

# ASKANCE



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## Askance

Edited and published by John Purcell, 3744 Marielene Circle, College Station, TX 77845-3926

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What you have here in your hands (or on screen) is 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 cold hard cash in the amount of \$2.00 USD. Bribes are also accepted, natchery. Of course, if you send in locs, articles, and artwork, you've earned a life-time free subscription. Heckuva deal, eh?

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**MEMBER FWA (SINCE 2007!)**



Art: Marc Schirmeister  
Photoshop: Taral Wayne

# Askance

## issue sixteen

### Bemused natterings

To a certain extent, I guess you could call this particular issue the special Post-Worldcon issue of *Askance*. By that I mean every major article and contributor to this ish is connected to either Anticipation or other worldcons in one way or 'tuther. Think about it: the lead-off articles are about then by Anticipation's Fan Guest of Honor, Taral Wayne, who was also a finalist nominee for the Best Fan Artist Hugo (more on that later); then there is yet another one of my Not-Worldcon reports, a long-running tradition of mine since I haven't been to one of these events since 1978 (more on this later, too); Lloyd Penney's fanzine review column is not really about zines he's read, but Lloyd's personal assessment of running Anticipation's fanzine lounge (a rousing success, by all accounts, and more on this later); Robert Sabella's article is about a landmark Hugo Award winning novel from 1969, Ursula K. LeGuin's *The Left-Hand of Darkness*; and then "Figby" is just simply here because it is, and nothing more needs to be said about that.

So let's get right into it.

### Department of corrections

Even the best of us make really stupid mistakes. Lastish I made a couple of these, so I guess that doesn't make me one of the "best of us." Oh, well. This is something I will just have to live with.

First off, on the colophon page, I miss-numbered the issue number (gawd, but that makes sense, don't it?). Instead of listing the fifteenth issue as Volume III, Number 3, it was shown as Volume III, Number 2. What you hold in your hand or are looking at on your computer screen right now is Volume III, Number 4, so the 15<sup>th</sup> ish was really Volume III, number 3. This is all because I decided back when I started this zippy little fanzine that each volume would have 6 issues since it's a bimonthly zine. Thus, since *Askance* is now into its third year, this is the third volume and the fourth issue into it. Got that? Good. I really don't do math very well, y'see.

The other dumb-ass mistake I made was in the byline for Steven H Silver's article about Mabel Normand. Steven prefers not to have a period (.) after his middle initial, much as R Laurraine Tutihasi (long-time fan now living in Arizona who puts together one of FAPA's long-running zines, *Feline Mewsings*) doesn't have one of those after her first initial. Therefore, consider this a correction to Steven H Silver's name in lastish and also a public apology to that rat bastard. 🇺🇸

## Who's Responsible?

That sub-heading is probably more accurately descriptive of this issue's contributors than anything else I could have written. So here are this issue's culprits:

### Bill Fischer

He's back, this time wrapping up the *Plan 9 from Outer Space* tribute (?) series of Figby toons. Bill tells me he has some other \*ideas\* for future installments, so be forewarned. Also, I have asked for more Wikiphilia entries. The man has a warped sense of humor, and I for one am glad for that.

### Janet Hetherington

Please welcome this young lady to *Askance*. Janet is a free-lance writer, cartoonist, and screen-writer from Ottawa, Canada; she interviewed Taral Wayne before Anticipation, this year's Worldcon (in case you've forgotten by now), and thanks go to Taral himself who e-mailed both the interview and article to me for inclusion in this post-worldcon issue of *Askance*. This article first appeared in a comics webzine, The Pulse.

### Lloyd Penney

Fresh from his conquest of running the Anticipation fanzine lounge, Lloyd (at my request) wrote about the experience in his fanzine review column this time. It is interesting, and reinforces the consensus opinion that the fanzine lounge at the Montreal Worldcon was the best party, or at least the One and True Place To Be. Sounds like a good time to me!

### Robert M. Sabella

The editor/publisher of the fanzine *Visions of Paradise* sent in a fine contribution about one of the more significant novels published in 1969. Not only was that a milestone year in America and the world – Woodstock, Apollo 11, et al – but it was a seminal year in the field of Science Fiction. Bob takes a retrospective look at Ursula K. LeGuin's multi-award winning novel, *The Left Hand of Darkness*. I really should re-read that book. Again.

### Isaura Simon

It is with great honor that I present this issue's cover artist, Isaura Simon. She is a one talented artist, which you can see by going to her website, [www.isauras.com](http://www.isauras.com). I discovered her work while surfing the Internet – googled in "science fiction artwork" – and was struck by this particular piece, an older one, titled "Sea Elf." Isaura was the December 2002 Artist of the Month for Infinitee 3-D Graphics (<http://www.infinitee-designs.com/index.htm>), and she also has work on display at [www.elfwood.com](http://www.elfwood.com) and [www.graphicsforum.com](http://www.graphicsforum.com). You will definitely see more of her work here. I'm working on it.

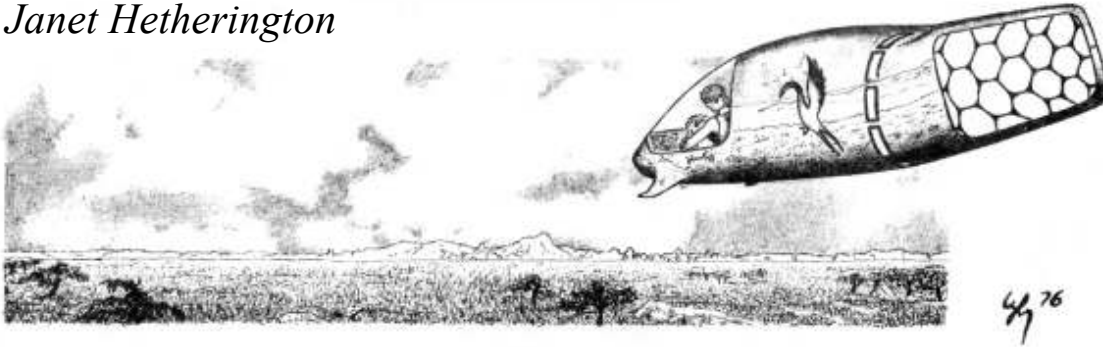
### Taral Wayne

He wuz, robbed, I tell yuz...

Just kidding! Once more with feeling, Taral returns two-fold: first, as the featured subject in an interview with Janet Hetherington, and then with an article that all of us can probably relate to. "Beaver on my Back" is reprinted from rich brown's great fanzine, *Beardmutterings* #4 (1983), and is still as applicable and enjoyable to read today as it was then. It appears here with its original illustrations.

# TARAL WAYNE'S WINDING ROAD TO WORLDCON

*By Janet Hetherington*



The **67<sup>th</sup> World Science Fiction Convention**, [a.k.a. Anticipation](#), is taking place in Montreal, Canada, from August 6 to 10, 2009. This year, graphic stories are getting their due thanks to a brand-new category in the Hugo Awards for Best Graphic Story, and famed novelist and comics scribe **Neil Gaiman** is the Worldcon Guest of Honour.

But Worldcon is, and always has been, a fan convention. This year's Fan Guest of Honour is **Taral Wayne**, an accomplished artist and writer whose work has graced both the science fiction and comic book genres. His specialties include drawing cool futuristic machinery and attractive anthropomorphic characters (or furies), and he was the key artist on the comic book series, *Tales of Beatrix*.

This year, Taral was awarded the Rotsler Award (lifetime award given by SCIFI Inc., named after prolific fan artist Bill Rotsler) and has been nominated for a Hugo for Best Fan Artist. The Hugos will be given out at Worldcon.

When asked about these achievements, Taral is modestly proud. "I suppose the reason my name appears on the [Hugo] ballot from time to time is that I've been contributing art to fanzines for over 35 years, and people began to feel its about time fandom took notice of it," Taral says. "While my work hasn't been everyone's cup of tea, they generally concede my skill and persistence."

"I fell in love with fandom in November of 1971, when I answered an ad in the back of a used magazine I had bought for fifteen cents," Taral recalls. As a newbie (novice fan), the Toronto native turned up at the next meeting of the local fan club -- the Ontario Science Fiction Club (OSFiC) --where Taral saw a fanzine for the first time. He was hooked.

It took the budding creator a while to learn the ropes and to understand that fandom wasn't limited to just that club. "With my new friends, I went to conventions, wrote and drew for fanzines, mimeographed some of my own, and lived the lifestyle to the hilt," Taral says.

Taral also notes that his fan art work is currently being rediscovered... and digitally enhanced. "In the last two or three years, you might say I've made a bit of a comeback," he says. "I was busy with comics and furies for most of the 90s, but shortly after Y2K, my interest in SF fandom revived. I raked through 2,000 or 3,000 furry drawings to see what was presentable for SF 'zines, and began to send some of it out. I also did new art, meant for fandom. Since 'zines were more and more often in digital format, I was able to do color covers, which added possibilities there hadn't been before."

## Dedicated to Form

Taral is well-known for drawing shapely bunny-girls (a commission favorite), but he also has an affinity for drawing machines.

"Since I began drawing at a very tender age, you can be sure I was drawing machinery, like hot-rods and jet fighters, long before I discovered 'girlie' characters," Taral says. "Of course, once I was old enough, I became as dedicated to the well shaped female form as I was to the well-oiled mechanism."

"I've always had a minor talent for mechanical things," he says. "As long as I could see how the parts moved, I had a chance to fix a thing. Circuits and chips are something else again. As much as I enjoyed using my hands to draw, I also liked to use my hands to build model kits, or fool around with stuff. I continue to be fascinated by replicas of military helicopters, fire trucks, choppers, spaceships, racing cars, firearms, ships, even miniature figures. I like having them around the house on view, so that the eye is constantly stimulated. And I enjoy handling them -- opening the doors, peering in the engine compartment, loading or unloading the chambers, imagining it flying at 20,000 feet, repositioning the hockey stick, or just about to touch down on the surface of another planet."

"In a nutshell that's how I do my research," he says. "I handle things, and over time commit them to memory, and often won't need to refer to a book or photo at all."

### **Artistic Aspirations**

Like many fans, Taral's interest in literary SF led him to genre movies and television, including the classic show *Star Trek*. "I was an avid fan of the original *Star Trek*, though never a Trekker," he says. "It was a treat to see on the screen what you could only read before."

His interest in the genre also affected his life goals. "All my life I was waiting for the future," Taral says. "But the future is never here. Not entirely anyway. Bits of it have arrived -- the exploration of the solar system, laptop computers, cell phones, global positioning systems in your car -- but there's always more to come. I guess I could say that wanting something better, rather than settling for what there was, is as good as any explanation for why I am the way I am."

Taral followed his artistic aspirations through his SF fan art, and he also pursued doing comics professionally. "As a very young kid I thought I might like to be an anatomical illustrator," Taral says. "Fortunately, that takes a medical degree, and I suspected early on that several years of medical school wasn't in the cards."

"My real ambition was to get into humor magazines like *Mad*, or maybe into comics," he says. "I wasn't very clear about how to do that, or exactly what sort of comics. Newspaper strips, or the funny books?"

"This was before Marvel came along and spoiled everything, by driving all but superheroes out of the field," Taral comments. "So, by comics I was likely thinking something more like *Donald Duck*, or *Sgt. Rock*, or perhaps even *Magnus Robot Fighter*. When it became obvious that spandex and capes were mandatory in the comics business, I abandoned any ambition that way for the time being."

"I did try to start a newspaper strip or two," Taral reveals, "but found out that the local newspapers weren't interested in finding new talent."

"Eventually I did break into comic books," Taral says. "It was a different genre in the 80s, and for a while it was possible to do quite well without knuckling under to the demand for superheroes, or to sell your soul to Marvel or DC."

Taral found himself witnessing, and participating in, the birth of anthropomorphic comics and its fandom, "I was a founding member of *Rowrbrazzle*, the flagship apa for anthros, and participated



in many of the earliest 'zines," advises Taral. "It was in the days when black-and-white comics sold several thousand copies, and the creators made slender livings. I sold a number of minor efforts -- filler art for letter columns, and pin-ups in *Amazing Heroes*. Then I began doing covers for a comic called *Gremlin Trouble*."

Taral also worked on *Tales of Beatrix*, created by Steve Gallacci. The title, about a rabbit girl who is forced into the role of superhero for hire, was published from 1996 to 1998 by Mu Press, Vision Comics and Shanda Fantasy Arts.

Drawing the comic proved to be both a burden and a delight. "I learned that it was effin' hard work," Taral comments.

"I actually kept a journal for much of the time I worked on the first issue, and recorded my thoughts," he says. "Pity I don't remember them in any detail... But I recall discovering that storyboarding a comic is much like acting. It isn't enough to break a plot down into individual scenes, with spectacular graphic effects like *Spawn*. At least that approach never appealed to me. I found it was more like putting myself into the heads of the characters on the page, and trying to understand how they thought, and how they would express themselves in anger, fear, despair, or laughter."

"I also learned that good work is no guarantee of success," he says. "Sales were awful. In part it was because Marvel chose exactly that moment to seek Chapter Eleven. But also, I found non-furries wouldn't read a furry book."



"I had enjoyed doing *Beatrix*, no question of it," Taral says. "Sometimes I imagine going back to the character when I'm retired on the public dole, and can afford to spend all year on a profitless book if I want."

### The Winding Road

Despite finding the road to artistic fulfillment a hard and winding one to follow, Taral has stuck to his love of fandom, and has continued to draw and write.

"I stuck with fandom for 35 years, so what does that say?" Taral muses. "Oddly enough, though, I think most of my energy went into *writing* for fanzines, not drawing. And since the Hugos are decided by essentially irrational impulses, the weight of the writing I've done, added to the weight of the art, seems to have put my name on the ballot again. Short of actually winning the award as a fan artist, I suppose my greatest ambition now is to get nominated as a fan *writer*!"

"If I have a plan at all, it's to write more, and perhaps write things I can illustrate myself," he says. "It's an idea I've spoken of more than once in the past, and done little to bring about."

"So, strangely enough, I wrote my first

children's book a few days ago," Taral reveals. "It's not a book I plan to write, or I'm in the process of writing, it's *finished*. Period. Next step is to do a couple of pages of illustration (out of a dozen or so total), and figure out how one goes about selling to a publisher. The book isn't *Harry Potter*, or even *Goosebumps*, but it's a start."

When Taral attends Worldcon as Fan Guest of Honour, he is eager to chat with fellow fans about his work and experiences.

"So far, Anticipation has made few demands," Taral says. "What I have wanted to do, I've offered to do. That includes designing a t-shirt for the con, doing some of the art for publications, as well as submitting a written item or two. I've volunteered for Program, and have suggested an unorthodox sort of workshop for artists. Beyond that, I would like to sit in the dealers' room with a coffee machine, and donuts, and be available for people to talk with most of the day."

Fans will also be able to view some of Taral's art in the Worldcon Art Show. "I've been given a little space in the art show," Taral says. "I'm essentially a minimalist, and most of my original work is in black-and-white. I've decided that I'll only be showing work that is Not For Sale, so that I can show some of my best. Perhaps a couple of comics pages, maybe some color prints (since most of my coloring over the last several years has been digital), and the majority likely b&w drawings I've done for my own enjoyment."

