

# CHATTACON XV



JANUARY 12-14, 1990

This program book is dedicated to the people of eastern Europe.  
Democracy is well worth fighting for.

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We apologize to any staff members who didn't get their names listed in the program book.

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# Robert E. Vardeman

An Appreciation

by

Kathryn Ptacek

Bob, as he is known to his legends of friends and fans (please: never "Bobby", "Rob", rarely "Robert", and only once to a late fan "Bobito"; although there was the "Robot" incident, but that's a whole 'nother story which can only be told after a sufficiently late hour has elapsed and much money has exchanged hands) was born along a gentle bank in the mighty Mississippi River several dozen decades ago. There are those of you who may have thought that Bob actually grew up in assorted mundane places such as El Paso and Indianapolis and Albuquerque. Naaaw. Lies. All shameless lies.

It was a hard life for Bob, being the eldest of twenty-three children. He had to rise at dawn—you all know what a morning person he is, always with a ready smile and cheerful mien at the earliest of hours—so that he could wade out into the fields to plant the corn and cotton crops, and then he worked until dusk in the fish plant, shucking scales and flinging fins. Bob truly loves fish; offer to buy him a fish dinner sometime to discover the depths of his feelings. And of course, all the while, Bob, in truly humble circumstances, was writing.

Boy oh boy, was he.

In the course of all this, Bob managed to get to college and even to get an advanced degree. He worked for a Top Secret Place.

But all the while writing beckoned.

He went on to other things. And he wrote. His life grew apace. And so did his bibliography.

His interests vary, so his fields of writing vary, too. He has sold more than a dozen short stories to such respected places as the late Twilight Zone magazine, as well as a number of anthologies, among them the "Greystone Bay" horror ones, as well as the fantasy anthology Tales of the Witch World.

Bob has written more books than any man, woman, child or possum has any right to do. And he's done it well, and without too much complaining.

His novels run the gamut from straight SF (among them the Weapons of Chaos series, the Masters of Space series, and Crisis at Starlight coming out from Ace in February to be followed by Space Vectors in June), Star Trek (The Klingon Gambit and Mutiny on the Enterprise), fantasy (among many titles: A Symphony of Storms, the third in the Demon Crown series, out this January; the Cenotaph Road series; the Jade Demons series; the Swords of Raemllyn series co-written with George Proctor), a Tom Swift book, the mystery genre (Eight Card Stud, Doctor DNA, Kali Death Cult, among others) and westerns (Fast Hand by Karl Lasser, and nearly two dozen of the Jake Logan series). Over eighty in total, with a few more in the ol' computer right now. I don't know what Bob gets

*(Continued on page 40)*

# Michael P. Kube-McDowell

by  
Michael Hudson

Michael P. Kube-McDowell has been called “the finest new writer of cosmic science fiction in twenty years” (Orson Scott Card), and his writing praised as “reminiscent of Arthur C. Clarke at his best” (Newsday). Though occasionally accused of being a Hard SF writer, he denies the charge; as far as he knows, he does not belong to any identifiable clique, Movement, or school.

In his ten years of professional writing, Kube-McDowell’s fiction has been featured in such magazines as Analog, Asimov’s, Amazing, Rod Serling’s Twilight Zone, and Fantasy and Science Fiction, as well as in various anthologies. “Slac//”, Kube-McDowell’s fifth published story, was selected as one of 1981’s ten best by Donald Wollheim. His 1983 fantasy “Slippage” was chosen for Karl Edward Wagner’s The Year’s Best Horror Stories and subsequently selected by George Romero to be adapted into an episode of the television series “Tales From the Darkside.”

Kube-McDowell’s involvement with TV continued with three teleplays for “Tales From the Darkside.” The stories included an original, an adaptation of his story “Lifebomb,” and an adaptation of a story by Frederik Pohl. Kube-McDowell is a member of the Writer’s Guild of America-East.

Emprise (1985), Kube-McDow-

ell’s first novel, launched the thousand-year “Trigon Disunity” future history; it was a finalist for the Philip K. Dick Award. The series continued with Enigma (1986) and concluded with Empery (1987). Other novels include the juveniles Thieves of Light (1987, writing as Michael Hudson) and Odyssey (1987), the first book in the pioneering project “Isaac Asimov’s Robot City.”

Kube-McDowell’s most acclaimed work to date is Alternities (1988, SFBC 1989), which David Brin called “the best parallel universe novel to come around in years and years.” The Quiet Pools, a novel about “fathers and sons, starships and evolution, and destiny and free will,” will be published as an Ace hardcover in May, 1990.

Born Michael Paul McDowell, the author grew up in the New Jersey section of Philadelphia. While attending Michigan State as a National Merit Scholar, he married Karla Jane Kube, creating his unusual surname. Michael and Karla were divorced in 1987; they have one child, Matthew, 6.

Outside of science fiction, Kube-McDowell is the author of more than 500 nonfiction articles on subjects ranging from space careers to “scientific creationism.” He holds a master’s degree in science education and was honored for teaching excellence by the 1985 White House Commission on

*(Continued on page 45)*

# David Cherry

by  
C. J. Cherryh

I always knew the kid was bright. And I can remember him when. Many of which incidents I daren't tell: he'd put a contract out on me.

But I was convinced from the first when he arrived in the household that he was shamming, convincing everyone he was sleeping. This was not fair, you understand. My parents had told me I was going to have a sib of some sort (they refused to make guarantees as to A or B type) and that it would be Fun, Fun, Fun. We could play together and go places together, etc., etc.

So they delivered this critter that slept all the time.

Faking it, I figured. *Nobody* could sleep that much. It wasn't good for him. So, every time our mum went off to the corner grocery, or out in the yard, or got on the phone, I figured it was my bounden duty to stir the kid up and make him function.

I dropped him once. I was real sorry.

I don't think it did any permanent damage.

I also figured it wasn't good for people to talk baby-talk at him, because that is what he was learning, all the goo-goo ga-ga stuff, which would frustrate him because nobody could understand him, so I who knew better, would of course give him language lessons so that he could grow up faster. I wasn't unreasonable.

I tried to get him walking about the time he could sit up. I figured it was just a matter of coordination.

Unfortunately, so is standing. Plump!

Then he learned to do all the above, and pretty soon the little beggar was toddling right through my toy soldiers and chewing the tails and the feet off all my toy horses.

Next thing I knew, he was graduating from law school.

Which was rapidly on its way to giving him ulcers.

And after getting a career well-started and doing darned well at it, he had the fortitude to shove it aside, go out on a shoestring and work his tail off doing what he wants to do...

At which he has proved my initial opinion right.

Professional art is a difficult trade. There are those who make their reps by hype and extravagance: flinging buckets of paint off the roof at a canvas or wrapping Cadillacs in plastic. And then there are artists...

There is a Roman proverb: What comes to effect by design, not chance—is art.

And causing things to come to effect by design means being in control of your materials and making your viewer see the thing you intended they see, in a way the viewer might not have

*(Continued on page 16)*

# Danny Gill

by  
Mike Dillion

Danny was born on October 24, 1961 in Idaho. While this date happens to coincide with "Black Monday," it has, happily for all involved, had no effect upon Danny's life. Early in life, Danny demonstrated artistic ability. While in school, Danny decided that art was his "thing." This led to a major in Advertising Arts in college and the target of becoming a professional artist.

Soon after graduating from college in 1983, Danny discovered science fiction art. He started doing illustration work for zines and program books. He also discovered a ready market for his work in art shows throughout the south. Danny has also done extensive work for Chattacon including logos (this year included), program book covers, and illustrations.

Danny's works have graced the pages of a number of magazines

including Amazing Pulp Comics and the short-lived Undiedog. But much more of Danny's work meets the public eye in the form of billboards, packaging, newspaper ads, flyers and television.

Danny has held jobs ranging from illustrator to courtroom artist and, most recently, as a member of Ted Turner's TBS crew. Danny has decided to turn full time to art and put his energies into free-lance work.

I have known Danny both personally and professionally for five years and I have never met a more, shall we say, "creative" (read warped) sense of art. Between Zanny and I, we have one of the largest collections of Danny Gill works there is. I urge each and every one of you to go to the Art Show and view his works there and to attempt to try and match our collection.







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# Wilson "Bob" Tucker

and the Search for the Origins of Fankind:

Early Fan and His Beginning-Part One

A Doctoral Research Thesis

by

B. & Leaky

The spring of 1988 marks the end of the first complete decade of fossil hunting in the midwest region, and a more exciting and fruitful ten years in the search for primitive fankind cannot be imagined. Fragments of fossilized bone from hundreds of early fen have been unearthed and identified that together outline the complexity and direction of fannish prehistory over the last 2 or 3 million years. The past decade has witnessed a new view of the beginnings of Fan.

As the dinosaurs slid into decline, a small shrew-like creature, *Editorialis Cheapuskatus*, climbed down from the trees and emerged into dominance. At that time, the main fare of these shrewish creatures had been a small breed of primitive mammal, *Scripticus Hackus*, who filled only insignificant, submissive riles in the local niche. On such nourishment, and with little regard for the normally sedate pace of evolutionary advancement, these predatory shrew-like creatures quickly evolved to their present state—Apes.

But an equally unprecedented evolution simultaneously occurred among *Scripticus Hackus*, on a somewhat smaller scale, however. Indeed, it was among *Scripticus* that our most exciting discoveries were made.

For long years our scientists have studied the cave paintings and primitive scratchings which are attributed to

such early Hackus creatures as *Authoropithecus Nivenanthicus* and *Homo Pournelle* (though some argue that, indeed, *Pournelle* is not true *Homo* at all, that debate is not germane to our purposes). It was at sites near these cave paintings that we found evidence which leads us to conclude an advance had been made among the *Authoropithecus* which marked the emergence of a new breed of Fan.

This fossil, which, following the traditions of great fanthropologists of naming their discoveries, we named Wilson "Bob" Tucker, marked the first arrival upon the scene of a new creature *Homo Erectus* (so named because it stood straight up), though the female members of our team insist it should actually be called *Homo Erectus Erectus* (straight up and straight out). Making its home primarily in the Illinois region along the white shores of Lake Bloomington and the Jacksonville Gorge, it was apparent—and this marks the greatest departure from the earlier Homos—a quite witty and charming fellow of infinite mirth, with highly developed social skills and an amazing sexual stamina.

Rather than resorting to the sometimes murky and undecipherable cave scratchings of its *Authoropithecus* forbears, Tucker developed the hammer-and-chisel technique (another advance),

*(Continued on page 41)*

# Dick & Nicki Lynch

by  
Charlotte Proctor

It is only fit and proper that the founders of Chattacon are this year's Fan Guests of Honor. Fifteen years ago, Dick and Nicki Lynch decided to "do a con," and look at it now!

During their fifteen years in Tennessee (they now live in Maryland), they not only created one of the South's most enduring and traditional SF cons, but also published from 1977 to 1981, 40 issues of the clubzine Chat. Chat and Cliff Bigger's Atarantes were the South's premier fanzines, lending validity to fandom in the South, the existence of which was, at that time, doubted in other parts of the country. Their perzine, Mimosa, while getting off to a slow start (once every five years), has tightened its publishing schedule a bit and issue #7 will be out RealSoonNow.

Mimosa is noted for its traditional feel, being one of the dozen, or fewer, mimeoed zines still in production. It prints fan history, fanart, and fannish tales—by, for, and about fans—of the finest kind.

