

ASK ANCE



RULES for HACKERS

Never get into a
flame war with a
skunk...



Askance

Edited and published by John Purcell, 3744 Marielene Circle, College Station, TX 77845

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In case anybody really cares, this is yet another Mythical Publication. Copies of this fine, bimonthly fanzine can be had for The Usual, which means expressed interest, submission and eventual inclusion of articles and artwork, letters of comment, expressed interest, and if you really want to get mercenary about it, cold hard cash in the amount of \$2.00 USD. Since nobody took me up on it, I'm fore-going your option of using sexual favors to acquire copies of this zine. Back to cold hard cash, I guess.

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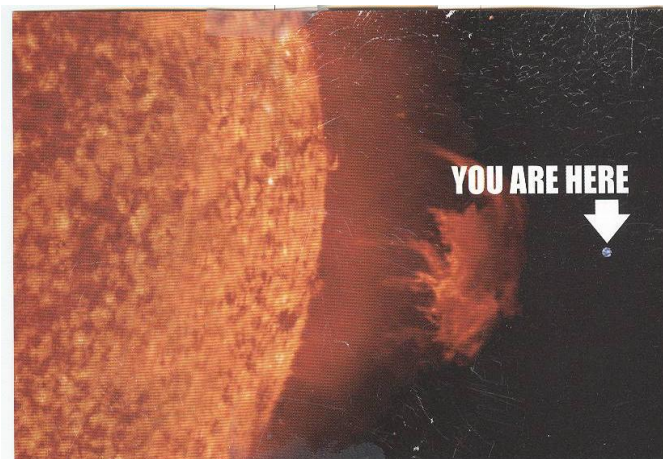
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Bill Rotsler – 2, 25; scanned postcard on my office door – 3; Real Musgrave – 7,8,9; Alan White – 16;
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Bemused

Natterings



And never more bemused have ever I been. Most of my current befuddled state is directly related to the amount of work I have been doing this fall semester. The enrollment figures for the current academic year were released about a month ago, and the Bryan Campus student population is up nearly 8% from the Fall, 2007 enrollment. Now, that is good news from the administrative viewpoint, but from the instructor's angle, it means bigger classes since there have not been significant increases in the number of new hires either full -time or adjunct. This translates into full-time instructors (like yours truly) having to take on an overload class.

Now, normally I wouldn't mind handling one more class; it means more pay per month, which means happier times at the old homestead. Unfortunately, a consequence is that I have an additional 25+ papers to grade more than usual. This is, of course, on top of my doctoral work, and this semester I am fortunate enough to be enrolled in Behavioral Statistics (EPSY 640), the penultimate course on my degree plan. Next Spring is the last program course – the second Behavioral Statistics class (EPSY 641). No rest for the wicked, obviously.) Much like Groucho Marx, as Professor Quincy Adams Wagstaff, alluded to in *Horse Feathers* (1932), there are times when I almost nod off in that stats class, a 3½-hour evening lecture after a day spent teaching three classes (7:30-8:45 & 10:35-11:50 AM, then 2:50-4:05 PM), so by the time I stagger in the front door my brain resembles the key lime yogurt my wife enjoys eating, usually with loud slurping noises. *yecchh*

At any rate, suffice to say that I have been mega-busy, much more than usual. Thank great Ghu that I have fanac to keep me sane. Somehow I manage to create a little time each week to either read a book for pleasure, a fanzine or three, maybe write a loc, or do a little work on *Askance* or my SNAPSzine, *Nukking Futz!* This may sound like a lot is on my plate, but I am not doing too much fanac; my school work comes first, which is why my loc-writing has been much, much less than the past two years, and *Nukking Futz!* takes only an hour or two to rattle off each month. Once I send off that \$25 check to Robert Lichtman for my FAPA dues, *Askew* (first issue already online at <http://efanzines.com>) will be yet another minimal means of maintaining sanity in the hectic academic *ouvré* of my life.

Of course, you could argue that my sanity is minimal, and I wouldn't argue with you. What passes for "sane and normal" in my household would drive anybody else screaming into the night. So it goes...

Lettercolumn Blues...

If you hear a loud grumbling sound or the gnashing of molars, that's me being a tad upset over one of the smallest e-mail responses to this zippy zine. Part of this is my fault. Alright, most of it is. I admit it. But still. Getting a total of five e-mailed locs - all good locs, of course, two of which came from Lloyd Penney (which shouldn't surprise anyone, much like getting two fanzines from Chris Garcia on the same day) - is a pittance compared to what I usually receive. I know, I know: I really should make a concerted effort to mail real **PAPER** copies to people who are more likely to write locs, and I actually have copies on hand to fire off in the Post Offal. The problem is always my frickin' busy schedule. *sigh* In my defense, though, I have made strides in a positive direction.

For instance, when I drove up to Dallas for FenCon V in early October, I brought along a dozen print copies of *Askance #10* and the debut issue of what will become my FAPazine, *Askew*, to hand out at the con. Greg Benford's reaction was choice after I presented him a copy of both. Flipping through *Askance*, Greg raised both eyebrows and said, "There's a throw-back: an actual fanzine being handed to me at a con." A handful of other folks got a copy handed to them, as well: David Thayer, Guy H. Lillian III, Real Musgrave, con chair Russ Miller, Gerald Burton, and a couple more. So far, I haven't received a loc from any of them. In the meantime, I really do need to get copies in the mail to folks who send me their zines the old-fashioned way. It's only fair. This is completely understandable and reasonable. Unfortunately, it all depends on how busy I get in the next few weeks. After all, it's almost the end of the semester. By the time the dust settles, it will be mid-December. I guess that's enough time to mail zines and get some responses. I sure hope so. Getting feedback is the life-blood of a fanzine.



New tricks for this old dog...

Well, sort of. There are a couple new twists and layout tricks I want to experiment with this issue. At the back end of "Penney for your Thoughts" you will notice that I am including e-mail contact addresses for the faneds, if and only if - designated as "iff" in my stats textbook, just in case you thought I stopped thinking about that stuff by now - said e-mail address is listed in the zine. Otherwise, you will need the full-blown, real-life, honest-to-gawd physical mailing address for that person. I might even provide that. Most of these addresses you should be able to find in Guy Lillian's *The Zine Dump*, which is not posted to efanzines, so unless you get *TZD* e-mailed directly from Guy, you're screwed. By the time I get to the zines received/viewed listing, I should have figured out what I want to do with the zine contact info. Trust me. You'll be the next to know.

Who's fool enough to be in this issue...

It is always a joy and a pleasure to welcome a new face to these pages, and I actually have one of those.

Granted, he's sandwiched between some of the regular fruitcakes that spice up this zine, but this is a special call-out to one of fandom's finer fan-editors and writers, Mr. Earl Kemp. More about him in a moment, so in alphabetic-~~oder~~ order, here are this issue's offenders:

Bill Fischer

Once more – or rather, twice more – here comes Bill with Figby and another of those Wikiphilia entries that have become one of the more popular recurring features in this fanzine. In the latest issue of *The Zine Dump*, Guy Lillian even mentions Bill's "hilarious trip to Hungary," which was in the tenth issue. No question about it: I am very happy to have Bill's lunatic ravings in these pages. At some point in the future – probably in early 2010 or thereabouts – my plan is to pub two collections: Figby and the Wikiphilia entries. I would like to auction/sell them to benefit the fan funds. At least, that's what I'm thinking about these things right now. Sing with me: "Only time will tell..."

Earl Kemp

One of fandom's most respected fan editors and a long-time (emphasis on the "long") fan, Earl produces one of my favorite electronic fanzines, *eI*, which can be downloaded in either .pdf or .html format over at www.efanzines.com. How I received "1962 All Over Again" is an interesting tale itself, which you will find in a sort-of book review section, "Half-Shelf Life." It is a great honor to have this article from Earl, and I hope all of you will enjoy it. No question, it is definitely fascinating reading.

Lee Anne Lavell

Wrapping up her 3-part fannish autobiography this issue, Lee Anne's "Traveling the Bumpy Byways, Part 3" is yet another enjoyable entry from someone whose resurgence in fanzines in recent years has been very much appreciated by many of us. You can read more of Lee Anne Lavell's writings over in Dave Locke's wonderful zine, *Time & Again*. Come to think of it, Dave figures prominently in this installment. Funny how that works.

Lloyd Penney

A man who needs no introduction. So why bother? Well, let me tell you why: all contributors of articles get mentioned here. Granted, Lloyd is one of fandom's premier loc-writers, and it is rare for any zine nowadays to see publication without a Lloyd Penney loc in its lettercolumn. Lloyd is to locs what Chris Garcia is to e-zines. Scary, ain't it?

Marc Schirmeister

For oh, so many years, I have faunched for a cover from Marc on any of my zines. Finally that dream has come true thanks to the efforts of Taral Wayne, who did a bit of additional work (mainly in the coloring and shading, I think) on this issue's cover. Schirm has one of the most distinctive artistic styles of all fan artists, and it is with great pleasure that this issue is adorned with one of his funnier efforts, IMHO. I love it, and I hope you do, too.

Taral Wayne

This year's winner of the Rotsler Award for career contributions as a fan artist, Taral is the gentleman who shipped me Schirm's cover as an e-mail attachment. Of course, Taral has appeared in this zine before – see issue 9 for a cover and article – and will again (the lead article for the 12th issue). But I wanted to mention him here to congratulate Taral on a much deserved award. By the way, he is also the Fan Guest of Honour at Anticipation, the 2009 WorldCon in Montreal, Canada, yet another feather in his cap. Nice fannish resume' you're developing there, Taral.



Rosie and Guy H. Lillian III with Gregory and Elisabeth Benford: my constant con companions.

a.k.a., Now ~~that's~~ more like it!

Con report by John Purcell

Since my return to SF con attending in the Spring of 2006, this annual convention up in the Dallas area has been on my agenda of “cons to attend.” Personal reasons, of course, but it has rapidly gained an area-wide good reputation in the past four years. Like its counterpart in Houston, ApolloCon (entering its 5th year, as well), FenCon has brought in some pretty big names as guests. This year’s version, held over the October 3-5, 2008, weekend, had Gregory Benford as its main GoH. When I learned this, I figured “This would be a good one to go to.” Then when Greg e-mailed me and asked, “Are you going to FenCon?” a few months ago, that kind of nailed the deal. I responded, “Probably,” which Greg could understand, I am sure, but I wasn’t terribly sure if my finances would be amenable to attending the con.

As it turned out, having your potential future son-in-law going to school at nearby University of Texas, Arlington was advantageous for my attending FenCon V. All I had to do was ask Eric (Penny’s hockey-playing boyfriend of five years) if I could crash at his place for the weekend, and he said, “Sure. Not a problem.” Penny came along for the weekend to visit Eric, watch some of his hockey games (he plays goalie on the UT-A team), and study (yeah, sure; I believe *that*). This definitely cut costs, especially since the hotel room rates were \$88 a night, and the other lowest nearby motel rates ranged between \$49-\$79 a night. Free was a much better price. Big deal if the commute from Eric’s apartment in Arlington to the con hotel was 25 minutes; that was a small price to pay for a free place to sleep and shower.

I had to make another arrangement before the con, too: contact James Halperin, the man who purchased Harry Warner, Jr.'s fanzine collection (see *Askance* #3), to see if he had the time to meet Greg and Elisabeth Benford and myself Friday afternoon. Turns out that Mr. Halperin is very interested in cryonics, and so is Greg, so Jim was excited to have the chance to talk about cryonics and comics and fanzines with us. I arranged the meeting for approximately 2:30-3:00 PM because Greg had to be back at the con for a 4:00 PM early bird panel, which was sparsely attended (I was one of the 7 audience members, and his wife was one of the other 6) because it was so, well, early. What the hell was the concommittee thinking? Oh, well... It was an interesting introduction to the weekend.



But back to earlier that Friday, October 3, 2008. After taking care of an early morning make-up class for a date cancelled out by Hurricane Ike, I ran home to get Penny, pack our stuff in the car, and we were on the road for Dallas-Fort Worth by 11:00 AM. That was about half an hour later than desired, but we made good time and got to Arlington just after 1:30 PM. On my way to the con hotel – the Crown Plaza North in Addison – I called Greg Benford and told him that I'd probably be there shortly after two. Well, it turned out to be more like 2:20 PM since I got turned around on the directions a bit, but I figured them out and picked up Greg and his wife Elisabeth in front of the hotel, and off we went to Heritage Galleries, which was only 8 miles south of the hotel.

As it turned out, we wound up walking into Heritage Galleries after 3:00 PM since the directions (once again) didn't match the reality of the roads we were driving. This made me wonder which alternate DFW website gave me this particular set of driving directions. We did, though, find the dag-nabbing place, a 20-story glass tower in a part of Dallas that Greg remembered being nothing but scattered buildings among tree-studded prairie in the 1960s when he and his brother Jim lived in Dallas. Once we got our guest badges, Jim Halperin came out to meet us. It was really funny to see Mr. Halperin acting kind of like a googly-eyed kid meeting one of his TV cowboy heroes. That image passed fairly quickly once we were in Halperin's office, where Elisabeth and I enjoyed the view from the spacious 17th floor office while Jim and Greg talked about cryonics, comic books, and old science fiction, to say nothing of how Jim got interested in fanzines. Like my interview with Mr. Halperin in *Askance* #3 said, Jim grew up as a comic book fan, pubbed comics fanzines, and maintained his interest in collectibles and science fiction as he grew up. They had a great conversation going, which I unfortunately had to cut short since Greg had to be back for a 4 PM panel. So Jim led us down to the tenth floor, through a maze of hallways, and coded us into the storage and processing room where Harry Warner's zines were being processed.

