

Peregrine

Nations!



The Ofyshul Crudzins

of Eastkoast Fandom

VOL. 3, #1 APRIL '03 !

Aw, quit yer belly-achin', it ain't real...

GOTCHA —  
APRIL  
FOOL!

(in the midst of recent news of several fannish deaths [and passings of those related to fans], I thought it might be helpful to do something completely silly for my April ish. Laughter truly is the best medicine for all woes.)



THE *REAL* PEREGRINE NATIONS  
VOLUME THREE, NUMBER ONE / APRIL 2003



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This issue is dedicated to:

- Harry B. Warner Jr., John Foyster and Henry Beck. Alan White's art in the previous *Pub Crawl* seems eerily prophetic, now. Clear skies, gentlemen.
- All those who voiced their opinions — nonviolently — on recent events in Iraq, regardless of their nationality, political views or location. Those who speak out (literally or otherwise) at least have a chance of being heard; those who are silent do not.
- Mohandas K. Gandhi, for the truth of his life, warts and all.

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**peregrination**, n., *L.*, A traveling, roaming, or wandering about; a journey. (The New Webster Encyclopedic Dictionary of the English Language, Avenel Books, New York: 1980).

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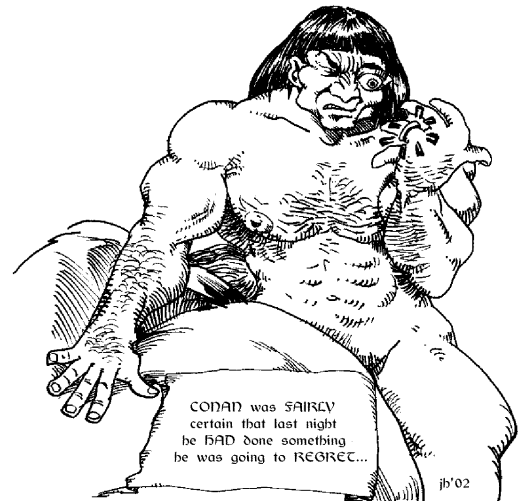
This issue of *Peregrine Nations* is a © 2003 J9 Press Publication edited and published by **ADDRESS CHANGE !!!** J. G. Stinson, P.O. Box 248, Eastlake, MI 49626-0248. Copies available for \$2 or the Usual. A quarterly pubbing sked is intended. **All material in this publication was contributed for one-time use only, and the copyrights belong to the contributors.** Contributions are welcome in the form of LoCs, articles, reviews, art, etc. in two methods: e-mail to me at [tropicsf@earthlink.net](mailto:tropicsf@earthlink.net) (please use Peregrine Nations in the subject) or via regular mail. **No attachments unless previously arranged.** Clearly scanned artwork is also welcome. Main articles should be around 800-1,200 words, reviews 200-500 words. Queries welcome.

**Next editorial deadline: June 20, 2002.**

## Silent eLOCutions

[Thanks to all those who sent letters, cards or e-mails of condolence after reading the previous ish. They're all very much appreciated; having fandom as part of my life kept me from fragmenting the last few months, in more ways than just this fanzine.]

Eloise (Beltz-Decker) Mason  
<http://www.fishdragon.com>  
[eloise@ripco.com](mailto:eloise@ripco.com)  
August 14, 2002



I must preface this LOC with an apology for the utter LACK of a LoC for either of the last two issues. The only (somewhat backhanded) apology I can offer, for what consolation you might find in it, is that nobody else got any LoCs out of me either. My life went seriously south starting last September, both for the same reasons everyone else's did and for completely unrelated personal ones. Briefly, I no longer have any living grandfathers; I had two out of my starting total of four, until last September. Why I had four to start with is complicated and revolves around the shape of modern families. But in any case! I was highly overscheduled and didn't even come up for air or think straight until about mid-January; since then I've largely been getting caught up on everything I let slide till then. I'm not even certain I read the last ish of your zine; certainly, reading through the LoCs this time, nothing sounded familiar.

I took this out of its envelope (VERY securely taped, by the way!) and began to flip through idly. The first pages I saw were what turned out to be the scanned-and-printed LoCs, and I realized you might not know why they came out all grainy and strange. You converted them to .jpg files after scanning, didn't you? [Yes, bad editor that I am, I did. I have since learned my lesson.] Jpegs are wonderful for photos or other detail-oriented, gradient-heavy images, but for plain black and white lines (or text), they're far from optimal. Gifs or .tifs or whatnot are preferred, in those cases. Now I just need to figure out why all the images in my zine come out pixelated no matter what I do, and I'll be in business!

I then skimmed random parts of the ish and set it down for several days. I keep bemoaning the fact that I don't have time to LoC, or even (in many cases) to READ zines anymore. This morning, on my way to work, I made a conscious decision not to put a book in my bag, instead taking your zine and another, and promised myself to read through carefully and take notes for a LoC. I did, and lo and behold, here it is! Amazing.

I own a copy of *Signs of Life* by Cherry Wilder; I purchased it off the bargain table when I worked at a B. Dalton bookstore, briefly. I'd never heard of her, or it, before; and yet I found I loved it. I have yet to find a copy of anything else by her, despite sporadic looking. It seems so sad to find she's dead. I didn't know she was so old; somehow, the back of my head thinks all SF authors are between thirty and fifty-five, eternally. I was equally shocked to discover that Wilhelmina Baird, whom I only know from her trio of hard-cyberpunk novels (*Clipjoint* et al), was in her seventies when she published her first novel. It's ageism of the worst sort, of course, and something I should endeavor to avoid in future.

Lyn McConchie's LoC anecdote containing the line, "Only with men!" reminds me of something that happened to my mother in the early-to-mid-80s. A woman of distinctly Anglo appearance, she nonetheless took years of Spanish in high school from a teacher who felt it quite important to learn multiple accents, because of the social-status implications accents have, in that language. She ended up reasonably fluent. While riding Chicago's El train, as she habitually did, one afternoon she was in the same car with a pair of Mexican wannabe-toughs, who amused themselves for several miles by discussing, in Spanish, her sexual attributes and their speculations on what she would enjoy in bed. She sat quietly, with her legendary poker-face in place, but did get her revenge. Just before her stop, she rose

and approached them, and asked them, in her best crisp Cathtilian lisp, for directions to her destination. They blanched, then blushed, then stammered out some moderately-helpful instructions. She smiled politely, thanked them, and left. It is a treasured memory. Perhaps they learned some tact out of it? [*One certainly hopes so.*]

I enjoyed the *Pub Crawl* (and, I should note, not just because I am mentioned fondly in it!), not that I should even be thinking of looking for new zines to start reading. It's nice, nonetheless, to know what's out there. I've contemplated doing zine reviews in *RoCB*, but with the space so limited, I'm not sure I can justify it. Besides, I receive a LOT of zines. And, quite honestly, I dislike some of them, and would not wish to either (a) review them highly unfavorably in a public forum, as it smacks of high school politics, or (b) review everyone I like, leaving everyone-else-shaped holes, for those who know what zines I receive. So I avoid the question and simply publish a list of ishes.

