



*The Good News Department***Webmaster Gets
a Second Chance**
by Chaz Boston Baden

It's been a year of second chances for this fearless reporter. After playing a minor role at L.A.con III, where I ran the web page, organized the Internet Lounge, and distributed the daily newsletter, Lynn Victoria Boston and I were married at my sister Dorothy's home in Huntington Beach on the first day of Autumn, 1996. (Upon which day, I took "Boston" as an additional middle name; it's not a hyphenated name, you can still file me under "Baden.")

This is the second time around, marriage-wise, for both Lynn and myself. The ceremony was held next to the pool in the back yard, with Greg Hem-sath officiating and Lynn's daughter Maria participating. Greg boasts that of the dozen or so marriages he's performed, all of them are still going strong; he also gets a big kick out of telling people he married the three of us, as opposed to the more traditional two-people-at-a-time, since the vows included speaking parts for Maria and myself, her new stepfather, to exchange.

Fannish poet Tom Digby, local smofs Mike & Diana Glycer and Dan & Dan-ise Deckert, L.A.'s Electrical Eggs booster Lee Wygand, and artists Kelly & Laura Freas were among those attending, along with many other friends and family members. The party favors included squirt guns; about half of the guests had brought bathing suits, and joined the general chaotic good fun that afternoon when Lynn & I took the plunge (literally -- hand in hand off the deep end). Colleen Crosby provided the delicious wedding cake -- chocolate with chocolate frosting, decorated with bears, flamingos, and frogs.

And if that wasn't enough to make any man deliriously happy for the rest of his life, in the spring I got a new job at Hirsch Electronics in Irvine. This would not ordinarily be fannish news, however the career shift means that we will be making it to Chicago for the Worldcon in three years, which will probably be the first out-of-state Worldcon for any of us. Which brings us to the other "second chance," and the nominal justification for using up so many column-inches in a fannishly serious newzine.

As some of you may know, ConAdian in 1994 was the first Worldcon to have a web page; L.A.con III was the first to have an Internet Lounge; and Buc-coneer will be the first Worldcon to have had a bid page before the vote.

But the first bid page to have a Worldcon will be Chicago in 2000; Chicago in 2000, and Boston in 1998, were the first Worldcon bids to put web pages on the Internet. Rick Waterson has been custodian of the bid's web page for lo these many years. Now that the bid has closed and the convention committee's work has begun, he's passing the torch. As of August 31, when the results of the uncontested race were announced in San Antonio, www.chicon.org is on the air, with myself as webmaster.

I've been working on writing up my "Webmastering the Worldcon" notes, off and on, for a year now; the rough draft runs 60 pages, with examples, printouts, program and script listings, and so forth. If you'd like to be informed when it comes near to publication, or if you think you might be able to contribute some illos to liven up an otherwise dry subject, please write. A severely condensed abridgement will appear in the Worldcon Runner's Guide; with any luck, the long version will be out before the next Worldcon or NASFiC.

On top of that, the NASFiC is coming to the Western Zone again, in 1999, and I intend to run its web page along similar lines as the Chicon page (only sooner). You can see it at www.99-nasfic.org.

File 770 120

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Sweet Home, Armadillo

1997 Worldcon Report by Mike Glycer

LoneStarCon 2 delivered what it promised and 4,650 attendees went home happy. They got a convention center and two excellent Marriotts perched over San Antonio's Disneyesque Riverwalk, and a program steeped in Texas traditions. Though the committee struggled in advance of the con with staff turnovers and pulled off last-minute saves in many areas, fans detected little out of place once the con began.

Some areas were very well prepared. Most impressive were the evening events: the funky and entertaining Opening Ceremonies, a masquerade worthy of wizards, a successful Art Show reception and a proper Hugo Awards Ceremony. Super tech support came from Bill Parker and company, including onstage fireworks at the beginning of the Hugos.

Equally impressive was the quiet efficiency that prevailed in areas whose invisibility is a sign of effective area heads, such as registration and facilities.

The two Marriotts had nicely contrasting styles. The blue-collar Marriott Riverwalk had a miniature food court in the lobby, featuring Burger King, Pizza Hut and a Gourmet Bean coffee stand. (It also had a regular coffee shop). The uptone Marriott Rivercenter had pricier hotel restaurants, and the Nordstrom-esque touch of piano music on the mezzanine.