Besides the stacks and racks of assorted goodies in there, we also saw some of the various original artworks that Heritage had recently acquired. It was a rather intimidating assortment, but what really caught our eyes were three rows of shelving that had boxes with neatly stacked fanzines. On one table was a pile of *Horizons*, Harry's long-running FAPA-zine. Greg picked the top one up reverently as I noted its date: September, 1964. We both knew that at the bottom of that stack were *Horizons* from the 1940s, and it was enough to make us catch our breaths. Jim Halperin pointed out which row of shelves contained the rest of the Warner fanzine collection, estimating that it contained between 40,000 and 45,000 fanzines. Keep in mind, dear reader, that Harry Warner, Jr. did not actively collect fanzines. All of these zines were *mailed* to him over the years. Do the computations: Assuming that Harry began receiving fanzines in the mail in 1936, when he first encountered fandom, and kept receiving them until his death on February 17, 2003. Divide 40,000 fanzines (the low estimate) by 67 years, and the result is

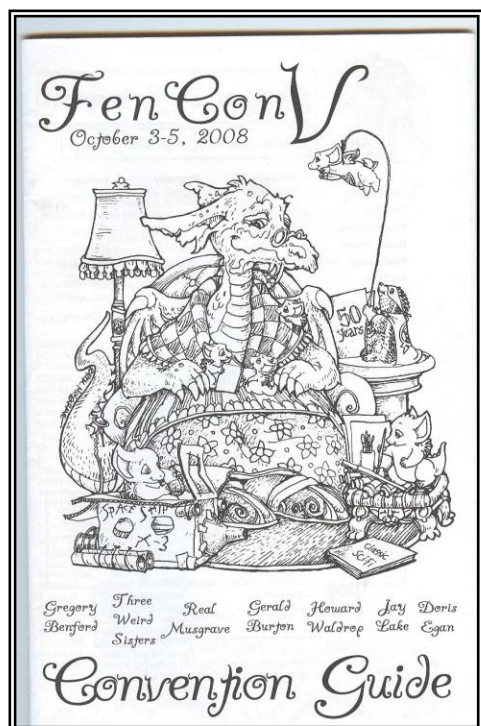
597 fanzines a year, or 1.64 zines a day. The upper end projects out to Harry getting 1.85 zines – call it two – every day in the mail for 67 years! And this figure does not exclude holidays and Sundays when no mail was delivered. The numbers are astonishing, and chances are Harry locced every single one of those fanzines. By the way, Jim Halperin said the figure does include *Horizons* and probably other apazines Harry produced over the years, but he hadn't found them yet since he and his aides have only opened 10 boxes so far. My mind was suitably croggled with this, and all Greg could do was shake his head in wonderment. We were immersed in a sea of fan history.

So while Jim was talking to Greg about the Warner collection, I wandered off a little and began looking at other shelves containing stacks of old fanzines. "Are these also from the Warner batch?" I asked.

"No," came Jim's answer. "You're actually looking at some of the fanzines we just acquired from Forrest Ackerman's collection," implying that these multiple shelving units loaded down with boxes of fanzines was only a small part of Forry's massive collection of SF memorabilia.

"Egad!" was all Greg could say, and began telling Jim about the Acker-mansion and its attendant wonders. So while we browsed through shelf after shelf piled with fanzines – labeled by decade, I might add, beginning in the 1930s – Greg and Jim continued talking about the early years of Dallas fandom and the comic book scene in the late 1950s.

We were unfortunately unable to spend more than half an hour in that repository of fan history, making me wishing I was a fannish version of Scrooge McDuck, diving into and swimming through a vault of old fanzines. That probably would not have been a feasible reality since such contact would destroy these precious literary gems. I made a mental note to come back and visit Jim Halperin again. We bade adieu, and drove back to the Crown Plaza; along the way, Greg called the con chairman, Russ Miller, to let him know we were running a bit behind schedule, which turned out to not be a big deal. Greg's early bird panel thus began at 4:15 instead of 4:00, but like I said earlier, the three of us comprised 30% of the total number of people in the room.



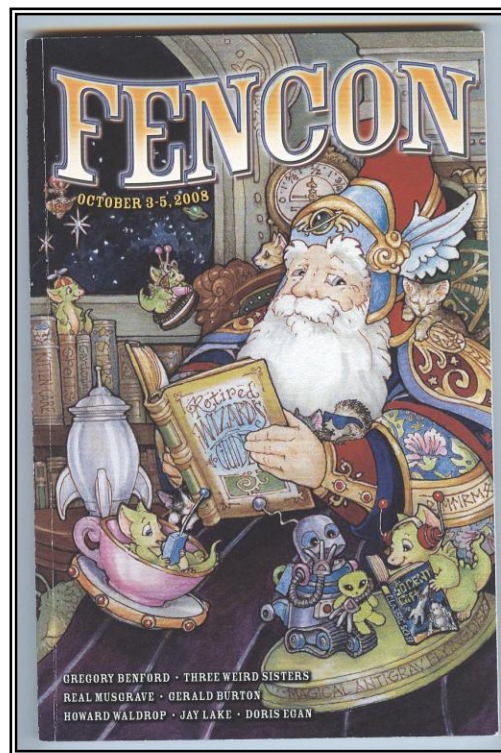
The remainder of Friday progressed quite prosaically, but was most enjoyable. After finally getting my registration packet and name badge, I made my obligatory run-through the dealer's room, and exulted in all the book dealers, which was a nice contrast to AggieCon's media-oriented dealer's room. Then I repaired to the bar to glance through the convention guide, cover illo by cartist Guest of Honor, Real Musgrave, to plan out my weekend itinerary. The baseball playoffs were on the television, so I sipped on a \$6 pint of draft Shiner Bock – one of only two beers I bought in the bar the entire weekend – occasionally watching the Tampa Bay Rays and the Chicago White Sox while perusing the guide.

This time also gave me the chance to catch my breath before opening ceremonies, due to start relatively soon. And that was when the first of a series of calls that began, "Hey, John!" began. All of them, by the way, were spoken by Greg Benford. This floored me. The Guest of Honor of the con not only wanted to hang out with me, but he genuinely seemed to *enjoy* my company! "What the hell's going on here?" kept running through my mind the entire weekend. Oh, sure, I enjoyed it immensely, but it really did make me feel important, and Russ Miller's face

that Friday afternoon in the bar was suitably befuddled. “Who the f**k’s this guy, Greg?” was written all over Russ’ face, but once Greg explained who I was, my fanzine, diviner of Harry Warner’s secret buyer, etc., Russ relaxed. In short order, Russ and I would chat whenever possible over the rest of the con. He was, naturally, a very busy man (con chairs are like that, you know), but a very capable con organizer and definitely a good man. I enjoyed his company, as well, over the weekend.

It was at that pre-opening ceremony drink party where I not only met Russ, his wife LuAnne, and Alan Jackson, but also learned through Russ that toastmaster Howard Waldrop was still in the hospital and thus unable to fulfill his duties. (This is a lengthy story in itself. Suffice to say, Howard had been in hospital since July(!) under observation for his diabetes complicated by a “silent” heart attack Howard had recently suffered, but he was in good spirits, and Saturday night Howard called the con, so a roomful of a couple hundred people cheered and gave Howard a raucous “get well” yell.) So, at opening ceremonies the go-to replacement toastmasters, Brad Denton and David Lee Anderson, did a bang-up job filling in for Howard. Heck, they were great for the whole weekend! They are also very talented musicians, interspersing opening ceremonies with the occasional song and dance and quite snappy repartee.

After opening ceremonies were over, Greg and Elisabeth invited me to dinner with artist Guest of Honor, Real Musgrave and his wife Muff, in the hotel restaurant. The food was reasonably priced and filling, and while we were sitting there chatting after eating, Guy & Rosie Lillian wandered in to join us for a drink and conversation. At another table were David Thayer and his wife Diana, so I had to say hello since I hadn’t seen David since 1985! That was a great treat, and over the rest of the con David and I had a few more opportunities to chat. Eventually, the dinner conversation ended just before 11:00 PM; we were in the restaurant for almost three hours! Well, what can I say? Good people + good conversation = good times. The classic calculation for a memorable convention, which FenCon was rapidly achieving.



The parties Friday night were alright, though only a few: The Seattle in 2011 WorldCon bid party was a good one, but the ApolloCon party was even better. That con is held in Houston, and at this room party I had the chance to meet and talk for a while with FenCon’s Fan GoH, Gerald Burton. Gerald is a genuinely fun person, a photographer, and hails from Oklahoma. There were quite a few fans down from the Oklahoma City area, which caused me to make a mental note to visit SoonerCon some year. Of course, Tulsa’s Conestoga really isn’t that far from Oklahoma City, either; whether or not their con hotel is 99 miles from Tulsa remains to be seen. Anyway, the fans I meet from Oklahoma were all good folks, and someday I might wend my way to one of those con, which is what I thought about on the drive back to Eric’s apartment in Arlington shortly after midnight.

Saturday was the day I planned on actually attending PANELS, which was something I eschewed back in the 80s when attending cons. At 11:00 AM was “Science: Fact or Crap”, a rousing game where teams competed over statements that were either true or false. Team members wore safety goggles, rubber gloves, and had hand-clackers to signal in if they knew the answer. Greg Benford’s team won, despite the fact that Greg blew a question that he should have remembered from dinner the night before. One part of our dinner conversation covered a potential panel game - “there’s a name for it” – when Real wondered

what that grooved section between the nose and upper lip is called. “That’s the philtrum,” I informed him, Greg was impressed. So guess what question he blew during the “Fact or Crap” game? Yup. The ‘philtrum’ question. Actually, nobody on either team knew it, but quite a few of us in the audience did, including Guy and Rosie Lillian, who walked in half-way through the game.

I won’t bore you readers with details about the other panels, but the ones that were quite interesting were “50 Years of Texas Fandom”, reminiscences by OLD Texas fans like Greg Benford, Alan Jackson, and Scott Culp, and the GoH’s keynote speech at 4:00 PM. There was no banquet at this con, which didn’t bother me (those must be too expensive to hold anymore), so Greg gave his “speech/dialogue” very informally to a roomful of fans who asked very thoughtful questions about technology and global warming, a field Greg has been working on for nearly two decades. Some of his points got me to thinking, and I think his emphasis that the private sector is where the needed technology is going to come from is true. As Dr. Benford noted, guys like Buffett, Branson, Job (as in Steve), and Gates are already funding major research in this direction, so there’s hope. Maybe. It was this “speech/dialogue” where I first heard about carbon capture as one means of combating the rise of greenhouse gases – it’s in my notes – to research. A fascinating hour, to say the least.

Other things of note about Saturday were sitting in a comfy chair outside the main programming venues taking notes and watching people in costume walk by. Not all of them would compete in that night’s masquerade, but lots of the costumes were really good and impressed me. I have always been more of a people watcher at cons, never one to wear costumes at all, but that doesn’t mean I don’t appreciate the workmanship of excellent costuming. Some of the ones I saw Saturday were quite extravagant, especially one large group that won the Judge’s Award. I cannot remember what story or movie they portrayed, but their costumes were wonderful! I managed to get some decent photos of various fen in costume, but I



This is how you make a “Jay Lake Sandwich.”

I wasn’t that used to Penny’s little digital camera; I kept jiggling it too much so some photos were blurred. That was way too bad, but I had to live with it.

Another item worth mentioning was finally having the chance to meet one of Chris Garcia’s buddies, Jay Lake, a couple times. Jay’s a good guy and a lot of fun. I can see why he’s so popular at cons: bright, witty, and he has long, shiny hair. At one point Jay and I were chatting with a couple of cute ladies, so I texted Chris that info during the conversation (FYI: Garcia was attending Silicon the same weekend.): “Jay & I r chatting with 2 cute ladies. Kiss-kiss.” Half an hour later I got this response from Garcia: “RAT BASTARDS!” Jay got a kick out of that when I showed him the text during the masquerade.

Then there was the mysterious appearance of eight boxes of freebie paperbacks someone was unloading. They simply appeared by one of the ten-foot flyer tables opposite the huckster room, and there was no mystery about their disappearance. I was fortunate enough to walk by moments after the boxes were deposited. And like flies on fresh shit, fans descended on the freebie boxes. Yes, I was one of those shit-eating flies, but hey, I came away with 15 used paperbacks. I won’t list them all here, but shortly after midnight I wandered by that area again while party-hopping, and glanced into the last remaining box,

where only four paperbacks remained. One of the stragglers was Talbot Mundy's *Tros of Samothrace*. It currently resides on the bookshelf in our bedroom. For me, that was the find of the weekend.

Speaking of parties, I was invited to join the Saturday dinner party of the Benfords with Alan and Jan Jackson. Once again, this was initiated by Greg Benford, who corralled me while I was talking with Russ Miller between panels. Greg asked, "Dinner tonight?" I said, "Sure. When I see Guy I'll pass that along." "Good deal," Greg responded, and trotted off to his next scheduled event. It was my duty to decide where we would eat, so off to the bar I went to look over the eatery guide in my con packet, asking the bartender, a lovely young woman named Stephanie, questions about nearby restaurants. At her suggestion, seconded by another pretty young lady sitting to my right, I decided on Nate's, a half-mile up the road from the hotel. Their recommendations were more than amply met by the Cajun cuisine Nate's offered. We all were suitably stuffed to the gills for the next 14 hours, so a couple hours later we rolled back into the con to begin the party rounds.



*At dinner Saturday night: Greg Benford, myself, and Alan Jackson.
Photo taken by Guy H. Lillian III (using my camera).*

Now, back in the day, Saturday night was THE night for room parties, and FenCon V fulfilled this obligation admirably. The concommittee had the foresight to designate one floor for parties, besides the primary hospitality suite providing munchables and beverages for breakfast lunch and evening snacking over the weekend. I wrote down the listing of parties going on – ApolloCon again, Curious Cats, ArmadilloCon, ConQuest 40, and Seattle in 2011 redux – and began making my rounds. Jay Lake and I hit a couple of these at first, then Jay wandered off with some other folks, while I stopped to chat with David and Diana Thayer. Guy and Rosie floated around for a little while, but Guy was definitely logy from dinner, so they turned into pumpkins early on and went to their nearby motel to get some sleep. Once in a while I would bump into Greg Benford and/or Al Jackson, mostly at the ApolloCon room party (at which con Al will be the Fan GoH next summer), so Greg might be back for that one.

If I were to rate the parties, ApolloCon would get the highest marks: they had plenty of Shiner Bock, besides other drinkables, and loads of munchies. Their suite was constantly packed, and I had a grand time meeting and talking with fans from DFW, Oklahoma, and Arkansas. The Conquest 40 party was very good, too (more Shiner, but different varieties of that brand), but it was low-key compared to the other shindigs going on. ArmadilloCon was treating attendees to an ice cream social in their suite, and not surprisingly they ran out of yummys shortly after 11 PM. Next time, folks, plan ahead: get lots more and invest in a small portable freezer. The Curious Cats bash was alright, and Seattle in 2011 Redux was much more subdued than their Friday night version. I decided to call it a night shortly after 1:00 AM while most of these parties were still going strong; my days of pulling all-nighters were long gone – one of the casualties of aging, obviously. Even so, I had a great time doing the kibble and noshing thing for a few hours, made some new friends, and handed out copies of *Askance #10* and *Askew #1* to interested people – yes, I printed out 20 hard copies of each zine just for FenCon V – as part of a plan to entice fresh blood into fanzines. Thus far my evil plan has yielded no fruit, but it's only been seven weeks since

the con ended, so I'm not really worried. Besides, I have names and e-mail addresses, so I can always pester these folks for material. Ah, me. A good night ended early, but the con was going very well.



The judge's award-winning ensemble prize: I forget what show or movie these folks were presenting, but the costumes are marvelous!

