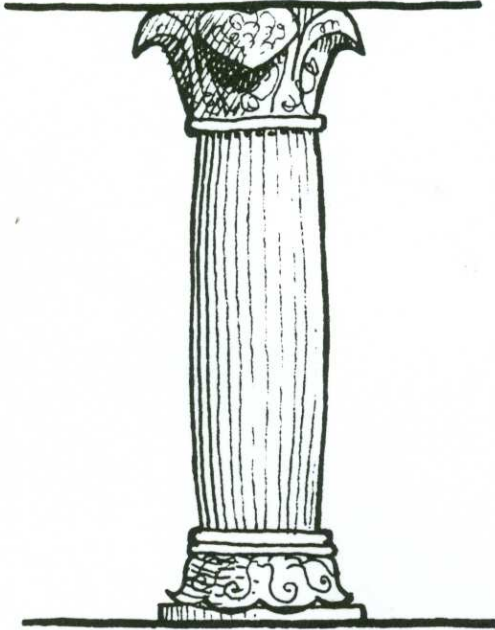
Henry Welch: Thanks for publishing the URL for the Fan Gallery. It is about time that this material was given the wider dissemination it deserves via the WWW.

Taral Wayne: [About the tanks on the cover of the last *File 770*] One was a Tiger II, from 1944. The other was more or less an Abrams A2 MBT. The original version was for a customer who wanted a few skiffy additions, like force field generators. Gotta make sure the good guys win... I re-did it later, without the the add-ons, but put my fictional characters in to give it a different spin.

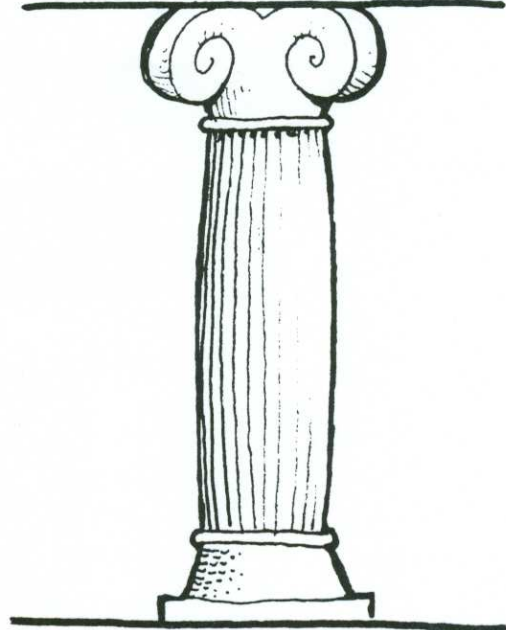
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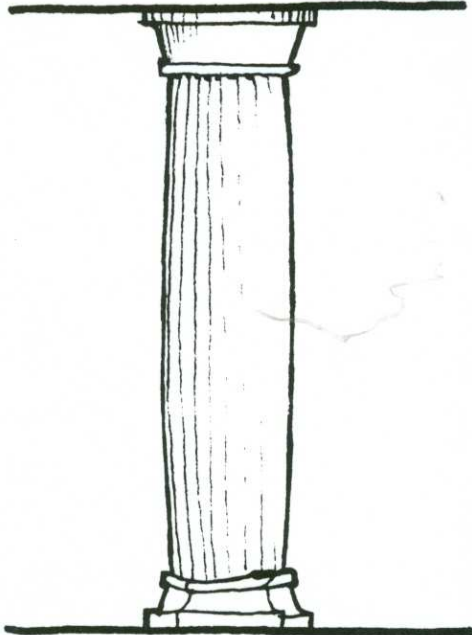
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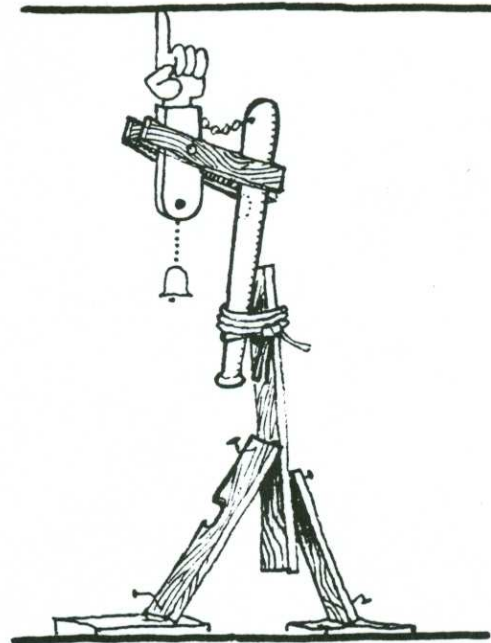
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