"Most likely I'll have a few of my CD folios with me, but on the whole I don't expect to use the con for selling," he says. "My experience as a dealer over several years suggests that selling is a full time job, and half-hearted efforts to flog a product will have disappointing results. As well, most of the material (comics, prints, and folios) I sold when I was a dealer was at furry cons. It isn't well suited to a science fiction Worldcon."

Attending Worldcon is not a new experience for Taral... nor is visiting Montreal.

"Montreal is an appropriate place for this year's Worldcon," Taral says. "It's the 67<sup>th</sup> one, you know? The first, and so far only, time I was in Montreal was for the World's Fair [Expo 67]. That was 1967. And I still have the 'program book' for it."

"My first Worldcon was in Toronto, Torcon II, in 1973," Taral remembers. "Even now it's regarded as one of the high points in a history of Worldcons that go back to 1939."

Naturally, this year's Worldcon will also be a high point for Taral. "Dan Steffan -- a talented fan artist himself, with years of seniority over me -- once said I was the most under-appreciated artist in fandom," Taral comments. "So, yes, it was nice to actually come out on top for once. Perhaps it's a harbinger of bigger things to come. Although, in fandom, I don't know what's bigger than GoH at a Worldcon."

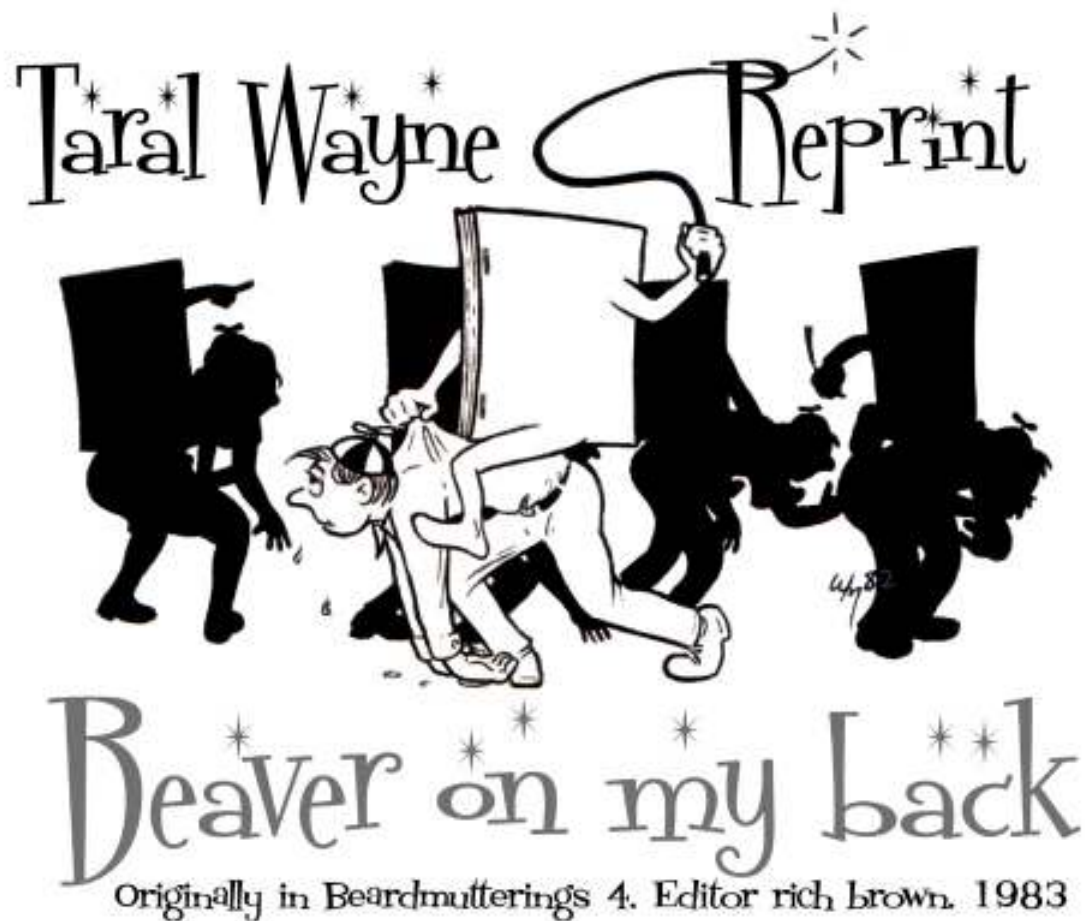
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*Janet Hetherington is a freelance writer, cartoonist and screenwriter who shares a studio in Ottawa, Canada, with artist Ronn Sutton and a ginger cat, Heidi. Follow Janet on Twitter (BestDestiny).*

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"I also consider it very important for the fanzine to actually be a science fiction fanzine, engaged with and wanting to be part of science fiction fandom." - *Claire Brialety*





"I'm just a collector," is an expression that many of you have heard. No-one starts off dealing. But once on that first high that comes from the felty texture of twiltone, and the discovery of your name in print, there is no coming down until the insatiable beaver on your back has robbed you of dignity, principle, and self-control. The first harmless looking issue of a Brian Earl Brown apazine arriving in its postmarked, brown-paper wrapper, will rush you pell-mell to –

Divorce: "Honey, either those 89 boxes of moldering fanzines leave the house or I do!"

"Will you be alright at your mother's, Dear?"

Insanity: "...six, seven, eight, eight point five, *giggle*, eight point seven five, three point one, three point two, three point three, three point four, three point five, hahahahaaa... FIFTEEN! (Trails off into hysterical laughter)."

Genocide: "Dear Editor,  
I'm writing to try and egg those two fannish nincompoops in the last issue on. I think they are only expressing the true fannish spirit, that of pettiness and backbiting. If it weren't for such silly and stupid

exchanges as these, fandom as we know it would not survive. When was the last time you boys stepped back and had a good laugh at yourselves? Me and my circle of friends laugh at you all the time. Maybe you guys should develop a social life... etc.

Yours, Jophan"

Masturbation: \*Bang, bang\* "Are you in there still? You've been in there half an hour with those fanzines!" \*Bang, bang\* "What are you doing in there with those Austins, Wallers, and Bodés?"

And, finally, to support your uncontrollable habit... well... Let me start from the beginning.

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A lurid red copy of *Riverside Quarterly* propositioned me early in 1971. I read it on the premise that it couldn't hurt me only this once, and of course I was hooked. Soon, I had a box full of fanzines, and was publishing one of my own. From a single box of mediocre tradezines, my stash expanded out from under the bed, into numerous, stolen, plastic milk crates.<sup>1</sup> But, that I graduated from ordinary street traffic – Prehensile, Starling, Maya, Karass – into hard core collecting was due to meeting the first real collector I knew.

His name was Bob Allen<sup>2</sup>, and he had been collecting fanzines for several years without giving himself away. Then he got religion, perhaps, and renounced his vice by offering his fanzines for sale in Yandro. No-one followed up for almost a year. I remember seeing his ad, but thinking (as neos do) that this sort of thing belonged to another world that I wasn't yet a part of, I didn't respond. Months later, I got in touch with Bob Allen after browsing through that Yandro a second time, and saw his ad again. It struck home this time. The seller was right here in Toronto, and so far hadn't sold a thing. On an appointed day, I brought along two friends who also had the bug. It was firmly understood that I had first pick, but even second pick turned out to be choice indeed! We scored heavily on copies of *Spacewarp*, *Lighthouse*, *ConFusion*, *D'Journal*, a first Worldcon memory book, and even a mint mimeographed copy of Heinlein's 1941 Denvention speech<sup>3</sup>. What we didn't know was that this was only a taste.

My first heavy deal was with Ethel Lindsay, who sold me more than a couple of hundred dollars of *Hyphens*, *Quandries*, *Retributions*, *Aporrhetas*, *Habakkuks*, *Oopslas*, *Grues*, *Voids*, *Fanacs*, and half of the rest of the other great old fanzines I knew anything about.

I scored another hit with a box of 40's material that was being sold like nickel and dime bags under a table at a con, by a dealer who hadn't graded them well enough. An arrangement was reached to sell me the whole box for \$15. 90% of it had no other distinction than being old. But lost among the crudzines was the original printing of *Ah, Sweet Idiocy!*

Next, I gobbled up the bulk of Bill Grant's collection. After he died in 1977 or 78, his effects were sold to a local dealer I knew, who was supplying me. I had the opportunity of adding

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<sup>1</sup> You couldn't buy them then. You can't buy them now. The ones at Ikea cost twenty times what they cost to make, and are ten times flimsier than the sort used by your grocery store. They can't possibly support an honest stack, if full of records or fanzines. So what else can you do?

<sup>2</sup> Who is Bob Allen? I have no idea. He was never an active fanzine fan that I knew of, so I suppose he must have been a pure collector who, for reasons we'll never know, was for a time collecting fanzines.

<sup>3</sup> It cost me two whole dollars. In those days the '41 worldcon speech hadn't been reprinted, and was worth a fabulous sum. How much? Lloyd Curry, the noted book dealer, once had it listed at \$1,100 US. Oddly, I doubt its worth that much now, 25 or 30 years later. In the meantime it *was* reprinted, you see...

one of the most nearly complete collections of Canadian zines of the past to my own. That was not all. To stoke the furnace of greed, there were more *Hyphens*, more *Quandries*, **two** *Harp Statesides*, an *Enchanted Duplicator*, *Spaceships*, *Oopslas*, and embarrassing riches of *CanFans*. One unassuming bag of unsorted pages, that I paid \$5 for, yielded fifteen un-collated, unnumbered copies of *CanFan*'s big anniversary issue – an edition officially numbered at 125 copies. I even found original *CanFan* cover art in the bag.<sup>4</sup> There was a tremendous amount of chaff as well, but I was a “completist” now, and had no discrimination.

I began scrounging for any handout, and started excavating through the piles of shit left on Neo-Fan's Room tables for copies of *Shambles*, *Rune*, and *Amor de Cosmos*. Two *Energumens* turned up at an Autoclave. A *Granfalloon* and *Tomorrow And...* were found in a freebie pile on the floor at the SF book store, *Bakka*. Terry Hughes took pity and gave me copies of *Title* he didn't want. I had no shame that I was taking zines out of the hands of neos – I had a collection of my own to feed, and I was ruthless.

Then I began hanging out with questionable people “in the trade.” At a Fanoclasts meeting, a swarthy-looking man with thick glasses whispered to me, “feelthy fanzines meester?” That was how I met Arnie Katz. Arnie introduced me to Bill Kunkle, and they both laid some heavy ones on me – copies of *Rats*, *Tandom*, *Cipher*, and *Focal Point* that they kept specifically to corrupt the unsuspecting. Thereafter, I became a regular “user” of *Swoon*, and *Four Star Extra*.

The biggest deal of all was made with Linda Bushyager. She was quitting the habit, and arranged with Victoria Vayne and myself to dispose of her entire collection. She was given \$400 fast money, and a cut of any street trafficking we did with her goods. Whereupon, she retired to a small casino in Atlantic City...<sup>5</sup> Linda thought herself well quit of her collection. But Victoria and I – co-inheritors of her *Double:Bills*, *Outworlds*, *Starlings*, *Warhoons*, *Waste Papers*, *Energumens*, *Aspidistras*, *En Gardes*, *Motas*, *Span Inqs*, *Eggs*, *Rataplans*, mimeo issues of *Locii*, *Beabohemas*, *Randoms*, *Syndromes*, *Phantasmagorias*, *Canticles for Leibowitzes*, *Kratophanies*, *Kwalhioquas*, *Beardmutterings*, *Algols*, and *Placebos* – never wondered at our luck. We hardly even quibbled over the spoils.

Time passed unnoticed behind a twiltone veil. All that registered was the need for ever-increasing fixes of pernicious paper opium. New-made friends were supplying me. *Le Zombies* and *Chanticleers* from Schirm, a *Pavlat-Evans Index* from Bruce Pelz. My habit began to outstrip my ability to satisfy it when Bruce offered me a full run of *Xero* that I couldn't forget, at a price I couldn't meet. Then a run of *Hot Shit* escaped me...

This would have happened again and again, if I hadn't found the solution that so many other fanzine junkies have found. Less attractive (and less potent) items from the Bushyager collection were sold to raise money for the rest. An assortment of early Trekzines, almost impressive in spite of what they were, exchanged hands this way for an aggregate \$75. Many long nights of mindless pleasures reading *Nope* or *Innuendo* could be bought for that sort of money. I realized that the best way to be an addict was to deal on the side.

I sold a few duplicate zines to test the water. Then, I made a big sale to a Swedish fan, who paid me an astonishing amount of money – over a hundred dollars. Dealing could become lucrative in its own right, not just a means of supporting a habit. I confidently placed a notice in the *N3F Trader* to sell a large number of old Neffer publications. I demanded a hundred dollars, and got an immediate cash offer. Emboldened, I culled my collection for other saleable, and superfluous items. A full quarter of the six to eight thousand zines I had collected had no earthly interest to anyone other than a sercon fan, or a compulsive completist. I happily abandoned those suddenly un-strategic positions, and offered the freed-up zines to Toronto's *Spaced-Out*

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<sup>4</sup> Yes, I still have it, though not the *CanFans*.

<sup>5</sup> And later still she retired to an immense casino in Las Vegas, Nevada.



handling the collection came to a few odd issues of *Seamonsters*, *Stop Breaking Down*, and *Twil Ddu*. Their absence from my collection, and presence in Victoria's, had been a sore point with me. Representing her to rich, and "Alan"<sup>7</sup> gave me the opportunity I'd been waiting for, to remove those nettles from my hide, and transfer them to my collection (as it were).

But no, I still wasn't through with rich. Like *The Sting*, or some improbable *Mission Impossible* plot, the deal began to take on *Prisoneresque* ramifications. To make clear the intrigues within intrigues, we must step back for a wider view.

I was the paid driver on a road trip with two other Toronto fans to the World Fantasy Con. It was in New Haven that year, I believe. On the way back from the con, the two dark fantasy fans planned we drop in on an out-of-the-way place which I shall only name "Bessboro", home of a dealer in collectables I'll call "Gotbuchs."

Gotbuchs was one of *the* pre-eminent figures in SF, Fantasy, and Dark Fantasy mail order book sales. His basement had much in common with the basement that was my abode at the time, as well as with NORAD headquarters under Cheyenne Mountain. The chief resemblance was in the cinder block motif, and coordinated cement floor. Where Gotbuch's basement owed more to NORAD headquarters was in the bright lighting, surgical cleanliness, mechanistic order, and sheer size. His environment was a subterranean *chez*, whereas mine was a gloomy hole. The first thing I saw on reaching the bottom of his stairs was an original framed Powers. At the bottom of the stairs leading to my basement was only a tattered poster of a Hurricane fighter I picked out of the trash behind a print shop. The main part of Gotbuch's cellar workspace was filled with rank after rank of parallel shelving, holding well kept rows of small-press editions and hardcover firsts. There were fairly few paperbacks, or anything of modest value. Nor were there items of any great age or scarcity. In his business, keeping a book's shelf-life low, and turn-around high, is the key to success. Even so, the stock as it was must have been worth a not-too-shabby fortune – more, probably, than the value of the house above us.