Saturday's programming – Sunday's, as well – was peppered with assorted concerts by various performers. Besides Brad Denton and David Lee Anderson, music GoH Three Weird Sisters gave two concerts (one Friday night, the other Saturday night), plus about a half dozen other acts performed sets during the weekend. Margaret Middleton, a long-time fan and filker from Little Rock, Arkansas was scheduled to do her show Sunday at noon, so I finally had the chance to meet her again just before her gig. Margaret remembered my name from the fanzines I produced in the late 70s and early 80s, so it was nice to briefly reminisce – wish I had seen her earlier in the con instead of only on Sunday - with her.

All this naturally leads into the eventual downer that is the Sunday of a con, however, FenCon didn't seem to be affected. I got back to the con at 9:30 AM, hit the hospitality suite for coffee, donuts, and fruit, joined an 10:00 AM panel on pets in "science fiction and fantasy" (panelists were Real Musgrave, Linda Donahue, Kathryn Sullivan, and someone whose name I forgot to look up), then the 11:00 AM panel on "alternate history" fiction (panelists: Greg Benford, Jay Lake, and Chris Donahue). I wanted to go to that one since I had just started reading Harry Turtledove's *Opening Atlantis* and found other Alt-Hist novels very enjoyable, notably Tim Powers' *The Anubis Gates*. Very interesting discussion, and I wrote down some names – nearly indecipherable when I look at my notes – to look up when free time would once again be available.

By 1:30 PM Guy and Rosie Lillian returned to the con, notably to pick up a piece of art that Guy had purchased in the Art Show – which, I must admit, had some truly lovely and incredible work displayed – as a potential cover for *Challenger*. Guy was extremely hungry, and didn't have enough cash on hand to buy something proper, so I suggested the hospitality suite. Like a shot, he was off. I followed at a safe distance, noting that Guy prowled the hospitality suite like a caged bear. Guy Lillian foraging for food is not a pretty sight, in case anybody's interested. My suggestion is to steer clear of Guy when he has the attack of the "gotta eats". Even so, I had yet another delightful conversation with Guy and Rosie before they went off with Greg and Elisabeth Benford to see the King Tut exhibition at the Dallas Museum of Art, which opened the same weekend of FenCon. If my wife Valerie had been able to attend, we would have gone with the Lillians and the Benfords. Unfortunately, Val had other obligations to tend, so I opted out in order to see it at a later date, probably during ConDFW in February, 2009. The Tut Exhibit runs through May, 2009, so in my mind there's no rush, and felt that it would be better to wait until we could go together.

Sandwiched between all this Sunday activity, Real Musgrave grabbed me after the Pets panel to give me a free autographed copy of the latest Pocket Dragon book – *What do Dragons do when they Retire?* - he and his wife had produced. That blew my mind away. That touched me, and I thanked him and Muff

profusely, inviting them down for a visit to the Purcell Petting Zoo if they make it to the next AggieCon. I hope they can; Val would really enjoy their company since, like them, she is an artist and animal lover.

And so FenCon came to a close. It was a definitely a fun con, reminding me very much of the cons I frequented in the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s in the Upper Midwest, especially Saturday night's party room pinball machine imitation. Being in the company of old convention friends like David Thayer and Greg Benford, was wonderful, and finally meeting folks I have only known through fanzines – Guy Lillian and Margaret Middleton – was definitely a big plus. Leaving any successful con is always a bit of a downer, but it had been such an enjoyable weekend that the glow carried me over. Indeed, said afterglow seemed to make the drive back to Eric's apartment shorter than usual.

That Sunday afternoon gave me the chance to finally stop and take a look at the new home of the Dallas Cowboys being built in Arlington, not very far all from the Ut-A campus. It is a massive structure, and really taking shape, looking like it will be ready for the start of the 2009 NFL season. As a matter of fact, the drive to and from the con took me past the old Texas Stadium where the Cowboys have been playing since the 1960s. It definitely resembles its age, and the new digs will be a huge improvement. I took a few pictures of the new stadium from a restaurant parking lot across the street. When it's time for FenCon VI next October, it will be ready to fly.



Diana and David Thayer (a.k.a., Teddy Harvia) masquerading as themselves.



No, it's not a spaceship under construction paid for by FenCon memberships. This is the new home for the Dallas Cowboys for the 2009 NFL season.

Thus endeth the con. I wish to thank Greg and Elisabeth Benford, Real and Muff Musgrave, Brad Denton, Margaret Middleton, Gerald Burton, Russ and LuAnne Miller, Linda and Chris Donahue, Al and Jan Jackson, plus the rest of the gang at FenCon V for a wonderful time. I may have to return next year.

Traveling the Bumpy Byways, part 3

Loe Anne Lavell

Third Street Adventures

Fast forward several years to the late sixties or very early seventies. The second incarnation of ISFA had died its natural death. Jim Lavell and I had gotten married. We had lived for several years in a house near the Speedway track but we had outgrown the place, or rather our science fiction collection had, so we bought a larger house on the east side of town. This house had a room that had been remodeled from a garage. We promptly lined it from floor to ceiling with bookcases. The house also had a finished basement and our other bookcases went there, so that took care of that problem. Right along with the house, out back, was an in-ground swimming pool. It was only five feet deep with no deep end, but that was alright since neither of us were very great swimmers.

We were contacted by the Coulsons who told us they had come across some Indifans and how about considering starting up the club again and getting together at our house. We agreed and contacted what was left of our old club. That was Jerry Hunter. Ray Beam, I believe, was living out of town at the time. The Purdue Boys were scattered. And most unfortunately, Jay Crackel had died of a heart attack a few years earlier. So this new group descended upon us and we suddenly had a new trio.

That trio was the Three Davids: David Lewton, David Gorman, and David Burton, three teenagers with Lewton the youngest, Gorman the eldest and Burton the "middle child". When they first entered the club they wanted it to "do something", a thing that our core Indifans were constitutionally against. Underneath all this I could hear a frustration about fanzine publishing. All three had published but had found it unsatisfactory because of the reproduction methods they had found: either lousy like ditto or too expensive (which is the way they wanted to go) like photo offset. I kept telling them about mimeo but they couldn't see it so they kept on agitating about the direction the club should take. Finally, (my teaching

genes kicking in) I decided to demonstrate. I asked them to bring any letters they had received from fans about their dilemma, dragged out my last old mimeo which hadn't been used in years, and in one afternoon published this absolutely execrable letterzine on the subject. The Davids took the hint. Oh boy, did they take the hint!

They indicated they would publish on my old mimeo so I thought it would be best if I had it overhauled. I took it in and instead of refurbishing it I bought a new top-of-the-line Roneo with interchangeable drums for color work, electric instead of hand-crank, the whole works. We (Jim and I – he was so understanding) came home with it and I was thinking: What have I done! I've just bought this very expensive toy for three teen-age kids! The only thing left was for me to start publishing again.

Thus was born my *Embelyon*. But not only that, the Davids went into a frenzy of publishing. Lewton bought my old mimeo (or I gave it to him, I don't remember which), had it overhauled, and turned out *Infinitum*. Gorman bought his own mimeo (he was a bit older and had his own resources) and edited *Gorbett*. And then there was Burton and Burton and Burton andWell anyway, he was over to our house virtually every other day, it seemed, to publish his fanzines, both *apa* and *Mircosm*. Lewton also turned out the latest version of *Isfanews*. Rumors were promptly rife throughout fandom that The Three Davids were a hoax and that there was really only one. This was squashed when all three turned up at a Midwestcon.

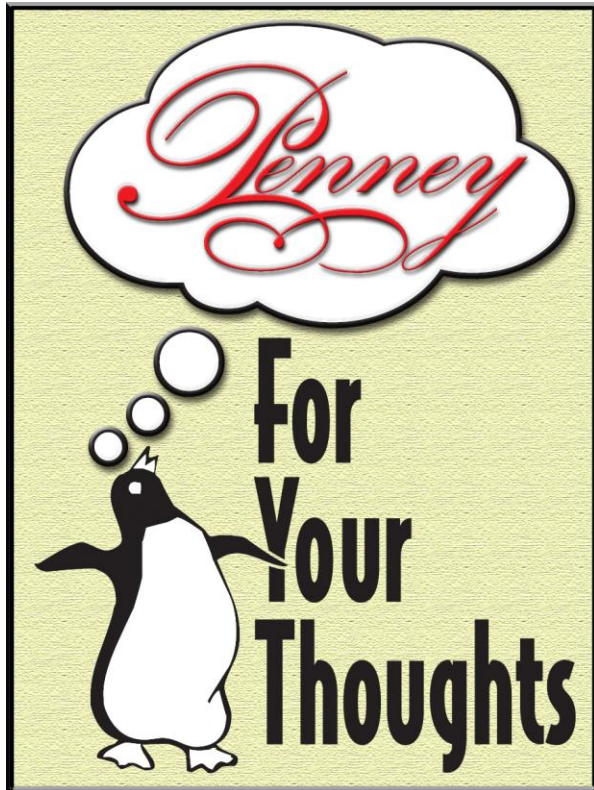
We did have other new members besides the Davids. John and Sandra Miesel joined as well as Laura Clark and her silent husband, Larry. There were others, too, but right now I can't recall their names offhand. There were no real officers in the club. Mrs. Pboth became the official goddess and our cat, Gummitch, was her high priest. Meetings were often at our house where we mainly just talked and enjoyed each other and the pool. We had picnics and pool parties (I got carried away with the potato salad once and so we had an annual Posacon after that.), went to local conventions where Gummitch gave parties. (Once the Davids and Jim filched a "Talk to Tucker" real estate sign from a yard and took it to the Midwescon and presented it to Bob Tucker.) The group gave us help in assembling our fanzine, especially when it got horribly large.

Then we started getting break-ins at our house so we sold it and moved out here in what was then the boondocks. Meetings continued for a while at either our house or at the Miesels. Publishing ceased. (The Davids had burned out some time before.) A lot of my *Embelyon* files were lost during the break-ins. The club just slowly died again. Jim and I continued to attend some conventions and we never lost track of the Coulsons, Lewton or Jerry Hunter. When Jim died suddenly of a heart attack in the early eighties even conventioning wasn't fun any more and I completely dropped out (although I still have my s-f collection) until I ran into Burton on the computer, so I'm just dipping a toe into the water. This current appearance may rate only a pothole.

In the recent years since the dissolving of the old ISFA a new Indianapolis s-f fan group, called Circle of Janus I think, formed. Most of the core group of the old ISFA has had little or nothing to do with it (save for, perhaps, Ray Beam), as their philosophy seems to be antipathetic to that of the old ISFA -- they seem to want to actually DO something. Horrors!

So now you have my whole fannish life. Do with it what you will – which is probably try to forget it if you ever got this far. I had no intention for this to be so elaborate when I started and I rather guess not many would be interested, except maybe from a "historical" standpoint.

■ Lee (Anne Tremper) Lavell



Fanzine Reviews

by Lloyd Penney

The splat on the floor as a paper fanzine or two is pushed through the mail-slot of the front door? Nothing like it. Then there's e-zines, either via e-mail or going to eFanzines.com to download them. They're great, too. At least the e-zine is an electronic representation of the paperzine, and a lot of e-zines can go on a single CD.

It's great to see that software and hardware are advancing when it comes to publishing, but the wetware between the ears is still pretty much v1.0. We consume publications in a linear fashion; we start at the beginning and end at the end. That's how we logically process information. We also know that we

have read the whole publication.

With all this blether in mind, I am thinking of webzines. They are not necessarily linear publications, and sometimes, they are a little difficult to read. Good thing there's usually a hub page to start at, and good thing your blue links turn purple (or whatever your onscreen settings are) to acknowledge that you've clicked on the link and presumably have read what the link connected to. We could get into the discussion about a webzine being little more than a collection of webpages and links rather than a publication...how about you all discuss that, and I'll return later on with a bucket of popcorn and watch the fight.

I will review two webzines that I respond to, *Challenger* and *Picofarad*, edited by Guy H. Lillian III and Petréa Mitchell, respectively. I'll take a poke at both of them from the webzine angle

Picofarad deserves some attention; besides, I'm usually the only one with a loc in the locol. I've never met Petréa, but I've done my best to respond to each of the issues I've been told about. Each issue has her editorial mark on it, to be sure, with comments on fandom as a whole, and anything that catches her eye or ear. But, I think her readership is very limited, because the content of the zine is limited. I hope we'll all be proactive and comment on her zine; we can make the zine better with lots of feedback and suggestions.

Picofarad has its regular features... movie reviews by Chris French, mini book reviews, a list of historical dates, a small locol and a large list of conventions and links in the back. Some might call them regular features, and others might call them the same old same old. One kvetch is that as a type guy, I'd like to see a variety of type and art, and except for the title art, there's rarely any other artwork. All the other pages on this site are type.

At least she is Pubbing Her Ish. Notifications for the next issue usually come out through RASSF, and I know she is part of fandom in the Portland, OR area. After the usually illustrated title on the main page,

there's little or no artwork; just type, and as an old type guy, I'd like to see more of a variety of type and artwork. It's a zine with change each issue, but it has a bit of a bland look. I concentrate on what the type has to say.

Now for a comment you'd only see about webzines...it's easy to navigate, and relatively linear. When you go to the opening page, there is a list of links to get to all the various pages within the site, but when you scan to the bottom, there is a link to the top of the second page, and so on until you've gone through the zine in a relatively linear fashion, which is good for tired, old wetware like mine. Sure, you can go to any page you like at any time from the main page, but I like to read any publication in order...sorry, old habit of mine.

And now for *Challenger*. *Challenger*, of course, used to be a paper fanzine, and still is for the right price, but has gone electronic due to financial necessity. I quite understand, but I wish Guy had gone to producing his zine in .pdf format instead of a webzine.

Challenger gets its regular Hugo nomination for a variety of reasons: interesting and various articles, great artwork, including the front cover, and from artists seen nowhere else, like Peggy Ranson and Dany Froelich, articles about fandom, photographs, and even coloured backgrounds and borders. And, the letter column is big and full of good discussions. Guy showcases his favorite causes and people, and while some of these features might be considered regular, I wouldn't say that it's a cookie cutter zine; each issue has its differences. Each issue shows Guy's attachments to fandom and its present and past, and he does his share of timebinding. There are articles by others to add more spice to the mix.

This zine is available as a paperzine to a select few, but I have agreed to give up my paper copy for the web version. Yet, I do find the navigation on the Challzine website a little troubling. The main page contains the cover art, and a long list of links. I've noticed that on some pages, there are links to subpages, which might take me a little too far off the main page. The locol takes me right off the main page, and onto a blog webpage. I have to jump to each page and back again; nothing is linear, and so I'm never really sure I've seen the whole issue. There is a navigation bar at the bottom of the page; it might be better to put it at the top of the page, or at the side.