In 1988, at Chattacon 13, the Lynchi produced the South's first "Living Fanzine," not to be confused with the Living Bra or Living Will. While the other fan-eds toy with computer bulletin board systems in an effort to keep their zines on the leading edge of technology, Dick and Nicki took to videotape. They filmed, before a live audience, each contributor reading, dramatizing, or drawing his or her contribu-

tion.

Southern fandom bestowed its highest honor upon the Lynchi at B'hamaCon II, DeepSouthCon 19 (Birmingham, Alabama, 1981)—the Rebel Award. The Rebel is given each year to a fan, or in this case a fannish couple, in appreciation of contributions and services to Southern Fandom.

Through their years in Tennessee, their home at 4207 Davis Lane was the local fan hotel, with transient fen ranging from the illustrious Wilson "Bob" Tucker to your humble reporter, spending a fannish night or two, curled up on a pile of old fanzines in the corner.

I remember my first Chattacon—seeing a tall, dour-looking man ever-present at room parties, leaning on the wall, and a perky, cheerful brunette, talking vivaciously to party goers. I soon learned they were a pair, "Dick & Nicki," or, "The Lynchi."

Dick, while he looks forbidding sometimes (don't let that fool you), has a dry wit and wry sense of humor that is delightful to experience. Nicki, the more mercurial of the pair, makes everyday life seem an adventure. Ask her about living with cats in a motel, or selling tea to heathens!

Dick and Nicki complement each other; they have an affinity that makes it impossible to separate the two. Southern fandom and the Lynchi complement each other; they, too, are impossible to separate.

# Stan Bruns

by  
Nancy Bruns

When Mike asked me for a few words about Stan, who is one of my favorite subjects, I realized I suffer from a bit of bias. But, please, bear with me...**I THINK HE'S GREAT!** Now that I have that off my chest, I can get on with the tale of Stan, the artist.

I first became aware of Stan in Economics during evening classes at Kennesaw College. You may wonder why my eyes were attracted to this fellow sitting against the far wall and if you were to ask, I would reply "Good question!" Stan had an annoying habit of always knowing the answers to the teacher's questions. That doesn't sound too special, knowing of course the high caliber of people who attend night school, but there is another side to this little story. During every lecture - every class, Stan was engrossed with working on a pen and ink drawing, not on the exciting subject of macro-economics. The "prof" tried repeatedly to catch him unaware, but Stan always came through with the correct reply, while taking the art of "doodling" to a higher plateau.

Many times I have watched Stan apply that ability of focusing on a project while attending to other matters. Unfortunately, this knack of "simultaneous split-concentration," as it's known in cerebral circles, was applied toward climbing the Corporate ladder for many years in the mundane business world and not toward art. In 1986, Stan

chucked the business suit for the less restrained artist's smock or, in this case, ink-stained blue jeans, and devoted his time to learning the business of illustration and fine arts.

While attending ConFederation in Atlanta in 1986, Stan decided to target the upcoming Chattacon XII for testing the waters and showing his art for the first time. Despite a shaky start (flu plus a room on the party floor next door to a "Con bash" - everyone's a novice once), friends too numerous to name were made and the Bruns were hooked at this first of many conventions in 1987.

Since that time, Stan has become a hard-working artist, well-known in his native South. Most of his pieces illustrate his poems and/or story ideas, sometimes translated into Nordic and Celtic (Tolkien) rune borders. Stan has illustrated several books, a large number of magazines and countless commercial projects for publishers large and small. His work has won many art show awards, including the best Monochrome/Professional Peer Award at the 1988 WorldCon in New Orleans. He founded the Dreamsmiths Artist Guild, a professional organization based in Atlanta and composed of working fantasy and science fiction artists. He is a frequent lecturer/instructor at the Hunter Museum of Art in Chattanooga, Tennessee and is one of the featured artists

*(Continued on page 40)*

# This is Jeremiah...

(Excerpted from The Quiet Pools)

by

Michael Kube-McDowell

From the elevated guard station at the main entrance to Allied Transcon's Houston center, a young corpsec monitored the truck trundling up Galveston Road toward NASA Drive. With his televiewer, he could see that the rider cabin of the robot tractor was empty. The dull silver tank trailer bore the familiar logo of Shell Chemical.

"Traffic on the board," his watch partner said suddenly as the truck crossed the security threshold. His watch partner was an Artificial Intelligence Personality named Isaac, one of eight personalities making up the center's Sentinel system.

"I've got it," said the corpsec. A squeeze on the grip of the televiewer brought the reply to the station's radioed interrogative into the finder in pale yellow lettering. "ID's okay. Shellchem local hauler, running empty."

"I have confirmation from the National Vehicle Registry," Isaac said. "The registry is valid and current."

"Okay." The corpsec idly continued to track the tanker in the glass, trying to read the graffiti scrawled on its flanks. In the course of their four-hour shift, more than a hundred wheeled cargo vehicles would slide by on the old surface road, shuttling between Galveston and Houston. Except for the occasional burst of imagination or artistry in the graffiti, they were hardly worth notice.

Besides, ground traffic was the least of Corporate Security's concerns. It was far more likely that someone seeking to penetrate Allied Transcon would try to hop the triple fence in a flyer; far more likely that someone trying to destroy it would lob a screamer from the forest of scrapers downtown, or from a boat bobbing somewhere on the poisoned waters of Galveston Bay.

And even those possibilities were hard to take very seriously at all—right up to the moment the Shellchem tanker suddenly veered right and roared up the ramp onto NASA Drive, accelerating all the way. At the top of the ramp, the tanker swept an unsuspecting two-seat flyer aside and hurtled down the entrance drive toward the barbican.

"Jesus," the corpsec said unbelievably. "It's going to crash the gate."

There was little else for him to do, for the silicon reflexes of Sentinel had already taken over. In less than a microsecond, the AIP declared the tanker a threat, activated the gate defenses, and transmitted an alert to corpsec throughout the grounds.

"Now sending kill-Q," said Isaac.

A half dozen flyers were queued up in the accumulation lane outside the barbican's tunnels. They settled to the ground as one as Sentinel abruptly took command of their pilot systems. But the tanker kept coming, its systems refusing the insistent commands. In seconds



the tanker would smash into the stalled flyers and their human occupants.

"It's stall-shielded," the corpsec realized.

Sentinel had already drawn the same conclusion, and made the only possible decision. With almost tangible reluctance, Sentinel exercised what control it had, and the flyers suddenly rose up and scattered like a flock of birds. That ended the risk to life. It also cleared the way to the gate.

"Fire authority," snapped the corpsec. "Blow it off the bridge."

"Road sensors show the tanker is fully loaded. There's no way to know what's in it," the construct said. "Sorry."

The corpsec swallowed hard. "Jesus, I hope they built this tower good—"

At the end of the bridge spikes rising from the roadbed shredded the tanker's tires, but could not halt it. The tanker reached the final concrete apron outside the twin tunnels of the barbican, now sealed by heavy doors, and abruptly slewed into a sideways skid. Moments later it slammed into the wall of steel and stone.

The corpsec grabbed for a handhold as the tower shuddered and swayed. But there was no explosion, no alarming creaking and rending. The corpsec looked toward Isaac's room scanner with a look of relief and drew a deep breath to clear the poison of fear from his lungs.

"That wasn't so bad," Isaac said.

"No," said the corpsec, going to the window. Peering down at the barbican, he saw the tanker crushed sideways against the entrance gates, bleeding a yellow-brown soup from its belly.

The fast-running pool of liquid had already reached the east edge of the apron and begun to spread across the hard earth and brown grass.

Grabbing his viewer, the corpsec trained it on the spill. Wraithlike white wisps played in the air above its surface. "I don't like the looks of that."

"The HazMat team has been notified."

"Should I evacuate?"

"No," was the answer. "Remain at your station. You'll be given further instructions when HazMat evaluates the situation."

The corpsec frowned. "I'm not settling for that," he said. "Let me listen to E-1."

Emergency Channel One came on the speaker just in time for the corpsec to hear the chatter of excited voices fade under a storm of static and then vanish beneath the clean white hum of a pirate jammer. Then a voice spoke, a solemn, sonorous male voice that commanded their attention and tugged somehow at the emotional chord labeled father.

"This is Jeremiah, speaking for the Homeworld . . ."

"Shit."

"This is an unauthorized transmission," Isaac said.

"Shut up, Isaac," the corpsec said irritably. "I want to hear what they've done to us."

#

As always, Homeworld had worked hard to make certain that the corpsec, Allied Transcon management, and as many of Earth's eight billion as possible heard.

*(Continued on page 45)*

## Surviving the South III: The Tourist Mode

by  
Charles L. Grant

It happens sometimes—you travel all the way to Chattanooga, your friends haven't arrived at the convention yet, the bar isn't open, the redhead in the black t-shirt won't give you the time of day, and the one panel you wanted to see has been replaced by a steel drum filk singing band. You stand forlornly at your window and look out upon the city. Suddenly it is as if you have seen it for the first time. Suddenly you wonder just what there is to do out there, what places you might visit, what sights you might see, what people you might meet. But you have no idea where to go, how to get there even if you knew where to go, or what to do when you got to where you don't know how to go.

Fear not. The Committee has thought of you, poor wandering one, and presents herewith and for free (you better believe it) a list of fascinating tourist attractions for the budget-minded and intellectually adventurous. There are no guarantees, however, since all tastes differ; and the only satisfaction you'll get out of these trips is the sure and certain knowledge that you could only find these places in the South

For example:

1) On January 14<sup>th</sup>, at 2:00 pm, is the annual Chattanooga ice parade. This is a splendiferous display of incredible amateur ice sculptures mounted on locomotive-shaped floats; plus marching bands, Boy Scouts, color guards

from all the area high schools, and the precision drill team of the 34<sup>th</sup> Quartermaster Corps out of Omaha. Aside from the beautiful women, the smart uniforms, and the soul-stirring music, you haven't seen anything until you've seen Robert E. Lee, Mt. Rushmore, Atlanta, Tara, or Gov. Faubus rendered in shimmering ice. A remarkable, heart-warming sight indeed, unless it snows, in which case it's cancelled.

2) The Delia R. Swalmouth Museum of Confederate Soap. Don't laugh. Delia Swalmouth has devoted most of her eighty-six years to collecting and preserving all manner of soap products initially developed during the hard times of the Confederacy. The historical value of this slice of domestic life cannot be underrated. Particular attention should be paid to the soap carvings displayed on the tank in the downstairs bathroom. These were done by Ms. Swalmouth's own great-grandfather whilst he was bathing in the claw-foot tub you'll also see there. Note especially the one of Ms. Swalmouth's great-grandmother, unless it's the dog.

3) Three blocks to the (pardon the expression) north and one south is the house where Thomas Hitherton was born. Hitherton, as you history buffs know, is the man who developed the water-powered reaping machine. That it only worked when it rained speaks not to the man's genius and inventive-ness. Note, in the drawing room, the

easel.

4) A short drive across the river towards Georgia, and a quick right at the fifth traffic light will bring you to the Southeastern Tennessee Aquatic Zoo. It is the only one of its kind in the country, and was developed under the auspices of the University of Tennessee Department of Life Sciences and Home Ec. Call first and bring wading boots. Exhibits have a tendency to either dry out or vanish or rot if you're not there when they dump the water in the cages.