A couple of years earlier, before I had come to adopt a dealer's point of view, I had written to Gotbuchs, and complained about the extortionist prices he demanded for old fanzines. Gotbuchs was gracious about receiving me as a guest in spite of it. In fact, he offered me the run of an un-renovated corner, where he kept the very fanzines whose price I had kvetched about.

They were stacked alphabetically, but not sorted in detail. Shortly after I began, we were leaving soon... I had to look through most of the material much too quickly to savor the thrill. I managed to be thorough, at least, and turned up everything of interest before being hustled out the door, and back behind the driver's wheel. While sorting through the zines, I didn't know what Gotbuchs wanted for them. All I could do, at the time, was put the best on top of the pile, where I could find them easily once I knew whether or not I could afford any. Gotbuchs was a shrewd one though. He wouldn't set a price, but threw my own doctrine back at me.

"Pay whatever you think fair," he said.

Greed flowed through me – an insatiable hunger for nearly everything there. But then he said, "I have to see what you want before you can have it, though. Some I want to include in my next catalog."

In my head, visions of bringing home boxes of *Warhoons*, *Quandries*, *Spaceways*, and *VoMs* for next to nothing faded away. Glumly, I skimmed off the top of each pile, and passed them to Gotbuchs for evaluation.

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<sup>7</sup> I believe that "Alan" was in fact Alan Rosenthal, but I'm just guessing. There was in fact nothing sinister about his identity or the sale.

To my surprise and delight, he was generous. (Crafty Gotbuchs.) He passed copies of *Granfalloon*, *Mota*, and *Starling* back to me with only a glance at their tables of contents. It was evident that he held them in little value, and was looking for names that would register to his bookish customers – Lovecraft, Howard, Heinlein, Sturgeon, Silverberg or the like. He let me take home the *Quandries*, *Shaggies*, *Rats*, *Focal Points*, *Psychotics*, mimeod *Outworlds*, and *Carandaiths*, the single issues of *Warhoon*, *Lighthouse*, *Entropy*, *Energumen*, and numerous old Canadian zines that would find their way into my bibliography-in-progress. He held out only a few of the zines I had selected. Some issues of *Spaceways*, *Double:Bills*, and (surprisingly) *LeBeavers*.<sup>8</sup> Of course, his withholding them made me want them more than ever. I had scored big regardless. He brought a box, and packed virtually all the zines I wanted in it, because they had little value to a collector of *science fiction or fantasy*, and would be too much trouble to catalog!

Of course, while going out the door, all I could think of were those missing issues of *Spaceways*, *Double:Bills*, and *LeBeavers*. Like any true addict, I saw the half empty glass, and not the bulging box of old fannish treasures in my arms.

Crafty Gotbuchs. He knew it too. Doubtless he expected me back for those few remaining zines, with greenbacks in my fists.

As a matter of fact, few of the zines I brought home weren't already safely in my collection. There were only about a dozen items in all the hundreds that Gotbuchs had to offer that I needed to make my collection more complete. In my mind, I had formed the rationale that I would at least "rescue" all those that I could from the mercenary's grasp. And sell them myself, of course. To that end I carried off my box of *Rataplanes*, *Amors*, et al. Doubtless Gotbuchs knew it, and knew that if I sold what he could not, I would bring the money back to him to buy the others. So, by dealing with a professional, I was no longer dealing just to beat the game. I had become a professional. From then on my *dealing* in fanzines would be no more an option than my *collecting* was. The amateur is always outwitted in the end, and I had been co-opted.

In losing my soul to Gotbuchs, I perforce I had to steal the souls of others. Rich brown left me an opening I was swift to exploit. Along with the zines from Victoria, I included bait – a list of even more zines, that I just *happened* to have for sale. When he read it, I imagined, his mouth would water, and his eyes widen at the *D'Journal*, the *Aporrheta*, the *Asp*, the *Chanticleer*, and the *Wendigo* I dangled before him, and could let go for oh-so-reasonable a price. Then I'd have him, as Gotbuchs had me.

But rich would be an easy conquest, his will already destroyed by a hard-riding beaver on his back.

Better to corrupt the innocent. I sent the same list to other unsuspecting souls in Edmonton, who had dallied around the margins of the collecting hell long enough. It was time for them to fall, in a word. In the mail soon, they would be getting their first, hard-to-find copy of some Canadian zine from the glory days of Toronto or Ottawa fandom<sup>9</sup>.

Compliments of their friendly neighborhood pusher.

The first issue is *always* free.

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<sup>8</sup> To this day I have no idea why. LeBev was not one of your legendary fanzines, nor especially desirable. But perhaps there was an Ellison comic review, or some such, that a desperate aficionado would pay well for.

<sup>9</sup> In the original, I named the two, now lost souls. Robert Runté and Mike Hall. It seems less relevant today than it did then, to give a name to them.



Postscript – Fully conscious of the irony, I have to confess that many years later, and not quite so many years ago, I had need to sell most of my fanzine collection. The sum was a tidy \$6,000, which I was paid in several installments that, I have to admit, largely undid the good the money was to have done. (Too much ended up spent on living while waiting for the rest, and not very much at all on catching up with credit card debt.)

I held back about a third of the collection – the crème de la crème, zines by people I counted as friends, as well as anything I had made contributions to. A surprising number of the titles mentioned in the article above are still in my collection. But I had to give value for the money, and perforce parted with most of the old Canadian zines from the 40's and 50's, including all but the special 15<sup>th</sup>. issue of CanFan. Not before I had meticulously recorded the information I needed for my once-and-future Canadian fanzine bibliography, at least. I reluctantly gave up the Starlings, and most of the Runes and Yandros, having gone through the contents with a fine tooth comb and finding them not as impressive as I once thought. On the whole, though, I regard the remains of my collection in many ways superior to what it was. It's 90% of the quality, but only 30% of the sheer mass and volume. In my 550 square foot apartment, that was almost as important a consideration as the money!

I've long since filled up that space with other things, you can be sure!

- TARAL WAYNE



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"After seventy-five days of canned beans, I wouldn't open the door, either."

# Unanticipated Results

## *Another Not-Worldcon Report (sort of) by John Purcell*

Well, it certainly sounds like the 2009 Worldcon was not only an event-filled event, but also, to borrow a Mark Plummer phrase from the current issue of *Banana Wings*, one “stonkingly good party.” Based on what I read in LiveJournal entries from James Bacon, Geri Sullivan, and others, that certainly seems to be an appropriate remark. Post-Anticipation correspondence with Chris Garcia and Lloyd Penney also mirrors this feeling.

However, as everybody knows by now, unless you’re a fanzine fan living under that proverbial rock, this year’s Worldcon was not without its typical brouhahas, ranging everywhere from over-crowding to non-SF related panels to \*shudder\* the Hugo results, which, in apparent deference to the Worldcon’s *nom de plume*, was to be anticipated. Perhaps the best way to proceed from here is to first list out the Hugo Award winners. From the website [www.thehugoawards.org](http://www.thehugoawards.org), here they be:

- **Best Novel:** *The Graveyard Book*, Neil Gaiman (HarperCollins; Bloomsbury UK)
- **Best Novella:** “The Erdmann Nexus”, Nancy Kress (*Asimov’s* Oct/Nov 2008)
- **Best Novelette:** “Shoggoths in Bloom”, Elizabeth Bear (*Asimov’s* Mar 2008)
- **Best Short Story:** “Exhalation”, Ted Chiang (*Eclipse Two*)
- **Best Related Book:** *Your Hate Mail Will Be Graded: A Decade of Whatever, 1998-2008*, John Scalzi (Subterranean Press)
- **Best Graphic Story:** *Girl Genius, Volume 8: Agatha Heterodyne and the Chapel of Bones*, Written by Kaja & Phil Foglio, art by Phil Foglio, colors by Cheyenne Wright (Airship Entertainment)
- **Best Dramatic Presentation, Long Form:** *WALL-E* Andrew Stanton & Pete Docter, story; Andrew Stanton & Jim Reardon, screenplay; Andrew Stanton, director (Pixar/Walt Disney)
- **Best Dramatic Presentation, Short Form:** *Doctor Horrible’s Sing-Along Blog*, Joss Whedon, & Zack Whedon, & Jed Whedon, & Maurissa Tancharoen, writers; Joss Whedon, director (Mutant Enemy)
- **Best Editor Short Form:** Ellen Datlow
- **Best Editor Long Form:** David G. Hartwell
- **Best Professional Artist:** Donato Giancola



- **Best Semiprozine:** *Weird Tales*, edited by Ann VanderMeer & Stephen H. Segal
- **Best Fan Writer:** Cheryl Morgan
- **Best Fanzine:** *Electric Velocipede* edited by John Klima
- **Best Fan Artist:** Frank Wu

And the **John W. Campbell Award for Best New Writer (presented by Dell Magazines):** David Anthony Durham

My congratulations go to all the winners. I have read absolutely none of the fiction winners, and finally saw *Wall-E* on DVD earlier this year; it is a very enjoyable and cute animated movie. I haven't seen Phil Foglio since the late 70s, so it's really cool to see him getting an award for a graphic novel that I have heard of but not seen/read. Good job, Kaja and Phil!

There are definitely some unanticipated results in that listing, one of which has become a real bone of contention in fanzine fandom. I will get to that in a moment. But I am very happy to see Cheryl Morgan winning the Best Fan Writer Award, even though she would not have been my first choice (if he had made the short list, my vote would have gone to Mark Plummer); Cheryl is a fine writer, well-known for her past award-winning zine *Emerald City*, and seems like a very decent



person. (I base this opinion on e-mails we have swapped and by reading her zine.) Frank Wu won again, and again would not have been my first choice. (Taral Wayne should have won, In My Humble Opinion. Sorry, Frank.) I understand that Frank has withdrawn his name from future considerations for this award, which is an honorable thing to do. And finally, it was a real shocker to see *Weird Tales* beating out perennial winner *Locus* in the Semi-prozine category. I have *Weird Tales* bookmarked on my computer, and do enjoy it. This was a real surprise winner, and I like it when something fun like this happens.

Which brings me to the Best Fanzine category. First, though, a caveat on my part: like Mark Plummer wrote in the most recent *Banana Wings*, I am in no position to piss and moan about this result since I haven't been an attending or supporting member of any Worldcon since 1978: if one is not at least a supporting member, one cannot vote on the Hugos. So

saying, I have to accept the results for what they are. Even so, it wasn't until it made the short-list that I had ever heard of *Electric Velocipede*. John Klima's name was familiar to me – he's published professionally – but the zine? Not at all. I perused what I could of it online out of curiosity, and saw that it paid contributors (sort of) and was not truly available for The Usual. Technically it does qualify as a fanzine, which is how it got on the ballot. And, deferring to what

others have written in the fannish press, Klima apparently “campaigning” for the fanzine Hugo and freely admitted to faunching for it.

Let’s get one thing straight first. I don’t fault Klima for falling victim to “Hugo Lust Syndrome.” Anyone who has ever seriously pubbed a fanzine dreams of winning a fanzine Hugo. At last year’s Fencon, Guy Lillian admitted to me he was deep in Hugo plaktow (spelling?). Heck, if I was a decent enough fiction writer – or tried much harder to develop those skills – I have dreamed of being a Hugo nominee and winner of stories and novels. We all have done that to some degree, I am sure. But I don’t write and pub *Askance* for the sole purpose of winning a Best Fanzine Hugo. Yes, for the second year in a row this zippy little fanzine received nominating votes, which is a nice thing to know. However, I never expect to win. Why? Because that’s not my reason for producing this fanzine.

To bend a familiar Shakespeare quote supremely out of shape, a fanzine is a fanzine is a fanzine, by any other name, which smelleth. I enjoy doing what I do with the expectation of getting e-locs and fanzines in return. I am pleased with the results and have a lot of fun producing *Askance*. It keeps me off the streets, and gives me a chance to stay in touch and communicate with fannish friends, which is yet another valid reason. But to win awards? No. Like I said earlier, it’s nice to be recognized for your efforts. Still, Margaret Mitchell did not set out to win an eventual Academy Award for Best Picture when she wrote the novel *Gone With the Wind*. Arthur Miller’s two Pulitzer Prize winning plays were not written in search of high praise and glory: he had things to say and said them extremely well. One more time: Carl Sandburg, e. e. cummings, Maya Angelou, and other great American poets did not set out to write award winning poetry: they were expressing themselves in verse. Sure, their bodies of works stand out in quality and quantity, but the point is that most writers do not deliberately seek awards. Most writers do, in fact, admit that seeking money and a bit of fame (vanity is a valid reason for becoming a writer, I doth believe) are among their driving muses; their primary muse – or so they say – is the desire to express and share their knowledge, ideas, and feelings.

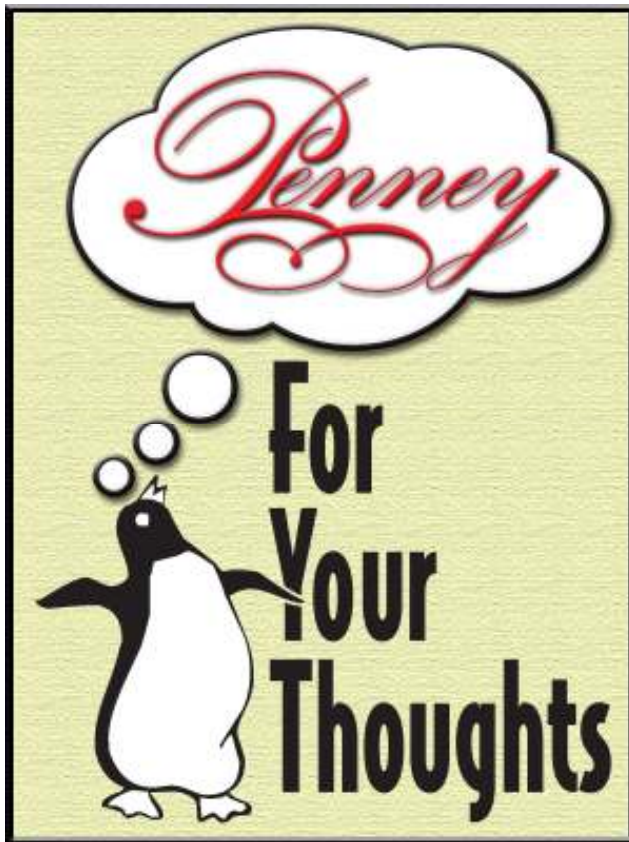
So to bring this long-winded argument to a close, it kind of chaps my hide to hear of someone who is campaigning to win a Best Fanzine Hugo. I don’t like that. Geri Sullivan, in one of her LiveJournal posts, said that doing so demeans the award. I agree. However, unlike Geri, I was not a member of Anticipation. Because of that, her opinion carries more weight than mine. If fanzine fans who are grouching about this year’s results were actual Worldcon attending and supporting members, then I think the argument would be more pertinent. Until then, valid points aside, it all comes across as a case of simple sour grapes.