I'm certain there are those who like the webzine format better than a .pdf, and such preferences are completely subjective. I don't let my own preferences detract me from enjoying the contents of the zine. *Picofarad* and *Challenger* both reflect how their editors see their fandom. I just know where my format preferences lie.

Before I go...in last issue, John hinted that he'd like a third title reviewed in this column. With that in mind, I thought I'd do a little review on a little fanzine, literally. *Bento* is a quarter-sized zine issued annually by Kate Yule and Hugo-winning author David D. Levine. The latest issue, 20, has Kate and David's travelogue to Japan - three weeks worth - including the Worldcon, I believe, plus other travel to Mexico, and other essays. Because of its size, fillos illustrate the zine just fine, including a cover by David in a Harvia-esque style, plus good stuff from Sue Mason, Brad Foster. The locol is a fun one, even if the annual frequency means that some of the locs get a little old. Also, because it's annual it's rarely seen, so every one that arrives in the mail, or handed to you in person, is a treasure to hold.

Picofarad is edited by Petréa Mitchell

www.bidalaka.com/picofarad

picofarad@bidalaka.com

Challenger is edited by Guy H. Lillian III
www.challzine.net
ghliii@yahoo.com

Bento is edited by Kate Yule and David D. Levine
www.bentopress.com
kate / david@bentopress.com

other fanzines either received in the mail or viewed on-line:

These are the zines noted from my e-mail account. This is an incomplete list, but most of these listed can be found at www.efanzines.com , a site maintained by Bill Burns.

Alexiad

Ansible # 255-256
BCSFazine #426
Consonant Enigma #3
Corflu Zed PR #1
Critical Wave #1
Descent of Fan
Drink Tank # 182 – 189
el #40
Einblatt! (Oct & Nov)
Фантастика W Фентзй #36
Futurian War Digest #1-8
Idle Minds #1
Interstellar Ramjet Scoop (October)
Ish #5
Journey Planet #2
MT Void # 1511 -1520
Orphan Scrivener #53
Planetary Stories
QuasiQuote #7
Royal Swiss Navy Gazette #15
Science Fiction in San Francisco #76
Scratch Pad #69
Taboo Opinions #114
Time & Again #7
Vanamonde #758-772
VFW #110
Visions of Paradise # 133-134
Virtual Tucker Hotel #18-21
WCSFazine #14-15
Xanadu PR #1
The Zine Dump #21



HALF-SHELF LIFE:



RECENTLY READ BOOKS

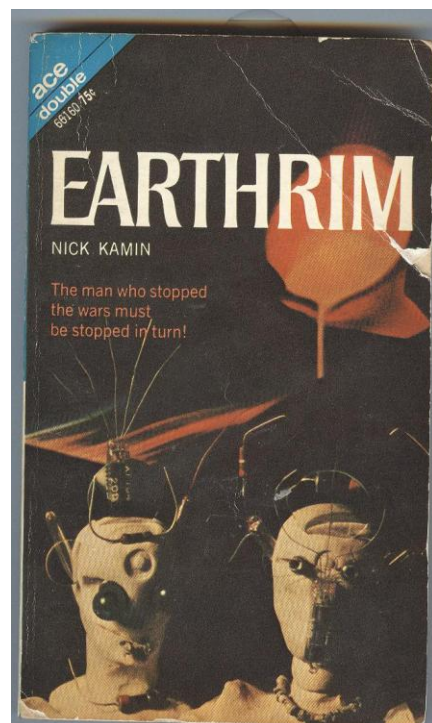
Unbelievably, I have actually been able to read some honest-to-ghu science fiction since last issue. Again, this is part of my on-going mental health care plan to alleviate the massive inundation of academic bull-hockey (read: statistical analysis) being poured into my head this year. Oy... it hurts so bad...

Yes indeed, reading something for fun has helped me concentrate on the serious shit when needed. For instance, shortly after I put the 10th issue of Askance to bed I had a hankering for some light bed-time reading. Perusing the shelves led my eyes to the batch of Ace Doubles grouped together. At random, I grabbed one, figuring they would all be suitably mindless fun. At least with these books I had a 50-50 chance of reading something worthwhile or at least enjoyable. Needless to say, I was not disappointed with my selection.

The first side I read was *Earthrim* (1969), by an author I had never heard of, Nick Kamin. A quick Google search on that name turned up another title, *Herod Men* (another Ace Double, backed with John Rackham's *Dark Planet* (1972)), and clues indicate that the name Nick Kamin might be a pseudonym for someone named Jon Polito. If such is the case, then I am not surprised (read: a work not something one could be proud to call one's own). This is the kind of story that is told in a slightly non-linear style but can still be followed. I say "non-linear" because the first half of this "novel" (147 pages) has flashbacks that take up large chunks of text that are not demarcated by any layout clues, italics, or what-nots. In other words, the reader is not prepared for these flashbacks, and that makes the story-line a tad confusing.

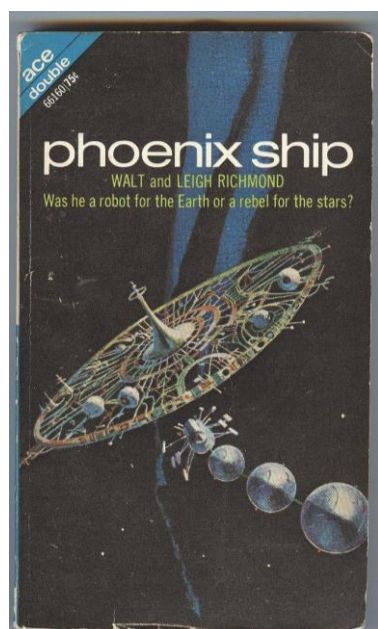
Another qualm I have about the plot is that it is just plain silly. Check this out:

Michael Standard, the hero of the tale, is a rebuilt veteran from the war in Oz (Australia), which has just been ended by a powerful man named Rim (not to be confused with any A. Bertram Chandler stories, in more ways than one here). Standard's new right arm is an advanced prosthetic device that harbors a deadly weapon, and Standard claims he doesn't "know" about it, nor "how" it works, yet he does "know" his mission now that he's back in America is to assassinate Rim. Thus the tag-line on the book cover: "The man who stopped the wars must be stopped in turn!" This is because Standard "knows"



– a sense probably implanted by the Powers hiding out on the Moon, naturally – that Rim is in reality a tyrannical ruler who is not doing things for the betterment of mankind, but for the betterment of Rim. Oh, and I almost forgot: the reader is given more than obvious clues, courtesy of those annoying flashbacks, that Rim was the nearly dead guy in the next bed at that Chinese hospital that Standard was in just before the war in Oz ended. Somehow that was when Rim miraculously acquired his massive mental powers. That would explain a lot, especially considering that Rim’s head was basically smashed open like a coconut... well, you get the idea.

So I finished reading *Earthrim*. Not surprisingly, the ending was completely predictable and stupid, but then again, this book was written and published back in 1969 as an obvious anti-war statement, and so on and so forth. Okay, fine. It wasn’t *too* bad, but it wasn’t very good, either.



Flipping this Ace Double over, Walt and Leigh Richmond, on the other hand, told a much more enjoyable tale, one that can be legitimately described as space opera. *Phoenix Ship* is a tale – another “novel” that clocks in at 106 pages (!) – of a youngster whose name is appropriately Star Dustin (his full name is Stanley Thomas Arthur Reginald Dustin), the nephew of Trevor Dustin, the leader of the Belter’s revolt for independence from Earth’s influence. By “belter”, I mean the people who inhabit and work in the asteroid belt. Earth has, by the time of this story, established colonies on the moon, Mars, and plans on outposts on a couple Jovian moons, mostly for mining purposes to supply the mother planet.

Here we have the classic plot of a lad who must “find and fulfill his destiny”, but he has to do so here in our solar system’s asteroid belt, not in some fershlugginer hack galaxy far, far away. Star Dustin has been chosen to attend a private, very select school located way up on the Alaskan north plain. Naturally, without his knowledge, he is being trained to be a leader for Earth’s forces in the upcoming war with the

Belters, but it turns out that Star’s true allegiance is with his rebel uncle. All too easily, Dustin steals away to Belt City via Mars to lead yet another revolt for Belt independence, all the while being followed by Earth’s spies and agents from that Arctic academy. Yep. What we got here is good, old-fashioned space opera. And yes, I love it.

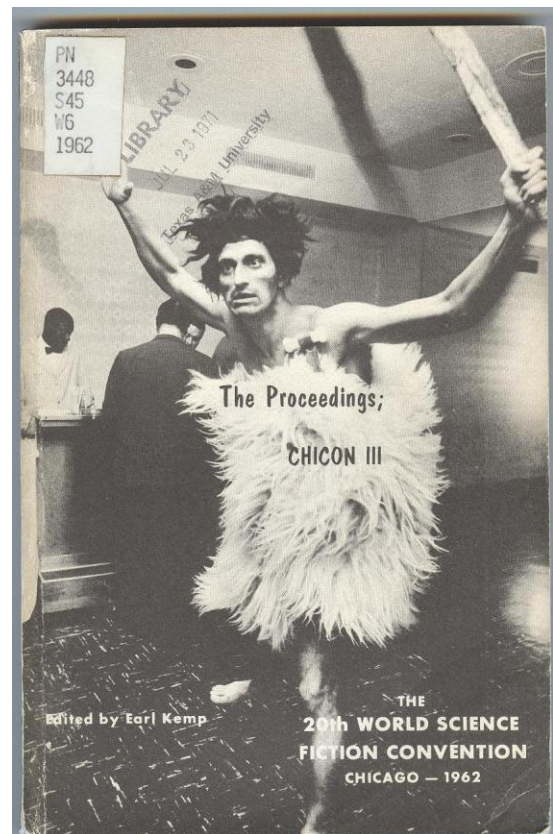
Phoenix Ship is actually very well-written: good pacing, relatively believable characters and plot-line (although a bit far-fetched), and the ship that Star Dustin oversees building, the titular vehicle Phoenix, is designed using ram-scoop technology very much in theoretical discussions back in the 1960s, so the Richmonds were quite up on the latest, er, scoop when they wrote this story. It does have considerable internal consistency, scientifically-speaking, for the late 60s, and that’s a good thing. The result is an entertaining tale, and matched my 50-50 prediction for Ace Doubles.

Sometimes, though, both sides of Ace Doubles had good stuff; my favorite being Clifford D. Simak’s *The Trouble with Tycho* teamed with A. Bertram Chandler’s *Bring Back Yesterday*. There was definitely a lot of good science fiction written during the 1960s, and fandom itself was beginning to grow and flex its muscles as well.

This makes a good transition to one of the other books I managed to finish reading despite my heavy work and school schedule, to say nothing of doing my statistics homework. The things I gotta do...

Okay. This next one is a gem that I ran across last month while perusing the science fiction criticism shelves in the stacks at Evans Library, the massive research library at Texas A&M University, one night after another “stimulating” Behavioral Statistics lecture. There I was, happily eye-tracking over books by Damon Knight, Sam Moskowitz, Brian Stableford, and oodles more when suddenly I espied this slender paperback from Advent, *The Proceedings; Chicon III*. Edited by someone named Earl Kemp – where-ever have I heard that name before? – this was the final transcription of the panels, masquerade, speechifying, and Hugo awards ceremony of the 20th World Science Fiction convention held at the Pick-Congress Hotel in Chicago, Illinois in 1962.

What blew me away about this book was that it was not stored in the non-circulating SF collection housed next door in the Cushing Library, overseen by Hal Hall. Yep; you got it. This was a CIRCULATING book, of all things, so it took me all of two seconds (if that long) to decide to check it out. [note: I have since renewed it twice.] A quick glance at the circulation record sheet at the back of the book revealed that the last time it was checked out was never. As you can see, gentle reader, the front cover is stamped with the reception date of July 23, 1971. No record of who donated this book can be found anywhere within its pages, so that’s a mystery that may never be solved, but I am eternally grateful to whomever made this donation to Evans Library.



Yes, that's Jon Stopa as a barbarian for the 1962 WorldCon Masquerade. Either that, or he wants his registration money back. Careful: he's armed!

This is a grand time-portal into what WorldCons were like just as fandom was beginning a growth spurt. When I told Earl what I had found, he related to me that he, as con chairman, had hired a professional transcriptionist (with help, of course) to turn the recordings of nearly all the events into text. It did help that the major speeches were already written down (for the most part), but this was still a monumental task, one that the following year's DisCon committee also attempted. After that, the recording of WorldCon events slipped into non-practice, which I think is a shame; this would have been a fine tradition to uphold.

My favorite parts of this book were everything, especially considering the people who were actually there (Hugh Hefner??). The sections I enjoyed the most were the transcribed Hugo Awards ceremony (for which Bob Tucker was the Master of Ceremonies), Bob Bloch's slide show presentation (even without the pictures this was hilarious; the transcription of this was brilliantly conceived), Theodore Sturgeon's Guest of Honor Speech, Willy Ley's speech, and presentations by Fritz Leiber and Jerry E. Pournelle. The photographs of the masquerade contest winners are delightful, too, and even though they are in black-and-white, the quality of the costuming shows.

I almost hate to return this to Evans library. The question is this: what would they charge me for “losing” one of their books? Would it be worth the penalty? The problem is, I am too fargin' honest, and my sense of professional ethics prevents me from following through on this thought. Still, this was a very fun book to read. Now it is time to check out eBay or other Internet sites to see if I can honestly acquire a copy.

1962 ALL OVER AGAIN



Centerfolds, Dueling Egos, and Big Oil Bucks

By Earl Kemp

John Purcell stroked my memory and turned me on real good. He asked about the 1962 SF WorldCon and *The Proceedings* of same. Naturally, that forced me to dig up my reading copy and look it over again after a number of years of not having seen it.

I said my “reading copy” because I also have a “good” copy somewhere, carefully put away for posterity. I no longer remember where, when, or how I received that reading copy. Whoever it belonged to had thoroughly devoured the contents. The book is dog-eared with many turned-down page corners, a practice that croggles my imagination, and one that I detest mightily. It is also riddled throughout with marginal notes, in ink, apparently written to another third person.

There are notes like “start reading here” and “end here.” “Read this entire section.” Another practice that I find completely unacceptable, but then it wasn’t my book, except in spirit and intent.

After I overcame my annoyance about the former owner and their treatment of the book, I began looking it over carefully, concentrating on the contents.

Gosh! What a fantastic book. Rereading it, even casually, sure made me wish I had done something like that myself. It made me wonder who that person was Chairing the convention, and how he held up through all that glorious celebration of what was surely a Golden Age period not only for sf fandom, but for all of science fiction itself.

I, of course, was much too busy during 1962 to participate in any of that foolishness. In fact, I seem to have missed the entire convention, running all over Chicago for needless reasons, day and night, without rest or sleep. One entire very long weekend zipping past in the blink of an eye.