I skipped the Worldcon report, as I'm finding that usually detailed con reports for cons I didn't go to are a mass of names I don't know and jokes I don't get. I did, however, enjoy the exegesis on comic book writers; I recently (all right, a year or two ago) began reading comics again after a decade-long hiatus called "My dad quit buying them and I didn't have money till after college." The X-Books greatly unimpressed me, as they felt the need to inflate the powers and make entire books contain nothing but fight scenes — a vast difference from my remembrances of *Kitty's Fairy Tale* and "The brooding trashes the mansion on Christmas when Kitty's alone, and she has to torch it with the Blackbird's engines." (Yes, I identified strongly with Kitty, back in like the Sandman constellation, and *Hunter*, *Legion*, *Spider-Girl*, and NOT X-Men) and *Mangaverse*, among going on in comics nowadays, though I'm enjoying it a lot. Thanks for some I'd never heard of, to the attention pick them up. [*Credit goes to Will Allan for PN.*]



Enclosed please find Issue 3 of *Rain* save postage by mailing yours in an

[*Appended to this printed-out letter the lateness of this mailing!*]

*All is back soon and tell me whether you have a new last name (as your mailing envelope indicated) or not. Deaths in the family can cause one to become more forgetful, as I've had sad cause to learn.*]

the day.) I moved on to other imprints, later *Strangers in Paradise*, *Tim* Marvel's new Ultimate lines (though others. There's some amazing writing mostly not in the main imprints, and bringing some of my favorites, and of folks who might otherwise never *Hogarth*, who wrote the article series

*on Cherry-Blossoms* (I figured I could envelope this time, with the LoC). *was the handwritten note, "Plz forgive forgiven, Eloise, as long as you write*

Lloyd Penney

March 3, 2003

Many thanks for Volume 2, No. 4, WN 8 of *Peregrine Nations*. It's reassuring to see that even in the time of your greatest grief, you're still able to keep to your regular schedule and do the things you like, like another issue of PN. It can't be easy, but you're determined, and you're providing us with an example to follow. I hope you'll tell us more about Kenn in future issues...it will help us to understand your grief more, and may act as catharsis for you. Now for the issue at hand...

"Saints": If you're French, or can speak it, here's a quick joke...who's the patron saint of dressmakers? St. Ure. (Ceinture, French for belt.) That's from my French-Canadian, dressmaking wife Yvonne. [*Groan.....yet another punster! But that was a good one, so thanks!*]

We have both fully recovered from our October car accident, although my knees can be a little sensitive from time to time, and with the cold we've been having here (-26 Celsius this morning), Yvonne's wrist still hurts from time to time. We're hoping all this fades with the return of warm weather, which can't come soon enough.

Greetings to Peter Watts...stick around and stay a while, fellow Torontonians! There is so much to see and read within SF, and some of it is written by the fans. A lot of it is even interesting and insightful. I've been reading it for 20 years, and if you continue to read it, you'll find out more about your readers. Rob Sawyer still gets some fanzines in the mail, and he enjoys keeping up with local fandom. [As does Paul DiFilippo.]

The disaster of 9/11/01 was a time when Americans felt that there were so many people against them, and they felt surrounded by hostility. It took the rest of the world some time to convince them that they had friends elsewhere, that people with nationalities other than American died in New York, Washington and rural Pennsylvania. It took Canadians, New Zealanders, Australians, Japanese and many more to say that they were there, too.

*The Zine Dump*...yes, I printed this up, too, and I am happy to say I've received most of the zines you list. [Then do please e-mail Guy Lillian and let him know, since that's his title; mine was *The Pub Crawl*. And to avoid confusion, I won't separately pub my fanzine reviews again. That's what I get for trying to ride on the coattails of someone else's good idea.] If you're planning to come to Torcon, please do. [Depends on what the health reports are like re: SARS.]

And, that's all for right now...life will never get back to normal, but at least life may settle down to something you and your son can live with. I hope happiness will return to fill your days. I hope to see you in Toronto in about seven months or so. [Me, too.]

Trinlay Khadro  
March 4, 2003

Heartfelt condolences! Egads...what a terrible surprise. Dozens of warm hugs enclosed. [Gratefully returned.]

I've had an odd feeling that I've missed a few issues of *Peregrine Nations*. [It's intended to pub quarterly in January, April, July and October. Check what you have (if you hang onto them); I've pubbed eight issues so far, and this is the ninth.]

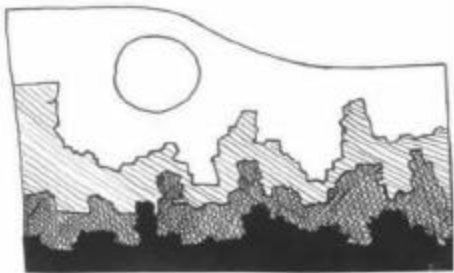
Jukka Halme: If St. Urho has a "namesake beer" he must be from Wisconsin's more specifically the general area of Milwaukee. <grin>

Joseph Major: In counter-balance to St. Josaphat (who to me delight has a basilica in Milwaukee's South Side), Buddhism seems to have picked up a "St. Issa" somewhere along the way. Don't know much about him, but apparently he's Jesus. [Elaborate, please.] (So who's supposed to be offended at "Jumpin' Josephat!"?).

Lloyd and Yvonne, get well soon and take care!

Lyn McConchie: I recently read an article by a girl whose sister was killed in the [Bali] bombing. "If she hadn't been flirting w/the Aussie boys she wouldn't have been there..." "...we expect Americans to be terrorism targets..." [Helluva wake-up call for her.]

I loved the article about Charisma — "that's some horse!" He obviously loved his job.



Oooh, shameless plug time, I did a logo for one of the Buffy cons and they're making good use of it. [Those online] can see it at [www.moonlight-rising.com](http://www.moonlight-rising.com). I'll get a free T-shirt out of it; and fame (ha ha yeah sure...)

Generally everything here is going fine. I seem to be dating again; fannishly this time...[Exactly how does one date fannishly? Inquiring minds want to know!]





[In honor of my selection as the Second Occasional Poliad Award for Fan Writer of the Year (see *Twink* 28), TK kindly bestowed upon me an origami rocket SOPA, as well as two other origami suitable for use as photo frames for a lapel pin. Many thanks!]

E.B. Frohvet  
(March 2, 2003)

"Purple Haze": On Frank Marino's 1985 live album, he and the band close out playing "World Anthem" and, apparently, go off stage. The crowd is still going crazy and quickly settles into rhythmic stomping. After thirty seconds or so, the guys come back out and Frank announces: "For those of you who dug it a long time ago, and for those who wanna dig it now -- Jimi Hendrix." And goes into a detonating cover of "Purple Haze". I in fact attended one of the band's shows during that tour and though it sounded about the same, I can't be sure if it was that performance that was recorded for the album. Still a cool moment. [Wasn't Frank Marino the guitarist for Grand Funk Railroad? I had one of their early live albums and even today, replaying it in my mind, it's still a scorcher. "Mean Mistreater" was among the tunes on that album. I think my brother may still have it, or perhaps it's at my parents' house. Now I'll have to hunt it down...]

I would have sworn I got Jukka Halme's name and address from *Trap Door*, but looking over TD #21, can't find the reference. I know it was some California fanzine. *No Award? Nonstop Fun?* Or maybe I'm just losing my mind, which would surprise few. [Nah, it's from reading too many fanzines, heh heh.]

*Joseph Major*: I don't recall St. Therese as the patron saint of florists, or perhaps there is more than one. Incidentally, Lloyd Penney, the Russian Orthodox Church creates saints, too. (I believe both these points were mentioned in my article, Janine.) The patron saint of all who work with high explosives, specifically including rocketry, is Saint Barbara. I'm not sure how much good it would do to invoke Saint Barbara on behalf of the Columbia crew, but it could do no harm. Perhaps I'll go over to the Franciscans and ask the brothers for a prayer. I expect God would recognize His own; He certainly had a good view of them...