Then a night or two after the Hugo Awards were announced, I was talking to Arnie Katz on the phone. After sharing some of the results with him, Arnie said that he really didn’t care about the Hugo Awards, pro or fan, that the FAAn awards meant more to him because they are more of a peer-reviewed honor than the Hugos. Reading between the lines here, the point to be reiterated here is that most voting members of a worldcon are not as truly aware of the entire sf/fnal field as those more deeply involved in the field. Does this mean that the Hugos should be juried awards instead of voted on by “fans”? An interesting proposition, one that will definitely generate reams of discussion in fanzines both printed on paper and in pixels dancing across global computer screens.

Thus, Anticipation was yet another in a series of controversial Worldcons. Heck, it probably wouldn’t be a proper Worldcon without one, would it? Through my virtual attendance (via LJ’s and blogs) I discovered that the fanzine lounge was The Place To Be, and if I had actually been in Montreal, you would have probably found me there most of the time. Well done, Yvonne and Lloyd Penney for the job you two did in running the fanzine lounge.

As a matter of fact, with that said, it’s time to segue into Lloyd’s contribution to this issue.

- John Purcell



## Notes on Running a Fanzine Lounge

By Lloyd Penney

About three years ago, when we were coming down off the high of L.A-con IV, an excellent Worldcon, Yvonne and I were quite convinced that this would be our last Worldcon. We started attending them in 1982 with Chicon IV, and thought, that's a pretty good run, but with rising expenses, we felt that Worldcons were pricing themselves out of our reach. Fair enough, we accepted that. And not long after that, we found out about a bid for a Montréal Worldcon.

We were invited to join the committee...no thanks, having to deal with the toxic politics behind Torcon 3 was enough for us. Besides, we've gone to our last Worldcon. One thing we didn't say is that we didn't think Montréal had a ghost of a chance. Fannish memories can be long, and after Torcon 3, I heard some saying that it would be a cold day in hell before they'd ever come to another Canadian Worldcon.

However, they bid and won. Okay, what do we do now? There's a Worldcon now just up the highway from us, you want to go? Sure... Do you want to help out? They're friends... Sure... So, I figure we were among the first to offer our services to the brand new Anticipation. Yvonne said she'd work some time in cash office, as she's done many times before, and I offered to run the fanzine lounge. We'd done it before in 1994 in Winnipeg, and I still had all the paperwork needed to keep track of purchases, so why not?

The year and a half between volunteering and staging was fairly quiet. My department head, John Mansfield, got very little information from the convention and the Palais de Congres, so he had little information to pass along to the departments under his directive, including me. It became frustrating to ask for information and not get any, even basic information about area and location of the lounge. Usually, the answer to any question was silence. When asked for furnishing requirements, I replied that I couldn't provide that kind of information unless I knew how much space I'd have, and the reply to that was more silence. When the demand came through for furnish request or I'd get nothing, I listed five dressed 8' tables, one dressed 8' banquet table, a sofa and 25 chairs, and hoped for the best. Asking where mailed-in fanzines would go, I was assured by others that they'd be waiting for me when I got there.

It's convention time! We drive up with a box of fanzines from some time ago, plus a few packages of zines mailed to our home address. We get to the Embassy Suites, check in, and go to see

where the fanzine lounge is, somewhere on the main convention floor on the second level. There it is, a small area bordered by pipe and drape, about 200 to 300 sq. ft. in size. There are my tables and sofa, and only a few chairs, and all of this is in a corner of an area called the Relax Area, a place to go and sit and work on other things while at the con. There are several boxes full of zines ready. Well, it will have to do.

And, do it does. The tables get covered with fanzines, except for one table which Colin Hinz has already taken and set up his Gestetner with assorted supplies and tools. A tablecloth with all the flags of Canada's provinces and territories went on the banquet table, to provide a little colour, and two signs I had saved from the Winnipeg fanzine lounge went up on the pipe and drape. The map of the main convention floor advertised where we were, and we were ready to go.

And the room, what little there was, worked. I spent a lot of time here, and got friends visiting to cover for me while I went to the fan editors' feast, the Aurora banquet, a few panels and the Hugos' pre-event party. More and more fanzines arrived, some for giving out, some for sale, others for reading within the room itself. Most were American, some were Canadian, some were British, French or Israeli. I figure that we did about \$200 in sales, and money has been sent to TAFF, DUFF, CUFF and the Corflu 50 fund. At times, we had 12 to 15 people in this little area, standing around, sitting with us at the table, checking their e-mail, working on the Gestetner, perusing the wares on the tables, or even having a nap on the sofa. It certainly wasn't the size I wanted, but with all the activity going on, it certainly was the room I wanted.

The fanzine fans enjoyed it, but I still had to wonder if Worldcon is still a place to have a fanzine lounge, given the relative lack of importance the lounge is given. One person confirmed for me that the answer is yes. A young man by the name of Benjamin McGinnis came to have a look. He told me that he's from Montréal, and had been reading and enjoying SF all his life, but had heard about fandom and fanzines, and wanted to find out more. First of all, I pointed out the display for MonSFFA, the Montreal Science Fiction and Fantasy Association, and that to find fellow readers and SF fans, he should join that club. Then he asked more about fanzines, and tried my best to explain to him why there were fanzines, who wrote and illustrated for them, and how to get more fanzines, especially through sites like [eFanzines.com](http://eFanzines.com). At the end, he purchased about \$13 worth of fanzines, gave me the change to donate to CUFF, and walked away with a bag full of zines. I sure hope to see his name elsewhere in MonSFFA publications, and who knows, maybe in this zine some time in the future.

Well, that was my second, and probably last, fanzine lounge. I hope those who found it enjoyed it, and I also hope it was of benefit to the cause. Anticipation was a great time, and may have piqued our interest in Worldcons again. Perhaps see you in Reno?

- Lloyd Penney

[illegible]

The typical fanzines received and viewed listing that would normally follow “Penney for your Thoughts” has been sacked for this issue only. A more complete listing in a different format is being developed for the November, 2009 issue. So there.



# 1969: The Year of the Supernova



by Bob Sabella

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The growth of science fiction as a genre is similar to the evolution of humanity: slow, steady growth with occasional mutational spurts (or supernovas, if you prefer astronomical metaphors rather than biological ones) which affect the entire direction of the genre. The publication of H.G. Wells' **The Time Machine** in 1895 was such a spurt. The publication of Edgar Rice Burroughs' **Under the Moons of Mars** in **All-Story Weekly** in 1912 was another.

The appearance of A.E. van Vogt's "Black Destroyer" in the July, 1939, issue of **Astounding** was a true supernova since it sent incredible reverberations through the entire science fiction field, signaling the birth of John W. Campbell's "Golden Age" of Science Fiction.

1965 was another year of supernova, the year Roger Zelazny burst to the forefront of the sf field. He had already made a small splash in 1963 with the publication of "A Rose For Ecclesiastes," in **Fantasy & Science Fiction**, but he totally dominated 1965, ultimately winning Nebula Awards for "He Who Shapes" and "The Doors of His Face, the Lamps of His Mouth," and a Hugo Award for ... **And Call Me Conrad** (which became **This Immortal** in book form).

The next supernova year was 1969, but I did not realize it until Labor Day weekend when I was attending the World SF Convention in St. Louis. This was at the height of the "New Wave," when young science fiction writers were experimenting with stylistic and thematic changes as well as a more poetic approach to writing. Writers such as Roger Zelazny, Samuel R. Delany, Robert Silverberg, J.G. Ballard, Thomas M. Disch and editors such as Michael Moorcock and Harlan Ellison were pushing science fiction in new directions, broadening its themes and its areas of concern.

There were two major foci of the "New Wave." In Great Britain Michael Moorcock's prozine **New Worlds** was publishing experimental and "literary" fiction by the likes of Brian W.

Aldiss, J.G. Ballard, John Sladek, and Thomas M. Dish. In America, Harlan Ellison published an original anthology, **Dangerous Visions**, whose stated intent was to publish sf stories too dangerous for the prozines of the time. While the majority of its stories could have fit nicely into **The Magazine of F&SF**, it did push the boundaries with several of them, especially Philip José Farmer's "Riders of the Purple Wage" and Samuel R. Delany's "Aye, and Gomorrah..."

While most of the experimentation took place in prozines, Ace Books, one of the most traditional publishers, began a series of *Ace Science Fiction Specials* edited by Terry Carr, longtime sf fan and editor. While many of its books were fairly traditional (Clifford D. Simak's **Why Call Them Back From Heaven?**, James H. Schmitz' **The Witches of Karres**, Wilson Tucker's **The Lincoln Hunters**), the series also contained several more experimental works, mostly by newer writers (Joanna Russ' **Picnic on Paradise**), Roger Zelazny's **Isle of the Dead**, John Brunner's **The Jagged Orbit**).

One of the panel discussions at 1969's St. Louiscon concerned "great" science fiction, and Lester del Rey, one of the most traditional writers and editors in the field, commented that great science fiction went back as far as H.G. Wells and continued as recently as that year with the recent publication of the Ace Science Fiction Special **The Left Hand of Darkness**, by an author I had never heard of previously, Ursula K Le Guin.

While that was the first mention of Le Guin's now-classic novel, it was surely not the last, as **The Left Hand of Darkness** dominated much of the fan critical press the rest of that year, as well as the end-of-the-year recommendations. Eventually it swept both the Hugo and Nebula awards as Best Novel, and it has since been widely considered one of the half-dozen best sf novels ever published.



Shortly after St. Louiscon, I bought and read **The Left Hand of Darkness**, and it was a stunning novel. Slow-paced (which was unusual for sf at that time), it was primarily a character study examining how civilization would develop if people were mostly-androgynous, shifting into male or female at periodic times in their biological cycle, and also how humans would react to such a race. While other New Wave writers, such as J.G. Ballard, had indicated they were concerned with moving the emphasis of science fiction from "outer space" to "inner space," Le Guin combined both those aspects masterfully, as well as raising the literary bar for science fiction higher than it had ever been previously.

What Ursula K Le Guin did with **The Left Hand of Darkness** in 1969 was a quantum leap forward from any science fiction that had ever been written previously, a change of direction which forever shaped the genre, and from which there would be no turning back. Within a half-dozen years following her ground-breaking novel, major introspective works became almost commonplace. D.G. Compton's **Chronocules** and Joanna Russ' **And Chaos Died** appeared in 1970. Barry Malzberg's **Beyond Apollo** and Robert Silverberg's **Dying Inside** appeared in 1972. In recent decades, it has become common for science fiction authors to concern themselves with the literary aspects of their novels without sacrificing any of the "sense of wonder" or fabulous ideas at the core of their works. Michael Bishop in the 1970s, Kim Stanley Robinson in the 1980s, Dan Simmons in the 1990s are just a few examples. But none of this might have happened without the stunning example of Ursula K Le Guin's **The Left Hand of Darkness** in 1969. It is truly one of sf's monumental works.

As for Le Guin herself, **The Left Hand of Darkness** was not her sole masterwork, but merely an introduction to what has been a fabulous career. In her career, she has received 9 Hugo and Nebula Awards, as well as a Newberry Silver Medal and a National Book Award. Her

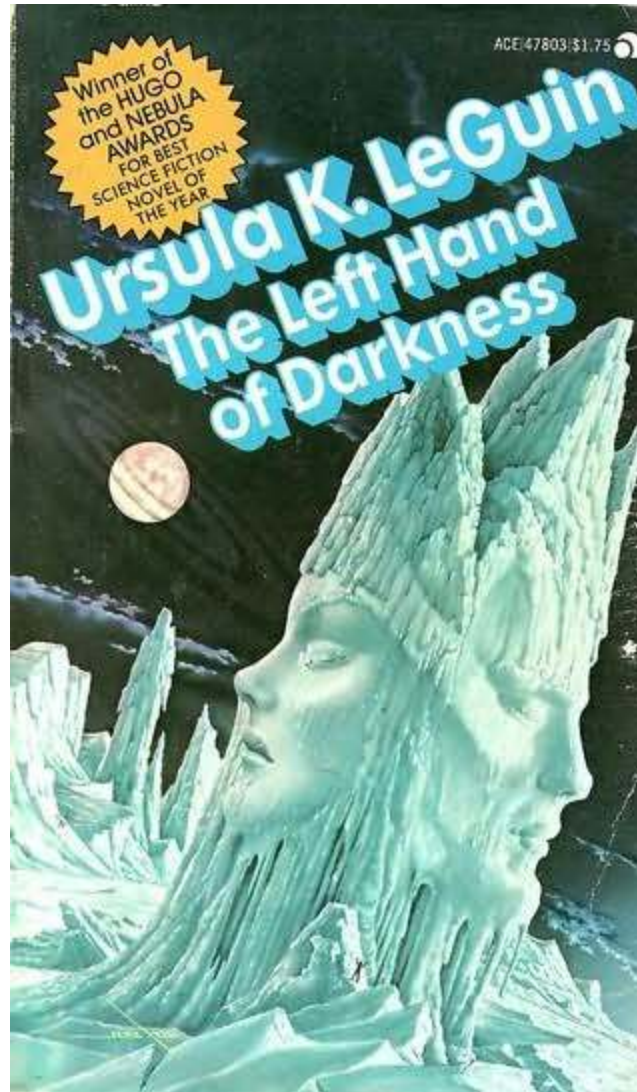
stories have received universal critical acclaim, both from the science fiction critics as well as from the mainstream critics, the first American author to cross that chasm since genre sf split away from general fiction in the 1920s.

Five years after **The Left Hand of Darkness** came **The Dispossessed**, another double winner of both the Hugo and Nebula Awards. Where the former novel had its roots in biology and human-alien relations, the latter was a study of anarchy and revolution with its roots in both sociology and politics, but it was an equally-introspective character study, as in fact all of Le Guin's novels have been.

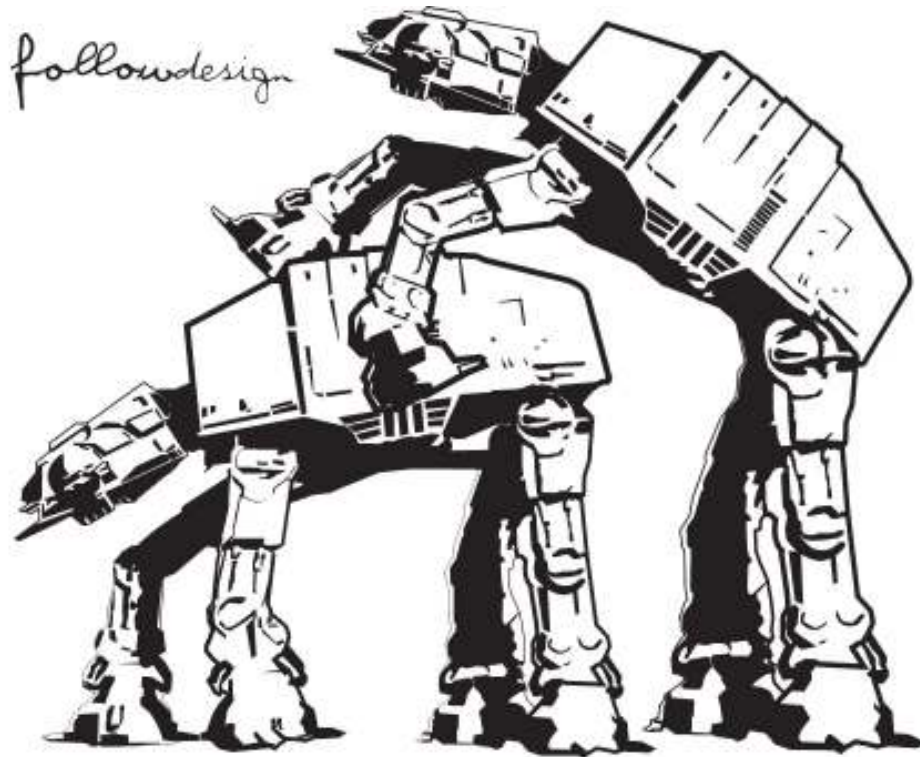
Other important stories include "Nine Lives," one of the earliest science fiction stories to consider the human implications of cloning; "The Word for World is Forest," another story of human-alien relations; "The New Atlantis," a near-future novella of ruined ecology; "Buffalo Gals, Won't You Come Out Tonight?," a story steeped in North American native culture; and the novel **The Lathe of Heaven**, a retelling of the fairy tale about the man given three wishes.