Things not included in *The Proceedings* kept popping into my mind, some of them long forgotten and some of them written about to an exhaustive extent in various fan publications over the years. Most notably “Heinlein Happens” that was written for Alexei Panshin’s Website *Abyss of Wonder* and was printed in Marty Cantor’s *No Award* 10, fall 2001. A few of those things were lightly hinted at in *The Proceedings* but unexplained.

One was the involvement of *LIFE Magazine*. Very early on they contacted the Chicago committee asking permission and cooperation in covering the entire convention for a major article to appear in their magazine. At that time, *LIFE* was a very large, very successful, prestige publication and we were delighted to open all doors for them and encouraged them to follow through with their plans.

And they did, sending Arthur Shea, a crackerjack photographer, and a reporter to cover the affair. And cover it they did, taking several hundred photographs, all very high quality and high definition for 1962. Then, at the very last minute, for reasons never known to us, they decided not to go through with their original plans to publish a story about the convention. Needless to say, we were all disappointed.



Back cover – photo of Sylvia Dees by Arthur Shea (Life Magazine)

However, they did the next best thing, gave us access to their photo coverage of the convention and permission to use a number of their very best images. They appear not only on the covers of *The Proceedings* but throughout the issue as well, augmenting the convention committee's own photo coverage done by Dean Grennell, Richard Hickey and Jean Grant (who went on to a very successful career as an assignment photographer for *National Geographic*).

There were three major time-wasting problems facing me during ChiCon III. The first, and least significant, was Texas oil mega-magnate H.L. Hunt. At the time he was a stumble-footed, about-to-collapse-at-any-minute old codger, already well into senility. He occupied a plush suite in the Pick-Congress staffed by his own servants who traveled with him. Hunt had written "a science fiction novel," he said, named *Alpaca*, and was seeking help in promoting it. He gave me a copy of his self-published book...an abomination of a print job...and I couldn't force myself to read much of it regardless of how hard I tried. No photographs of him turned up in the mess of pictures from the convention.

The second major time-wasting problem was super control freak and out-of-control ego Robert Anson Heinlein. He had an endless list of requirements and conditions attached to his even appearing at the convention...starting with an absolute guarantee that he would be presented with a Hugo for *Stranger in a Strange Land*. He extorted the thing that he had won fair and square. His next requirement was total attention to his plans that included quite an elaborate scam whereby he would seem to appear miraculously at the very last minute in a blaze of glory, trumpets, and drum rolls. His plan was rehearsed thoroughly, figured out to the exact minute, and he was costumed, groomed, and ready for the spotlights to go on at his command.

And he did, making his spontaneous rehearsed approach to the convention ballroom through basement service hallways, into the kitchen, and into the ballroom through the service door at the rear of the huge room. To gasping applause...exactly as he wanted it all to work out.

In retrospect, I should have not only locked that door but barred it at the very last minute, leaving super-ego-freak to stew in his own juices outside the view of his worshipful, anticipated audience.

I fought with myself very much trying to avoid most of Heinlein's bullshit, but in the end decided that his presence at the convention would be a prestige event that I needed to maintain for the benefit of

everyone there. Heinlein had been, before he began his series of demands, extremely high on my personal list of favorite authors. He lost his position very quickly, however, through his own rampant greed.

The third most time-consuming thing was *Playboy* and its boss Hugh Marston Hefner. For years, secretly, I had been a stand-by asset of *Playboy's*. As Little Mr. Science Fiction, I was the on-call man for anything related to the genre. Names, real names, addresses, phone numbers, that sort of thing.

At the time, because my boss was William Hamling, Hefner thought it best that there should appear to be no contact between the two of us, for my job's safety if nothing more. There was some sort of unresolved major conflict between the two old co-workers and friends who had, together, planned their "perfect" men's magazine...and doing all that in Hamling's basement where he and Francis produced *Imagination*...and making their page layout mock-ups on Hamling's kitchen table.

By 1962, neither would even speak to the other.

Secret arrangements were made to have my contact at *Playboy* be Hefner's right-hand man, Spec...A.C. Spectorisky, who spoke directly for Hefner. Spec, in turn, made Murray Fisher the go-between, running messages from me to Spec. At the time I thought that Murray was nothing more than a high-paid flunky, but was I ever wrong.

Murray was something else entirely. "Murray the Fish." "The walking drug store." "Executive privilege pure pharmaceuticals free for the taking." "Uppers, downers, the company special Dexies...whatever gets you through the night." I don't think I ever saw Murray when he didn't whip out his candy bag, open it, and urge me to take whatever I wanted and enjoy it to the fullest. I never did, though I later told Hefner than I had, and thanked him for the trips, but I lied.

In reality, I was pure as the driven snow. I wouldn't touch anything remotely close to drugs, while all around me my friends and coworkers were into pot with a vengeance. I never even tried that until after I had moved to California. But then California was in a totally different universe from Illinois. I often chastise myself for having missed out on all that good, free stuff floating around Chicago in the 1950s and '60s.

Eventually Hefner's personal secretary took the fall for "inappropriate actions" and they tried to clean up the corporate image a bit...and then moved to California....

During ChiCon III, *Playboy* was in heavy evidence all over the place, and almost all of that totally clandestinely, secretly, and invisibly. Hefner had a huge list of things to accomplish during the convention, categorized by value to him and his organization. I was given those lists and asked to arrange everything well before the convention itself started. And I did. And everything was cloaked in deepest secrecy so as to not upset the delicate egos of the people—especially the very big-name professionals—who were *not* included in any of Hefner's lists.

During the entire convention Hefner's limousine was running shuttle services from the Pick-Congress to the *Playboy* Building to the original bunny-hutch and Hefner's residence at 1300 North State Parkway day and night. Picking up pros and taking them to various meeting places important to Hefner...newspapers, radio and television studios, and private offices, etc.

In exchange for my services, my demand was that Hefner would personally make a walk-through appearance at ChiCon III and that I would be included in the invitation list for a very special party at Hefner's house. It was admission by engraved invitation only and every name was checked off on the invitation list before any entry into the mansion. The party ran throughout most of the night, following the

close of the convention for that day, and ended with a very elaborate breakfast that finished just in time for the partygoers to get back to the Pick-Congress for the start of the day's convention activities.

Everyone was so bright-eyed and bushy-tailed after all the outrageous consuming and lie-swapping they had been doing throughout the night, getting no sleep, etc.

And Hefner did indeed make an appearance at the convention, along with his retinue that consisted of the incomparable Shel Silverstein, Paul Krasner, a gaggle of centerfold bunnies as eye candy, and the ever-popular Murray Fisher, who was working the convention overtime as well as the rest of us.

Murray had a suite in the Pick-Congress and throughout the convention kept quietly stealing away one pro after another to interview them for unknown future purposes inside that suite. It turns out that Murray was the major interviewer for *Playboy*, doing all the really big-time Q&A sessions. Most notably with Alex Haley, with whom Murray worked in refocusing Haley's vast segments for his mega epic *Roots*, winding up with a smooth-flowing, continuous manuscript that was an incredibly fantastic bestseller...followed by an exceptionally good TV series.

And all of those things were going on simultaneously throughout the WorldCon.

Now, all these many years later, revisiting *The Proceedings*, these and many more wonderful memories are coming to mind. Just skimming through the pages and looking at the photographs, pausing now and then to read the words of dozens of Famous Writers That I Have Known...far too many of them and beloved BNFs as well, now long since departed from this world...makes me sad and glad that I had the opportunity to know them and, in many cases, to call them dear friends if not bosom buddies.

I think I'll make myself a promise: I'll pick *The Proceedings* up again, my reading copy, in another 45 years, and relive the whole sordid experience all over again.

- Earl Kemp

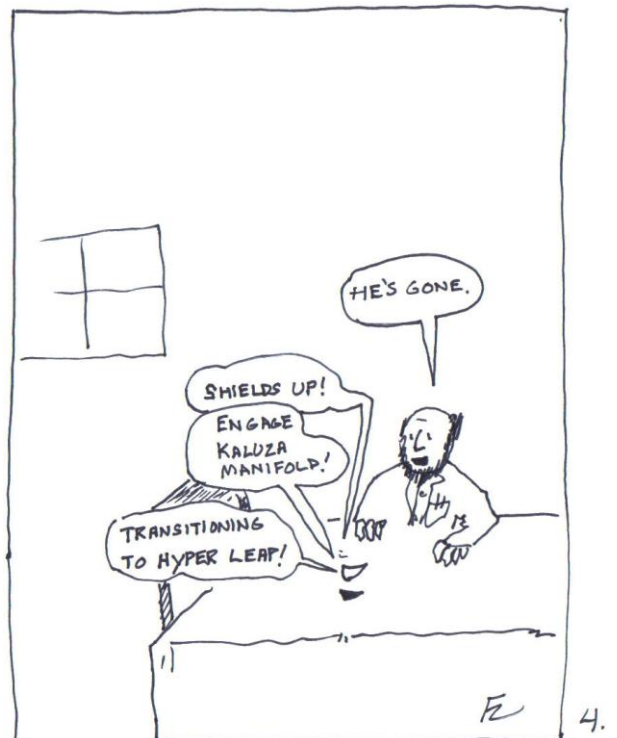
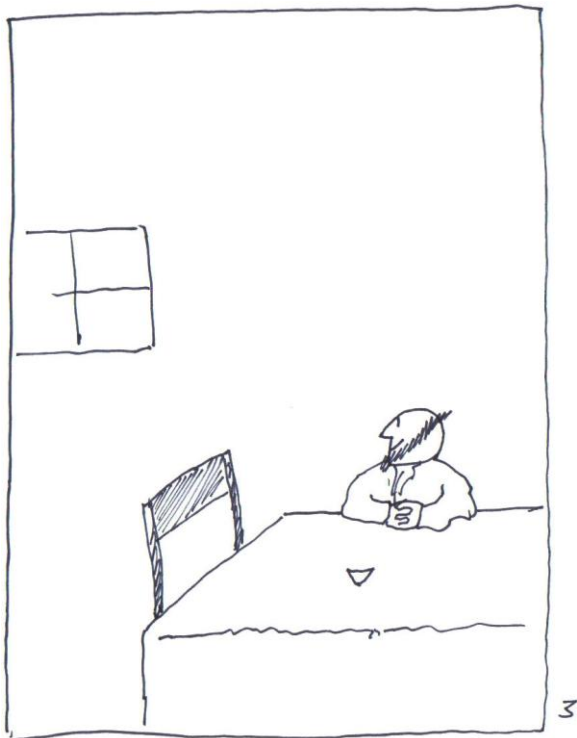
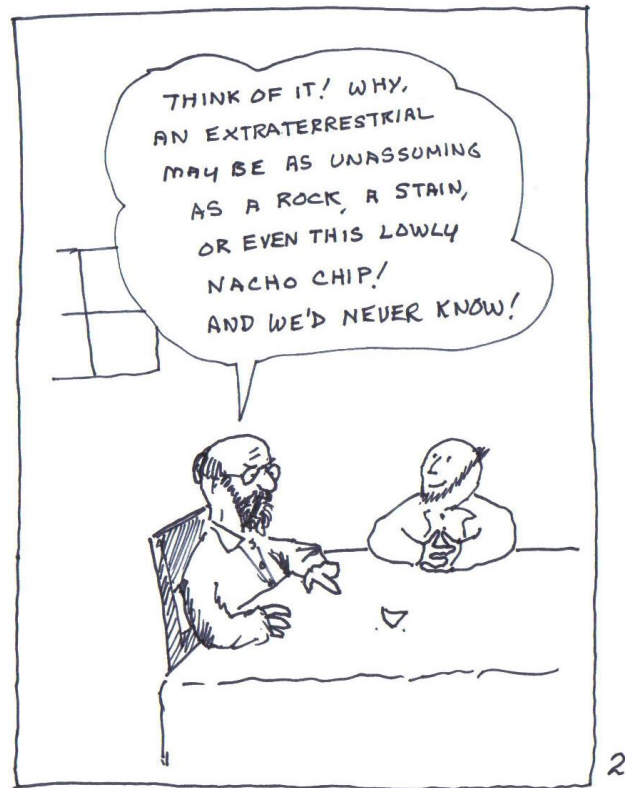


From the "This'll bring in the tourists" department (Part One):

A new Florida tourism pitch: "Come visit us, we're not neurotic!"

Dia Kuykendall (Florida tourism official)

FigBY by Bill Fischer



FROM THE HINTERLANDS



Even though I feel a bit disappointed in the lack of responses to the last issue, that does not diminish the quality of the locs I did receive. So what follows may be few, but they are fine in content. With that said, it's on to the letters!

First out of the box is the editor of Time and Again, which is one of my favorite zines being pubbed at the moment. The latest issue – the 7th – was recently posted to efanzines.com, and it's another sterling effort. Go and enjoy.



Dave Locke

21 Sept 08

I wrapped up *Time and Again* #6 with digital gauze and sent it off late on 9/20 to Bill Burns. That will get followed up by a couple of emails as soon as Bill gets it posted at eFanzines, but

it's Sunday the 21st and that hasn't happened yet so it's time to crank out a LoC on *Askance* #10. You'd think that Bill actually has a life or something, instead of just sitting there eagerly awaiting our sterling fanzines. ***{Bill lives for us. Or is that the other way around?}***

Very nice Eric Mayer article. I was never a big sports fan. Didn't learn to care about baseball or football or basketball or any sport of that nature. Close as I got was tennis and table tennis and swimming and boxing. Tennis was something a LArea friend and I decided to pick up. We never took lessons and, although we increasingly got better at it over the years, ultimately we were weekend hackers but no one ever told us we had to be good to be interested. In Cincinnati,

fan and pro Steve Leigh and I got together for a few years and played tennis as fiercely as we could manage to.

Ping Pong I took up in high school, but that my father got interested in and we played countless games on a homemade table. That we both got good at, and I went on to win a trophy in a county schools tournament. In the LArea, after buying the house I set up a pong table in the garage and half the people in the neighborhood would come over to get a game. And from outside the neighborhood. I recall a nearby minister who would come over because he loved the game. And fan David Hulan, who played a rather mean game, would also show up occasionally. At one place I worked we set up a table for noon-time entertainment, and eventually even set up singles and doubles tournaments.

Today, I occasionally watch a boxing match. My son, the Raiders and Fantasy Football fan, frequently has NFL stuff playing on the TV, but the only thing I find good about all this football is that it makes purchasing gifts for him easy because of all the logo-driven merchandise.

Of course, while you might say Eric's article was about baseball or perhaps even other things, in essence it was about his dad. And the article was very nicely done.