Which Las Vegas Corflu was that, Lloyd? Last I heard, it was in Madison, Wisconsin this year. (Putting me at odds with Tracy Benton, but that's a topic for another time and place.)

Well, *Peter Watts*, yes, the international spread is typical of fanzines — ironically, I started out trying to stick to the U.S. to simplify my postage situation; and yes, a thin, widely dispersed readership is generally the norm.

Contest #4: Haven't a clue. I must not have been paying attention to #3, as *The Gods Themselves* was familiar. Not sure if I still have a copy.

Ah. Lemon Broccoli Chicken, a few hunks of The Breadery's Garden Herb, and a couple of glasses of Black Opal's 2001 chardonnay. I shall sit here with my glass of "Orangerie" (bitter oranges from my dwarf tree infused in brandy) and proceed until something else happens. If this LOC goes totally incoherent you will know why. [Those dratted gremlins were supposed to steal all that stuff and bring it to me!!! Arrrrgh! Never trust a gremlin to do a faned's job.]

"The Faned Article Pool": Contact Janine, people. Those pieces are now under her authority. I will hold off on sending any more until I hear if any of those are taken.

"The Pub Crawl" — I discarded *Chunga* unread, and notified Randy Byers of the fact [you didn't miss much, really]. Guy and Rosy Lillian did win DUFF, hurrah! Now all Guy, who hates flying, has to do is get there. Clearly if flying commercial bothers him, he's never been in a C-130. [giggling from editor]

Alas, I received one brief zine from "Max", and not another word. Perhaps I'm not "fhannish" enough. Wouldn't be the first time. [It's probably more economics than any lack in fhannishness on your part.]



*Even if you sent a LOC for They Made Me Do It or another title, paper and postage costs are the deciding factors in many faneds' decisions to pub only online, or mostly online with a limited regular-mail list. I go and get a lot of online-only zines on my own, they aren't sent to me.]*

*[Okay, pay attention, everyone who isn't online. I'll give away the copies of fanzines I get online and print out myself to those who are interested. Send me an SASE and I'll send you a list of what I have. I got both of Max's zines online, as well as Alex Bouchard's Lightning Round and others.]*

*Ansible: I expect everyone is waiting to see how this will affect the Hugo nominations. [I am, certainly, considering the titles usually fielded in the semi-prozine category.]*

Your review of Twink #'s 27-28, you say, "More, please." More zine, or more on religion in SF? I suspect the latter subject has been covered, or at least I've had my say. *[I was referring, apparently too obliquely, to a perceived feeling of ennui emanating from the Sign of the Frozen Chaffinch. Perhaps it was just winter blahs? Anyway, "more please" means keep pubbing Twink or whatever you want to call it, I look forward to reading it.]*

Now that I think of it, have you ever had a Harry Warner LOC? Can't be a real fanzine without a LOC from Saint Harry, y'know. *[Yes, I did get a LOC from him and it ran in the July 2001 ish of PN. It was the only one I will ever receive from him, now. Ghu bless Harry!]*

It seems a questionable time to bother you with such trivia, but here is your "Poliad Award" for "Fan Writer of the Year 2002" It was a surprise to me too, that the idea should take on such form. Credit/blame Trinlay Khadro for way too much imagination. *[Credit, surely, and thanks for the award!]*

*Paul DiFilippo*  
(Feb. 9)

Many thanx for the excellent PN 2.3 Great LOCs & a good article on saints by EBF. But my favorite piece was Alan White's essay. Combined with his superb cover, this made the ish a standout!

*[Paul continues to send items in interestingly decorated envelopes, and handwritten notes on similarly interesting stationery. The above was penned on the reverse of a photocopied comics page (apparently, from the drawing style, though it could be another fanzine), title unknown. I hope I'm not the only one getting these materials, they're far too fun to limit their distribution.]*



*John Hertz*

*[John very kindly sent me a copy of his Worldcon 2002 report, from the Chronicle, Dec. 2002 issue.]*

On SFSFS Shuttle 148, not only contents make a fanzine — just as desktop publishing isn't what makes a zine look good. Fannish whimsy is the blood, without which all those nutrients would be left lying in the belly (see Coriolanus by W.A.) — bored silly.

*[There must be something about writing a lot of haiku and other condensed forms of poetry that reconfigures a person's brain to densely meaningful prose — the reason reading Vanamonde is still a delight. And, yeah, what he said about fanzines. Um.]*

*Sheryl Birkhead*  
(Feb. 21, sent March 20)

Alan White is surely being seen (so to speak) in fanzines far and wide! Nice job. Trinlay has been contributing her art work more widely too — good to see it! *[I have run out of Birkhead originals, so when you get a chance, could you send more?]*

*Lyn McConchie*: There is no reciprocity for veterinarians — you have to take the National Boards and then State boards for every state where you wish to practice.

I finally let my license lapse in West Virginia, but when I took their state boards there was also an oral exam. One of the questions to me was, "How do you de-bleat a sheep?" I admitted I had no idea, but I assumed it was similar to the vocal sacculotomy in dogs — cut the vocal cords?

At the end of the questioning, the board said they were finished — did I have any questions for them? "Uh...yes...how do you de-bleat a sheep?"

"You don't," replied the chairman, "it was a trick question."

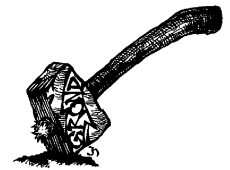
I've taken to listening to books on tape in the car more than real reading. I tried listening to SF but didn't care for it, and went back to mysteries. Perhaps if the library would get more recent SF, I'd try again.

*Ansible* will now only be nominated as a semi-prozine — watch out Charlie Brown!

I really, really appreciated seeing Alan White's piece; it makes me feel a bit better in my artistic inadequacies, knowing that yet another Ghreat One does art for a living and had training — whew, I'm off the hook. *[I don't see why having or not having training in art should matter. There is "art" formed with technical means, and there is art which uses technical means to create the artist's vision. It's what separates a pile of rusty steel from a sculpture in metal, to me.*

### Addresses:

Eloise (Beltz-Decker) Mason, 1519 W. Taylor St., #2 Chicago, IL 60607-4015  
Lloyd Penney, 1706—24 Eva Rd., Etobicoke, Ontario M9C 2B2 CANADA  
Trinlay Khadro, P.O. Box 240934, Brown Deer, WI 53224 trin1066@hotmail.com  
E.B. Frohvet, 4716 Dorsey Hall Dr. #506, Ellicott City, MD 21042  
Paul DiFilippo, 2 Poplar St., Providence, RI 02906  
John Hertz, 236 S. Coronado St. No 409, Los Angeles, CA 90057  
Sheryl Birkhead, 25509 Jonnie Court, Gaithersburg, MD 20882



## Cher Invades Fandom!!!

by Lew Wolkoff

*[Lew Wolkoff devised the following clever bit of filk in March on an Internet mailing list, and gave his permission for the gist of the message to be printed here. The Editor is solely responsible for the headline.]*

Someone one did a fannish survey that found the following:

- \* Favorite Fan Cuisine: Chinese
- \* Favorite Fan Food: Chocolate
- \* Favorite Fan Pet: Cats

The surveyor then suggested that the ultimate fannish food would be Chocolate Kung Po Cat.