5) Just behind the hotel you'll find a series of railroad tracks. Approximately one-hundred-and-ninety yards along the center of the tracks is a plaque where the mayor of Chattanooga claims Glenn Miller died. That the famous bandleader disappeared over the English Channel during WWII makes no nevermind to him. He campaigned for that plaque, and you'd damn well better go see that plaque. Notice how much the engraved profile of Mr. Miller resembles Jimmy Stewart. The mayor doesn't care about that either. And if you're too young to know what the hell that refers to, you're too young to be reading this anyway.

6) Another short drive, this time along the interstate toward Knoxville, where (on the drive, not at Knoxville) you'll take a left at the cow crossing sign, follow the paved road into the hills, and make another left at the rusty cannon. Three or four minutes later, the trees will fall away and you'll be at the site of the Fourth Battle of Chattanooga. The first three happened during the Civil War. This one happened during the Korean War because the folks here were so depressed about what happened

during the first three that they decided to try again. In was one of the war's (Korean, not Civil) swiftest battles. Hank clobbered Will with his refurbished musket; Elma tripped Marsha into the wine press; and the four Stuart brothers fell into a sink hole caused by the collapse of a mine shaft dug during the Second Battle of Chattanooga (Civil, not Korean) when the 5<sup>th</sup> (or Bloody) Division decided it wasn't going to hang around for the Third Battle (which actually happened at Knoxville, for you purists). It is a most impressive site, and one which will no doubt cause many a second thought about the so-called glory of war (Civil or Korean).

7) Robert E. and Patty Vardeman. They're not actually tourist attractions except that he's tall and she's short and the midget with them is their son, Christopher, who isn't a tourist attraction either unless he's drooling on Bob, and they're here from New Mexico to be stared at, photographed, studied, followed, listened to, learned from, laughed with, and hell, I guess they are tourist attractions after all, so notice please that Bob talks funny (he says "greaZy" instead of "greaSy", "ruff" instead of "roof") and Patty doesn't, that Bob's hair isn't as dark anymore as he thinks it is, and Patty's is, and that Bob won't dance and Patty will. With anyone. Or anything. I ought to know. She danced with me once in Albuquerque. A slow dance. Actually two slow dances. I wouldn't do the fast stuff because it's easier to dodge those pointy shoes of hers with the slow stuff. I've seen the guys who do the fast stuff. They either limp, crawl, or don't leave the house except when Patty is out of town.

should miss if you really hate their guts.

9) Just outside the city is Lookout Mountain, which, legend has it, was the site of a terrible tragedy during the Civil War. A Confederate scout, who was looking out for the Union Army, lit a torch when he spotted said army on the horizon. The idea was to warn the citizens of Chattanooga that the enemy was coming. Unfortunately, it being a particularly dry season that year, the entire mountain flared up. The Union Army, which wasn't looking for Chattanooga anyway, decided to check on the idiot who set a whole mountain on fire, and discovered Chattanooga. They would have kept on going, however, if the mayor of Chattanooga hadn't taken a shot at the Union colonel who was admiring the fire-lit mountain. The colonel, who hadn't the slightest idea where the hell Alabama was, decided on the spot that this place was as good as any to make general. Thus was born the Second Battle of Chattanooga (the First having been fought by a major who did, in fact, know about Alabama and took it out on Chattanooga). From all the plaques placed along the trail the scout took when he fled, you will learn a great deal about Southern strategy, Northern wisdom, and the then-mayor of Chattanooga, who ordered the plaques placed as soon as the battle was over and his son was safely hidden in Texas.

10) Chattanooga. What the hell. If you don't want to leave the hotel and do the tourist bit, you're stuck with the convention. If you've been here before, nothing I say can change your mind; if you haven't, nothing I say will convince you. If you've read these articles

before, you know that this is where I stop poking fun at the South and my friends and tell you all the real, true, wonderful things that await you at this gathering. But since I'm only a tourist myself, what the hell do I know, right? Right. So go figure it out for yourself. I, on the other hand, have learned, from Mr. Bryan Webb, of a place just behind the bus station down there where they hold LibertyCon. It (the place, not the bus station) is called Scarlet's O'Hara, a watering hole of the first rank, and the home of the First Battle of Chattanooga Camp Followers Museum and Mental Message Parlor and Dining Hall. Mr. Webb assures me it's tax deductible. I intend to enjoy myself. Go thou and do likewise.

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*(Continued from page 6)*

seen without being led to it...

One reads books and looks at art for more than entertainment—one wants to widen one's own vision, look at the world through someone else's eyes, and compare that against previously stored information and opinions.

In the case of science fiction and fantasy art, that Other Vision means leading the viewer to something which may startle the eye of the mind...and David's way of proceeding is to keep everything as normal as possible, 'til you realize you're Not In Kansas Any-more.

He's still evolving. He always has been.

I knew he was going to be interesting.

# **Deep South Con XXVIII**

**June 7-10, 1990  
Southern Inn  
East Ridge at I-75**

Guest of Honor

**Bob Shaw**

Artist Guest of Honor

**Darrell K. Sweet**

Special Guest

**Raymond Feist**

Toastmaster

**Forrest J. Ackerman**

Fan Guest of Honor

**Bryan Webb**

Memberships \$25 through the convention and at the door

For more information write:

Deep South Con XXVIII

P.O. Box 23908

Chattanooga, Tennessee 37422



# Never Trust A Yankee

(At Least One in Particular)

by

Bryan, Sharon, Wendy & Jerri Webb

*(Editor's Forward: After several years of abuse of the South by a certain Yankee writer, the fightin' Webbs decided to even the score. Here, with much love to CG, follows their rebuttal.)*

There is a Yankee among us. Sad, but true, these words. And here in the bosom of the South—he would call it something else—a man walks among us not with clay on his shoes, but something Northerners gather with pooper-scoopers. But we'll fix it, or him, whichever comes first. That's the Southern way. They break it, we mend it. They dish it out, we take it.

Until now.

Now, at least for the Yankee among us, the South has risen again. It's our turn to discuss the behavioral sociological, and psychological differences between the gentle Southerner, and the, you know, abrasive Yankee.

First the Yankee speech. While on occasion a Southerner drops a letter or two from the spoken word, making it as smooth as a sip from Bob Tucker's bottle, the Yankee tends to add sounds. Witness "Warshington" as in D.C. or George. Is this an attempt to usurp the language, or merely to get in the last word?

Another ploy by these folks from "up there" includes spouting forth ten words to the Southerner's one. Words run all together in rapid succession. Not

words evenly spaced, words delivered in a genteel pace befitting one who respects the language. We nod knowingly, and smile, and let him think we understand, and further that we care why New Jersey is called the Garden State.

I think we know what the Yankee among us would say to that, and say, and say, and say.

And then there's his choice of music. Willy Nelson, Reba McIntyre, and the lot. No REM on his CD, no Amoeba in Chaos. At least not after he's crossed the Tennessee line southbound. A solid country man, this yankee among us, or at least he'd like you to believe.

And don't ask him what he's read in the local phone book either. He'll claim he's doing research, checking on the political air of the city by counting the number of massage parlors in the yellow pages. Uh huh. And we have a bridge to sell him in Brooklyn. Cheap.

At convention's end watch for his swagger out the front door, a big ole cowboy hat perched atop his haid. You'd almost expect a pickup truck to be parked in the towaway zone out front. Sorry. Scratch this country boy and you'll find the "Y" word underneath. And don't ask him what he drives. It's just too embarrassing. Who else would drive a car named after a cheap, bad wine?

###

The South has a language all its own. Northerners listen to obviously phoney accents on such television programs as "Designing Women" and "Matlock." And they think that's us! (But Andy Griffin, known as "Deacon" in his stand-up comic days, has one heck of a southern accent.) These Yankees need to understand the subtilities of true Southern "pernunciation" from a true Southerner. To wit:

"Sugar." Not the granulated cane sweetener, but an affectionate term for a loved one, and seldom wasted on Yankees. It can also be used on one from whom you'd like a big (and probably unreasonable) favor, as in "Sugar, would you pump up this flat tire for me?" Pronounced "shug-ah," and only correct if it contains more than two syllables.

"Flutter." Not as it sounds, and not as a fluttering or a fluttering. This is the Southern belle's "F" word. Course Northern curses and swear words don't sit well down South. Listen closely to Southern ladies talk and you will hear these epithets spewing forth with charm and grace. Pronounced "Flitt-ah."

"Damn." This is what you think. Southern men use this word to excess, frequently preceded by deities, or other words such as "hot," and frequently followed by words such as "Yankee." This word defies conjugation and is equally as effective without a preface when spoken with the emphasis placed on the first few syllables. Pronounced "daah-em."

I could go on and on, but you can't teach Northerners anything they don't

already know. And besides, my car needs ole, a new tar, and the damn thing's on far. Gotta git!

###

These heah Yankees comes down below the line awl the time and tries to pass theyselves off as "Crackers," or bornden "Volunteers." Well, sheee-it. Awl yew gots to do is look at 'em to know better, and lissen to how they tawks. Why, they expects to set the south afar wif they slick tawk and con-nivances. It's high time we set things straight, raht cheer.

They puts on them stretch jeans, Canyew imagine? And snakeskin boots. No self respectin' shee-it kicker would be caught daid wif no snakes on his feets, and he don't want no daid eels wropped aroun' his money, neever. Then they gits a cowboy shirt and some skimpy black leather vest and puts 'em on. And a leather belt wif a big ole silver buckle. (I'm gittin' sick to my stomach just picturin' awl this here mess.) And to top it awl off they sticks a cowboy hat on top of they haid to hide the baldin' spot.

Whooo-ee! What yew got cheer is either Richard Petty—who damn sure is Southern—or some damned truck driver. And I don't mean Fowd F-150s neever. I'm tawlkin' Peterbuilts, which is real trucks, and onlyist kind yew can drive wifout wearin' a bawl cap, and hawlin' you loose-lipped hound dawg in the front seat wif about 26 empty cans of Bud a'rattlin' aroun' on the flow.

Now if one of these Yankees tries to pass hissself off as some kind of horror writer, be sure how he says thet.

*(Continued on page 41)*

# Masquerade Rules

Costume presentations will be limited to 1 1/2 minutes plus 30 seconds for each additional person over three. Skits will be limited to five minutes. The judges have been informed of your time limitations.

Any costume/skit that has been entered in, and has won an award at a "larger" (regional, WorldCon, etc.) convention may not enter the contest to win an award. you may, however, enter the costume/skit for "show" only.

Masquerade categories are Science Fiction, Fantasy, Recreation, and Skit. Up to 10 awards may be given; these are:

Best Science Fiction	Best Fantasy
Best Recreation	Best Presentation (not a skit)
Most Beautiful	Most Humorous
Most Dramatic	Best Costumed Skit
Best Skit	Best In Show

Judges may be permitted to give honorable mentions in the above categories.

Awards will be granted only to deserving contestants. Therefore, if there is only one entry in a category, and that entry is not worthy of an award, then no award for that category will be given.

Using this system, an entry may win more than one award if deserving (example: Best Fantasy and Most Beautiful). Best in Show will be selected from the winners (with the exception of Best Skit) because to be best they would have had to win at least one of the awards.

The hotel is requiring that no combat simulations may be allowed on the masquerade stage. This is because of the presence of a motion picture screen behind the stage.

The judges for this year's Masquerade will be Walt Baric, David Cherry and Val Lakey Lindahn.