Judd Apatow. I've recently watched PINEAPPLE EXPRESS, SUPERBAD, and KNOCKED UP, and thought they were quite decent stoner comedies. And they all (and other Apatow movies) featured actor Seth Rogen who I've definitely taken to as a comic actor. Come to think of it, Chris Garcia looks a bit like Seth Rogen...

Lee Anne Lavell says ISFA is dead. "The Circle of Janus is the general science fiction/fantasy fan club of the greater Indianapolis, Indiana area. We've been in existence [sic] since 1980, serving the local fan community by providing a gathering place for those with a common interest in Science Fiction and Fantasy." That

was accessed from the InConJunction webpage reference to the club's website. Well, Indiana certainly has enough fen that, if a club dies off, it won't be long before another one forms to take its place.

Arnie writes of he and Lenny Bailes getting into fandom in 1962, and what it was like back then. I'd been receiving fanzines for a few years by that time, but didn't actually get into fandom until April of 1961. I started off with a bang. The month I joined, I published a fanzine. Well, it was the zine scene which interested me back then. Come to think of it, that's a major part of what interests me right now. You'd think I'd have gotten it out of my system in 47 years.

I've been enjoying Patricia Rogers' tales of burrowing in Jack Speer's old kipple. I'm reading this as it appears in various fan mailing lists, but for some reason I'm actually happy to see it appearing in fanzines. Of course, you're pubbing the second installment and I don't believe the first has yet appeared (or has it?). But that's probably not important except for the chronology of appearance to a first-time reader. Once they're all published they'll be available, and the fanzine dates won't mean much. And quite possibly there'll be a single publication containing all installments. ***{Someone is going to collect them all under one cover, I am sure. That would be a fine publication well worth purchasing.}***

In her LoC, Lee Anne notes: "Comcast was no help, saying they don't accept Mozilla Firefox and they don't know anything about it. ... Turns out that it was all Comcast's fault and the problem hit a bunch of people." Comcast sucks here, too. When they say they "don't accept Mozilla Firefox" that only means they've no training concerning it. Certainly the Comcast service supports it in the sense that you can use it. What they mean is that they won't help you unless you're using MSIE. However, they don't know much about MSIE, either. When they established service here they put their own toolbar on MSIE6, without asking, and with the consequence that the address bar disappeared

and was nowhere to be found. I didn't care, as I don't use MSIE. Then, when they had to come back to provide more 'service', the lack of an address bar prevented them from doing what they needed to do. Fortunately, I had the Avant browser (which uses the MSIE engine), and they were able to get the job done using that. However, they blamed the Avant browser for this unrelated problem with MSIE, and they wanted to put the Comcast toolbar on Avant, too. I told them to stay the hell away from my laptop...

When I gave that laptop to my son, he had a problem because he uses MSIE and my version of it had no address bar. So I upgraded to MSIE7. Problem solved.

The spelling is indeed Midwestcon. Not Midwescon. Or so says the Cincinnati Fantasy Group which has put it on for the con's lifespan of 59 years now. See <http://www.cfg.org/midwestcon/index.htm>.

There are 17 references to "Midwescon" via Google, 5 to both spellings within the same page (...), and 2,520 references to "Midwestcon". I know it's been "Midwestcon" since I started going in 1978. I've got 1961 fanzines and 1950's prozines which say the same. If it was ever different, it was probably a brief aberration. I remember Bill Bowers used to insist on spelling it MidWestCon.

Enjoyed it, John.

Dave

{Like I said in my response to her loc lastish, by the time I was involved in fandom (mid-70s), it was definitely known as "Midwestcon". I believe Lee Anne's recollections of its early years since she was THERE, to paraphrase Walter Cronkite. I never had the chance to get to a Midwescon/Midwestcon, unfortunately. The closest I got was being in Cleveland the very same weekend that con was going on; my apartment roommate at that time, Barney Neufeld's sister was getting married the Saturday of the con, so he opted for the wedding and I went along for the ride. Oh,

well. It was a good time and a pleasant drive.}

Speaking of the lady who wrote about the early years of Midwescon, here she is now:



Lee Anne Lavell

11 Sept 08

Getting to the point:

The Epiphany of the Elephant (Arnie Katz):

This piece brings back to me the memory of my first trip to New York. It was with my parents and an aunt and uncle. I was in my teens at the time—I think it must have been around 1946 or 1947, not long after World War II, but when all the restrictions on gas and tires were lifted and auto trips had become possible again. The trip was a sight-seeing one along the Eastern Seaboard and of course one of the stops was New York City. At any rate, one of the things we did there, besides climbing to the top of the Statue of Liberty and riding the subway was to take a bus tour of the city. This was not long after I had discovered the second-hand book stores along Massachusetts Avenue in Indianapolis, and lo and behold, the bus tour took it right along a street (probably the one Arnie mentions) that held nothing but second-hand book stores—dozens, nay hundreds, maybe thousands (at least it seemed to me) of them. I remember I had to be physically restrained from jumping off the bus, moving or not. I never got back there. Sigh...

Fielding Practice (Eric Mayer): Back in my teen years (again) my only other great love besides sf was going to baseball games. Indianapolis did not have, does not have, and never has had, a major league team. We, the Indianapolis Indians, were/are in a Triple A league, the American Association, at the time. (Hell, this was in an era when the Dodgers and Giants were in New York, the Braves in Boston, etc. and all the West Coast cities were in the Triple A Pacific Coast League.) My father was a big baseball fan so we would go to several games a week. In fact, one year we went to fifty

games in one season. The Indians had a great team in the late Forties and early Fifties. They were coached by Al Lopez, we won several pennants and the players were very fast and great fun to watch. I even saw home stolen three times in one season. Virtually every Sunday when the Indians were in town my father would pick up my mother and me from church (my father was not a church-going man), we would go to a nearby White Castle (one of the very first ones) for lunch and then off we would go to Victory Field for an afternoon double header. During the week it was mostly my father and me. So, even though our experiences are quite different, mine passive and Eric's more active, both our memories of our early years are inextricably linked to baseball and our fathers.

Finally I would like to mention "comment hooks." I can't figure out what *does* make a good hook besides the one mentioned in the issue: "the reminds me of approach," and who can figure out what something will remind someone else of? So, what other kinds of hooks are there anyway? Well, you could always insult some "beloved" person or institution and start a feud—but I hate feuds, so forget that one. How about lists: you could make a list of, for example, best sf writers and deliberately leave out some well-known ones and add a couple of hacks, and see if anyone screams. The problem in finding a hook is figuring out what exactly will hit the reader's itchy spot, causing him to pull out the keyboard to scratch the itch. Some fanzines seem to be full of poison ivy and others are just an enjoyable stroll in the woods (with maybe taking a few "snapshots" to comment on).

Thus saying, while *Askance 10* is another outstanding issue, I didn't take my camera along for the other contents. Here's hoping that you garner even more votes for the next Hugo. I am eagerly anticipating the November issue.

Cheers,

Lee Anne Lavell

{Now that the November issue is finally here, a few comments are in order about comment hooks.

Seems to me that whenever I run articles that tend to be more "edgy" or fan-historical in nature I get more responses. Those types of fan writings obviously trigger more response synapses, so one tactic a faneditor can follow is to seek out and pub new-life-and-new-civilizations such material or try to goad readers into responding. It will thus be interesting to see what kind of response ratio Taral Wayne's article next issue will generate. It is definitely very different from the type of work usually seen in this zine. Stay tuned.}

Someone who usually responds with pithy commentary is the following fellow, who recently poked his head out from behind a pile of work to catch up on a bit of fun reading and writing:



Eric Mayer

25 Sept 08

Askance 10 was another fine issue. I read right through it but then was away for awhile and so the delay in loccing. I'm more than usually challenged to write a decent loc this time because Mary and I are in the throes of another book. We're always researching, outlining and composing to a degree but as it happens I managed to arrange a few weeks gap in my legal work so I'm doing some heavy duty writing. It isn't that I lack time to write anything else when I get so involved but rather that my brain seems to get fixated on the fiction and I can't come up with anything interesting.

Kudos for pubbing during a hurricane. That takes a lot of fortitude and a cosmic mind. Although I'm not so sure the latter is a good thing. Ultimately though, you need electricity for a computer. You might consider keeping on hand a manual typewriter and a hand cranked ditto machines for future emergencies. Or a hectograph. You could keep the hectograph

behind glass. In case of publishing emergency you could break the glass, and use it to cut your wrists so you didn't have to use the hectograph.

My first reaction to *Askance 10* was to wince at the inappropriateness of my own article in a faanish setting. One thing I've learned from doing some professional stuff is that one writes for the audience and, alas, I feel like maybe it's the same as if I were trying to shove our historical mysteries off on readers of modern romances. ***{Au contraire, mon ami'; your article was most appropriate, in my humble opinion, and was well-written and evocative. It reminded me of days spent in the backyard or at the ballpark with my dad and brother. That's what good writing does: it connects with its readers.}***

Having said that, Chris Garcia's little piece about people of whom I know nothing was nevertheless amusing. I agree with him that it is much better to look for problems and have a solution ready for them, or at least brace yourself, rather than being blindsided. I wonder if Chris did that with this article? Did he convince himself no one would like it, in order to be prepared for utter rejection and mockery? That's my policy.

Lee Anne Lavell's "Bumpy Byways" was also interesting, as far as it went. I guess, though, you can only explore a road as far as it goes. She says this period was "ordinary and dull to write about" but when did that ever stop a fanwriter? Some fans would get a three volume history out of that, particularly since their histories are all about them anyway. Don't tell me Lee Anne's actually learned to avoid boring people!

Speaking of boring, Arnie Katz's "how I discovered fandom" article was excellent and enjoyable but I will say no more. I would bore even myself were I to repeat yet again how I found some *Amazings* and *Fantastics* in a used book store and read the Clubhouse and sent off my sticky quarters. Finding older sf zines in New York City is more interesting than running across

fairly recent ones in Wilkes-Barre anyway. Wonderfully evocative story by Patricia Rogers about her encounter with Jack Speer's varied collection. I'm not sure if I'm reminded most of rummaging through dusty library stacks, or a treasure hunt or an archaeological dig, but those are all great fun.

Bill Fischer continues to be amusing in both pictures and words. I enjoyed, and appreciate Lloyd Penney's reviews, and your con listing is as big as the state of Texas, both of which are too big for my taste, but that big board game sure looks interesting.

Best,
Eric

{The one and only time I went to a gaming con – Protocon, which is a late-September event held on the Texas A&M University campus – I was bored to tears since I am not much into gaming. The dealer's room was interesting, of course, and I did learn much about how these events are structured, but I doubt if I would ever attend another. My rationale for listing anime and gaming cons in this area is to provide folks who live in Texas and environs options for pursuing their interests. To that extent, I think I have been successful, yet from time to time I toy with the idea of scaling back the listing. This issue's "regional convention calendar" is shorter because I decided to cut the advance time down to overlap from issue to issue, thus providing a bit of "con"tinuity. *chuckle*}

And so now here's the obligatory "Lloyd Penney section" of the lettercolumn, in which my fanzine reviewer covers first Askance #10 and then reflects on what will be my FAPazine come 2009.



Lloyd Penney
1706-24 Eva Rd.
Etobicoke, ON

CANADA M9C 2B2

I'm getting my act together, and I am getting serious caught up. *Askance 10* is relatively new, but am organized enough to get a loc to you right now.

(Well, we'll see how long that lasts. I feel organized, and I am caught up, Take the rest of it a day at a time.)

I send the .pdf to my printer at work, double-sided in colour, side stapled and image shifted to accommodate it. This .pdf really made a nice fanzine.

The hurricane season hit America's bottom hard, and several times, too. Fay, Gustav, Hanna, and Ike were ferocious, and caused lots of damage. We rarely get such harsh weather up here, but when the hurricane eventually tracks north, the remnants hook up with the jetstream, and they will usually run up through the Great Lakes, Québec, the Maritimes and Newfoundland, and out into the North Atlantic. Those four hurricanes made sure that we had our wettest summer ever. Kyle is in the North Atlantic and may give you guys a break, and may head directly for the Maritimes.

I haven't had any contact with John Scalzi beyond friending him on Facebook, but I do agree that if we are to keep the silvery rockets, especially in the fan categories, they should be spread around. I think we'd be more positive about the Fan Hugos if we felt that anyone had a chance at winning it. We haven't felt that anyone could, and Dave Langford's winning streak has only reinforced that. We may have complained about Scalzi winning the Hugo, but I wonder if in the future, we might say that his win was the best thing that could have happened. ***{A very real possibility. It certainly appears that Dave doesn't mind losing out to John at all. In fact, I daresay Dave approves of the result. Only time will tell, to quote a fairly benign Asia song from the early 80s.}***

Hey, baseball fans...well, the Jays are mathematically eliminated from any playoff possibilities, and as a result, or not, the Leafs have played their first pre-season hockey game.



We know what time of the year it is, what season has just arrived, more than just autumn. ***{Yay! It's Hockey Night in Canada time! And the Minnesota Wild are in first place as I work on this issue. I took Josie to a Houston Aeros hockey game a couple weeks ago, and should write that up – complete with pictures, too!}***

Good to be back in the contributor's list, and I think I can do more than get things to you on time. The review for next issue is already half written, and I may have something else for you soon. I shall remain cryptic here, and all shall be revealed in good time.

I never got into organized sports at all. I remember being interested in baseball, and asking my dad to throw the ball around. We did for a while, but the desire to rebuild our house took him away. There was never time to toss the ball or go tobogganing, or spend a little time together; another wall had to be built, or money had to be spent on buying more gyproc or nails or shingles. We were forced to grow up without a father to spend time with them, but he was around building here and there. When the house was completed, the house looked great, but we were a little too old to bond with our dad, and we were all too old to toss the ball around.

If Chris Garcia feels that Judd Apatow has stolen his life, the best thing I can suggest is to write a screenplay based on his life, and have Judd Apatow cast to play the lead role of Christopher J. Garcia. Then, he can say that he's stolen his life back, or even say he's stolen Judd Apatow's life. He could also write in a goofy character and have Val Kilmer play it, and Chris' revenge would be complete.

I have probably written already about how I encountered fandom, so I won't write it again. However, we encounter different kinds of fandom. When I first found fandom in 1977, I found the experience very positive, enthusiastic and hopeful. I think many of the other people around me were feeling the same way, and I think most of us found fandom that same way. When I moved from Victoria to Toronto, the meeting of local fandom was less than positive. No matter my previous fannish experience on the west coast, I was a new face, and therefore a neo to insult and ignore. However, there were a number of positive faces with good attitudes, and they were welcoming and inclusive. I married one of those welcoming people. I would hope that if I was ever to move again, there might be welcoming fans, but I have some doubts sometimes. In this era of various and myriad fannish interests, plus assorted ways to find out about fandom, we can't dismiss these people as readily as we might have in the past. We need all the fresh faces we can get.