Long before J.K. Rowling made "young adult" fantasies popular, Le Guin wrote an acclaimed series of YA novels which are rich enough and complex enough to be fully satisfying novels for adults as well. The *Earthsea* series originally contained **A Wizard of Earthsea**, **The Tombs of Atuan**, and **The Farthest Shore**. After a gap of 18 years, Le Guin returned to the series with Nebula-winning novel **Tehanu: the Last Book of Earthsea** and then, belying that latter title, two more works **Tales From Earthsea** and **The Other Wind**.

After a long gap during which many of her fans assumed Le Guin had retired from science fiction in favor of mainstream fiction, she returned with an acclaimed series of novellas examining people's lives during a far-future planetary revolution ("Forgiveness Day," "A Man of the People," "A Woman's Liberation") as well as another series of "young adult" fantasy novels (the *Western Shore* series containing **Gifts**, **Voices** and **Powers**) which have won her yet another Nebula Award. She continues to fulfill the promise of her supernova **The Left Hand of Darkness** and pointing the way which many other sf writers follow.



- Robert M. Sabella



### ***Books Currently On My Reading Shelf***

#### ***Green Mars, by Kim Stanley Robinson.***

Currently being read, the detailed descriptions of Mars and how it could be terraformed for human habitation are really fascinating, but they also initially slowed me down. I am not a huge fan of “too much detail” because it hinders the development of the story. Fortunately, I am now well past page 100, and Robinson has settled down into actually “telling the story.” It is much better now.

#### ***Conquistador, by S. M. Stirling***

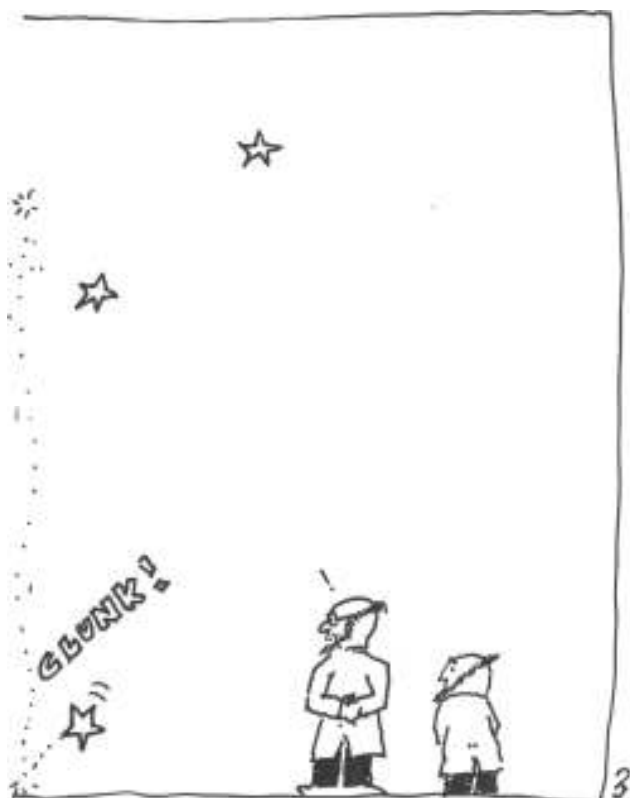
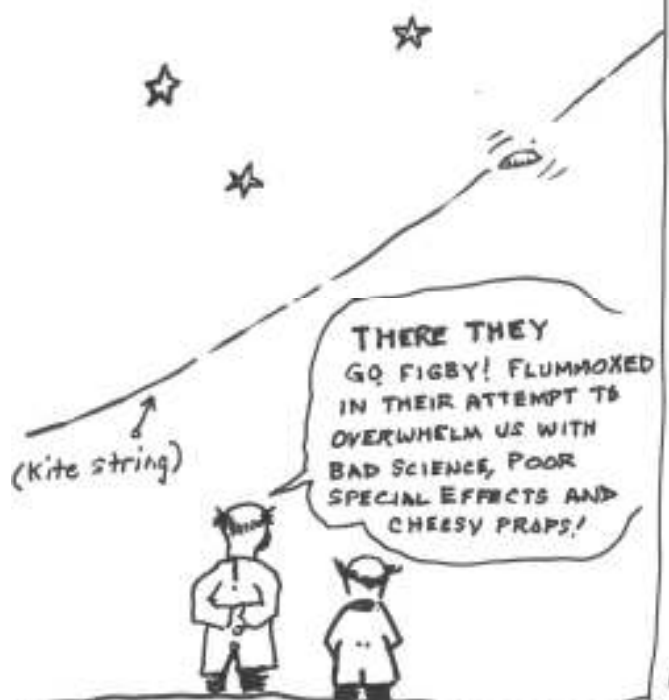
This is one is the next book to be read after *Green Mars*. I found *The Sky People* a lot of fun, and this alternate history sounds intriguing.

#### ***The Way the Future Was, by Frederik Pohl***

A guilty pleasure of mine is reading and re-reading autobiographies of science fiction writers and the early years of fandom. This book is one of my favorites. If you haven't read it yet, do so. If you have read it before, do so again. One of the best memoirs of The Early Days.

# FIGBY

By Bill Fischer





## Lost Letters Department

The latest issue of **Banana Wings** arrived three weeks ago, and when I got to Claire Brialey's fanzine loccking analysis article, it struck me that the fanzine editor who lost her loc was none other than yours truly. Oh, the shame of it...At least the end result of it was a marvellously written (and erudite) essay on the amount of loccking in a sampling of current zines. I heartily recommend folks to read it. This is yet another fine example of why Claire is frequently nominated for Best Fan Writer FAAn Awards.

So she resent that "missing" letter of comment to me. (Let's hear it for the Age of Electronic Fanac!) In order To Make Claire feel better and not raise her ire at me for being such a poor faneditor, here's that "missing" loc. This errant loc is so erudite that I felt it warranted a mini-article all of its own thish. Break out those back issues of **Askance** for reference.



CLAIRE BRIALEY

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Sunday 22 March 2009

Dear John,

What a very long time it is since I sent you a letter about *Askance*. And I was really, really meaning to write about #9 all those months ago, particularly because of your back cover.

I really enjoy Ditmar's art. We decorated the fan room at the 2001 Eastercon with A3 colour posters taken from his sampler CD. And I was particularly fascinated to see the back cover for #9, because I very nearly have that picture on the wall of my study (it's one of those I mentioned in my article on fan art in *Banana Wings* #36). But there's one significant difference, in that my picture has a landing craft in it; not sure whether yours is therefore before or after mine in the story of Ditmar's moon. There are other more subtle differences, in fact; my picture has another planet (or star? Or moon?) in the sky and the ring on the planet in your picture is brighter, so the shadows are different. And the viewpoint is actually from higher up on mine, so that you're looking down into the crater more. But they're both rather beautiful, and inspire me to *sensawunda*.

But #10 appeared while I was still thinking that I must write to you very soon, and now I see that time has flown. I will spare you and other readers a lengthy whistle-stop tour of the last few issues, and spring back into focus only a little out-of-date, on #12.

I like your mind map of the fanzine as a summary editorial. I wondered whether I had missed the boat on the discussion you're having with Arnie Katz about what makes a good fanzine – and since, as you reported in #12, this discussion spans both *Askance* and *VFW* I clearly need to write to Arnie to pick up his direct points too – but the letters in #13 unsurprisingly extend the debate so it still seems lively enough to chip in now. I agree with your comments in #12 up to a point, John, that one of the most important drivers for fanzine publication is that the editor enjoys doing it; that is, if putting out the fanzine has become a joyless chore or is just the lesser of several evils, I think this does show in the fanzine and this mood affects and diminishes even otherwise engaging content and attractive production.



But I tend to include in this broad category the idea you mention of zine-as-letter-substitute. I've never quite understood this concept. I mean, I do get the point: for some reason a fan is unable or unwilling to write to other fanzines but still wishes to receive them, and so falls back on producing a fanzine in trade. What I don't understand is why the hypothetical fan still wants to receive other fanzines if (s)he doesn't want to engage with them. If time is the problem – and I entirely sympathise with that – then how can it be more time-consuming to produce a fanzine suitable for trading than to write some letters of comment? I say this as someone who acknowledges that good LOCs can be hard, but surely good fanzines are harder? Moreover, in this day and age most fanzines are available electronically even if they also have a paper existence; so the concept of falling off a mailing list no longer exists. As Dave Locke commented in his letter in #12 before you even got started on this specific topic, 'LOCs are now generated on a purely voluntary basis, and are no longer a currency of exchange.' You commented in that letter column, 'Fannish courtesy once meant that if you got a zine in the mail, you should at least send *something* back in return.' I think the thing here is that most fanzines no longer arrive in the mail, not even in email (although I know for instance that both you and Arnie do contact people you want to know when new issues are available); but readers are no longer direct recipients in many cases, and thus possibly don't feel that a courtesy has been extended to them personally for which some reciprocation is required.

Maybe, though, in your editorial comment in #12 you meant that someone can produce a fanzine that broadcasts their news to everyone rather than tailoring a response to other people's fanzines; that rather than being a substitute for individual letters *to* people it's a substitute for a general news round-up letter *from* the editor, of the type included with Christmas cards. And that would quite possibly be quicker, but would it really be a good fanzine? It might well provide a means of staying in contact with other fans, but it sounds as though the contact would be primarily one-way. Which steers me towards adding a fifth criterion to the four you quoted from Arnie: does the fanzine engage with fandom and encourage and acknowledge response? Eric Mayer mentioned in his letter in #13 that judgement of the application of Arnie's criteria is inevitably subjective, and that personally he likes to see 'a fanzine that seems to be a projection of the editor and of what the editor thinks a fanzine should be', enhanced by apparent enthusiasm for doing it. I agree about editorial vision and presence (while agreeing also with Arnie's point about that presence needing to be 'appealing' to me) but personally I also consider it very important for the fanzine to actually be a science fiction fanzine, engaged with and wanting to be part of science fiction fandom.

I saw a statement on someone's LiveJournal earlier this year which said, 'If you can write a blog post, you can write a fanzine article'; this was evidently intended as encouraging outreach but, as ever, for me what makes a fanzine article and by extension a fanzine successful is its context and awareness of that context. I personally enjoy fanzines less that rely primarily on material that isn't written for, and from, an SF fannish perspective, and lots of blog posts obviously aren't and don't need to be. Of course Eric's right to point out the enduring difficulties of agreeing what this 'fandom' thing is within which some of us want a fanzine to be located, but I'm happy to start with the broad category of 'science fiction fandom' and let people clarify as much as they need to of their own context within that. And that is, as Eric suggested, just me trading my opinion; I'm not trying to define a standard but explaining what I personally like. Although I am of course surprised that not everyone sees it the same way...

Within the same overall discussion, Graeme Cameron returned in his letter in #13 to the question of what makes a crudzine, focusing on presentation and production values rather than the content. But my understanding of the term is that it refers just as much to the subject matter and quality of the writing and artwork as it does to how badly it may have been laid out and reproduced. Perhaps something needs to be bad on all those counts to qualify as a crudzine, which would reinforce the idea that there aren't really any these days.

I'm with Graeme, though, in being very reluctant myself to hurl that sort of criticism at any fanzine anyway. I may be privately critical of specific fanzines – and particularly so if my sense is that someone could easily do much better than they choose to, especially if they themselves seem to have an inflated idea of the quality of their output – but I prefer to focus on what I like in a fanzine and those fanzines that I would recommend; the only risk is that people draw their own

conclusions from omissions and assume that I dislike everything I don't actively mention. And even I'm not anything like that grumpy. I just don't see any value in broadcasting my more negative opinions; being on the receiving end of such criticism has certainly never spurred me on to greater efforts but has rather seemed actively discouraging – and I presume that in some cases fanzine critics would be happy enough with having made someone stop if they can't make them be better. I applaud Lloyd Penney's comment in his letter in #13 that he doesn't have the temperament for KTF reviewing either.

None of this is meant to be a direct comment on *The Knarley Knews*, which you mentioned as the starting point for your discussion with Arnie. I've spent too much time in my own fanzines recently bemoaning the way that lack of time begets lack of energy and deprives me of the capacity to engage with fanzines (and books) in the way that I want to, so I won't go into that again here. But rather than it being a chore, personally I find that putting out a fanzine is fulfilling in itself because it provides a focus for engagement with the rest of fandom – or at least that part of fandom I expect to be able and willing to read it – and so, when time is at a premium, I do prioritise that over responding to other people's fanzines. And I wonder if that was what you were getting at all along. What worries me is when time is at such a premium that I don't even have time to keep up with reading other fanzines, so that I'm ignoring the conversation outside our own letter column.

Going back to that earlier comment from Dave Locke, maybe LOCs are now a currency of engagement; we don't have to provide them to stay on a mailing list, but more than ever we owe them to editors as a demonstration of recognition and thanks. Which makes me all the more guilty at failing so often to live up to what I think is right; even, or perhaps especially, if I don't have much to say, saying thank you at least proves I'm out here and reading. Lee Anne Lavell, in her letter in #12, suggested some sort of incentive scheme to encourage letters of comment; she suggested some specific ideas in her follow-up letter in #13, and we already follow the sort of approach she mentioned for letters we don't feature at length. Indeed, we've never used the phrase 'We also heard from', in full or in abbreviation, but rather begin 'Thanks also to'. For me, it is mostly sufficient reward to see my letters published, rather than WAHfEd – but, again, what I most enjoy is any response to them, and a continuation of the conversation, in a future issue. Which relies on other people. And thus I am overcome by guilt again.

Tearing off my hairshirt and returning to #13 proper, I was interested in your reprint article from Dr Albert Jackson, although I found that the copy you'd included wasn't quite sharp enough to be able to puzzle through some of the smaller indented quotes in particular – either in the efanzine version or a printed copy. Which was a pity. But I did pick up on the 'personal note' at the end: the wow factor of looking towards the moon while Apollo 8 was in orbit and realising that there were people up there. I still get a wow from looking at the moon now and realising that people have walked on it, so I also wish I could pick up the TV feed you mentioned of NASA's images from the International Space Station.