"Chocolate Kung Po Cat" (sung to the melody of: "Gypsies, Tramps, and Thieves")

Now science fiction fans'll eat all kinds of stuff.

Chinese is our favorite; we can't get enough.

We think cats are **the** perfect pet.

Put then all together and what do you get?

### CHORUS

Chocolate kung po cat,

You'll find it in the con suite

At the end of each con.

Chocolate kung po cat,

The fixing ain't easy, but the fen'll come around.

They all want to chow down.



## *The Faned Article Pool*

All you faneds out there, this is the third consecutive ish that this article has run, and I haven't had any queries (that I can recall). **THIS IS THE FINAL CALL.** If no one else calls for any of the available or planned items listed below **BEFORE JUNE 20, 2003** they will commence seeing print in PN in the July 2003 ish. **YOU HAVE ALL BEEN WARNED.**

Note: Those who prefer "retro-reviews" might be interested in this ish's listing.

### **Items Ready to Send**

**Book review by E.B. Frohvet:** Dragon Hunter: Roy Chapman Andrews and the Central Asiatic Expeditions by Charles Gallenkamp.

**Book reviews** by J.G. Stinson: Heavy Weather by Bruce Sterling; The Living Blood by Tananarive Due; Moon of Three Rings by Andre Norton (1966); Tomorrow Now: Envisioning the Next Fifty Years by Bruce Sterling (nonfiction).

**Articles:** "Collegiate Zen and the Pennsylvania Turnpike" by E.B. Frohvet; "The Aesthetics of the Dump Truck" by E. B. Frohvet; "Five Mundane Films I Like" by E.B. Frohvet.

### **Items Planned by Yer Humble Editrix**

**Articles:** "Why There Will Never Be A Worldcon in the Keys"; "When Is a Fan A Pest? Talking to Writers on the Internet"; "Why in the World Would You Want to Leave Paradise?"

### **Free Book Deal: Contest #4 Winners**

The question was, "Doubleday & Company, Inc. published a book titled Five Fates in 1970, whose conceit was that the five stories therein all started with a common story hook. Who are the writers of these five stories?"

The online respondents' prize was Eleanor Arnason's SF novel A Woman of the Iron People. For the regular-mail respondents, the prize was Greg Bear's near-future thriller Vitals.

Either the ishes of PN I send by regular mail are not arriving at their addressed locations, or no one who got a paper copy knew the answer (or cared to respond) for the regular mail contest. I had two replies for the online contest. So, by editorial fiat, the Arnason novel goes to **Lloyd Penney** and the Bear novel goes to **Joseph Major**. Both contestants correctly answered the question in the allotted time. Congrats to you both.

### **Free Book Deal: Contest #5 Is Announced**

This time I'll make it a bit easier. The question for Contest #5 is: "What does TANSTAAFL stand for?"

Originating author's name NOT required.

It's Coffee-Table Book Time! This contest's prizes are flashy paperweights for all those magazines that get fluttered with every passing breeze in one's living room; they're also suitable for pressing flowers and leaves. Additionally, they're about SF, so the winners might even read them.

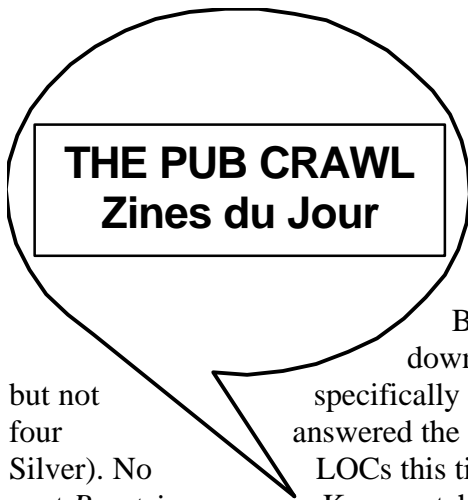
The online contest prize is Encyclopedia of Science Fiction, consultant editor Robert Holdstock, foreword by Isaac Asimov, book club edition from A. Hoen & Co. Lithographers (Baltimore, MD) from the original edition by Octopus Books Ltd., UK; 1978; 219 pages. Article text by Holdstock, Chris Morgan, Harry Harrison, Malcolm Edwards, Michael Ashley, Christopher Priest, Brian Stableford,

Douglas Hill, Patrick Moore, Alan Frank, David Hardy. It's factually out of date, of course, but contains tons of great art.

The regular-mail contest prize is Science Fiction — The Illustrated Encyclopedia by John Clute, Dorling Kindersley, 1995; 305 pages, hardbound. This lushly illustrated (artwork and photos) includes coverage of SF in film, TV and art (book and magazine covers, comics, and graphic-novels) as well as magazines and novels. Includes very handy film and TV show indices, which I once used to look up a movie title ("Quintet" starring Paul Newman, for the curious) that had escaped my memory. Nice to page through and dip into in 30-minute sessions.

Answers must be postmarked no later than **June 20, 2003**. All correct answers (if there are enough to warrant it) will then be divided by category, and a name selected from each pile. Paper replies can be on pocsacards or in letters, doesn't matter, as long as they're legible **and contain the entrant's name and regular-mail address**. Good luck to all the participants.

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Zines reviewed here are less than **four** ish old, or new to me. All others received since lastish are listed at the end, sometimes with comments. New zines are reviewed through their fourth ish, then move to the received list. Zines new to me but past their fourth ish will be reviewed once, then listed as received.

BURSTZINE #2 / from Michael and Nomi Burstein, PO Box 1713, Brookline, MA 02446 USA. On the Web at [www.burstzine.net](http://www.burstzine.net) for the downloading, or for the Usual, or \$3 for a sample or single ish. Irregular

but not  
four  
Silver). No  
next *Burstzine*.

specifically stated. // This ish had an announced theme of parents and fandom, and answered the call (David B. Williams, Mike Resnick, Janna Silverstein and Steven LOCs this time, but those and more responses to this theme are promised for the Keep watching your mailboxes.

CHUNGA 3 "Universal Love Chunga" from Andy Hooper, Randy Byers and Carl Juarez. Inquire for paper copies at Chunga, 1013 N. 36th, Seattle, WA 98103. Also available for download online at [efanzines.com](http://efanzines.com). Irregular. Available for trade, editorial whim, or "grudgingly" for \$3.50 per ish. // Randy Byers and Carl Juarez (or both) apparently have a jones for sidebars in layout design. Personally, they detract from my reading experience, so I don't much care for them. *Chunga* is certainly fhannish in its presentation and selection of articles, from the little research I've done, so those who prefer this kind of zine should enjoy thish. Me, I'm in the sercon camp.

CONVERGENCE: GATHERING OF THE CLAN, a conrep for The Great Cosmic Donut of Life No. 34 and \*brg\* No. 33, on the 41st Australian National SF Convention of June 2002. From Bruce Gillespie, 59 Keele Street, Collingwood, VIC 3066, Australia and [gandc@mira.net](mailto:gandc@mira.net). One-shot as part of two apas. // Bruce does a very nice job of reproducing photos and writing up an interesting conrep. Fear not, Bruce, Race Mathews' speech was printed in *Andromeda Spaceways Inflight Magazine #3* as "Recollections & Reflections: Science Fiction in Victoria 19455-2002." I'd gladly send you a photocopy if you can't find that ish.