Patricia Rogers' fannish archaeological dig at Jack Speer's home may need more than just the regular reports on findings in various fanzines, but its own website. If some of the treasures are to be scanned for the enjoyment of fans and fanhistorians, all the links for them should be in one place. Maybe Fanac.org might be able to help with a page and storage. ***{A good idea. Patricia should approach Joe Siclari with this idea, or Joe to Patricia. Either way,***

<http://Fanac.org> would be a fine repository for these reports.}

The fanzine review column...I can do better than this. And, I will. Now that a number of projects are done or nearly done, concentrating on this project will be easier.

Our fanzine collections...there's a number of good fanzine collections in Toronto, like those of Mike Glicksohn, Murray Moore and Colin Hinz. They've had the time and cash to accumulate a lot of interesting stuff. My collection, I think, has more chance of being buried under a parking lot, like Eric Mayer's collection, than being studied in a university lab. We've got to do our research to find out what universities may be interested in paper ephemera. We know of a lot of them, but we need to find out more.

Do I beg off review writing to catch up with locs? Nope, but it's not a bad idea, thanks for the excuse, John, I might use it on you as some point. But no, I have lots of plans, and I will get them done. I'm getting this loc done very early, aren't I?

P-A-R-A-G-U-A-Y. Yes, I'm a proofreader, but I was also a stamp collector. These things, you just gotta know. ***{What? You don't like Parkay margarine? Figures you'd be a Land 'o Lakes kind of guy...}***

Dave Locke says you might have such a surfeit of articles for *Askance*...well, I might as well ask, if you have articles in mind that won't fit in the design or theme of your fine zine. If you do, keep me in mind. One of my afore-mentioned projects is to try my own hand at a fanzine, working title is *Arcade*. Keep me in mind, and if you do, and I'll tell you about another project...

And with another Ditmarish bit of eye candy to enjoy, I will wind this up, and get it to you, eventually. Because of crazy days, I write these

locs in the bits of time available, and send them out at the end of the week. Soon, I will have more for you. Take care, and my greetings to the family.

Yours, Lloyd Penney

{Another fanzine on the market is ALWAYS a good idea. Good luck with it, and you just can never tell when an arkle might fall from the heavens and strike you down. You Have Been Warned.}



In response to Askew #1, Lloyd wrote in again:

4 Oct 08

Dear John:

Yup, you put it on eFanzines, I'm going to read it and comment on it, serves you right. It won't be a long loc, but a good one, on *Askew 1*.

When I saw mention of *Askew 1*, and how you meant to correct a mistake, I thought that this was a rider zine for *Askance*. Your FAPA zine for January 2009? Working ahead, I see. That's how you make up for a heavy workload, you date ahead so people think you're working ahead instead of working overtime to keep up.

Another episode of Patricia Rogers' adventures in Jack Speer's collection...I saw it on Trufen, but didn't comment on it. I did enjoy reading it, though, because we never know what's in someone else's collection, unless they do the fannish thing and catalogue and cross-reference their collection, and let people know what they've got, probably on a website.

I think one person who isn't getting her fair share of kudos is Ruth Speer, who is still mourning her terrible loss, but has been gracious enough to let Patricia dig about and

take away some fannish treasures, ephemera we try to make as timeless and permanent as we can, as long as the paper it's printed on lasts. If Patricia didn't understand why we collect before, I am glad she does now, looking fondly into the past to see what people thought the future would look like. There is some romance to those ideas, some wonder and expectation of the wondrous times to come.

Jack would probably be amused to know that it was my mother who got me interested in science fiction. She wanted books of short stories to read during breaks in doing housework, and she found anthology books at the local public library. I grew up with Asimov, Bradbury, Clarke and Heinlein, but I cut my skiffy eyeteeth on collections by Carr, Wollheim and Gold. A couple of years ago, in talking with my mother about various fannish adventures, she told me, "Oh, I don't read that silly stuff any more." That's okay, Mum, I'll read enough for the both of us.

In my building, I keep my fanzines in Bankers' Boxes in a locker, and the locker room is right across the hallway from our front door. The room has a few pipes running through it, but it is dry and dark. I figure that's probably the best place to keep them, and I don't have enough room for them in our apartment. I wonder what will happen when my collection outgrows the locker?

I look forward to more of Patricia's reports on what she finds. I wonder if there's a fannish Grail somewhere in that attic.

With that, I think I am done. I appreciate all invitations to join FAPA, and I may yet join you one of these days, but for the moment, I am enjoying loccing every zine I get, and I am still working on getting my own zine going. Many thanks, John, and I should have something else to e-mail to you shortly.

Yours, Lloyd Penney.

*{Robert Lichtman and Shelby Vick have been nagging—me requesting the honor of my presence in FAPA for a couple years now. The first issue of **Askew** was essentially a trial balloon to correct the appearance of the first Speerology articles. So far, the third and fourth installments have not appeared; I may inquire of ShelVy (who didn't run the 3rd part in the latest **Planetary Stories**) and Guy H. Lillian III (who is supposed to run the 4th installment in **Challenger 29**, due out in January, 2009) if they are still following*

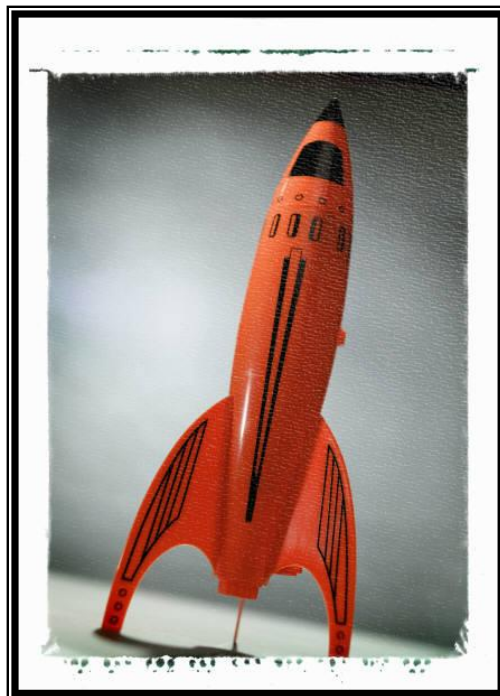
through on the agreement we worked out in the Southern Fandom Classic listserv.

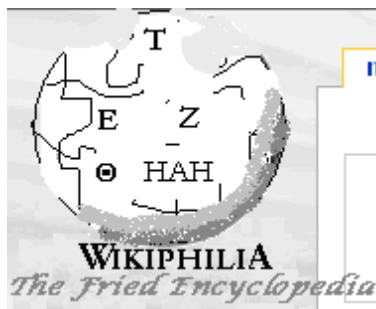
And I completely agree with you about Ruth Speer. This has to be so difficult for her, and yet how gracious she has been to allow Patricia Rogers in to help and write about the findings. Jack, I am sure, would find all of this most amusing – and correct any grammatical mistakes made in those articles.}

With that, thank you, folks, for the letters.

WAHFfling time

Arnie Katz, Guy H. Lillian III, Dave Locke (again), Venecian Todoroff, That's all, folks!



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Welcome to **Wikiphilia**,
the fried encyclopedia that [anyone can eat](#).
[1,689,481](#) articles in English

ORGANIZED MIME

wikiphilia article

(noun): "ORG-uh-nyzd MEYM"

DEFINITION

While [mime](#) has been around ever since prehistoric times in the form of "street mime" or "blue-collar mime" as an activity of individuals, *Organized* refers to the carefully constructed, organizations engaged in mime as a business who have terrorized law abiding citizens for years.

Organized mime is especially pernicious because where there is usually a clear demarcation from the individual mime's activity and acceptable social behavior, organized mime insinuates itself into hitherto legitimate endeavours of society such as business, show business, organized labor, and government.

EARLY HISTORY

There have certainly been miminal gangs terrorizing communities for years. Even [Biblical](#) scripture refer to "dens of thieves" and the famed "Good Samaritan" parable tells us of a man who was accosted by people who, in all likelihood, subjected him to stupid "[invisible box](#)" and "pull myself along an invisible rope" bits until he was forced to throw them all of his shekels to make them go away. They then left him for bored, and a good [Samaritan](#) came along and took him home.



[Figure 1. Helpless Victim of Biblical Mimes]

In the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries in France, Germany, and England, bands of mimes terrorized the travelers and bounties were constantly placed on their heads by the princes and rulers of the era. The mimes would typically respond with a corny, "Oh! look at this invisible weight on my head!" bit which, if not terrorizing villagers and travelers, would almost certainly annoy them. Penalties for mime were severe in [Victorian England](#) where a mime might be "hanged severally by his necks until he be dead." In fact this rarely proved fatal because the rope was always imaginary and the mime would simply mimic contortions of being strangled then "sway" on his tiptoes with his tongue hanging out until the people would simply say something like, "It's over: the poor fellow's gone." and then the villagers and hangman would go back into the local pub, allowing the clever mime to escape and commit another mime elsewhere.

According to tradition, during the Napoleonic occupation of Sicily in the early, 19th century, bands of mimes would get together and swear dark and secret oaths. Nobody knows, of course, how dark and secret the oaths actually were because no one could hear them. This became known as the "[code of silence](#)". By 1805 the mimes had organized into a shadowy, underworld group known loosely as "Mimes Against French Intransigent Waiters", or "MAFIW" for short. With the large wave of European immigration in the late 1800's into the U.S., came the [MAFIW](#) or "[MAFIEWSI](#)" as they were called. The first lucrative market they infiltrated was street busking, then later, vaudeville and general carnival stuff.



[Figure 2. [Boss Tweed](#) being bribed by organized mime]

PROHIBITION

The advent of the Volstead Act (1919) which prohibited the sale of alcoholic beverages in the U.S. had the opposite effect it's authors intended: instead of getting everybody to stop drinking and go back to church a thriving black market developed in "bootlegged" liquor. This was the heyday of organized mime. The MAFIW would carry out turf wars in which rival gangs of mimes would strut by a restaurant or business storefront with their hands in a steering wheel position while another mime would "rake" the building with imaginary machine gun fire. In spite of the code of silence among the brotherhood of mimes, certain gangland terms leaked into public awareness, such as "he's gone to walk the invisible dog". Many mime informants found themselves "silenced".



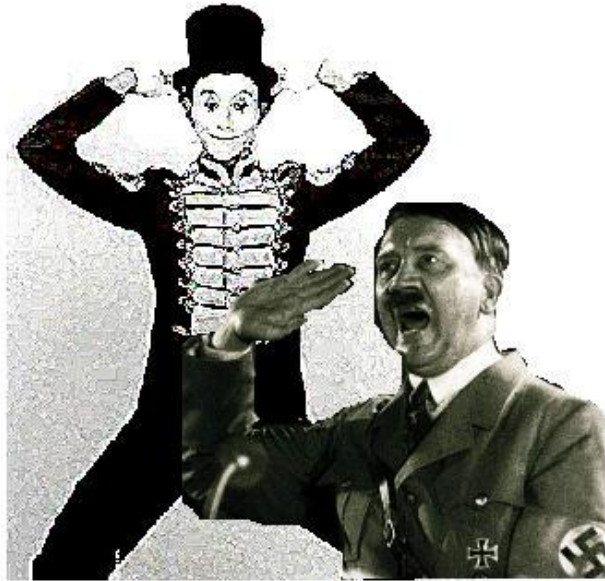
[Figure 3. Luigi "Big Dummy" Albigensia being "rubbed out" outside of a Chicago brothel. Feb 1927]

Authorities found it terribly difficult to prosecute organized mime figures for liquor possession as the bottles were imaginary and frequently there wasn't actually anything in them. Many a **speakeasy** raiding party stood by helplessly as a silently laughing mime "emptied" the nonexistent hooch down a drain in front of them, destroying all nonexistent evidence.

DEPRESSION

The massive, international collapse of banking and securities markets in the 1930's saw the repeal of the hated prohibition act and the collapse of some lucrative, organized mime leaders, most notably Al, "Paintface" Barone who was indicted for income tax evasion and performance of a really, really bad "invisible box" bit. These gangs, however were quickly replaced by others, who, deprived of their lucrative **bootlegging** business slid easily into prostitution and gambling. Gambling, it should be noted, was never a good business for organized mime because the croupier could never hear them over the other players placing their chips and the mimes were frequently drowned out by the racket of the slot machine bells and chimes.

The advent of the Second World War (1939-1945) had a cooling effect on organized mime for two reasons. First, the government was in no mood for their foolishness, what with a war to fight, etc. and the "Capos Di Tutti Frutti" of the murky underworld of organized mime took the hint and laid low. Second, many in organized mime felt patriotic and enlisted and left behind their mime-ridden pasts and served with distinction in the war. One of the most decorated mimes of the European Theater of Operations, Sergeant Audie "Slappy" Murfree, single handedly led a commando raid into Berlin and annoyed many high ranking Nazi officials with his lame "drinking the invisible glass of water" bit so much that **Hitler** finally just shot himself.



[Figure 4. Captured Axis Footage of Murfree's raid on Berlin, May 1945]

One of the most heroic episodes of the Second World War was when a handful of brave mimes waded ashore on a small atoll seething with suicidal Japanese. In spite of the fact that they were outnumbered 1000 to 1, they made it to the top of a central mountain and mimicked raising a non-existent flag. Unfortunately, the amphibious task force of Marines were still waiting offshore for the order to deploy and so the five mimes found themselves overwhelmed in the end by two battalions of enraged Japanese. Running out of ammo for their imaginary guns they were eventually cut down to the last mime. Said a Marine colonel during the mop-up operation a few days later "Gee, too bad we didn't get a picture of that!".



[Figure 5. Only known photograph of Mime slipping behind Japanese garrison to plant invisible flag]

POST WWII

The early 1950's saw a rise in organized mime again in the U.S. The old "Mustache Marcells" of the 1920's and 1930's were aging and getting out of the business but had garnered enough wealth to be able to send their progeny to ivy league colleges. Organized mime was going legit - Gone were the speakeasies and brothels but the legalized gambling in growing towns like Las Vegas and Reno and Havana beckoned and there were always the renaissance festivals. Much of this came to a peak with congressional hearings. These were also some of the first televised hearings. The Senate Sub-committee On Organized Mime, or SSCOOM, for short, attempted to subpoena crime boss Frank Costello. Unfortunately a glitch in the card catalog system at the Justice Department caused the subpoena to be issued to Lou Costello. This proved very embarrassing for the government as Lou Costello was a great comic but had never been involved in mime. A transcript of the televised hearings exposes the government's frustration:

- [Sen. Kefauver]: "Mr. Costello you were at a Korean restaurant in Yonkers, NY on the night of July 14, 1954. Is that correct?"
- [Mr. Costello]: "Yes, Senator."
- [Sen. Kefauver]: "And do you remember who the waiter was?"
- [Mr. Costello]: "Hu."
- [Sen. Kefauver]: "Who? Him?"
- [Mr. Costello]: "No, Him was the busboy".
- [Sen. Kefauver]: "No, I meant the waiter. What was *his* name?"
- [Mr. Costello]: "I just said: Hu."
- [Sen. Kefauver]: "Yes, that's what I mean! Who was the waiter??"
- [Mr. Costello]: "Yes."
- [Sen. Kefauver]: "Never mind." (points to a photo) "Who is She?"
- [Mr. Costello]: "No, Hu was the waiter. Shi was the cook."
- [Sen. Kefauver]: "Her??"
- [Mr. Costello]: "No, Hrr was the cashier. He was Laotian, though, not Korean."
- [Sen. Kefauver, understandably upset]: "Mr. Costello, are you toying with this Commission?"