I enjoyed Robert Sabella's round-up of anniversary years for science fiction. I've just read *Stand on Zanzibar* (presented with a Hugo in 1969) for the first time because I'm running a programme item at this year's Eastercon with two teams reading one another's recommendations of older as compared to more modern SF. Of the six recommendations it's the only one I hadn't read, which I hope restores a little of my credibility as an SF fan. I'll probably write something about that discussion, and the broader topic, in due course...

Also good to see Chris Garcia enthusing about Tim Powers, who is one of our Guests of Honour at that same Eastercon; Mark and I are acting as GoH liaison which seems to entirely bear out Chris's assessment that Tim Powers is 'a really nice dude'. I enjoyed all the books Chris mentioned, particularly *The Drawing of the Dark*, *The Anubis Gates* and *Last Call* (which haunted me all around Las Vegas during Corflu last year) but would also recommend *Declare*. I'm just about to read *Three Days to Never* before Easter, but a couple of days ago got to read an original Tim Powers short story he's sent us for the souvenir book, which was a splendid thing.

You see, we do still talk about science fiction...

Best wishes, **Claire**



## *From the Hinterlands*

*Letters, letters. Yes, I did get some locs on the last issue, and enjoyed them immensely. Though they may not seem like a flood, I do appreciate each and every loc I get. The really cool thing about it all is that Claire Brialey followed up on her Lost Loc of '09 with the following missive, which discusses some points near and dear to me, namely active engagement with fandom and the community of fandom. Let's dive right in.*



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*Sunday 30 August 2009*

The last time I wrote to you I began, 'What a very long time it is since I sent you a letter about *Askance*.' And five months and two issues later, here we are again; and I've just published an article about engagement with fanzines and so, while fearing this will come too late for it to be any use to you as a publishable LOC for the #16 you must even now be putting together, I am writing again to, well, y'know, engage.

Which seemed topical, as I re-read your comments about the lack of oomph you were experiencing at Aggiecon earlier this year. Your description of your experiences and the specific criticisms you focused on made it seem that – although advance communication was poor, and you identified a certain lack of inspiration to the various programme elements, and the future of the con is in some doubt because of the venue difficulties as well – your overall view is that these are as much symptoms of the state this event and its organisers have got into as being standalone causes of a future diminution of the con.

Perhaps it was because Aggiecon didn't give you the fannish connection and boost you were looking for that there's such a strong theme of engagement with Corflu running through #14. As Lloyd Penney and Chris Garcia both intimated in their letters in #15, it is possible to have a good time at an otherwise indifferent convention just because of the people we get to spend time with there; it did seem as though the parts of Aggiecon you most enjoyed were the opportunities to interact with other fans and SF people, and the whole thing came alive when you described meeting up with Pat Virzi and discussing Corflu. And it appeared from your virtual con report of Corflu Zed that you felt more connection with that community even through the rather marginal medium of the chat rooms than you had got from Aggiecon this time round.

Was that because of the different levels of engagement and participation that those cons give you, or rather of a disappointment that the con you could attend in person didn't feel as much fun or offer as much connection as the one you couldn't? I wondered whether even an Aggiecon of the standard you were hoping for would have helped there, although I appreciate your criticisms of that con are entirely on its own terms. (Incidentally, did you adapt your article from a feedback letter? There were one or two points where it read as though you were interpreting for a more general audience – such as when you referred in it to writing about the con in Askance.) *{Last things first: the article was adapted from my LiveJournal entries written over Aggiecon weekend. As for the "levels of engagement," I may have been expecting out of that con, that's an interesting idea. I believe – thinking back on it now, six months later – that my expectations were diminished by the general lack of concommittee engagement expressed through the lack of website updating and a general lack of care over the con itself; many problems could easily have been avoided with more attention paid to communicating with the attendees. Yes, it disappointed me, which led directly to my being disengaged from the con. Still, there were a few high spots; seeing Pat Virzi again was a delight (as was meeting her daughter, Maddy) and the art show had some fine work displayed. \*sigh\* There's always next year.}*

And while we're on participation and engagement, I have to applaud Eric Mayer in the #14 letter column: 'What is most important, in my opinion, is the personal link that a fanzine can create between editor and reader.' The fanzines I most enjoy are aimed at a specific audience that includes me. (There are some good fanzines out there aimed at a specific audience that doesn't seem to include me; and self-evidently I don't feel that sense of connection with them, for all that I might still admire or be interested in some of their subject matter, production values, and ongoing conversations.) I'm not arguing for each fanzine to target itself only towards a narrow clique and exclude any other potential readers and contributors, but rather for fanzine editors both to be clear in their own minds who they are primarily publishing for and to think about how they involve people in what interests them.

Contributors will doubtless think about each fanzine's audience and the community in which it operates when they decide where to offer a piece of writing or artwork. They'll be thinking about the tone, format, size and focus of their piece compared to what each fanzine usually seems to feature – either deciding to pitch something that seems to fit, or to offer something that seems lacking but might not be unwelcome. But it'll still be the editorial personality and the sense of connection and community the editor has sought to establish with contributors and respondents that helps to determine that.

I actually can't tell whether Lloyd is teasing when he asserts in his letter in #14 that in modern fanzines 'Even if the articles are garbage and the artwork is nothing but scribbles, they can be presented in such an eye-pleasing way' that the overall quality of the fanzine is improved. If that



was a serious opinion, I don't agree with it; style doesn't outweigh substance for me to that extent, but then I am a boring old phart. (And, noting Lee Anne Lavell's responses to R Graeme Cameron on making a distinction between 'content' and 'layout', I should clarify that I see both of those as potential aspects of both style and substance. But I'd rather have interesting material – text or art – set out without imagination than dull material beautifully presented; meanwhile we should all work towards the ideal state for both...) However, I wouldn't go so far as to identify any current fanzine as a crudzine – although that's partly because, even if that were my genuine opinion of any particular title or issue, I don't see that anything would be gained by sharing that opinion publicly.

I liked the central conceit of Taral Wayne's article in #14 about his recent writing history, where the piece that he's writing is ultimately also an element of the subject matter. I could almost see the camera pulling back so that we could see him typing the final few words. More prosaically, in one respect it was another list article and I'm one of those fans who likes lists – not least because it gives me something with which to compare my own opinions, experiences or in this case engagement with other fanzines. And, well, Taral puts me to shame again there; over the past five years or so I've averaged only two articles for fanzines I don't edit, and at least one of those hasn't yet appeared.

I also liked the resonance that this article had with Taral's piece in *File 770* #156<sup>10</sup>, which was updating his own article from *DNQ* thirty years ago in which he had listed ten (or, in practice, eleven) fanzines 'that every good fan should seek out for the good of his education'. There's relatively little overlap between the fanzines in Taral's 2009 list of ten more fanzines with which we should all be familiar and those for whom he has written recently, and I think that makes both articles stronger; for one thing, he's not focusing there only on the fanzines that are strongest or most prolific currently, but is looking back across the period since his original list (which he does not duplicate; it stands by itself already). He also wasn't saying that he personally likes all the fanzines in his *File 770* list, but rather that anyone who's interested in fanzines should be aware of them and know what they're about. The current fanzines for which Taral writes himself are, perhaps, more those with which he feels a connection and those in which he feels comfortable placing his writing – which is also a distinction I think the relevant fan editors should value.

On reflection I think that *Askance* #14 was, metafictionally enough, all about fannish engagement. Gliding swiftly past the thought that if your computer hadn't crashed it would even have had a letter from me in it – and you'll be as aware as anyone that that's a demonstration of engagement which is all too rare, and I'm not in the least bit proud of that – I thought your nostalgia for Corflu and disappointment with Aggiecon as an alternate source of live action engagement was demonstrated further by your account of the fanzines that overwhelmed you in the days following the delivery of your Corflu con package by Pat. Maybe there were some new titles in there for Lloyd to focus on, if he really doesn't want to repeat himself. (And, reading his #14 reviews of the six contenders for the fanzine category in the Hugo awards this year, don't think we haven't all noted your pre-emptive strike in giving your fanzine a title from the beginning of the alphabet.)

I felt that your tributes to Khen Moore in #15 strongly reinforced the sense of fannish connection. I didn't know him and really wasn't familiar with his fan activity, but in reading the tributes you assembled from many of his friends and fannish fellow travellers I got a strong impression of someone who was both significant in the community and will be missed as an individual. I hate getting to know about someone only through their obituaries; I guess the answer is once again about making the effort at engagement and connection with more fans while we're all still around to do it...

Lloyd commented in the #14 letter column that he wasn't sure how true it still is to identify it as the heart of fanzine fandom. Personally, I think that without a letter column – in other words, without having both drawn response and done so in a way that can be interestingly shared with other readers – a fanzine is diminished; but I've certainly come across a few fanzine editors in recent years who felt that a letter column didn't actually represent the sort of engagement with their fellow fans that they wanted to have. Maybe they just weren't managing to get the sorts of

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<sup>10</sup> <http://efanzines.com/File770/File770-156.pdf>

responses that they wanted; maybe they'd been unimpressed by what the rest of us were doing in editing and presenting our letter columns!

I return to Eric's comments in the #14 letter column where he notes that e-zines receive relatively few numbers of LOCs compared to the (paper) publications of Fanzine Days and, indeed, quite often very few LOCs at all. The article in the latest *Banana Wings* that I mentioned at the beginning of this letter includes a look at the number of correspondents some current fanzines have – although not the number of letters received on or published in individual issues – and the evidence concurred with Eric's view that *Askance* generates quite a healthy response, with around three dozen different respondents noted over the year I was looking at. That doesn't reflect how many of your responses are meaty letters that you can use to develop the conversation around the topics you've featured in articles, but it often feels like a good chat to drop into and pull up a chair.

Eric mentioned averaging only around one letter a week; without rehearsing my guilt all over yet another fanzine, even at my best I know I've never come near that and 2009 so far has certainly not been my best. And I've already acknowledged that I don't write many articles for other fanzines either. So if I really want more engagement I probably need to do a bit more than urging on everyone else from the comfort of my own fanzine's pulpit; and yet even if I succeeded in raising my own game, I've no desire just to be a one-woman engagement machine. Despite the cleverness of Joseph Major's circular references to his own letter in your #15, like many things in fandom or otherwise, I think this is generally something that it will be a lot more fun not to have to do by ourselves.

Best wishes,  
**Claire**

*[I completely agree with you, young lady, about fanzines connecting with fans and developing that sense of community. Corflu Quire definitely had that; last fall's Fencon had it, too, as have previous Aggiecons I have attended. Perhaps we older and tired fen need to urge our fannish youngsters to be more engaged in the community. Although, thinking even that statement*



*through, there are many young fen doing just that: Max, James Bacon, John Coxon, Chris Garcia, and a whole bunch of folks in the BArea, Dallas-Fort Worth, England, and elsewhere. Since receiving your locs I have noticed that there's a lot of fannish engagement going on, which is very healthy for fandom. It seems to me that things are not as bad as it seems; loccols in current fanzines may have repeat offenders, as your article in *Banana Wings* #39 implies, but that same article indicates that some zines – notably **Relapse**, **File 770**, and **Steam Engine Time** – have lots of different loccers. Perhaps modern*

*day faneds need to do what us older faneds once did back in the day: send issues of our zines to people not on our mailing lists by perusing loccols and fanzine reviews. That was one reason why I loved Brian Earl Brown's **Sticky Quarters**; it was a treasure trove listing dozens of zines, which meant more readers, writers, and artists I could ~~badger for material~~ send my zine to. That was always fun.*

*Your locs – both of them – provide meaty bones to chew on, and I hope that many of my readers will start gnawing away. No question, the main reason why I enjoy pubbing a zine is to stay in touch with this community of fans. The on-going conversation of fandom is what makes being a science fiction fan so much fun; this is one of the few places where a person can engage in an intelligent conversation, debate shared topics of interest, and express their opinions without*



*getting too many of their toes stomped on. Sometimes that's going to happen, but you can't make wine without smushing grapes, now can you? And why oh, why am I mixing metaphors so damned randomly this morning? Methinks I need to refill my coffee cup. Be right back.}*

*Well, it seems as if the ladies are showing the gentlemen how it's done. The next loc comes all the way from the wilds of Indiana. Give it up – crap, I sound like Chris Garcia there – for Lee Anne Lavell:*



15 July 2009

Greetings,

This time I am determined not to put off to the last minute getting in my LoC for this, another fine issue of *Askance*.

First of all, let me say what a wonderful cover...and it prints out just as good, if not better than it appears on the screen, something that cannot always be said.

**Silent Movies group:** First, what happened to the end of the sentence in the last line on page fifteen? *{Oops! Thanks to your keen editorial eye, a corrected version of the 15<sup>th</sup> issue has been posted since you spotted that error.}*

I really enjoyed all three articles. Diverse as they were, they made lovely contrasts to each other. *{That's the plan – sometimes. Lastish it was just stupid luck it worked out that way.}*

It occurred to me while reading Chris' contribution that films today are again on a cusp of development. As the Silents leapt into the Talkie era, movies at present seem to be morphing again. More and more they are dependant on CGI fx, and these are becoming so realistic that they are now almost indistinguishable from the real thing. I am referring to backgrounds with this, but more living things are falling into this category as well. I can envision a time when there will be no more living actors on the screen, just computer generated images, perhaps based upon real people to begin with, but continued on as long as their popularity lasts and roles appear for them. Just think, the beauty and sex queens would no longer age and die, the child actor could remain a child forever, that muscular, handsome hero could continue his exploits. The acting could be done by "stand-ins" who would do the performance upon the images are based. Voice actors would become prominent; at least until the computer generated voice could be perfected. You know, even long dead stars could be "resurrected" and make new movies, Jean Harlow, Marilyn Monroe, John Barrymore, Cary Grant, Clark Gable, "alive again" upon the screen. So, as the Silents progressed into the Talkies, so the Talkies could develop into—what could they be called—Pixies, maybe?

Oh well, it's just an idea... *{Your idea made me think of Pixie and Dixie cartoons.}*

**Poetic Justice:** I don't know. I am not sure that eloquence is particular asset for a Supreme Court Justice. Their job is to be dispassionate, and is difficult to be dispassionate and eloquent at the same time. Just the facts (or law), ma'am or sir.

**Book Review in a Box:** Your mention of how one book can spin one off into reading other related books in the same area reminds me of one of the influential books in my life, although the initial book although the initial book may not have been terribly good at all. When I was young I read *Forever Amber*. I now have several very good books on Charles II and the Restoration era in England. It is interesting to note that one of Charles II 's mistresses, Barbara Villiers, wanted vainly to be queen or at least that one of her "Fitzroy" sons (some of whom were probably not "Fitzroy"s at all) to succeed Charles since his queen was barren. The hope was in vain. Meanwhile, into the present era, Diana Spencer (Princess Di) was a direct descendant of Barbara Villiers, so some four hundred years later when William ascends the Throne (assuming the monarchy lasts that long) there *will* be a king in her line after all.