As the baby grand player piano automatically tinkled away its own kind of muzak, sitting on the piano bench was a man-sized stuffed armadillo in a black tuxedo and cape, fingers hovering over the keys. Seth Breidbart approved: "I like their idea for peacebonding a piano." (By Monday, someone had affixed to the armadillo's cape a LoneStarCon membership badge and the red rosette of a Hall Costume award winner.)



The convention needed its hotels and tourist attractions to take up the slack, because LoneStarCon kept "short hours." The problem was not that the Dealer's Room closed at six (a standard time) and the art show at seven (a little later than at many Worldcons), but that all other programming ended at six. The kind of evening panel programming that has been a major feature of Worldcons for over a decade was nonexistent at LoneStarCon. There was not even a film/video program available after six.

While the Con Suite in the Rivercenter Marriott was open evenings, fans were mystified why it did not open until 5



p.m. Perhaps with 90% of LSC2's daytime schedule concentrated two blocks away in the Convention Center, the committee thought the Con Suite would be in low demand. Whatever the reason, the Con Suite's hours were the butt of many ironic comments. Never underestimate the scorn of a fan who has failed to find a free lunch.

Still, any fan who didn't have enough to do could find endless shops and restaurants on the Riverwalk.

The Riverwalk is a wonderful progression of stylish restaurants and bars all speckled with holiday lights and roaring with music. In contrast to the raw, ancient sleaze of the French Quarter, the Riverwalk was as tame as a shopping mall. In the humid night air, the barges full of sightseers passing slowly on the narrow waterway under low bridge arches, the cafe-style dining on the sidewalk, and the throngs of pedestrians reminded me of being inside the Blue Bayou restaurant at Disneyland's Pirates of the Caribbean ride.

Getting There: Fans waiting in Denver to connect with United Air Line's flight to San Antonio staged an impromptu convention around Bob Silverberg. Bruce Pelz and I listened to his stories about a trip to East Germany. There,

science fiction writers used to subsidized apartments and regular paychecks are shocked by life in reunified Germany: they now struggle as free lancers paying real rent. Worse yet, West German publishers won't buy their stories: they only publish American sf, and mostly Star Wars at that.

Bob also said he visited an East German collector and asked to see all the pirated editions of "Robert Silverberg." The collector said there are none. Bob seemed unsure whether to be happy they didn't rip him off or sadder that none of them had read his work. "They were so East German they didn't steal!"

Bruce Miller and a friend soon joined us, bringing a touch of Cancun with them. They let two pet parrots out of carrying cases to run up and down their arms, chattering. Tourists' curious children were allowed to hold the birds, who methodically walked up the kids' arms and onto their backs. The kids instinctively bent over to give the parrots a level walking surface, which tickled Miller because he's learned from experience that the parrots are great manipulators.

Aboard the plane, the parrots in their carrying cases were stashed under their owners' seats. Squawks, chirps, and the occasional "Hello?" pierced the background engine noise all the way to San Antonio.

Registration: People's first in-person contact with a convention typically happens at registration. The experience inevitably makes an impression that carries over to the rest of the con. LSC2's registration process worked well.

Registration was turned over to John Lorentz only three weeks in advance of the con. He borrowed Boskone's equipment and recruited out-of-town computer help. How good a job he did can be measured by the complete lack of notice given to his department.

Registration had only one disconcerting moment. On Thursday morning, when the committee went to set up the registration area, they discovered the convention center staff had already opened the doors and hundreds of obliging fans had invented their own lines.

Paraphernalia: The membership badges were not up to the same standard (but Lorentz said someone else produced

them.) The badges were one of the con's many last-minute saves, given to an outside company that printed names in a too-small, too-unreadable font. (It illustrates the problem to point out that when we met, Sharon Mellby had to explain to me that she was from Plano, not Piano.) Badges came in plastic inserts with the name of the city in a big purple rectangle. Robert Sacks joked that a careless person would think everyone at the con was named San Antonio.

Then, Hugo nominees' rocket-shaped pins were not ordered in advance of the con. Instead, there were black buttons imprinted with a silver-colored rocket outline. However, for a change double-Hugo nominees did get two. Most World-cons have been unwilling to distribute an extra pin to multiple nominees, although committees will make an exception for Mike Resnick, feeling it's a small price to pay for an unconstricted windpipe. (Only kidding, Mike!)

However, the Souvenir Book looked gorgeous with its keynote Don Maitz cover and streamlined design. Maitz line drawings were lavished on the interior pages. Good introductions to GoH's Moorcock, Maitz and Tackett were written by John Clute, David Cherry and Richard Brandt. I didn't understand why GoH Algis Budrys and toastmaster Neal Barrett Jr. wrote their own introductions, unless they insisted upon it. It's problematic to run autobiographies as Souvenir Book GoH introductions because it leaves an impression (however untrue) that the committee didn't dig very hard for friends of the guests who could do the job.