EMERALD CITY 89, Jan. 2003, from Cheryl Morgan, available online at [www.emcit.com](http://www.emcit.com). "Occasional" according to the editor/publisher. Available free online. // Ms. Morgan reviews several books (Sean McMullen, Jeff Noon, Brian Stableford, Jeffery Ford, Brooks Hansen, Douglas A. Anderson, Jude Fisher), ponders the almost Bay Area Superbowl, and includes news as well. No gussied-up stuff here.

GOTTERDAMERUNG 11, Spring 1998, from Mark McCann and Tommy Ferguson, 40 Deramore Avenue, Belfast BT7 3ER, Northern Ireland (addresses may have changed). Irregular. // I felt obliged to check this out on the Web because longtime fen kept yammering on about Irish fandom. Well, this was an interesting read. I suspect most folk who get PN will have already read G 11, so I won't recount the TOC. I did like Julia Daly's article about visiting Canada. The Cuba article did nowt for me.

LIGHTNING ROUND 1 & 2 from Alexander Bouchard, available online at efanazines.com or from the editor for The Usual at P.O. Box 573, Hazel Park, MI 48030-0573. "More frequent" than *Scopus*, apparently. // Like several other faneds, Mr. Bouchard has recently chosen online fanac as the least-expensive alternative to stay in the fanzine pubbing game. This perszine is lively, well-written and varied in scope. I'm looking forward to reading more.

NEITHER RAIN, NOIR MURDER...#2, a DAPA-Em zine from Bill Bowers, available at efanazines.com or from BB at 4651 Glenway Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45238-4503. Probably irregular. // This contains Bill's recent thots, several interesting quotes, and a guest review of The Road's End (Albert Conroy) by Mike Robison. Mystery fans, take note, this is worth reading.

NO TIME, NO ENERGY & NOT MUCH TO SAY 4, from dwain Kaiser, 645 E. Base Line Rd., Claremont, CA 91711 or at efanazines.com. Available for The Usual. // This zine has been zooming into cyberspace almost faster than Bill Burns can get it posted at efanazines. While this e-zine is interesting and worth reading, I hope dwain doesn't abandon *Nonstop Fun*. Evelyn Gabai's series "Adventures in India" provides a unique perspective on living and working in that country.

NOVA EXPRESS Vol. 6 No. 2, Summer 2002, from Lawrence Person, P.O. Box 27231, Austin, TX 78755-2231 (address may have changed). Publication has ceased. // This was a gift from Paul DiFilippo, who's interviewed twice herein (once by Person, once by Fiona Kelleghan) and talked about by Chris Nakashima-Brown in an article. This is certainly sercon stuff, but I think I tried to read it on a day when I was too sleepy. I'll give it another go on a more alert day. Nice layout design, and I'd have probably subbed to it (as I have to *SF Commentary*) if it had continued.

RAIN ON CHERRY-BLOSSOMS #3, June 2002, from Eloise Beltz-Decker (Mason?), 1519 W. Taylor St., #2, Chicago, IL 60607-4015. Available for trade or the usual. Back issues available for \$1. Irregular. //

The return address said "E. Mason," so I hazard a guess that the lady has wed. I could also be wrong. This is still a lively and highly readable perszine, but one could wish for more frequent publication. However, Life Intervened. This included LOCs and another recipe, for those who missed thish.

### **Zines Received:**

ALEXIAD Vol. 2, Nos. 1 and 2 / from Lisa and Joseph Major, 1409 Christy Ave., Louisville, KY 40204-2040. Apparent schedule is 6 times a year. Available for The Usual (letter of comment, trade, contribution); samples available on request. Back issues \$1, subscription \$10/year. Inquire for electronic format availability. //

ANSIBLE 188 & 189/ from Dave Langford, 94 London Road, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 5AU ENGLAND. Monthly. Can be had for an SAE via paper mail or for the asking in e-mail to Majordomo@imi.gla.ac.uk with subscribe ansible in the body (and naught else), subject line "irrelevant." //

CHALLENGER 17/ from Guy H. Lillian III, PO Box 53092, New Orleans, LA 70153-3092. E-mail: GHLIII@yahoo.com. Irregular. Available for \$6, The Usual, or editorial whim. // Fab, fab, fab. But I didn't recognize the cover subjects. Still a neo, I guess. Way too much good reading to list here. Get one!

DE PROFUNDIS 362-363 / from the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society (LASFS), edited by Marty Cantor. Contact Cantor at LASFS, 11513 Burbank Blvd., North Hollywood, CA 91601 USA. E-mail: louishoohah@netzero.net. Monthly. The clubzine of the LASFS, but also available for trade. //

e.I 7, from Earl Kemp, available online only via efanazines.com in HTML or printable PDF. Intended as a memoir excerpt made available for additions and/or correction by readers with such information. // Earl continues a fascinating ramble through his life as a publisher. I haven't read all of this yet so I'll just say it looks really readable and nicely designed.

FANZINE FANATIQUE Fall 2002, from Keith and Rosemary Walker, 6 Vine St., Lancaster LA1 4UF, England; KWalker777@aol.com. Available for the usual. Intended quarterly. // More of the Walkers' list of zines received with brief comments.

FOR THE CLERISY 49, from Brant Kresovich, PO Box 404, Getzville, NY 14068-0404 USA. Available for the usual (letter of comment, zine trade, \$2). Publishes "seasonally."

THE KNARLEY KNEWS 98, from Henry and Letha Welch, 1525 16th Ave., Grafton, WI 53024-2017 USA. Available for the Usual. Bi-monthly.

NO TIME, NO ENERGY & NOT MUCH TO SAY 5-7, from dwain Kaiser, 645 E. Base Line Rd., Claremont, CA 91711 or at efanazines.com . Available for The Usual.

SF COMMENTARY / from Bruce Gillespie, 59 Keele Street, Collingwood, VIC 3066, Australia and gandc@mira.net .Available for the usual or subscriptions (AU\$35 for 5 issues, checks to Gillespie & Cochrane Pty. Ltd.; or via airmail for US\$30/12 pounds/equivalent for 5, in folding money). Irregular. // Gillespie and company continue to produce one of the finest sercon zines in the world. This covers a wide range of books, featuring articles by John Crowley, Russell Blackford, Elaine Cochrane, Roslyn Kopel Gross, David Langford and others. Can't say enough good things about it! Send Bruce money now!

THE SFSFS SHUTTLE 148, 152, from the South Florida Science Fiction Society, P.O. Box 70143, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33307-0143. Write for availability. //

SOUTHERN FANDOM CONFEDERATION BULLETIN Vol. 8 No. 2, edited by Randy Cleary; write to Southern Fandom Confederation, c/o R. Cleary, 138 Bibb Dr., Madison, AL 35758-1064. Available for annual membership. Usually 3-4 issues a year. //

TWINK (GREMFLOD) 29, from E.B. Frohvet, 4716 Dorsey Hall Dr., #506, Ellicott City, MD 21042 USA. Available for The Usual. Quarterly. // Sultry Taral Wayne cover graces this, with articles by EBF on military SF and Lyn McConchie on end-of-the-world SF, plus reviews and LOCs. Plenty here to stoke the fannish appetite; SOS this ain't.