**Penney for Your Thoughts:** I enjoyed Lloyds reviews as usual, but how can he possibly say he is running out of titles when he has that lengthy list of “fanzines received” at the end of his column? First of all, there is nothing wrong with reviewing the same title twice. Fanzines are not static. In fact, it might be interesting to see him cover the same fanzine over a year’s issues, noting changes, growth, deterioration, special issues, etc. Another idea would be to compare or contrast fanzines of the same ilk, such as clubzines, genzines, conzines etc. I am sure he could have some very cogent things to write in this area. He has done so before with his review of paper zines.

#### **From the Hinterlands:**

Eric Mayer: I believe that Eric does himself a great disservice. Good writing is always appreciated, even though the subject matter might not be apropos to the vehicle presenting it. Also, subject matter is often embroidered to the point of boredom. Saying the same thing over and over can be quite annoying. Succinctness is prime virtue. I *always* enjoy Eric’s pieces. *{You and me both. I still haven’t read any of his and Mary’s John the Eunuch mysteries. Something else to add to my bedside reading shelf.}*

Joseph Major: One of these days I shall get off an LoC to *Alexiad*, a fine zine.

Ah yes, the Burroughs Venus stories. I started reading them just when the last of the series appeared, then picked up the rest of the series when Burroughs Publications reissued the series, along with most of the ERB titles. I never seemed to be able to read any of the Burroughs books in the correct order save for the first Tarzan book, which I found in my aunt’s attic along with *The Mastermind of Mars*.

Lloyd Penney: Amen to Lloyd! Fans should stop complaining that he is in too many lettercols and start filling them up with their own LoCs. *{Seconded! Or thirded. Let’s get more engagement going here! (see above).}*

Chris Garcia: I hard copy almost everything I can that I consider important. I have this horror of losing something I will want later.

Me: Tsk, John. You misspelled my last name. No “e” on the end. I am rather hypersensitive about this. My maiden name was “Tremper” which others misspelled as Temper, Trempee, Temple and countless other variations. When I married Jim I thought, “Gee, “Lavell” will be an easy name to spell.” Hah! What I got, besides your “e-on-the-end” variation, were things like Laval, LaVell, LaVelle, Lovel, Lovell, ad infinitum (sorry Dave Lewton). So, you see, I am a bit paranoid about my name. *{My bad. I should have caught that. My last name is sometimes misspelled as Pursell or Pursel, but the main problem with it is the pronunciation as to where the stress falls: second syllable, in my case, unlike dear old dead uncle Sir Henry (1656-1695), who some folks believe my family spins off from. That would be quite cool if proven true.}*



Despite that last bit of ranting, #15 was another of your excellent issues, and I will be looking forward to the September issue.

Cheers.....**Lee Anne Lavell**

*{Well, it’s a week or so later than I originally hoped, but here it is. I enjoy pubbing this rag, and getting locs like yours, Lee, makes it so very worth-while. It’s all about the engagement, don’tcha know. See Claire Brialey’s above for more on this.}*

*Continuing on with a format that works so well for him, here’s Joe Majors, half of the editorial team that produces the zine **Alexiad**, which has my editorial envy for having one of the best loccols in a current fanzine.*



1409 Christy Avenue  
Louisville, KY 40204-2040  
[jtmajor@iglou.com](mailto:jtmajor@iglou.com)

July 22, 2009

Bemused Natterings: While here in Louisville we have been having record \_lows\_. As the one who pays the electric bill, I am not too annoyed.

At one of the last Kublas, one fine morning, I dragged myself into the con suite and laid out my morning's dose of pills. Khen Moore came by, observed the lot, and commented that the dosage seemed rather excessive. I told him that it was doctor's orders. He said, "I'd get another doctor."

He used to throw the greatest parties at ConGlomeration, a grill, swill, singing, dancing, and chat. But he'd always have a few minutes for a private chat.

When I saw that drawn, ghostlike figure at ConCave this spring, I was both delighted and saddened — delighted that he'd got there at all, saddened that he was so obviously on his last legs. He'd reached the end of his time. *{I probably met Khen at Big MAC and Iguanacon, but don't remember much of any conversations we might have had. His influence will live on.}*

I got one of those articles of Steve Silver's. He gave me Fatty Arbuckle, and there was one thing I added. I'll do it for you: Mabel Normand <http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0635667/>

Nowadays, it's possible to make all the comments you want, thanks to DVD, and upon seeing *Intolerance*, I have concluded that the ending where the Mountain Girl (in the Babylon scenes) survives is the real one. Look. She goes out scouting, sees the army coming, races back in a chariot to warn the king, takes part in the final battle . . . who does this remind you of? That's right, Xena. We now know one of her ancestresses.

From the Hinterlands: Eric Mayer: After seventy-five days of canned beans, I wouldn't open the door, either. It might kill the guy outside. On the other hand . . .

Me: The Faneds Feast is scheduled for 12:30 on Saturday, August 8. How many make it will be another matter, since Chris Garcia has a panel opposite it. *{How many zines will Garcia pub during his panel is another matter, too.}*

Lloyd Penney: Garth Spencer has observed how it is that every new generation of fans wants to re-invent the wheel. They want to learn by making their own mistakes. (That phrase must have been passed down from some psychologist to generations upon generations of schoolteachers.) And they keep on making the same old mistakes, never any interesting new ones. *{Oh, I don't know about that, Joe. Every once in a great while someone mucks up pretty good and provides grist to grind in the fannish mill. Let fans make their own mistakes; it gives us fun stuff to natter on about.}*

Lee Anne Lavelle: I agree, the current "The Tudors" is disappointing. Their Henry VIII for example — having become accustomed to Keith Mitchell, playing the descent from exuberant polymath to bloated tyrant, it's disappointing.

Good luck with FenCon.

Namarie, **Joseph T Major**

*{Sadly, Joseph, Fencon VI is a wash; family financial need outweighed going to the con. That bums me out, especially since it means missing out on meeting Warren Buff, the fan Guest of Honor, but there's always next year. PLUS, Fencon VIII in 2011 will be the host site of that year's DeepSouthCon. That one is a definitely must attend con.}*

*Well, yet another faned wrote in – what was that Claire Brialey said about just doing this engagement just by ourselves? (Just kidding, folks! I love hearing from other fans.) – and I can't wait for the next **Time & Again**. Let's see what Dave Locke has to say about lastish:*



"Dave Locke" <slowdjinn@gmail.com>

August 3, 2009

John -

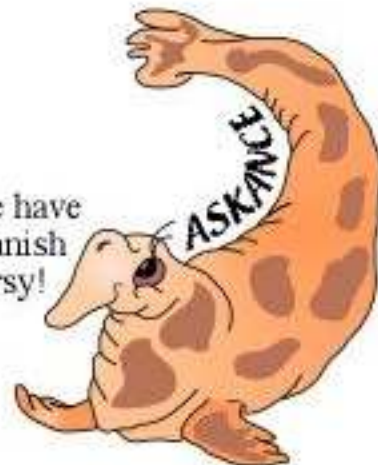
My son Brian is a fan of grilling, too. Chicken, burgers, hot dogs, yada. He's got a big-assed grill just off the back-porch steps. An Oakland Raiders 'apron' covers it against the weather. When UPS delivered the apron, one side of the box read "Red Sox apron". I figured that meant trouble. However, the apron inside had the right logo on it, for a value of "right" which equals "Oakland Raiders". Well, until he was in his teens he was growing up in Los Angeles, and that's where the Raiders were for most of the time he was there. I recently got one of his upcoming birthday presents from The Onion; it's a tee-shirt which reads "The sports team from my area IS SUPERIOR TO the sports team from your area".

A nice tribute to Ken Moore. I'm sure he's often missed as the convention season passes, for one thing. In lots of areas it wasn't a con unless you saw Ken Moore. And now you don't see him. I know a lot of fans who will be reflecting on that, because Ken was a fan who was appreciated by most.

With primarily three exceptions I've never been much of a fan of silent movies. Buster Keaton and Charlie Chaplin and 1927's METROPOLIS are the exceptions. Or at least the ones that I can recall...

I remember CITY very well. Particularly an incident concerning it. I'd finished the novel, back in my teenybopper years, and passed it along to my dad. He was reading it when I told him that if he was interested I had a humorous SF novel he might like, Eric Frank Russell's THE SPACE WILLIES. His reply was "this is humorous enough", and sometimes I look on this as early tutelage in book critiquing. I do remember that he liked it, though...

Ah yes...and here we have a swirling pool of fanish controversy!



Lloyd Penney is a fanzine reviewer worth noting. A review that merely lists the contents of a zine is of limited interest to me, though one which doesn't has an immediate failing. However, I'm far

less interested in a reviewer's perception of what a fanzine ought to be than in their descriptive abilities of what a given zine actually is. Fan reviewers generally make themselves too much of a factor in the reviews they write. I don't think zine reviews are just egoboo, though some are written that way. And I don't think all zines get around so well that reviews are purposeless. You need to read reviews of what you know about strictly to peg the biases and failings of a reviewer, but beyond that you need reviewers strictly to aid you in deciding if you personally might have an interest in a zine you don't currently get. That's also my take on book reviews and movie reviews. It helps explain why I found all those old KTF reviews of the 70s and 80s so utterly worthless, telling me more than I wanted to know about the reviewer and far less than I wanted to know about the item being reviewed. Lloyd does well in describing what a given fanzine actually *\*is\**, which is good because, when he's reviewing fanzines, that's at least what this reader would expect of him. *{This should make Lloyd feel better. And I agree with you completely that Lloyd is doing a fine job; a zine review should note what works and what doesn't work in an issue. The problem with many people, though, is that some faneds have thin skins and can't take constructive criticism very well. This topic could very easily be a full-blown arkle some day.}*

In your lettercol, Eric Mayer does an amusing mini-article on the topic of living off canned goods. Geez, something else I had in common with him and didn't even know it... I mean, veggies, soups, beans, fruit, it's a tin-can jungle behind all those pantry doors out in the kitchen. The can-opener seems to be the most-used kitchen appliance in this house, presuming we don't count knives and forks.

You note "The worst part of fan-writing for me nowadays is that I tend to ramble on too much in my first drafts, so then I go back and edit/revise/rewrite as needed to tighten things up."

Kurt Vonnegut noted in "Timequake": "Tellers of stories with ink on paper, not that they matter anymore, have been either swoopers or bashers. Swoopers write a story quickly, higgledy-piggledy, crinkum-crankum, any which way. Then they go over it again painstakingly, fixing everything that is just plain awful or doesn't work. Bashers go one sentence at a time, getting it exactly right before they go on to the next one. When they're done they're done." You sound like a Swooper, John... *{Works for me. My problem is actually finishing a story to my satisfaction.}*

I barely touched upon the writings of Edgar Rice Burroughs when I was of an age to maybe appreciate them. Never tried reading them as a Certified Adult, because for ever and ever I've heard people I'd hang with say or write that it just won't work to read him as an adult unless you've already developed the taste to appreciate a rereading. A first ERB reading as an adult? Nope. Not unless you can invent a time machine and introduce ERB to your younger self. *{That may be, but I enjoy a rousing tale from time to time, and ERB could write a good adventure yarn with the best of them. I freely admit to invoking the name of Coleridge from time to time while reading Carson of Venus; still, a very enjoyable story, and that's what matters.}*

Lloyd Penney writes a thoughtful class-act letter, and toward its closing mentions "I'd heard there's been a complaint that I muck up the letter column in several fanzines". Well, this letter should disabuse someone of the notion.

"Then I remembered this was a Chris Garcia loc, and my mind adjusted accordingly." It's okay, John. We all get forgetful in our old age (or, in your case, as you approach it). You could have edited Chris's comment, but chose to give yourself the joy of the jest. That would have been my choice, too... *{Always go for the joke, that's my motto.}*

Ah yes, the Virtual Con Suite. I've done a fair amount of chatroom chatter around the Net, and one of the first things I noticed about the Suite was that it contained more people who knew how to type. As opposed to poking out letters. I've been clocked at 100 wpm, so you can imagine what it's like to be surrounded by one-finger typists. I remember that in software like ICQ you could actually see the other participants type or poke out their responses, and that included backing up to edit something. It was particularly face-apparent what kind of typists or poke-artists



you were dealing with. But the Virtual Con Suite is more like IRC, where you hit a key to 'send' something you've already typed (or poked out...). Still, you can get a feel for the time lags in communication, most of which relate to getting those words on phosphor.

"Lee Anne Lavelle" is Lee "Lavell", actually. I take the blame on this because I use an unnecessary 'e' on my last name (which is silent, but I'm not), plus I set precedent a bit ago by spelling Eric Mayer's name wrong on the content page of TIME AND AGAIN. Created an amusing exchange in the lettercol, though, so it must have been worth it. Old friend Ed Cox used to generate much amusing fanwriting by digressing upon the frequent typos he made while typing. It was typewriters which made that particular shtick workable. I think Ed invented and closed out an entire fanwriting subgenre.

Lee notes "I once did some experimenting with deviled eggs, creating a version that involved, among other things, sherry." Lee sounded like a fun cook to have around. Of course, these were probably made as part of a great plan for fan party munchies.

Enjoyed your zine, John.

All best,

**Dave**

*{Well, I have always thought that psilent letters on people's last names is relatively elitist, but since only one of the 'l's on my surname is pronounced, who am I to talk? 🤔 At any rate, I do like your point about how much fun it is to make mistakes in a fazine, only to have others pick up on it and run with the ball. That's one way in which fandom creates its mythology and provides a sense of that connectivity binding the community of fandom, especially that subset which enjoys fanzines. It is all grand fun, much like Lee's cooking comment, which you noted, and now reminds me of the munchables that could be found at Minn-stf meetings in the 70s and 80s. Again, it provides a bridge that all of us have crossed and is a link between our varied shores. Or riverbanks. Or whatever this extended analogy was attempting to work towards. \*fout!\* Fuggheadaboutit...}*

*Ah, here is that lout who likes to muck up fanzine lettercolumns. What a trouble-maker!*



1706-24 Eva Rd.  
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CANADA M9C 2B2

August 23, 2009

I am finally recovering from the Worldcon...I'd actually started writing a loc on *Askance* 15 when I was there, but of course, got too busy to carry it onwards. Will try to make some sense out of that original loc, in the meantime.

Yesterday was a big fannish BBQ and pool party, and a couple of friends got really sneaky and gave me a "Hugo". Silver rocket, but with a few other fun things attached to the base, and a plaque with my name, the whole bit. Now I have my own silver rocket! What a wonderful surprise, from people I'd never have suspected. Luvya, Stella!

I had started my original loc in the fanzine lounge at Anticipation in one of the rare slow moments there. After all the fuss over space at the convention, I wound up with about 300 to 400 sq. ft. of



space, and it worked great. More in the column you'd like me to write, and I will try to be descriptive and objective.



The issue at hand...Toronto can certainly have some hot summers, and over 100F isn't unheard of, but this summer and last, we haven't had them. It's been pleasant and warm, with the odd bit of hot, but we've had no heat waves yet. Already, the end of summer sales are here; give us a break, summer doesn't end until near the end of September, but I guess any month that ends in -ember becomes a fall or winter season.