# Masquerade Awards

Something special has been created for the Chattacon Masquerade Awards. The Awards feature David Cherry Artwork laser engraved into a clear acrylic disk and set into a black acrylic base. A brass plate will be attached to the base with the year and category. It is truly a work of art and unique in masquerade awards. Chattacon plans to make this award design traditional as with the Ming of Rivercon or the Khandor of Kubla.

## Art Show

Once again, the Art Show, located in the Convention Center Exhibit Hall, will have many fine pieces of art for your viewing pleasure. If you wish to purchase a piece of art through the Art Show, there are a few ways to go about it. Prior to the close of the show Saturday, if a piece that is for sale has NO bids, you may purchase the piece for the Immediate Purchase Price (IPP), provided that the artist has listed an IPP. If there is no IPP, a bid on the bid sheet, or you do not wish to pay IPP, you must enter the auction process. This simply means you must enter a bid for the piece. At Chattacon, the auction process is done in two steps: the first step is the written bid, or silent auction; the second is the voice auction that occurs Saturday evening. If you see a piece that you wish to bid on, all you do is write your name, your badge number, and the amount you wish to bid, provided that the amount is the same or higher than the minimum bid indicated, or higher than the previous bid on the bid sheet. This is the silent part. As soon as an item has two or more written bids, it is eligible for Saturday evening's voice auction, where anyone can bid on a piece by just calling out a higher amount of money than the previous bidder. The person with the highest bid, written or voice, gets the privilege of paying for the artwork and taking it home. All written bidding ceases at 4:00 PM on Saturday, all verbal bidding ends when the auctioneer says the magic word—SOLD! Oh, if you bid, and are the highest bidder (written or verbal), please remember that you have entered into a contract and are obligated to purchase the item. So much for the bidding process. The Art Show will be open on Sunday morning for people to pay for and pick up artwork. Also, items that were not sold will be available for sale at the After-Auction price indicated by the artist. Naturally, any items marked Not For Sale (NFS) are not for sale. The Art Show will accept checks, MasterCard®, VISA®, and good old American cash.

## Print Shop

Once again, Chattacon is offering a Print Shop. In this shop, you may directly purchase a print of one or more of your favorite works of Science Fiction/Fantasy art without going through the Art Show's bidding process. The Print Shop is located in the same room as the Art Show.

# Weapons Policy

The practice of carrying or wearing personal weapons at conventions is one of the oldest traditions in fandom. Chattacon respects this custom, and we would rather not do anything to interfere with it.

Unfortunately, in recent years, a few fans have created problems by abusing this custom and behaving very badly with weapons. Therefore, we have reluctantly adopted the following weapons policy. Please read it because it will be enforced.

- All knives, swords, axes, shiraken, and other bladed weapons, whether sharpened or not, must be covered by sheaths, cases, reinforced cardboard, or some other protective wrapping. All blades or other small weapons, such as nunchukas, must be secured to the wearer's person or clothing in all public areas of the Choo-Choo or Convention Center, including the hallways, the lobby, and all function space. Exceptions will be made for displays in the Dealers' Room and for Masquerade participants on a case-by-case basis.
- All functional firearms, pellet guns, lasers, sound projectors, and other projectile weapons are absolutely forbidden. No exceptions will be given.
- Replicas, blasters, and zap guns are allowed. Any director, convention staff member, or uniformed security guard may, at any time, require proof that a replica is not real.
- Anything can be used as a weapon. Therefore any object used in a dangerous or threatening manner or in such a way that it becomes a general nuisance to the attendees of the convention will be regarded as a weapon by Chattacon.
- Any weapon being carried or misused in violation of this policy will be confiscated and held until the convention is over on Sunday afternoon, at which time the weapon will be returned in Operations (Rm. 224). Anyone who refuses to surrender a weapon when asked to do so by a Chattacon representative will be ejected from the convention without refund. If the violation is very serious, the Choo-Choo will be asked to evict the violator without refund and the violator may be liable for criminal and civil damages.
- No assassination games will be allowed. Players will be ejected from the convention without refund if caught. Please note this has been extended to include Lazer Tag™ and similar games.
- Anyone who deliberately or negligently injures or causes property damage to the hotel, trade center, or their contents, will be ejected from the convention without refund, ejected from the hotel, and may be subject to arrest and to civil or criminal prosecution.
- Interpretation and enforcement of this policy will be at the discretion of any Chattacon Director. In case of a disagreement about this policy, the decision of any two (2) Directors will be final.

All attendees please note: the civil authorities in this area have been known to take a dim view of persons carrying swords, knives, martial arts weapons, and/or large-bore particle beam weapons. Please show some discretion when making excursions into MundaneLand. Please remember, when in Rome...



## Art Show Hours

Friday	2:00 PM - 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM	Artist Check-In Open
Saturday	10:00 AM - 4:00 PM 8:00 PM	Open Art Auction in Lecture Theatre
Sunday	10:00 AM - 12:00 PM 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM	Open Artist Check-Out

## Consuite Hours

Friday	3:00 PM - 11:59 PM	Open
Saturday	12:00 AM - 6:00 AM 7:00 AM - 11:59 PM	Open Open
Sunday	12:00 AM - 6:00 AM 7:00 AM - 3:00 PM	Open Open

## Dealers' Room Hours

Friday	9:00 AM - 1:00 PM 1:00 PM - 8:00 PM	Dealers Only OPEN
Saturday	9:30 AM - 10:00 AM 10:00 AM - 7:00 PM	Dealers Only OPEN
Sunday	9:30 AM - 10:00 AM 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM 3:00 PM - 6:00 PM	Dealers Only OPEN Dealers Only

## Print Shop Hours

Friday	2:00 PM - 5:00 PM 5:00 PM - 10:00 PM	Artist Check-In Open
Saturday	10:00 AM - 4:00 PM	Open
Sunday	10:00 AM - 12:00 PM 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM	Open Artist Check-Out

## Registration Hours

Friday	1:00 PM - 11:00 PM	Open
Saturday	10:00 AM - 4:00 PM	Open

Locations for after-hours registration to be posted.

Friday, Jan 12

	Classroom A	Classroom B	Lecture Theatre	Imperial Ballroom	Conference Theatre
6-7				Opening Ceremonies	
7-8	Mecha, Monsters, and Maidens Mod: Bill Hedrick	Gimme That Oldtime Fandom W. Tucker, R. Hevelin	Multimedia Presentation Ron Lindahn Val Lakey-Lindahn	My Worst Story and Why I Wrote it. Mod: Charles L. Grant	
8-9	Reading John Maddox Roberts	Monochromatic is not Monotonous: Art in Black and White S. Bruns, R. Lindahn, B. Gisdrosich	Past Influences on Modern SF/ Fantasy Art: Slide Show David Cherry	Nature vs Nurture M. Kube-McDowell, S. Webb, S. Farber, J. Killus	
9-10		Southern Fandom vs. All the Rest D. Lynch, N. Lynch, R. Gilliam, B. Gwinn	The Dark Shadows Memorabilia Slide Show J. Thompson		
10				Dance	

Saturday, Jan 13

10-11	World Horror Con Closed Meeting				
11-12		The Art and Craft of Fanzines D. Lynch, N. Lynch, C. Proctor	An Interview with Danny Gill, the Artist D. Cherry	Demonstration by The Society for Creative Anachronism	
12-1	For Ladies Only W. Tucker	Albuquerque My Way: Slide Show R. Vardeman	The Art of Danny Gill: Slide Show D. Gill		
1-2	Consequences of Our Brave New World S. Farber, MD, J. Sherrell, MD, M. Wornack, EdD	Reading S. Webb	Illustration: Verbal Into Visual A. Clark, D. Deitrick, L. Deitrich, D. Chaffee	Shared Worlds Discussion M. Kube-McDowell, J. Lowder, J. Maddox-Roberts	
2		Chess Exhibition C. Schulien		Guest of Honor Speeches Mod: D. Cherry	
7-8			Art Auction Setup		
8-9			Art Auction	8:45 Masquerade Pre-Judging	
10				Dance (After Masquerade)	Masquerade

Sunday, Jan 14

12-1	Artistic Legalisms: Self-Protection for the Creative Person D. Cherry, S. Bruns, P. Gibb	Penguins and Other "P" Words R. Vardeman, C. Grant	Fantasy Without Elves T. Deitz, J. Lowder, J. Maddox-Roberts	
1-2	Willy Ley Society (Space Society) R. McNeil	Hank Morgan and the Mississippi River Commission R. Foote, EdD	FIAWOL/FIAWOD? B. Zielke, K. Moore, G. Robe	
2-3			Closing Ceremonies	

## Chattacon XV Video Schedule

Friday	3:00	PM	Misfits of Science	
	4:40		Colosus: The Forbin Project	
	6:20		Saturday the 14th Strikes Back	
	7:40		Jonny Quest	
	8:10		Metal Skin Panic: MADOX-01	
	9:00		Akira	
	11:05		Dream Illusion Gentlemen	
	11:55		Bubblegum Crisis	
	Saturday	12:40	AM	Bubblegum Crisis 2: Born to Kill
		1:10		Bubblegum Crisis 3: Blow Up
1:50			Return of the Killer Tomatoes	
3:30			Toxic Avenger II	
5:05			Nasty Rabbit	
6:35			Village of the Giants	
8:00			closed for cleaning	
8:30			Moontrap	
10:05			Fright Night II	
11:55			Outer Limits: The Invisibles	
12:50		PM	Them	
2:25			I Married a Monster from Outer Space	
3:45			Mission Stardust	
5:15			Nightfall	
6:40			closed for cleaning	
7:00			Outer Limits: The Man With the Power	
7:55			The 7 Faces of Dr. Lao	
9:40			Invasion Earth	
11:05			Super Deformed Gundam	
11:35		Lilly-C.A.T.		
Sunday	12:55	AM	Thunderbirds: 2086 (english)	
	1:45		Patlabor: The Mobile Police	
	3:15		Attack of the 50 Foot Woman	
	4:30		Invasion of the Girl Snatchers	
	6:00		The Return of Captain Invincible	
	7:45		Dark Shadows	
	9:45		Danger Mouse	
	10:45		The Brother from Another Planet	
	12:35	PM	Interface	
2:05		Outer Limits: Specimen: Unknown		
3:00		closed for another year		

Chattacon reserves the right to change this schedule and its contents without notice.

## Consuite

Beer will be not be served between 2:00 AM and 10:00 AM

### Consuite Rules:

No glass in Consuite or pool area.

No alcoholic beverages in pool area.

21 years of age or older to drink alcoholic beverages.

Badges are required at all times in the Consuite.

Photo ID required to acquire beer.

No gaming in the Consuite.

No beer outside the Consuite.

No wet bathing suits in the Consuite.

Anyone throwing things off the balcony of the Consuite or pool will be expelled from the convention without refund.

## Lost Badge Policy

Unfortunately, there has been a lot of abuse of badges over the past years requiring us to make a somewhat radical policy.

If you lose your badge, you will be required to purchase a new one at full price.

But, before you do this, be certain to trace your steps and attempt to locate your lost badge. Also be certain to check with convention Operations (Rm. 224) to see if it has been turned in.

Should you find a badge, please be certain to turn it in to convention Operations. You could save your fellow fan money that he could surely use elsewhere.

Should a replacement badge be issued, it will be a non-drinking badge.

### Badge Colors:

Blue	-	Adult
Gold	-	Minor
Rose	-	Main Guests

## Operations

Operations is located in the Gerald Ford Suite of the main hotel (Rms. 224 and 226 (see map)). We will be open 24 hours per day during the run of the convention. Operations serves as an information clearinghouse and should be contacted in the event of an emergency. The "Lost and Found" and minor medical supplies will also be located here.