VANAMONDE 493-502, from John Hertz, 236 S. Coronado St., No. 409, Los Angeles, CA 90057. Available for the usual (and maybe even for the asking). A weekly apazine for APA-L (and sometimes Minneapa). //

VISIONS OF PARADISE 94 (The Passing Scene, Wondrous Stories, Halcyon Days), from Robert Sabella, 24 Cedar Manor Court, Budd Lake, NJ 07828-1023 USA. Available for The Usual and/or editorial whim, as well as someone else's nudging. Quarterly. //

XENOLITH 49, from Bill Bowers, 4651 Glenway Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45238-4503. A FAPA zine also available at efanzines.com via PDF (printable). // A LOC-filled ish this time, with pithy comments scattered hither and yon in Bill's inimitable style.



## Fridge Finds

by J.G. Stinson

In my house, things get clipped from magazines and newspapers, rescued from the dog in the yard even, and saved for potential

later use on the refrigerator via a plethora of magnets. My late husband Kenn saw the following in a magazine and saved it; he found it very amusing, and too true. For some of those who have Been There, Done That, this will bring back memories (not always good ones, apologies in advance); for others in that group who never had to dodge bullets, it will bring a smirk, I suspect. The author is unknown to me.

### Murphy's Laws of Combat

1. Remember. . .the lowest bidder made your weapon.
2. The enemy diversion you ignored will be the main attack.
3. If it's tough for the enemy to enter, it may be tougher for you to leave.
4. When you are short of everything but the enemy, you are in the combat zone.
  5. When you secure an area, make sure you tell the enemy.
  6. Never draw enemy fire, as it irritates your teammates.
  7. If you can't remember, the claymore is pointed at you.
  8. If the attack is going well, you've walked into an ambush.
9. Professionals are predictable; it's the amateurs that are dangerous.
  10. Look unimportant; the enemy may be low on ammo.
    11. If the enemy is in range, so are you.
      12. The easy way is mined.
    13. Incoming fire has the right of way.
    14. The enemy WILL find a way.



*For those with a taste for the works  
of C.J. Cherryh,  
please visit Shejidan online  
at [www.shejidan.com](http://www.shejidan.com)*

*“Where the tea is always safe.”*

## *Dancing in the Dark: Iron Shadows by Steven Barnes*

Tor: 1998, 383 pages. Hardcover.  
Reviewed by J.G. Stinson

TV screenwriter Barnes has collaborated on SF novels with Larry Niven, as well as writing solo novels (The Kundalini Equation, Blood Brothers, and Beowulf's Children among the latter). His Hollywood experience is reflected in Iron Shadows — you can just *see* these characters in a TV show. But it'd have to be on a cable channel like HBO or Showtime, because the subject matter definitely doesn't fit the U.S. network TV profile.

Cat Juvell and Jackson Carpenter are both former Los Angeles Police Department officers who've opened a private investigations firm with Cat's brother Tyler, who was crippled in a childhood accident. Their California firm is hired by a wealthy man to track down the client's sister, believed to be a member of a cult-like, Oregon-based group called the Golden Sun. The client claims he just wants to make sure his sister is making a sane decision regarding the signing over of her share of the inheritance to the group. Given all the news in the last few decades about cults, brainwashing and "deprogramming," this is easy enough to take at face value.

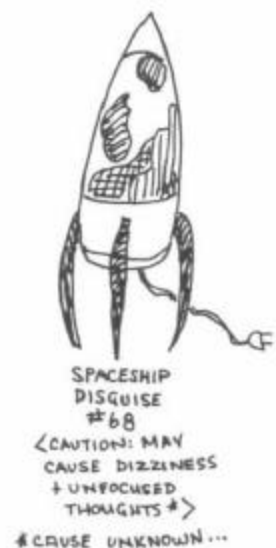
But there's a whole lot more going on underneath the surface of the client's story, and in the novel as a whole. Every character in this story has their own secrets, their own "iron shadows" which haunt them in unguarded moments and govern their reactions in certain situations.

As former police officers, Juvell and Carpenter can be expected to possess certain skills in firearms and hand-to-hand combat. But upon first introduction, Barnes almost ruins their credibility by giving them cartoon-like physical features. Carpenter is an Incredible Hulk with glasses and a chocolate skin tone, and Juvell is a Tinkerbell with an attitude. Fortunately, Barnes' solid characterization and competent dialogue skills are able to pull these two out of their initial comic-book setting and into life as people you might have once met.

Comic books, especially the modern version, can be every bit as complex and character-driven as a novel, but — especially in the superhero category — there's still that element of physical believability the reader has to accept before all the rest works. If a reader decides not to believe, then the rest of the work ultimately fails. It's the writer's job to make everything else in that world so convincing and interesting that the reader is sucked into it before realizing it's wrapped in pumped-up muscles and angst. Barnes certainly knows this, whether he learned it from comics or not, because I found myself racing to the end to find out what happened.

Barnes' mix of powerful heroes, dark secrets, a sex-based cult with a hidden agenda, guns and martial-arts-action scenes keep the pace moving just fast enough to maintain attention, but not so fast that one gets lost. The Tantric-sex elements of the Golden Sun's philosophical foundation (which acts as the honey trap for initiates) appears to have been well-researched. Barnes wisely leaves out the unusual body contortions in favor of focusing on the relationship benefits of intimate concentration. The cult's sexual relationship-building techniques are much like those apparently used by contemporary sex therapists, and add to the believability of the story.

Iron Shadows crosses the borders between the soft SF, horror and action genres. Readers who don't mind a bit of gore and guns with their scares won't be overwhelmed, and those looking for a dark SF read should also be...satisfied.





# Riding A Raid

by J.G. Stinson

*Come tighten your girth and slacken your rein  
Come buckle your blanket and holster again  
Try the click of your trigger and balance your blade  
For he must ride sure, that goes riding a raid.*

---Anonymous, Cobb's Legion, 1863



A writer friend who lives in upstate New York visited my Web site recently and read my tribute to my late husband, which includes the above verse. She said “I read your tribute and cried ... We go riding a raid every day.”

For a man who was a soldier and a cop, that was all too true. Each day can be the last one. Those able to share their lives with such folk have a common trait: They all know, deep inside, that that day *will* come, on the job or not.

Kenneth Arnold Stinson was born in 1953 in a small Georgia town. His father’s family were fisherfolk from Maine’s Kennebunkport area; his mother’s family were from Dodge County, Georgia. I never heard the story of how they met, but I mean to ask my mother-in-law some day.

Kenn told me we’d met via teletype before we ever met in person, but I have no recall of that incident. It had to have been while we were both in the Army and stationed in Germany in the early 1980s. The first time we met in person was at Ft. Meade, Maryland in 1984. He arrived there in March, we started dating about 6 weeks later, and he proposed to me that June. We married on July 21, 1984. This is a very good example of a whirlwind courtship.

I had received two marriage proposals before Kenn’s; one was tendered while I was in college, and the second while I was at an Army job-training school in Texas to become an intelligence analyst. My first proposer was a very nice man, a good poet, funny and warm. But I wasn’t ready to get married then, and as gently as I could, I tried to explain that to him. He took it well, as I recall. Wherever he is, I wish him well.

The second proposal came from a young man nearly a decade younger than me and, as it turned out, with some rather serious mental problems. Ew. Definitely a no-go there.

Once I’d accepted Kenn’s proposal, I asked myself what on earth I was doing. I hadn’t even known him for six months. But the simple answer — the plain truth — was that he was the first man I’d met who was smarter than me. I’m no rocket scientist, but I wasn’t an intellectual slouch either. He was literate, well-read, funny, very handsome, tall, and mysterious — a Vietnam veteran and ex-Special Forces soldier who said he couldn’t tell me much about what he’d done there because it was all still classified. Being an MI “weanie” myself and the daughter of a Vietnam vet, I understood and didn’t press him for information.