We missed Khen Moore at Worldcon. If he'd been there, he would have been wandering the Worldcon barefoot, and Yvonne would have chased him around the place. This man knew fun, and

his enormous circle of friends enjoyed his company. We were pleased to call him a friend, and we always will. We had a picture of Khen hanging in the fanzine lounge. *{Nice touch. This reminds me, at Corflu Quire there was picture posted in the con suite of Bob Tucker with Lee Hoffmann. It was like having them watching over our shoulders to make sure we were doing it right.}*

Some time ago, I found out how many Canadians were silent film stars. Marie Dressler and Mack Sennett were both born in Canada, as was Mary Pickford, in Toronto. The Pickford homestead lands now make up part of the Hospital for Sick Children complex in downtown Toronto.

The local...well, the silver rockets did get presented not long ago, and for Best Fan Writer, Fan Artist and Best Fanzine, the winners were Cheryl Morgan, Frank Wu and *Electric Velocipede*, edited by Jon Klima. I reaction to those results were definitely mixed, but I know that many who might complain about them usually aren't Worldcon members, or have the ability to vote. If you don't vote, you get what you deserve. *{True. See my arkle earlier thish for my thoughts on the results.}*

My loc...most of this season's cons have taken place here. After Anime North was Polaris 23, and that was a good time, too. Now that Anticipation is past, that's three Canadian Worldcons I've been to. Yes, Anticipation was a very good time, see below...

Lee Anne, I still get lots of paper fanzines. Perhaps one day, I should make a list of zines that I'm getting paper-wise.

As promised...The Montreal Worldcon was a whirlwind for me, but we got to see lots of old friends, local and international, and the fanzine lounge was well received, often having as many as 12 to 15 people in it, and the best part was that it also had a Gestetner going occasionally, and a manual typewriter for being typed on (thanks to Colin Hinz for bringing both to the convention), and it was a hub of activity. (Wish there could have been a Virtual Fanzine Lounge, but the convention centre suddenly made its networks available, after making it too expensive for the con, and then free, and too late to arrange anything.) Other activities for us that week included

the Aurora Awards banquet (I was a nominee, but did not win), and handing out a Hugo Award, for Best Fan Writer to Cheryl Morgan. That meant lots of suits and other fancy clothes, but heck it was lots of fun, and a very unique Worldcon experience for us. Australia is out of the question, but we do plan to go to Reno.

Guess I'm done for the moment...lots more to do and catch up on, as usual. I will make some notes about my column, and get you another Tale from the Convention!, too. Take care, see you soon.

**Lloyd**

*{That's kinda neat being a presenter at the Hugo awards. You're way up on me in that regard, friend. \* Like I've noted before, it certainly sounds like the fanzine lounge you and Yvonne ran was the life of the con, if not one of the key locales for finding like-minded fen. Congratulations for a job well done. Maybe we shall see each other in Reno? I'm still debating on standing for DUFF next year. We shall see what transpires between now and Christmas, my self-imposed deadline for making up my mind once and for all.}*

### **Here comes that infernal I ALSO HEARD FROM listing:**

Bill Fischer (who is plotting out the next sequence of 'Figby'), Brad Foster (warning me to properly inform him next time I re-use his artwork), Chris Garcia (announcing TAFF 2010 is now open for nominations), Arnie Katz, Andy Kurdtmann (who's working on a cover for *Askance*), Guy H. Lillian III (apologizing for inability to attend Fencon VI; I hear ya, Guy), Mary Pack, Steven H (no period) Silver, Isaura Simon (who might be reworking one of her pieces into a future cover for *Askance*), Venecian Todoroff (whose Bulgarian fanzine *Фантастѝка и Фантсѝи* simply must be an arkle someday), Taral Wayne, Art Widner, William Wright, and Joel Zakem. Thank you, one and all for touching base.



Thanks to the wonders of image Googling, This is a Cathedral in Varna, Bulgaria. This is what I call architecture as art.



## REGIONAL CONVENTION CALENDAR

*This time I am going to do this a wee bit differently, the main change being a shorter-time frame: four months forward from this date, so the last one listed would be in mid-January, 2010. My reason is to cut this listing down in size, but still showing the wide range of Science Fiction related cons in this weird-ass part of the universe. And, yes, I know of what I speak: I live here, y'know.*

### FenCon VI: Sci-Fi DIY

A Fan-Operated Science Fiction and Fantasy Literary and Filk Convention in the

Dallas/Fort Worth Area

September 18-20, 2009

Crowne Plaza Hotel

North Dallas/Addison

14315 Midway Road

Addison, TX 75001

**(Dallas / Fort Worth Metroplex area)**

GOH: Lois McMaster Bujold

Music GOH: Carla Ulbrich

Artist GOH: Kurt Miller

Fen GOH: Warren Buff

Toastmaster: Paul Cornell

Special Guest: Keith R.A. DeCandido

Special Guest: Howard Waldrop

Plus many more guests!

Fan-run convention featuring dedicated Filk Track and Costuming Tracks, Demos, Gaming, an Art Show & Auction, Panel Discussions, Science Programming, our annual Short Story Contest, Open Filking, the legendary FenCon Cabaret, a Writer's Workshop, over 100 Program Participants, and Much More!

FenCon is a production of the Dallas Future Society, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to the advancement of science, literature, and music for the future of all mankind.

### Realms Con

Anime and gaming  
October 2-4, 2009  
Holiday Inn Emerald Beach  
1102 South Shoreline  
**Corpus Christi, TX 78401**

Anime Dating Game, AMV (Anime Music Video), Anime Jeopardy, Cosplay, Dead or Alive Volleyball Tournament, The Katamari, Movie Rooms, Panels, Pool Party, Rave, Scavenger Hunt, Table Top Tournaments, Video Game Tournaments, Workshops, and SO MUCH MORE!!!

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### TrickConTreat 2009

Fan-run convention dedicated to Halloween culture.  
October 2-4, 2009

**Oklahoma City, OK 73118**

Literary GOH: Craig Wolf

Artist GOH: Dirk Strangely

Horror GOH: Dr. Ignatius Faust Fear II

Special Guests: Dawn the Butcher, Count Gregore, Bill Allen, Steven Wedel, and many more!

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### Re/Max Ballunar Liftoff Festival

October 23-25, 2009  
NASA Johnson Space Center

**Houston, Texas**

Visit this exciting and educational family-oriented event at NASA/Johnson Space Center and enjoy hot air balloon competitions, evening balloon glows, skydiving exhibitions, commercial exhibits, concession booths, food from local restaurants, arts & crafts exhibits, entertainment and various aviation equipment displays.

Ballunar Liftoff Festival, Inc., is a 501©(3) tax-exempt organization. Its mission is to help the public learn about aviation and space exploration, and to sponsor and fund educational activities that encourage young people to learn about aviation and space and to study mathematics and the sciences.

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### Oni-Con 2009

Anime con  
October 30-November 1, 2009  
Houston Marriott Westchase  
2900 Briarpark Dr.

**Houston, Texas 77042**

Anime Music Video Contest, Art Show, and more!

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## Millenniumcon 12

Gaming con.

November 6-8, 2009

Wingate Inn and Convention Center

### **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.

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## Izumicon 2009

New Adventures in Anime & Manga

November 13-15, 2009

Reed Conference Center Midwest City Oklahoma

5750 Will Rogers Road

Midwest City, Oklahoma 73110

### **Oklahoma City, OK area**

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

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## Arkansas Anime Festival

Anime con for Northwest Arkansas.

November 20-22, 2009

The Cosmopolitan Hotel

70 N. East Avenue

### **Fayetteville, AR 72701**

Cosplay, video games, two viewing rooms, tabletop gaming, anime activities, guest panels, Japanese food, displays by local artists, some local vendors, door prizes (we are working on a dance) and much more!

For more information, [send email](#)

Sponsored by [Realms Anime](#) at 2579 N. College Ave. in Fayetteville, AR

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### Yulecon

Anime and Gaming Convention  
November 20-22, 2009  
Radisson Hotel Fort Worth North-Fossil Creek  
2540 Meacham Blvd.  
Fort Worth, Texas 76106

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### SMOFcon 27

The Con about ConRunning  
December 4-6, 2009  
Hilton Garden Inn  
500 North I-35  
**Austin, TX 78701**  
Hosted in 2009 by ALAMO, a 501©(3) non-profit organization.

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### Ikkicon IV

Japanese Animation & Pop Culture Convention  
January 1-3, 2010  
The Hilton Austin  
500 East 4<sup>th</sup> Street  
Austin, TX 78701  
**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!

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### Con-Jour 2.0

Sci-Fi, Fantasy, and Horror Convention  
January 29-31, 2010  
Con itself held on **the University of Houston, Clear Lake campus.**  
[Hotel rooms at con rate: Candlewood Suites Houston-Clear Lake Extended Stay Hotel]  
Houston, Texas  
**Greater Houston metropolitan area**  
GOH: Steven Brust  
Guest: Glen Welch  
Guest: Simon Nightingale  
Guest: Linda Nightingale  
Discussion Panels, Media Rooms, Feature Films, Scheduled and Open Gaming, Cosplay,  
LARPS, Dealers Room, Masquerade Ball, Con Suite, and more!  
Presented by the UHCL Gamers' Guild

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Overheard years ago at a Minicon: "Oot-greet! Yes!! Now I finally understand what 'oot-greet'  
means in conversation!"



# WHAT'S NEXT

More fun stuff, that's a definite. The major pieces in the November issue will probably be a non-convention report - why I couldn't get to Fencon VI and what I did instead - alongside items about the Texas Renaissance Festival and the 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Kolache Festival just over in Caldwell, complete with pictures, of course. The big question content-wise for the 17<sup>th</sup> issue is this: will Taral Wayne send yet *another* article? Could happen.

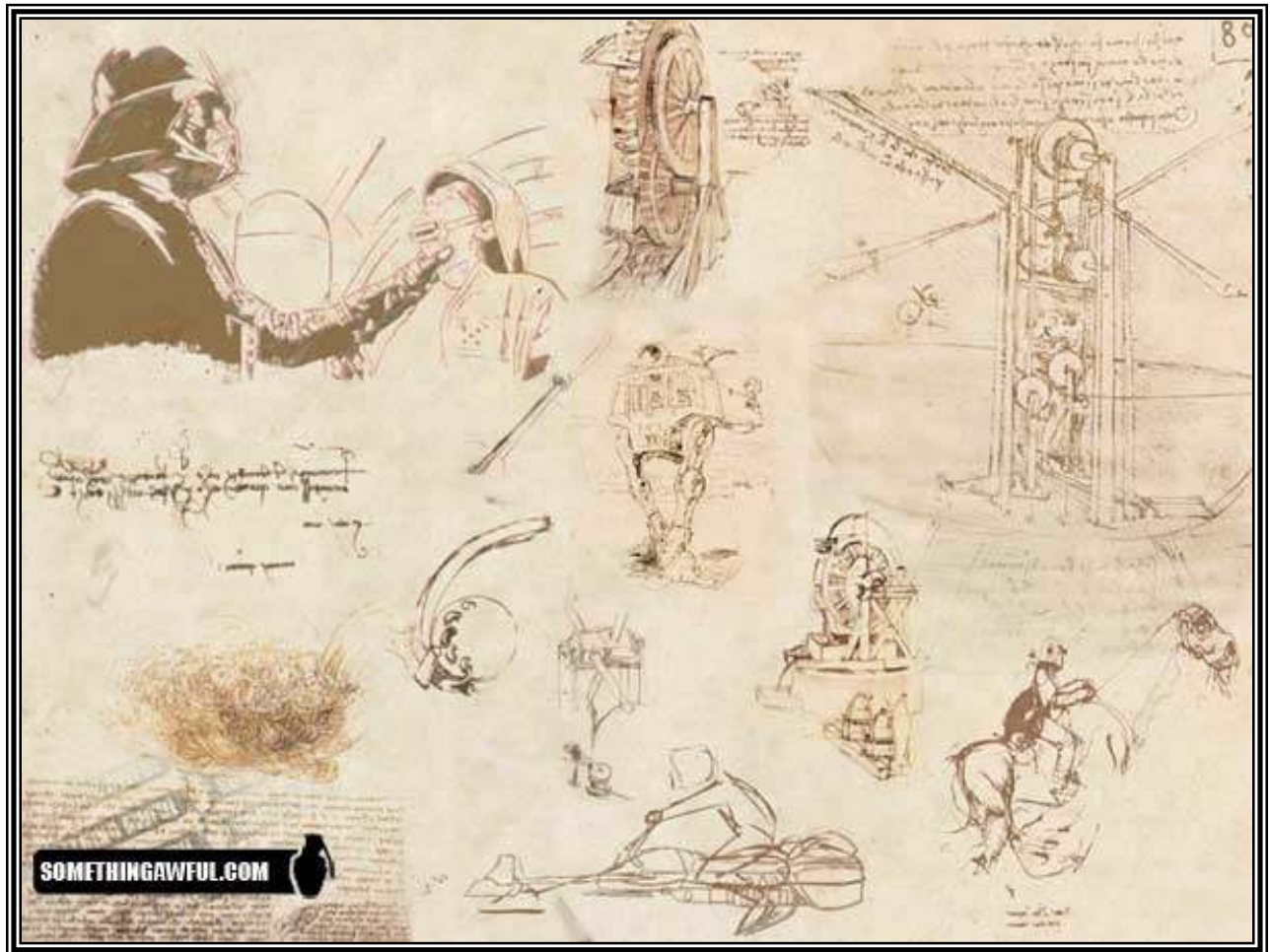
And there is good news to report on the local convention scene. The next Aggiecon (the 41<sup>st</sup>) has basically been set in place. The venue is one that I was hoping the Aggiecon committee would choose, the College Station Hilton and Convention Center, and the date has been moved UP (make a note of this) to February 5-7, 2010. The main Guests of Honor are Steven Gould and Ellen Datlow, and here's a link you can visit to get the whole poop on how this all went down; it's the Aggiecon blog, and reading through the entries is really interesting. But I am really, really glad that the TAMU SF club, Cepheid Variable, realized that they had to be proactive and went at it with a positive attitude. This is A Good Sign. Stay tuned for more info, or go to <http://aggiecon.tamu.edu/> to learn All That There Is To Know at this time. WARNING: Much of the info on the website is from this past spring's con, so be reminded that it will be updated in the coming months.



As for the bad news, I am supremely bummed that our finances put the kibosh on attending Fencon VI. This is one of those conventions with the potential of being one of the good ones to attend on a regular basis. So, now that it's essentially over and done with – as I finish this issue, it is September 20, 2009, the last day of Fencon VI – all I can do is look forward to the next one and do what I can to ensure being there. In two years, Fencon will be the host site of DeepSouthCon, so there is no doubt that I **MUST** be at that one! My apologies to all those who were expecting to see me in Dallas, but know that none of you are forgotten. Blame it on poor economics. If we lived within, say, an hour of DFW, we could have done that. But being 3 hours southeast of it, there was simply no way we could afford the gas mileage up and back, motel/hotel room for two nights, plus things like food and drink, and taking into account emergency fundage Just in Case. As fen have sighed before, *\*sigh\**. See all y'all next year.

*John Purcell*

*ya gotta love it:*



From an unpublished page in Da Vinci's notebooks. Copyright © 2008 [www.somethingawful.com](http://www.somethingawful.com)