## Dealers' Room

Greetings to all and welcome to the Chattacon 15 Dealers' Room. A little smaller this year due to the change in facilities, but, hopefully, every bit as useful in your search for the one true ring, button, book, T-shirt, or whatever you seek. Our dealers have come from as far as California (...wouldn't you?) to barter their goods. New faces abound among our dependable returnees, all of whom are determined to separate you from your hard earned cash. Come in, browse and enjoy.

Any suggestions (complaints) that you may have as a guest, member, dealer or staff are welcome. Either write them up and drop them in the suggestion box or talk to whomever you find behind the head dealer's table (during one of our less busy times, please!). Be assured that we do take your ideas seriously!

As always, we prohibit food and drinks in the dealers' room for anyone that is not a dealer, assistant to a dealer, or dealers' room staff. What is new is that smoking is now on that prohibited list. Room hours are very similar to what you have become accustomed to. Many of the autograph sessions will be held right next to the dealers' room and thus will be convenient for buyers and dealers to slip over to.

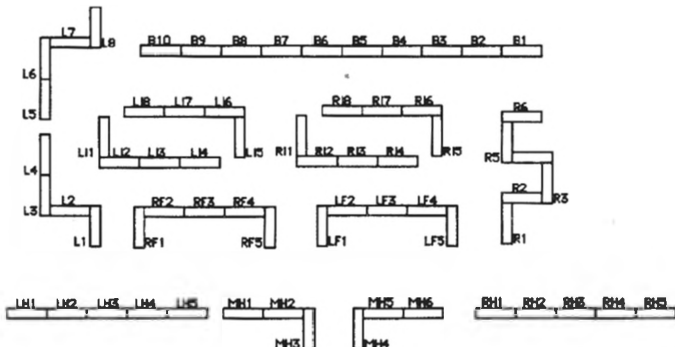
For dealers and their assistants only, memberships for Chattacon 15, 16 & 17 and tables for Chattacon 16 & 17 will be available at the head dealer's table all weekend. Forms and surveys will also be available there.

## Merchandise Key

AH -	Artwork (Hanging), prints, posters
A3 -	Artwork (3-D), miniatures
BH -	Books (Hardcover), new and/or used
BP -	Books (Paperback), new and/or used
C -	Clothing, costuming and accessories
EH -	Educational (historic) specialty items
ES -	Educational (space/science)
ER -	Educational (religious, occult, astrology)
F -	Folk music, audio tapes, songbooks
G -	Games, game aides, modules
H -	Horror specialty items
J -	Jewelry, gems, stones
K -	Comics
M -	Magic supplies
P -	Publications, magazines, pulps, fanzines
S -	Stationery, cards, notepads
T -	Toys, models, kits
V -	Japanimation, video tapes
W -	Medieval weapons, armor
X -	Computer hardware, software, accessories
Z -	Miscellaneous collectibles, buttons, media



Attending Dealers		
Barfunkle's	LF4-5	C,M,Z
Beauty & the Beast	LF3	C,J,G
Blue Star Games	LI4	?
Bill Brickle	LF2	BH, BP
Chained Lynx	RI2	A,C
Chattanooga Magic & Fun	B4	G,M,T
Chimera Publications	L1-2	AH,P,S
C.I.B. & Associates	B5-8	AH,BP,C,V,P,Z
Comics & Curios	RF3	K,Z
Jackie Dannenbarger	RI7	A3,C,Z
Dark Fantasies	L5	C,P,Z
Dragon Treasures	LH1-2	C,J,W
Fantasies Unlimited	L3-4	AH,BH
Galactic Images	LH3	C,G,T,V
Kerry Gilley	R6	K
Grinning Gremlin	RH1-2	B,C,G,P,T
Joseph Gubocki	RI3	?
Rusty Hevelin	RH4-5	Z
Hodge Hobbies	RI5	T,Z
Susan Honeck	LF1	A3,J
Ron & Val Lakey-Lindahn	LI3	AH
LSW Distributors	LI6-8	AH,G,K,T
Bob Maurus	LI1-2	A3,J
S.O.F.S.F.S.	RF4	AH,BH,BP,K,P,Z
Mere Dragons	MH4-6	J,Z
Moneyhaven	B1-2	C,K,P,V,Z
James Odbert	RI6	AH
Overlook Connection	LH4-5	BH,BP,H,P
Palindin Hill Books & Games	RI1	BP,G,Z
Courtney Parham	RI8	K,T
Jan Pettross	RI4	AH
Red Light Comics	MH1-3	BP,K,P,Z
Dee Sharpe	RF1-2	C,W
Southern Fantasies, Inc.	B9-10	G,K,T
Dick Spelman, Bookseller	R4-6	BH,BP
Star Book & Games	R1	B,G,T,Z
Treasure Island	R2-3	A3,C,J,Z
Ray Van Tilburg	L7-8	A,C
Willey Ley Space Society	RH3	ES,P



# The Opal Egg

by

Robert E. Vardeman

The broadsword gleamed brightly as it rose and plummeted onto the exposed helm. The victim of the fierce blow staggered and fell to his knees. He dropped his own sword into the dust and gestured defeat.

"Halt, my king, stay your mighty blow!" cried an onlooker to the mock battle. "Lord Bren has suffered much at your hand this day." Morven's lip curled back in a sneer as he mouthed the words. That blow had been innocuous. A swordsman of Bren's ability could have deflected it easily and retaliated with a deadly cut to the neck—could have, if his opponent hadn't been the king of the realm. Only a fool bested his liege lord in a practice session of no real importance.

"Ha!" cried King Balint, rubbing his arthritic shoulder. "A good fight. You do well, Bren, but remember to use that shield. You allow too many blows to reach your helm. That'll be your death in real battle."

"True, my king. Thank you for the lesson." Bren bowed his head, both in obeisance and to hide the smile on his lips. He glanced up and silent communication flowed between him and Morven. Once, King Balint had battled and bested all the knights. Once. Now the winds of time blew cold and chill past his thin frame. Even his mind lacked its former agility. Without Morven and the other advisors to the

realm, Balint's far-flung amalgam of petty baronies would have split apart like an overripe fruit years ago.

Morven took the sword from the old man's hand and said, "Your Majesty has done well, as he usually does in battle."

"Battle? You call this lover's tryst a battle?" Balint snorted. "The Battle of Tymen, now that was hard-fought. Hard won, too," he said, drifting into the endless corridors of his memories. It had been a noble battle, that one. Tymen marked the rise of his fortunes forty years ago. A barbarian from a distant land, he had hired on as a mercenary to aid the rebels intent on overthrowing the Duke of the Outer Reaches. Overthrow the duke he had done and more. Expert swordsmanship mixed liberally with shrewdness for manipulating others had brought him a throne. Balint remembered those days with fondness. Now the accountants ruled. The bureaucrats had perpetrated ordinance after bewildering ordinance in his name, and he had scant knowledge of what those meaningless proclamations accomplished.

The old days. Those were better, the king knew. Battles. Subtle alliances. Intrigues. Bold policies. His favorable marriage to the defeated duke's daughter Lyesa had given him the legitimacy needed to pacify the commoners and make nobles take heed.

King Balint. It hadn't happened overnight. It took almost twenty years, but he was still in his prime then. Now the twilight of senility crept through his mind, fogging it, bemusing it, making him the laughing stock of his own men, the sons of men who had supported him so long ago.

Morven cleared his throat and said softly, "The council requires your presence, sire. Many new ordinances are to be passed upon."

"Eh? Speak up, damn you. Morven. Always whispering." Balint stiffly bent forward to shed his chainmail like a snake losing a layer of dead skin. He managed to get into his doublet without much posturing.

Morven walked half a pace behind Balint into the chambers of state. Once, he would have taken this position as a matter of deference to his liege; of late he had to guard against the king's stumbling. A fall might kill the old man. If that happened before the marriage between his son and Princess Adara...

"What manner of nonsense worries us today?" demanded Balint, sitting on his throne and reaching into a huge chest to withdraw an oversized egg glittering internally with a faerie light. The old man's rheumy eyes drifted over the surface, tracing out the lovely patterns in the huge egg. The major axis of the egg matched the span of the king's forearm. The distance through proved greater than twice his hand's width, and the surface gleamed like the finest fire opal ever mined.

"Sire, please, your attendance is required. A new sanitation system is proposed for the community of North Goodland. Our engineers say..."

Morven's voice faded as Balint became more and more engrossed in the fluttering fireflies of brilliance inside the eggshell. He held it close and pressed his ear to the cool smoothness, as if listening. Balint smiled and nodded absently, then turned his own lips toward the egg and whispered a reply to the phantom voice from within that only he heard.

At Balint's right, Baron Zesiro said, loud enough for all to hear, "The king's mind is truly gone."

"Silence," snapped Yucel. "He is still king!"

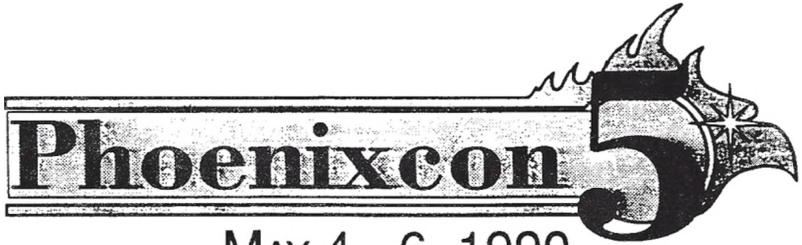
"King? In name only. We rule, Yucel, and well you know it. Who drafted those plans for North Goodland so they wouldn't drown in their own excrement? You!" Zesiro leaned back and pointed at Balint. "He even thinks that Duke Darvin will attack through the mountains. Pah! That is the most difficult route of all. If that upstart pretender to the throne wants to attack Strongkeep, he must assemble his men on rafts and float them down the Tymen River. In no other way can he muster the force required to break us. And yet he insists we bleed the treasury white by arming the frontiers facing the el-Liot Mountains. Pah!"

"The king," said Yucel, "is a strategist second to none. He has won more battles than the lot of you put together."

"Aye, that he has—twenty years ago. You, Yucel, are the oldest of the council. You remember the brilliance but times change and the realm today is different from his heyday. Look at him. He mumbles loving words to a present given him by some itinerant peddler. He is senile." Zesiro slumped in his

*"SF FROM A TO Z"*

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chair, arms crossed over his broad chest.

"I fear Zesiro is correct on his appraisal of the Darwinian problem," said Morven. "Since other matters have been dispatched, what is the feeling of the council on this question? Should we assemble our forces in the foothills some weeks travel away as our king suggests or do we use our men to build water traps for likely invasion down the Tymen River?"

"The river." "Traps in the water, aye!" "I second that. The river!"

Around the table went the vote until it came to Yucel. He shook his balding head and pounded his fist on the table. "Nay! The mountains! We must guard the mountains as our king decrees."

Morven smiled without humor as he said, "Fourteen in favor of barricades and fortifications on the River Tymen. One opposed. The motion carries."

"But the king!" protested Yucel.

Morven glanced at the old man, billing and cooing to the opal egg, and snorted in contempt. He didn't bother answering Yucel's challenge. He rose and left the chamber, the others following. Balint hardly acknowledged their departure.

"So the battle was decided by little more than the proper placement of a small troop of men," Balint explained to his egg. "On such things are great victories dependent."