Both our families were thrilled to hear we were engaged, but perplexed that the wedding was set so fast. I told my parents I’d finally met the right man, and that was enough for them. In our wedding photos, taken by a friend, I look terrified. I was in mortal fear of tripping over my dress and making a complete fool of myself on the most important day of my life, and I was concentrating very, very hard on doing everything exactly right. I did.

Eight years later our son was born, after we’d both left the Army and Kenn had become a police officer in Kansas, my last duty station being Ft. Riley. Kenn took the job offer from the Key West Police Dept. and went down to the Florida Keys ahead of me. The following year our son arrived, two weeks before Hurricane Andrew laid waste to the south Florida mainland, but only brushed past the Keys.

In 1997 Kenn went to see a doctor about blood in his urine, was referred to a urologist, and after tests he was told that he had bladder cancer, with transitional cell carcinoma. The urologist said the TCC was the least aggressive kind, and he felt that an aggressive treatment protocol would be the best thing to use. Kenn agreed. After two surgeries, he started directed chemotherapy to the bladder. By 2001, his urologist was ready to declare him cancer free, and called him his star patient.

After busting his ass on road patrol, motorcycle patrol and as a detective for a decade in Key West, Kenn finally got his dream job last year as a crime scene technician in a joint city-county lab created by Key West and Monroe County. All our relatives and friends were thrilled to hear it, as they all had seen and were fans of the new TV series “CSI.” A fellow cop brought back a “CSI” T-shirt from Las Vegas for Kenn that became his favorite shirt.

He worked that job for just under 9 months before his right femur snapped as he walked into a local grocery store, was transported to the Lower Keys Medical Center for repair of the break, and was later told that the bladder cancer we’d thought he’d beaten had come roaring back.

He went into the hospital on Nov. 18th, was allowed to go home for Thanksgiving, and by Dec. 13th he was ordered back to the hospital by his oncologist, who didn’t like what the recent blood tests had revealed. He didn’t leave the hospital until the funeral home director came for his body on New Year’s Day.

The official cause of death on the death certificate reads “cardiopulmonary failure due to metastatic transitional cell carcinoma of the bladder.” By the time his leg broke, it was too late to do anything other than relieve his pain. He’d been having pain in his right leg for 6 weeks previous to the break, but we both figured it was due to a knee injury in that leg from the previous year. I never even considered it might be due to something else, let alone that it could be the bladder cancer metastasizing. I don’t know if it occurred to Kenn; I didn’t have the chance to ask him. The test to monitor the bladder were done on his urine, because the test would reveal whether a specific marker element of cancerous cells was present or not. There was no need for a blood test, which would have shown a blood loss and indicated something was wrong.

He was cremated on Jan. 9, 2003. On that day, the law-enforcement communities of the Keys gave him a very traditional, heart-wrenching farewell of a memorial service. Even the toughest cop loses it when the last radio call for the one who’s gone is played: “David 38, dispatch, over . . . Dave 38, dispatch, over . . . David 38, Key West police, has completed his final tour of duty.” There were close to 200 people at that service, many of whom were not police officers. Two of them I stopped to greet in particular, for they were from the Special Forces Detachment in Key West.

Kenn’s remains sat in a rectangular plastic container — the “urn,” made to look like gray marble — on top of a bookcase in our bedroom until the end of March, when I drove up with them and my son to Eastman, Georgia and Old Daniels Cemetery, where Kenn wanted to be buried. My mother-in-law asked me during a phone conversation whether having the “urn” on that bookcase gave me comfort. I don’t remember what I said. It was the first place I’d thought to plunk the heavy thing down when I got it from the funeral home, and had no inclination to move it. But I did pound on it a few times, and touch it gently a few other times, and talked to it.

We’d had to separate the memorial service from the burial because my mother-in-law is disabled and couldn’t travel to Key West and then Eastman without time between the trips to recover. I needed recovery time as well, since I have Meniere’s disease and stress of any kind can and often does trigger the classic symptoms of nausea, vertigo and (if the vertigo isn’t stopped) vomiting. To this day I’m amazed that I got through everything that happened between Nov. 18th and today, and credit the close and generous support of my family, Kenn’s family and the KWPD family for it all. I kept the Valium handy (it’s used to treat the vertigo, mainly by relieving anxiety and stress and causing one to sleep), but knowing there were helping hands surrounding me was a great relief.

From January to the end of March, there was time for the immediate families to grieve, to talk to each other, to begin planning what to do next, and to begin the arduous process of informing friends and business contacts of Kenn’s death. There were bank accounts, loans, and other paperwork matters that



required sorting out, death certificate copies to be sent to various officials, and some days I thought the onslaught of all that paper would eventually bury me emotionally. But there was help for all that as well.

On April 1st — Kenn would have appreciated the humor in it — a Southern Baptist preacher gave a group of 50 or so a brief sermon (it was less than 10 minutes, and for a Baptist preacher, that's brief), then most of the folks repaired to the church hall adjacent to the cemetery for the traditional meal.

I had one more thing to do, and had planned to do it alone. But when I told Kenn's aunt, Lynda, who was closer to Kenn's age than she was to my mother-in-law's age, she said "I want to be there, too." From there, the group grew to about 10 people. "It seems appropriate to have you all here," I said to Lynda, one of my sisters-in-law, the best man from our wedding whom I hadn't seen in close to 20 years, my best friend from high school, one of my brothers-in-law and his partner, my mother-in-law and my

son. "This is a song that was a favorite of Kenn's and mine. Whenever either of us heard it on a radio station while driving, we'd crank it up."

Then I leaned down to the boom box I'd brought with me, pressed the Play button, and the opening chords of Jimi Hendrix's "Purple Haze" filled that April afternoon with memory. I shut my eyes and went elsewhere on the wings of that song, whispering the lyrics with Jimi, letting the tears come. When it finished, I looked at those who'd listened with me and thanked them. I asked my brother-in-law and his partner to stay a while after the others left, to give them a special message I thought Kenn would've wanted them to hear. Then we went over to the church hall, to the land of the living.

Kenn wasn't a particularly religious person in the organized sense; he didn't attend any services while we were married except for one wedding of a friend of mine. But we both had spiritual beliefs, and of course now that it's too late, I wish we'd talked about them before he died. Celtic legends and several Native American tribal myths were favorites of his, and he collected books about both.

The two jobs he held throughout his life were soldier and cop. He'd always wanted to be one or the other, and was able to be both in one lifetime. He did more in that lifetime than most people manage to do in three, and because of that, he was ready to go when the time came.

All he wanted, he said to me, was to know that I would be okay, and that Jamie would be okay. Once we assured him of that, it was a matter of weeks until he died. But the hardest thing to handle was the deterioration of his intellect. Just before he lost the ability to speak, he called me twice from the hospital, asking me to come and get him because he didn't know why he was there and he wanted to see me. It was as if he'd begun the slide into Alzheimer's disease — and a man aged only 49 shouldn't be doing that.

Kenn was a voracious reader, as I am, and read SF in addition to military history, intelligence history, linguistics, and certain types of true-crime books. He was a U.S. Civil War buff, spoke five languages fluently during one period of his life, and collected hats and T-shirts. He was an Oakland Raiders fan. He was an assistant coach on his son's first soccer team. He wasn't perfect — he was human.