Although they failed to garner enough evidence to secure an indictment, Mr. Costello was cited for contempt of Congress and spent 120 hours in an anger management and parenting class. During his absence, Universal Studios cast mob boss "Big Frank" Costello opposite [Bud Abbott](#) in the zany comedy "Abbott And Costello Meet [Carrot Top](#)". Lou Costello never recovered from this betrayal and died in 1959.

[Figure 6 (right). Theater Poster from 1956 movie; Lou Costello never recovered from this betrayal]



Senator Kefauver was admitted to Bethesda Naval Hospital a year later suffering from delusions that he was one of Maimie Eisenhower's dress shields.

LABOR UNIONS

Although organized mime had begun infiltrating the labor movement as early as the 1890's, the 1950's saw an uptick in raquetteering by local mime bosses. This opportunity was made available when labor leaders realized that they could lure the mime goons away from management (who had been employed as strikebreakers) with more lucrative deals of control and union revenues. The first union so infiltrated was the tennis pros' union local #334 at the Grosse Point, MI. Country and Tennis Club in 1952. By 1953 mimes had silently taken over the towel locker, the showers and even the Pro Shoppe and had a stranglehold on the distribution of tennis racquets, hence the term, "raquetteering". By 1954, Mrs. Suzanne "Bitsy" Keeplehoffer was horrified to look up from delivering her 2nd child and see three, white-faced mimes pretending to be "obstetricians" hovering over her. It became evident that organized mime had found it's way into labor.

By the early 1960's, the U.S. Attorney's Office with a lot of assistance from the Congress passed the "Racquets, Imbeciles, Clowns Omnibus", or "**RICO**" act which gave both state and federal authorities tools to pry mimes out of the labor room and the racquet clubs. Mimes didn't take this without a fight but by 1970 many organized mime figures were standing against the black curtain with their hands around invisible "bars" looking out of their imaginary cells.



[Fig 7. Mimes doing hard time in imaginary wing at Allentown, Pa. Facility]

POST-COMMUNIST BLOC

After the collapse of the [Soviet Union](#) (c. 1990) the fledgling, Russian Federation became virtually an open society for every type of entrepreneur: mimes stepped up to the plate. Within a few years the feared, "Russian MAFIW" had cornered every vice in Western Russia and Eastern Europe. Although Russian and East European police were very aggressive and very vigilant in seizing a number of stolen vices, many shop tools were still missing. Once again, the old, mime ploy of using "invisible" tools stymied many a police inspector who was confronted with non-existent evidence, even when they caught the mime red-handed "sawing" an invisible piece of wood. Besides conventional vices, mimes are also found in human trafficking, sometimes stuffing as many as 12 or 14 mimes at a time into a tiny car and then jumping out in traffic.



[Fig 8. Mime trafficking in children]

LEGACY

Organized Mime has taken on many shapes - a waterfall, a soaring bird, a soldier, a dancer, etc. but its nefarious hold on communities world wide is still firm. With the advent of better policing technology and more international cooperation between countries (InterPol, FBI, Scotland Yard, CSI: Wadi Monsour, etc.) dents are still being made in localized mime "empires" but vigilance is historically proven to be the best deterrent to organized mime.

See Also

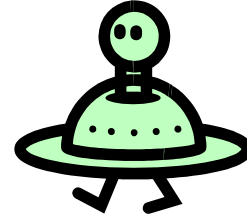
- [biblical](#)
- [invisible box](#)
- [Victorian England](#)
- [MAFIW](#)
- [MAFIEWSI](#)
- [depression](#)
- [bootlegging](#)
- [Bud Abbot](#)
- [Soviet Union](#)

From the "This'll bring in the tourists" department (Part Two):

"Here in the home of William Faulkner, we take intense, almost perverse neuroticism as a sign of emotional depth."

Ted Ownby, who studies Southern culture at the University of Mississippi

Regional Convention Calendar



Millenniumcon 11

Gaming con.

November 14-16, 2008

Wingate Inn & Conference Center

1209 North Interstate Highway 35

Round Rock, TX 78664

Round Rock / Central Texas area

This year, the entire Wingate Conference Center will be dedicated to miniature, board, card, roleplaying and other games. This effectively doubles the gaming space available for all games. Individual role playing games and RPGA events are still welcome.

Our convention caters to many different gaming tastes and styles. Unlike other conventions that support multiple genres, we don't have one group trying to be all things to all people. The historical miniatures and board gaming events are hosted by [Lone Star Historical Miniatures](#). Our RPGA events are hosted by the [Austin RPGA](#).

To participate in the RPGA games, you must first register for the convention and pay the registration fee and also register for the RPGA events. This is two separate registrations. You must do both.

We're looking for all sorts: RPGs, Board Games, Card Games, and Miniatures.

Millennium has a particular need for classical historical periods (ACW, Napoleonics, Ancients, etc). Last year, there was more demand for these types than we could meet, and the slots filled up quickly.

Izumicon 2008

New Adventures in Anime & Manga

November 21-23, 2008

Sheraton Midwest City and Reed Convention Center

5800 Will Rogers Rd.

Midwest City, OK 73110

Oklahoma City, OK area

Cosplay, panels, screenings, dealer's room (including artist alley tables), guests, and more!

Oni-Con 2008

Anime con

Oni-Con rescheduled due to Hurricane Ike

December 19-21, 2008

George R. Brown Convention Center

1001 Avenida de las Americas

Houston, TX 77010

Hilton Americas
1600 Lamar
Houston, TX 77010
Anime Music Video Contest, Art Show, and more!

Con-Jour

Gaming, Fantasy & Science Fiction Convention
January 30-February 1, 2009
University of Houston, Clear Lake
Houston, Texas

Greater Houston metropolitan area

GOH: Absurd

Guests: Glen Welch, Larry Friesen, John Moore, Scott Padget, Kevin P. Boerwinkle, Richard Leon, Simon Nightingale, Paul Abell, Amy Sisson

While we do have gaming at our convention, that is not the only thing we have there. We also have guests on writing and fandom, and we will be showing sci-fi/horror/fantasy films.

Presented by the UHCL Gamer's Guild in partnership with the UHCL Film & History Club.



OwlCon XXVIII

Gaming, Fantasy, & Science Fiction Convention
February 6-8, 2009
RMC/Ley Student Center
Rice University

Houston, TX

OwlCon is an annual gaming convention at Rice University, Houston, TX, dating back to 1980. We will feature table top and live action role playing games, miniatures games and events, historical miniatures, board games, card games, a dealers' room, and more. OwlCon 2k2 gaming events will include RPGA events, official tournaments for Warhammer 40k, Warmaster, Shadowfist, and Mage Knight, Matchbox-scale Car Wars, World of Darkness tabletop games, a Vampire LARP, a Call of Cthulhu LARP, a Crossroads fantasy LARP, and many other games with prizes galore! OwlCon will once again be swarming with official demo folks for various game systems to give you a chance to try some of their great games. We will also have open gaming, an anime room, a TV lounge running movies, some "all nighter" events, and our second annual OwlCon party and costume contest in Valhalla.

Ikkicon 3

Japanese Animation & Pop Culture Convention
February 6-8, 2009
The Hilton Austin
500 East 4th Street

Austin, Texas 78701

Anime Idol, Anime Music Video(AMV) Contest, Anime Poetry Slam, Dance Contest, Media Gallery (Artist Alley & Exhibitions), Dealers Room, Art Show, and more!

ConDFW VIII

A Science Fiction & Fantasy Event

February 20-22, 2009

Crown Plaza Suites Dallas - Park Central

7800 Alpha Road

Dallas, TX 75240

(Dallas / Fort Worth Metroplex area)

Author Guest of Honor: Jim Butcher

Author Guest of Honor: David Weber

The Expected Activities:

Art Show, Autographs, Dealer's Room, Con Suite, Panel Discussions, Gaming, Readings, Freebie Tables

And the Unexpected:

Annual Sci-Fi Spelling Bee, Pro Artist Drawing Challenge, Charity Book Swap, Hard Science Panels, Short Story Contest, Beauty Pageant...of Sorts..., "Late Night Double Feature", Sci-Fi Pictionary

Sponsored by the Texas Speculative Fiction Association

Furry Fiesta

Texas' only furry convention, and the first one in the state of Texas in over four years.

February 20-22, 2009

Crowne Plaza Hotel North Dallas - Addison

14315 Midway Road

Addison, TX 75001

(Dallas / Fort Worth / Metroplex area)

Dealer's Den, Artist Alley, Video Room, Charity, and more!

Chimaeracon 2009

South Texas Gaming, Scifi, Anime & More Fest

March 6-8, 2009

Crossroads Convention Center (South corner of Crossroads Mall)

4522 Fredericksburg Rd. (SW of I-10/Loop 410 interchange)

Balcones Heights, TX

San Antonio, TX area

Three days of fan-run, locally-organized game, anime and science fiction/fantasy events.

Game Genres: Old Skool, New Wave, Table Top, Miniatures, Card, Electronic, Scale, Role-playing, Live-Action Role-Playing

Game Titles: TBA

Features:

Special Guest(s); Costume/Cosplay Contest; Anime Room; Game Demonstrations; Vendors; Artist Alley; Door Prizes and more to come!

Charity: TBA

Overheard during one of the parties Saturday night (4 Oct 08) at FenCon V:

“Have you ever noticed that ‘commode’ and ‘commodity’ share the same root word?”

Unknown speaker

All-Con 2009

Multi-format convention featuring autographs, gaming, comics, & a burlesque show.

March 13-15, 2009

Crowne Plaza Hotel North Dallas - Addison

14315 Midway Road

Addison, TX 75001

(Dallas / Fort Worth Metroplex area)

For three days All-Con provides an umbrella of content supporting fans of Science Fiction, Fantasy, Renaissance, Anime, Costuming, Theater / Performing Arts, Mystery, Art, Crafts, Collecting, and Film Making. To help 'give back' there are several charity events at the convention every year.

REVELcon 20

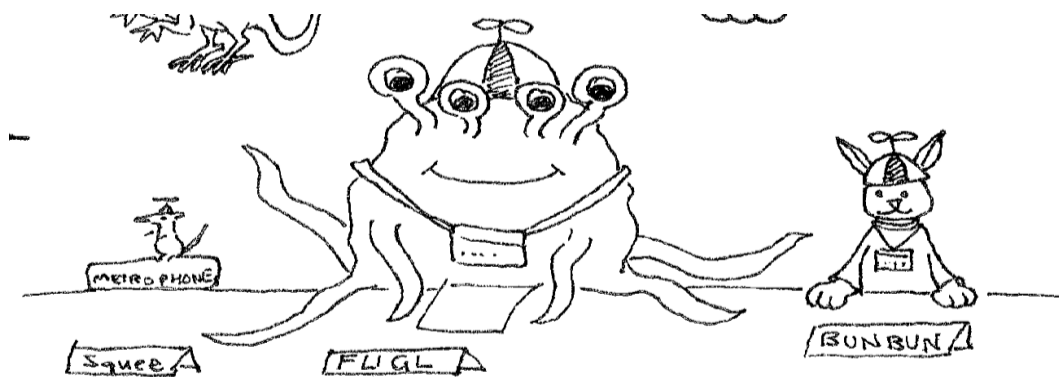
The Little Con with the Texas-Size Heart

March 13-15, 2009

Houston, Texas

Revelcon is THE only fan-run relax-a-con/zinefest in the Southwest US. It's a fab weekend of vids, panels, art, zines, merchandise, food and fun! [Note - Revelcon is an adults-only/18-and-over con.]

[REVELcon/Friends of Fandom Art Show](#)



ADVERTISEMENT:

Loads of fun gabbing with your favorite fen can be found at The Virtual Fandom Lounge , found at www.lasvegrants.com and clicking on the link. Enjoy!

Already the twelfth issue is shaping up to be another interesting issue. The lead article is already on hand, and comes from the prolific pixels of Taral Wayne. I really don't want to give its subject matter away, but I can say this: it is a well-written cautionary tale. Beyond that, I don't want to say anything.

Besides the regular appearing items – “Figby”, “Penney for your Thoughts” and the lettercolumn – I have on hand a bit of fancy that recently smack me upside the head. Just for the heck of it, I Googled in my name to see what would happen, and discovered all sorts of prior incarnations of myself. It gave me an idea for an article, and so I have bits and pieces of it done already. If you're lucky, it will never be completed. IF you're lucky, that is.

Thinking ahead reminds me to bug Dan Steffan for the twelfth issue's cover. He's up next, so it's time to break out the thumbscrews again. I know he's a busy fellow, but if Dan can't come through, I have yet another lovely Ditmar selection to use. Either way, the twelfth issue is guaranteed a fine start.

And so, the year 2008 comes to a rousing end for yours truly. I was not able to make it out to Corflu Silver in Las Vegas, but thanks to modern technology and the ever-present presence of Bill Mills, I was virtually there. So were many others, too, and it was a lot of fun.

Which reminds me: One of the fanzines listed on page 18 is Peter Sullivan's *The Virtual Tucker Hotel*, which is the guide to using the Virtual Fandom Lounge. This zine is easily accessible at <http://efanzines.com> and lists upcoming events on TVFL, plus transcriptions of chats when-ever possible. Peter is doing a wonderful job, even though it seems TVFL usage is mostly by the same folks: Dean Sweatman, Curt Philips, Dian Crayne, Shelby Vick, Peter, and myself. Please do not be afraid to join in the fun. The best chatrooms are the ones where we have what is known as a “flash event”: the word goes out on a listserv that so-and-so is in TVFL, and before you know it, a half dozen or so fans have joined in. It really is a lot of fun, and I encourage you cyber-fans to get in on the action. It doesn't matter if you're a veteran fan or a neo-fan; get involved, introduce yourself, and have fun!

End free plug for The Virtual Fandom Lounge. Thus, until next issue, in the immortal words of my hero, Red Green: “Keep your stick on the ice.”

- John Purcell

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