The egg gleamed in the ray of sunlight glancing through the open window. Balint stroked the shell, his gnarled fingers curiously gentle when handling the egg. If any had been present to hear what followed, they

would have known sorcerous powers were at work.

The egg spoke.

"Are you sure this Duke Darwin will attack through the mountains?"

"Aye," Balint said vehemently. "He is shrewd, that Darwin. Much as I was in earlier days. It would not surprise me if he studied every battle I fought and won, perhaps even giving the ones lost special attention. Such a march would aim a massive force directly at the throat of the kingdom. Strongkeep would fall within a day.

"What of this Zesiro and his contention Darwin will come by river?" The entire egg shivered visibly at the mention of the river.

"The river is too easily defended. Darwin knows that."

"I agree. The thought of being sprinkled with even a drop of water is repugnant." The egg shuddered again, a tiny crack appearing down one side. "Only Yucel supports you in council. Why not remove the others?"

Balint sighed. "Many times I've considered this but they do well in the boring routine of kingdom. Never could I properly deal with the paperwork and petty decisions. They lack imagination, but they are good men for their jobs, if they aren't required to think."

"I personally think you should eat them."

Balint laughed at this barbarism. "Nay, my appetite is not so large that I could devour fourteen of them. Is yours?"

"No. Truth to tell, I know only slightly of such things. Vague memories transmitted to me through the ages. Oh, what does it matter? Since I was



stolen, nothing has gone well. I am blind and virtually deaf and without a friend in the world."

"I am your friend. Didn't I speak to you every day?"

"True, but you are senile."

Balint laughed as he stroked the egg's surface. "I may be, but I am all you have."

"Such is my sorry lot in life. Although I am hardly deserving, is it possible I might be returned to the mountain from which I was stolen? You are king and such a minor task is within your feeble grasp."

"I shall take you to the el-Liot Mountains myself!"

"All the way?" asked the egg.

"It will be difficult," admitted Balint. "I will leave Yucel as regent since Istuwani is incompetent and Adara, lovely Adara who reminds me so much of her dead mother, lacks majority."

"Morven would marry his son to her and thus rule the realm by default," said the egg. "I overheard."

Balint gestured away the problem and called for his squire. Balint, egg and squire left for the mountains at sunrise the following day. Only Yucel was on hand to bid them farewell.

###

"They are after me. I know it," quavered the voice inside the egg. "They are evil, and I am helpless..."

"It's not you they seek," said Balint. "I do so wish my squire hadn't taken flight, though. He was a useful lad for doing menial chores. But those brigands were rather fearsome." He chuckled. "I think I handled them well, even if I do say so myself."

"They do not seek to eat me?"

"No, no, they were after a few coins and nothing more. I may not be the swordsman I once was, but I can still swing a blade. And they must have been deterred by my silver-tongued claims."

"They thought you a crazy old man. Their clans demand protection of such," the egg said.

"Nonsense." Balint snorted indignantly. He knew the egg was probably right. His shouting and boasting of being king had made the brigands laugh. He looked at his tunic and noted for the first time that the royal coat of arms embroidered on the front was obliterated by mud stains.

"Where do we find the lower passes in which you expect to sight Duke Darwin's army?" asked the egg. "I feel I should know, but I was stolen before full consciousness came to me. I know so little." The tone turned self-pitying. "Not even fresh from my egg and already a failure. How will I redeem myself?"

"You provide me with companionship when others of my own realm desert me," said Balint. "After this adventure I shall make you—"

"Halt!" The word roared and echoed down the rock gully they traversed. Even the partially deaf Balint snapped around.

"Who orders a king to stop?" he demanded, pulling his sword free from its sheath. The action took long seconds of fumbling.

The mighty voice roared again, "Leave! We do not want your kind in these hills." A spider larger than a peasant's hut leaped to bar his path. Balint's horse reared and threw him.

The king lifted himself on one elbow and gaped at the monster. It towered twice his height atop the eight hairy legs flexing with sinewy power. Huge mandibles capable of slashing a man in half clacked ferociously. He grabbed for his sword, knowing he had no chance against this ferocious mountain arachnid.

"You shall be my dinner!" bel-  
lowed the spider, advancing with a rolling gait. Balint scuttled away, unable to rise. He pulled himself into a sitting position and noticed the fate of his precious opal egg.

It had fallen from his grasp and had broken apart on the rocks.

"Murderer!" cried Balint. "My friend is killed!" He had no firm idea what had lived inside the egg, but he had come to cherish that creature.

The giant spider hesitated, turned and looked at the egg. A coppery leg reached out and rolled the shattered eggshell into the sun for closer examination. Balint saw the creature stiffen in rage.

"Kidnapper," accused the spider. "I, Kral-wilk'nek'niik, Webmaster of the el-Liot Mountains, will devour you slowly for your heinous crime!"

"Is all this wrath because of me?" came a second, tiny voice.

Balint gasped at the large spider sitting on a nearby boulder—large by normal standards. The furry beast's body was the size of a dinner plate and its legs stretched out to span a distance equal to a strong man's shoulders. Compared with the towering monster blocking the path, however, it was a midget.

"You live! Are you out of this

egg?" demanded the huge spider.

"I am unhappily the same. My eyes adjust now to the light, and I see you are as I, though a trifle larger."

Seeing that the large spider had relaxed noticeably, Balint ventured to speak. "This egg came into my hand by a scurrilous trader. When the egg began speaking, I answered. Was this wrong?"

"Krek!" cried the huge spider, ignoring the human totally. "You have returned to the web of your birthing.

"Krek?" the baby spider asked. "That sounds like a fine name, one befitting such as I, but who—"

"I am Kral, Webmaster of these mountains. You are my first hatchling. When you were stolen, I despaired. Now you have returned."

"Krek?" the smaller spider said again, as if savoring the taste.

"Krek-k'with'kritklik," said Kral, now shivering with joy.

"I like it," said Krek. "The name fits nicely. Noble, even regal, and it rolls well off the palate."

"A name befitting a future Webmaster. Not that I intend to die soon, unless my mate finds me."

"You hide from her?"

"Naturally. I have little desire to be devoured. At this moment, she is occupied with tending others recently hatched."

"Siblings?" Krek sounded hurt at the idea of others sharing the web.

"Yes, but not of noble birth as you are."

Balint started to speak.

"Silence or I shall eat you now," snapped Kral. Balint pressed into cold rock as Kral clacked heavy mandibles under his nose.

"In all fairness," Krek said, "this human brought me back. He is my ally. I was weak and he aided me."

"Then he deserves the protection of my web," Kral said solemnly. With less belligerence the spider added, "I apologize for wanting to devour you. I have had much on my mind, and it makes me fretful."

"Quite all right," Balint said, painfully using his sword as a crutch to stand. His shoulders ached with arthritis and his fingers stiffened from being wrapped so tightly around the hilt.

"Are the other puny humans your friends, too, Krek? I like them not, but all tell me I am too intolerant of my hatchlings' friends."

"Others? From the north?" asked Balint, now on his feet.

The huge spider bobbed his head. Balint walked slowly to the rock where Krek stretched his newly freed limbs. With a startlingly spring leap, Krek perched on the king's shoulder. Balint felt the bristly fur of the spider's legs against his face. He flinched slightly, then decided this didn't look good, not when Kral stood only a long pace away.

"These are enemies," Balint said carefully. "Krek and I journeyed to the mountains to stop them...from annoying you. I'm sure the humans passing into these mountains provide no end of misery for you and your kind. Didn't they steal Krek, after all?"

"They did," agreed Kral. "You would stop these annoying humans? It would be good to attend to web repair again." Kral hissed like a venting fumarole. Balint hoped this was nothing more than a spiderish sigh.

"A treaty between your web and

my kingdom can be worked out," the man said, warming to the task. It had been years since he had been allowed to negotiate a real treaty. Yucel told him that Morven and the others were more adept. Balint doubted that, yet acceded to his old friend's wishes. But it did take the zest out of being king not being able to barter destinies and trade promises over the treaty table.

"Krek?" asked Kral. "Will these humans honor such a pact?"

"Balint is honorable. The others in his kingdom are less so."

"They can be dealt with," Balint said hastily. "We can provide guards at all roads into the mountains. Perhaps you require some small product of ours to make your lives easier?"

"There is a gummy substance humans manufacture which makes excellent bonding for snare webs," said Krek. "I have not made such webs, of course, but memories flood my mind now. The strands hold prey well, but break loose from rocky moorings. This human substance bonds well between web and rock. We could trade them some of our lesser silks. Their cloth is so coarse." Krek's claws tightened on Balint's shoulder and wrinkled chain-mail under his tunic. Balint didn't correct the spider's mistake.

"Can you stop Duke Darwin?" he pressed, his ancient heart hammering. A treaty welded together now and a war averted swayed in the balance. Balint felt years younger with Krek sitting on his shoulder. No longer useless, he fulfilled the true destiny of a king.

"Naturally," said Kral, somewhat disgusted. "A few humans cannot stand to a mountain arachnid."

"How few? How armed?"

"Not more than five thousand," Kral said. "They wear those silly carapaces of metal."

"Breast plate," muttered Balint, conjuring the picture of a major army moving steadily through the mountains. Such a force would rip the guts from his kingdom. "Are they into the mountain passes?"

"Less than two hours' travel from here."

The baby spider said, "Are you doing anything important this afternoon, Kral? Besides leaping out and frightening these frail humans?"

"No."

"Why not turn these other humans around and send them back to their web. I could hardly do it," said Krek, jumping up and down on Balint's shoulder, "but for a mighty warrior such as yourself, it should be simple."

"Of course." Kral paused for a moment before adding, "I might get some of the others to aid me. Perhaps your mother would join us. She needs some activity away from the web and your siblings to get the notion of devouring me out of her head."

Kral turned and loped off, not even casting a glance back at Krek and his pet human. Balint found himself hard-pressed to maintain the pace on foot. But he did. He as a king in the presence of kings. Dignity demanded it, even if the other royalty were overgrown spiders.

###

Balint saw Duke Darwin's camp and stood in sheer awe. If anything, Kral had underestimated the size of the force. Ten thousand armed men, with

supplies and horses, spread across an entire valley. Only his blurred vision prevented him from taking a more accurate count.

"But the numbers, Krek. Darwin has an army!"

"So?"

Balint studied the placement of the troops that the spiders would face. He nodded slowly as he realized Duke Darwin had copied a position he himself had employed successfully on many occasions. Not many weaknesses and overwhelming strength in all areas where a human assault could be mounted. Balint carefully pointed out the failings of Darwin's position to Krek. The tiny spider absorbed all this with equanimity. When Kral loped into view, Krek clicked and squealed rapidly, possibly pointing out all Balint had said or passing judgment on the silliness of humans. Balint didn't know or care. He was too excited at the prospect of battle.

He only wished he could lead a force of his own men against the duke. To be in the saddle again, under streaming banner, sword swirling brightly in the sun. He sighed. War was for young men, and he was no longer young. All his thrill must be vicarious, but the excitement was nonetheless real for that.

He watched the force led by Kral sweep into the valley. Fully twenty of the monster spiders bowled over the guards before they could recover from their shock at the sight. Then came the carnage. The nightmarish spiders snapped and clawed through the center of Darwin's camp, juggernauts of prodigious power. The battle became confused, diffuse. Balint no longer

followed the course as the spiders spread out to pursue individual fighters.