People here have remarked on how well I'm handling this loss. I tell them that I can't go through life crying, and it just stops up my sinuses and gives me ferocious headaches anyway. But the real reason is that I know Kenn was prepared to die, that he was well and truly tired, and I would be serving him ill if I'd tried to force him to stay alive longer.

I like to think that the smartest man I ever met asked me to marry him because he believed I could bring some light into a life that had seen far too much darkness. I hope I did that.

# Will the Real Swamp Thing Please Stand Up?

editorial

In the last 6-8 weeks I've received two large chunks of old fanzines from different parts of the world. Bruce Gillespie (Australia) sent me several backissues of *SF Commentary* and *The Metaphysical Review*, along with some copies of *brg* and *The Great Cosmic Donut of Life* (the latter two being apazines). Greg Pickersgill (UK) sent me a wide variety of titles, among them *Maya*, *Microwave*, *Not the Science Fantasy News*, *Waldo*, *Egg*, *Erg*, *The Wrinkled Shrew* and *Ansible*.

Forty dollars U.S. can buy a lot of interesting reading, some of it quite good. From Bruce I got some fannish and some sercon, but more of the latter, which was fine with me as I'd been wanting to read *TMR* for quite some time. From Greg I got mostly fannish material, which I expected (Greg being a fhannish kinda guy), and several titles I'd heard about but never seen.

Comparing the two is apples and oranges comparison, really. Sercon is sercon and fannish is fannish, and it's a rare bird that combines the two successfully and with good balance. Of the fannish zines, I found myself enjoying the writings of Vinc Clark (I know that ending c in his first name is supposed to have a slant through it, but I can't figure out how to make This Infernal Machine do that — yet) very much. He seemed a very gentle soul, and it was a treat to read the handwritten notes to some of his recipients. *TMR* was engrossing, as were the early issues of *SFC*. The latter has evolved into the best-looking and best-written serconzine I've yet received.

As those who pay attention to the colophon will already have noticed, I am Moving House.

The only reason we came to the Keys was for Kenn's job, and now that he's gone, there's no reason for me and my son to stay here. I've always wanted to return to my parents' hometown of Manistee, Michigan, because it's also my "homeplace," as Southern folk in this country call it. I wasn't born there, but when I think of home, Manistee is the first place that comes to mind. Tropical climates just don't suit me, and it's rapidly reaching the point where I'd have had to move eventually anyway because the property values are skyrocketing in the Keys and the jobs are disappearing. I'd not be able to live here much longer even if I wanted to, because I couldn't afford it.

However, moving to Michigan allows me some financial breathing room. Thanks to Kenn's hardworking ethic, the Social Security benefits for myself and my son plus Kenn's police pension are enough for Jamie and me to live comfortably. I've bought 1/3 of an acre and a house to put on it (which will be completed by the time I get there), and I'll be living less than five miles from my parents. I will live in a place where I can see snow again for the first time in over a decade; where the deciduous trees drop their leaves once a year; where there are also mosquitoes but their life-cycle is blissfully confined to a month or two a year instead of year-round; where the land undulates for miles around instead of looking like plops of mud in a large rain puddle. It takes a certain personality to feel comfortable in an island lifestyle, and I don't have that personality.

People here have asked me whether I think I'll miss the Keys. "Not the place," I tell them, "but definitely the people." If I could, I would move a large chunk of this community up north with me. My theory on why Keys people are so ready to help others comes from the old seafaring community's traditions. In population centers where the major industries involve water, weather is something to which everyone pays attention. Storms come when they want to, not when you plan them, and so you help others in need, for there's no telling when **you'd** need help. I might miss the mild winters here once in a while, but I'll certainly not miss the six-month natural terrorism plot that is Hurricane Season.

Yes, there'll be snow and ice storms to contend with in Michigan. Storms arctic and tropical can both contain awesome power. But I find beauty in snow and ice than I can't find in hurricanes, so my preference is for snow.

And there is something wonderfully satisfying in contemplating how my Siberian Husky, Spunky, will react when he sees his first snowfall.

Given our new income, I won't have to work if I don't want to, which is a great blessing. Given my ear problem, I couldn't honestly tell a prospective employer that I'd be able to show up for work the next day if I got hired.

The Meniere's disease symptoms are increasing and the current episode has reached the eight-month mark now, longer than the previous ones. Once established in the new home, I'll be starting visits to the local ENT doctor to discuss surgical options for my affected ear. It's incredibly frustrating to know that I cannot make definite plans for anything now, not even going to the grocery store, because I don't know from one day to the next whether the vertigo will hit me or not. The unpredictability is slowly driving me nuts. I've heard of a new surgical procedure which conserves the remaining hearing and, in the majority of cases, rids the patient of vertigo permanently. I'll have one of those, please. The 18 weeks of symptom-free life I had last summer were glorious, and I want every day of my life to be like those were.

Not knowing whether I'd ever get to another one as close as this year's Worldcon will be to my new abode, I've got my attending membership and hotel reservations made for Torcon 3. I plan to be wearing special attire that will make it obvious who I am and that I'm a fanzine reader. I don't know what that attire will look like yet, but when I do, I'll announce it here. The July PN will be out in time for Torcon 3.

I have a neighbor named Linda who is also a widow; her husband died about five years ago. When she heard that Kenn had died, she brought me a wonderful-tasting pot roast dinner and lots of hugs. "Be good to yourself," she said. "There are lots of people around you now, but later on, they will go back to their lives. I hope they don't forget about you once that happens." She's given me a taste of what widowhood will be like, and I'm grateful to her for warning me. I've also made sure that I haven't hidden in my house feeling sorry for myself. I make no secret of my widowhood, and don't expect sympathy from those I barely know. I've always known who my friends are here.

Laughter is what keeps me and my son going. Fandom, in great measure, has kept me going simply by existing so that I can partake in its doings. Thank you all for being here now, wherever you are.

## Bones

They talk with suns in their eyes and surf pounding in their ears,  
While outside the room warmed with heat and holiday cheer  
Snow covers the streets, the trees, the dirt,  
An eye slowly closing in sleep.

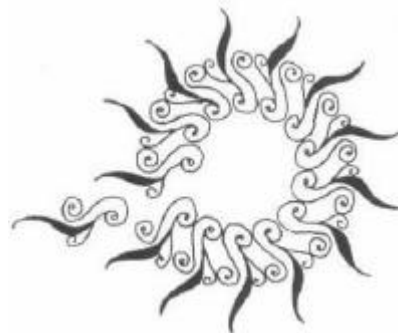
Thin-blooded people! I think in silence,  
You are hangers-on from an age just after the dinosaurs  
Ceased their roaming, making the earth shudder in their wanderings.  
Where will your descendants be when the earth covers herself again?

How will those future kin of yours  
Contend with the hard casket of glaciers, as the sky darkens  
And the sun's life dwindles towards its final feeble emanations,  
Removing all traces of their attempts to relive a post-saurian past?

My blood will run in the veins of those  
Who will take on bearskin and return to the caves;  
We will see the end of time in the last of the northern lights  
Long after your summer bones have frozen.

— *J.G. Stinson, Winter 1978 / Revised May 2003*

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*Peregrine Nations*  
c/o J.G. Stinson  
PO Box 248  
Eastlake, MI 49626-0248  
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