Once, a man clad in full battle regalia charged up the hill where Balint stood. The king pulled free his sword, lowered the facemask of his helm and waited. His heart pounded as it had in olden days and his hands no longer ached. He was transformed, he was a man forty years younger. As he engaged the soldier, he howled in glee. He fought hard, his muscles responding smoothly, his joints lubricated with virile youthfulness. Each cut he made was perfect, exactly on target. He beat back his attacker, forced him to his knees, then dispatched him.

And turned to meet another knight attacking from the flank. Balint's blade leaped to the fray. He parried the double-handed broadsword and beat harshly at his opponent's blade. A leg betrayed him then, and he fell to his knees. A swift, powerful block prevented the knight from decapitating him—and then Balint saw his ally.

Krek had ridden throughout the fight on the top of his helm. Now the spider jumped and covered the Darwinian soldier's vision ports. The man shrieked and dropped his sword to pry loose the spider. Balint's blade drove upward under chainmail and into the man's groin. He died instantly.

Krek pranced back and preened, saying, "That will show them. I think I killed him nicely."

Balint blinked twice when he saw that Krek's baby mandibles had torn through the thick steel of the gorget and severed arteries in the throat. Whether his own thrust had killed or Krek's had done the trick, he could not say. He was

willing to give the credit to the spider.

"A powerful pair we make," agreed Balint, leaning on his bloody sword, panting. His joints now exacted their toll and stiffened on him until he moved in agony. For the brief fight, it had been worth it. He looked past Krek into the once peaceful valley. Darwin's army was in a rout, only a few rallying to the duke's flag in a vain attempt to continue battle.

"I would parlay with Darwin. Can you arrange it, Krek?"

A high-pitched squeal echoed through the valley, cutting past the din of battle, and was answered by a slightly deeper screech from below. In a few minutes, a man dressed in full plate armor was dragged to Balint's feet and unceremoniously dumped.

Duke Darwin rolled agilely and came to his hands and knees in the heavy armor. He raised his head to a strange sight. Balint stood, helm under arm, smiling. The king had a replica of the deadly arachnids perched atop his head, as if this were quite normal.

"Balint?" asked the fallen duke, unsure.

"Krek, help him from his armor." The spider leaped from the king's head and landed on the duke's back. In less than a minute, powerful mandibles had opened the man's armor and left him standing like a lobster without a shell.

"Are you willing to deal with me, Duke Darwin?" asked Balint, once Krek had regained his position on his head. "Your troops are defeated; mine hold the field."

"Yours?" the dazed duke asked. "I underestimated you, King Balint. I knew you were wily. No ordinary as-



mult down the river would have worked. I studied your strategies and decided a quick attack through the mountains would work. I never thought you...the spiders...this is too much! Name your terms of surrender."

"I think you will find them generous, Darvin, perhaps too generous for a brash youngling like you. But tell me, did you copy that battle formation from my own fight at the battle of Tymen? You were brilliant in adapting it to the circumstances here. I—" and Balint forced Darvin to suffer through reminiscence from an old, garrulous and lonely king.

###

"This is madness!" exclaimed Morven. "Such a marriage is absurd!"

Yucel smiled wickedly as he said, "You have no choice, The marriage will take place and this realm will be united with Darvin's. Princess Adara has already left to prepare. She seems well pleased with the match. Especially considering her alternative." Yucel smiled even more as Morven uncomfortably looked away, his plans for personal power shattered.

All eyes turned to Balint, dozing on his throne. He snorted and stirred slightly, feeling content to let his advisors lament his decision. He had ordered two companies of armed men to establish entry points along the foothills to prevent more humans from blundering into the el-Liot Mountains. It was a true bargain. The mountain arachnids benefited, but his kingdom benefited more having such powerful allies guarding the high approach to his realm. Also he had seen the "lesser" silks Krek had sent; the merchants

danced all night over the profits to be made from this trade. A worthless glue in exchange for the finest of silks. Trade. That was the essence of being king, to be able to negotiate successfully.

With a battle or two along the way to keep the joints limber.

Balint snorted as he turned in his uncomfortable chair and decided his other machinations were nothing less than brilliant, too. His advisors cared little for Duke Darvin, especially Morven now that his reprobate son had no chance of marrying Adara. But the young duke had a spark of ingenuity that reminded Balint of himself when he was younger. With Darvin slated to assume the throne, Balint need not worry about a capable heir. His kingdom would not suffer. And soon there would be a little prince to dandle on his knee. He smiled at the thought.

"But King Balint," came Zesiro's plaintive voice, "this duke is unable to administer his own duchy. He asks for our advisors!"

"A trick," muttered Morven. "He will kill them."

"No," said Balint, opening tired eyes. "He truly wishes to ally with us. Perhaps you, Zesiro, might show him how to properly tax his people."

"An entire duchy, undertaxed. Virgin territory," muttered Zesiro. "Yes, very well, sire." Zesiro leaned back smiling at the promise of tax revenues flowing into the coffers. He would support this Darvin. For a while.

Morven protested but the other advisors slowly turned against him. As Balint drifted off to sleep, he wondered if Krek might not be right. Perhaps he should devour Morven. His appetite was large enough for just one advisor.

*(Continued from page 4)*

as a reward for reaching a total of one hundred books, but it damned well better be good.

As you might have gathered, Bob enjoys his work mightily.

However, in the past two years, Bob's life has changed drastically, and we all know it's been for the better. In June, 1988, he married Patty, a wonderfully charming and witty lady hailing from Texas (go ahead: ask him about the laryngitis he mysteriously developed the day before the wedding; go ahead: ask him how he cured it. Hint: The cure involved several tubs of ice cream). And this past August they had thier first child, the wee Christopher, a boy who appears to sleep all the time although Patty denies that most vehemently. I don't know. When I saw him, Christopher was looking fairly angelic as he snoozed.

Bob is still writing books while being a housedaddy now. And it's a good thing he's got plenty of book ideas: Pampers and Huggies cost a lot, you know. So everyone save their cents-off coupons and mail them to Bob and Patty. Every little bit helps.

Just a few more points about Bob: while very tall, he never played basketball—his chosen sport was cricket, but since that sport never got total acceptance in New Mexico, he soon gave it up. He is an animal lover (well, cats and such, but not dogs); once, when he was visiting us in New Jersey, he leaped from the car to rescue an abandoned animal. That lucky rubber dinosaur now occupies an honored bookshelf in our house. What a swell guy. Bob also likes to travel—he's been Guest of

Honor at a number of SF and fantasy conventions all over the United States; he even made it back to the wilds of Northwestern New Jersey where my husband and I live, and he was forced to stop making jokes about NJ (at least about where we live). Bob is also a long-time member of SFWA, and has, in the past, served as vice-president of the organization. He does not write poetry, eat sushi or believe there is a Santa Claus. He was not—I repeat, not—named for fantasy writer Robert E. Howard.

And so, straight form the rugged foothills of the Sandia Mountains in Albuquerque, out of the bonsai jungles of his house, past the feisty feline figures of Neutron and Lotus Blossom, I present Robert E. Vardeman, husband, dad, writer, and a good friend for many years, and many years to come (I hope; although with this article, that might not be assured.).

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*(Continued from page 11)*

at the "Into the Future" art show sponsored by Olympia & York companies at the Park Avenue Atrium, New York City.

Now you may be wondering who am I to know the whereof Stan Bruns has been and to display such bias in this short narration. You see, I am the girl who said yes in 1975 when Stan asked, "Do you want to come in to see my etchings?" This is our fourth year at Chattacon and is all the more special since Stan is being honored as Fan Artist Guest of Honor. We are looking forward to seeing our many "old" friends and making some new ones and want to wish you a "Happy Chattacon XV" at the Choo-Choo in 1990.

*(Continued from page 9)*

and carved its earliest stories in the mystery and science fiction genres. Found among the usual grave sites and trashpits of its dwelling places were copies of such notable works as The Long, Loud Silence (which, though translation is still incomplete, we take to be an exhortation, perhaps of a zen-like faith), and The Year of the Quiet Sun (an early attempt at primitive calendar astronomy), and the most accessible Resurrection Days (more religious stuff). In all, some twenty-five such works and several briefer tablets have been unearthed to date.

All the physical evidence indicates that Tucker was a tall, white-haired, quite good-looking creature of a most amiable and highly social nature. Well-preserved, one might say of our fossil. It thrived mostly on fried chicken and Beam's Choice Bourbon (another advance over its scotch-drinking cousins whose taste buds had not yet developed to any notable degree), and the occasional eating of an egg-roll-like morsel after midnight. It participated also in many strange rituals of an ecstatic nature, such as "Smoothing," a communal celebration involving the aforementioned bourbon and a sound made by pursing the lips together while imitating a cow with a list, and the symbolic conversion of young attractive femfen (early female fan) into bugs.

So, we have seen through our Tucker the rise of early Fan in the midwest. There are questions yet to be solved as we contemplate the evidence of unearthed bones and stone carvings of our ancestors, however. There is some evidence of a Great Staple War

between Homo Erectus and Editorialis Cheapskatus. And what of the truth behind the so-called "Rubber Band Jar" controversy? Did Tucker actually design and fly the first pterodactyl, as some have suggested? These are just a few of the mysteries yet to be solved if we are to come to a true understanding of the origins of Fankind.

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*(Continued from page 19)*

Horror, I mean. He actually might be sayin' he's publishin' stories about ladies of the evening. You know, them what got a ill repute. And written under an assumed name, I'd venture. Good thaing, too.

If he really is a horror writer, acks him if his next story is goin' to be about some Peterbuilt thet comes to life an terrorizes the community. If he grunts "Yeah," whop him up side the haid 'cause thet story's done been wrote, 'sept about a 1957 Plymouth. Thet dumb story was wrote by another of them damned Yankees, and din't scare nobody. Any Southern writer woulda knowed ain't no 1957 Plymouth gonna scare nobody. They wouldn't crank half the time when they's new.

Now if this feller'd write one about a '57 fasback Fowd Farlane, whooo-ee, thet'd been some kinda spooky story, don't yew know.

*(Editor's Afterword: I type these stories out on a VAX 8800 system and run spelling and format check programs before typesetting. This story has a rather single honor of being able to send Grammar-Master into fits. Our software was obviously written by a d\*\*n Yankee.)*

# ...Fragile Ecologies

(Excerpted from The Quiet Pools)

by  
Michael D. Kube-McDowell

...The encounter room was dark save for the single candle on the floor between Malena and the young man seated cross-legged and bare-chested facing her. His eyes were closed, his head tipped slightly back, his arms floating as though weightless a few inches above the floor, his hands palm up and open, fingers loosely curled.

Pretty, she thought. Pretty. If only he was willing to try a few more of the eight Paths-" The negative energy is black and heavy," she continued in a low, warm, patient voice. "Look inside and find the dark places, the heaviness. The pain of your guilt. The sadness of your loss. It is only your choice that holds them there. Release them. Choose not to keep them, and they will drain from your body. Choose to keep them and they will become part of you. Find the dark places and open them to light. Find the weight and release it. Feel it leaving your body, discharging into the Earth. Feel your body become light. Feel the light within."

As she spoke, the young man's hands dipped slowly toward the floor. When his knuckles brushed the wood planking, it was as though a static charge had grounded. A hundred muscles in his body relaxed, and his face at last looked peaceful. She felt him floating, freed, and floated with him. She heard his silent half-sobbing laughter of release, knew the moment that he achieved

ephemeral egoless being and the moment it was permissible to call him back.

"Randl," she said.

He opened his eyes and sought hers.

"We're finished for today."

A deep breath left him smaller and sadder. "Thank you, Malena," he said, skirting the candle and coming to hug her.

Unwanted hugs were an occupational risk for counselors, and all the more so for her, a prisoner in the chair. This hug was not unwanted, and yet it made her uncomfortable all the same, for she had to wonder if she had projected her earlier thought. She accepted the embrace self-consciously and kept her contribution as chaste as possible, considering that the object of the hug was nude.

"I'll leave you to get dressed," she said finally, and the Airchair lifted. Way to go, bozo. Let him know that you noticed he was naked. Very professional—

The counselor's lounge was empty, and she shut the door behind her in the hopes of keeping it that way. Hormones from hell, she fussed at herself as she drew a glass of hot cinnamon tea. Ron, you'd better be there tonight, or I'm going to end up drooling on Father Brett again—

It was not until several minutes

later, when she retrieved her slate to resume reading, that she saw the V-mail marker blinking. The message was from Karin Oker, Supervisor of Selection, Diaspora Project, Allied Transcon.

She watched the message once, then immediately watched it again. For a long moment, she sat in her chair clutching the slate against her breasts, eyes glittering, hands trembling. Then she let out a whoop and sent the Airchair into a dizzying spin.

The door flew open, and Kirella, the branch chiropractor, and the branch manager piled up in the doorway. "What's the matter?" Kirella demanded, approaching. "Are you okay?"

Smiling beatifically, Malena tipped her head back against the rest and closed her eyes. "Cancel my appointments," she said dreamily.

"What?"

"Cancel my appointments," she said, opening her eyes to let the tears run free. "They picked me. They picked me, Kirella. I'm going to Tau Ceti."

#

### Ten thousand for Tau Ceti.

However euphonious it might be, the unofficial motto of the Selection Section was not quite accurate. Counting the core crew of roughly five hundred, drawn equally from Allied and Takara, plus between one and three hundred "discretionaries," split between paying passengers and other payoffs, plus a handful of creative stowaways, the final outbound head count would be closer to eleven thousand.

And that was only if you discounted the quarter-million frozen eggs (five per donor) and five myriad frozen sperm samples which would also make the trip

— consolation prizes in the starbound sweepstakes. In all, Karin Oker would get to say "congratulations" not ten thousand, but a hundred and ten thousand times. (Lesser Selection officials would say "sorry" to more than ten million.)

But it was the ten thousand Pioneers who were the focus of most of the energy, most of the urgency, most of the romance, most of the anger. They were the elect, the chosen. They were the ones who would pass, knowingly and willingly, through what one popular commentator dubbed "the one-way door." To those that would stay behind, the Pioneers were humanity's hope, or its arrogance; its idealism, or its idiocy; but most often, all of that and more.

It was different in Houston and Munich and Tokyo, in Brazil and Kenya, on Takara, on Memphis herself. To Karin Oker and the rest of Selection, to Hiroko Sasaki and the whole of Allied, the Pioneers were the moving pieces in a complex ballet too serious to be a game. Ten thousand to pluck from homes and families across six continents. Ten thousand to process through the training and transshipment centers. Ten thousand to lift skyward a hundred at a time and ferry to the great sky city which would be their new and possibly last home. Ten thousand to meld into a working community that could survive fifty years in the crucible of interstellar flight.

Ten thousand for Tau Ceti...



# TSR, Inc. Presents



## EMPIRES TRILOGY

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### HORSELORDS

David Cook

Between the western Realms and Kara-Tur lies a vast, unexplored domain. The "civilized" people of the Realms have given little notice to these nomadic barbarians. Now, a mighty leader has united these wild horsemen into an army powerful enough to challenge the world. First, they turn to Kara-Tur. Available in May 1990.

### DRAGONWALL

Troy Denning

The barbarian horsemen have breached the Dragonwall and now threaten the oriental lands of Kara-Tur. Shou Lung's only hope lies with a general descended from the barbarians, and whose wife must fight the imperial court if her husband is to retain his command. Available in August 1990.

### CRUSADE

James Lowder

The barbarian army has turned its sights on the western Realms. Only King Azoun has the strength to forge an army to challenge the horsemen. But Azoun had not reckoned that the price of winning might be the life of his beloved daughter. Available in January 1991.

*(Continued from page 13)*

This is what they heard:

“This is Jeremiah, speaking for the Homeworld.

“From the first, I have been a student of history. The truth of the present can be found in the past, if you seek it. Enemies hide their evils in the mists of the past, if you allow it. The winner is the player with the longest memory.

“For more than a hundred years, the bandits of Allied Transcon have insulted the Earth, our gentle mother. The trail of Gaea’s pain begins with Allied Transcon’s sorry heritage, with names to which such shame attached that those names were abandoned and hidden.

“We have not forgotten. Rockwell built weapons of war, abetting the mindless devastation of fragile ecologies. We have not forgotten. Exxon bled the earth of its precious stores and poisoned the waters and the air with chemical wastes. We have not forgotten. Mitsubishi supplied the tools to turn once-beautiful Japan into a mechanized warren and to ravage the grand tropical forests of Indonesia and the Philippines.

“The bastard of the mating of these soulless parasites worships at the altar of the same shallow profit principle. I look on your works and weep. Thirty square miles of the Amazon Basin transformed from lush jungle to dead, sterile pavement. A dozen gigawatt power plants generating million-year poisons. An endless parade of LSD freighters ripping through the atmosphere, carrying away the riches of the Earth.

“And the worst insult of all, that all this is done only so that we might reach

out for more worlds to despoil.

“Today, we have returned the insult. We returned to Allied Transcon a tiny fraction of the poisons it creates in a single day — a few seconds of death and disease. At 6:50 this morning, a tank truck emptied five thousand gallons of life-hating industrial pollutants at the main entrance to Allied Transcon’s American headquarters in Houston. We have rubbed their noses in their corporate excrement.

“We have heard it said, even by those who agree with our goals, that we have committed a crime, and become like our enemies. We accept this judgment, with one distinction.

“Allied Transcon’s crimes are crimes against Nature. They harm the body and spirit of Gaea, immanent in the fabric of life. Our crimes are crimes for Nature. We harm only those who bring harm to our common home. We steal their wealth. We destroy their tools. We stand against them, and for the silent Earth.

“This is Jeremiah, speaking for the Homeworld.”

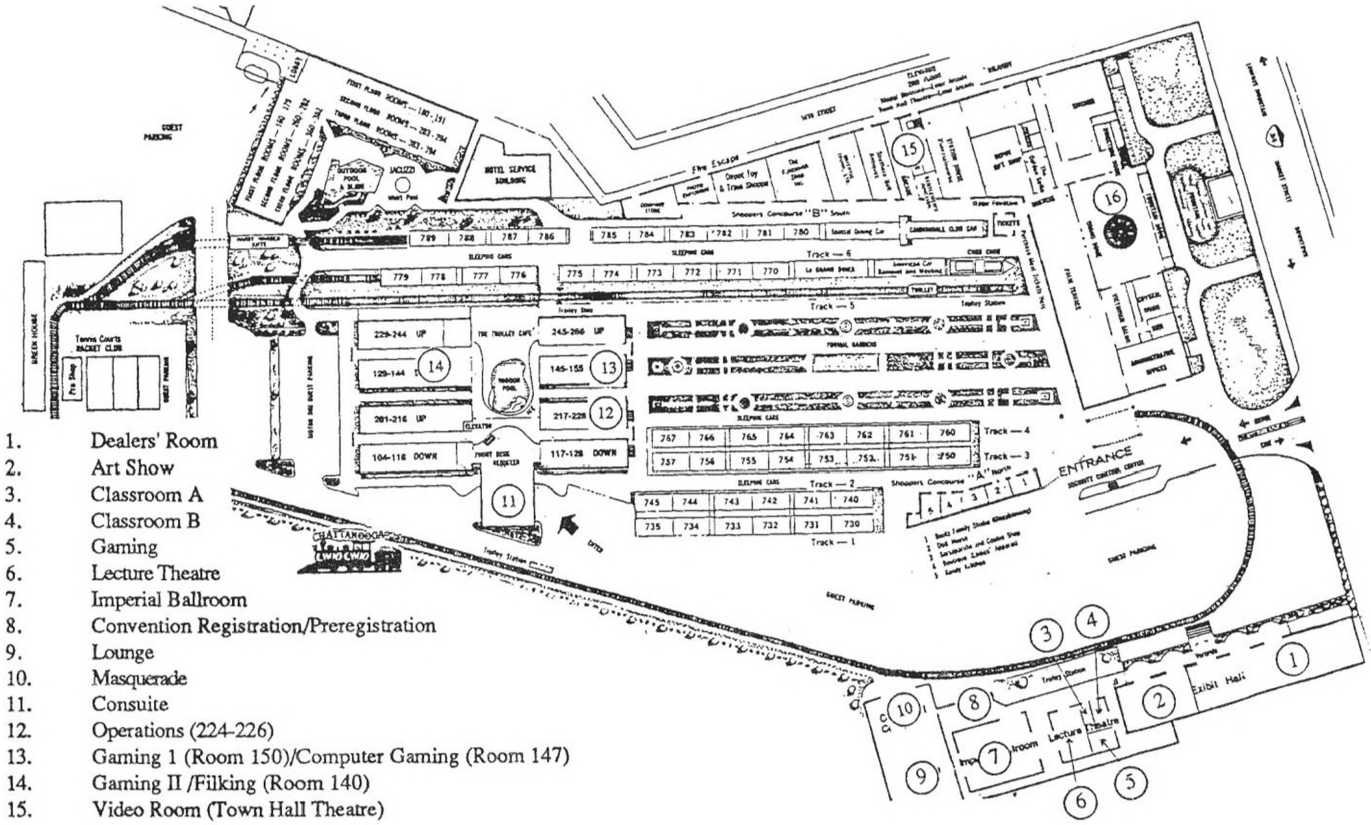
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*(Continued from page 5)*

Presidential Scholars.

Oh, yes, he is reported to be fond of cats, baseball, a certain Gwendolyn Lee Zak, black-and-white Jimmy Stewart movies, Pepsi, and long, cuddly hugs, most assuredly not in that order. When he can work them in, his hobbies include photography and music; he sang and played viola and keyboards on recent albums by Kathy Mar (Plus C’est La Meme Chose) and Barry and Sally Childs-Helton (Paradox).

P.S. It’s pronounced “CUE-bee.” Not “Kyoob.”



1. Dealers' Room
2. Art Show
3. Classroom A
4. Classroom B
5. Gaming
6. Lecture Theatre
7. Imperial Ballroom
8. Convention Registration/Preregistration
9. Lounge
10. Masquerade
11. Consuite
12. Operations (224-226)
13. Gaming I (Room 150)/Computer Gaming (Room 147)
14. Gaming II /Filking (Room 140)
15. Video Room (Town Hall Theatre)
16. Hotel Registration

# Chattacon XVI

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Artist Guest of Honor  
Don Maitz

Toastmaster  
T.B.A.

Special Guest  
T.B.A.

Fan Guest  
Khen Moore

Fan Artist Guests of Honor  
Mark Maxwell & Debbie Hughes

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**In Memorium:  
Chattacon's GOH Emeritus**

**Robert Adams**

**Taken from us on  
January 4, 1990**

**We'll miss you, Bob**



# CHATTACON • 15