Also well done was Bill Childs' pocket program for LoneStarCon. He continued the highly successful spiral notebook design originated by ConFrancisco and refined by Shaun Lyon for L.A.con III. Besides program descriptions and schedules, the booklet contained much useful information about local sources for meeting all kinds of everyday needs. Childs did an excellent job.

Childs would have been frustrated to hear that a number of fans gave up using his booklet because they believed false rumors that too many program changes had rendered it obsolete. Though false, the rumors seemed believable for two reasons:

(1) The Monday before LoneStarCon, workmen in the Convention Center broke a sprinkler and water damage to two meeting rooms made them unusable. Karen Meschke told people, "It's Disclave all over again," an allusion to indoor flooding at D.C.'s Memorial Day weekend convention. Loss of the two rooms forced relocation of a number of program items, nobody knew how many. It wasn't actually that many, but one was the daily WSFS Business Meeting, biasing SMOFs to believe the number was large.

(2) Neither the pocket program nor the registration packets

contained grids, the schedule spreadsheets that display program titles, times and room assignments. One of the staff spent all night Wednesday publishing grids with an up-to-date schedule, and these were distributed on Thursday. Amy Thomson gave me a set from the box-full she was carrying, waving the new schedule sheets in her hand and saying, "This is hard sf. The grid in the program book is fantasy." Issuing the schedule grids after the start of the convention reinforced fans' belief that they replaced an inaccurate pocket program.

However, these grids only supplemented the pocket program: we used the same arrangement at L.A.con III, though fans got all of the materials together in their registration packet. My guess is that the grids came out late at LoneStarCon because they were another last-minute save.

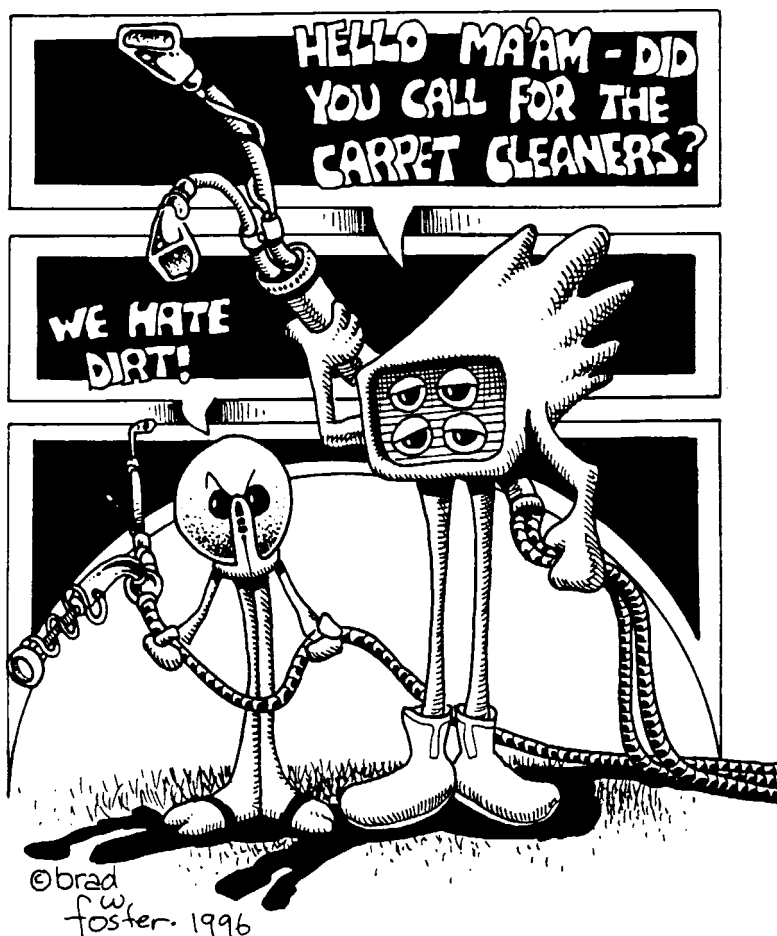
And the fact is there weren't all that many program changes. As a test, I compared the Saturday schedules from the grids and pocket program. I found only six discrepancies out of more than 150 items, and nearly all of those were panels that had to be relocated from the damaged meeting rooms. Of course, individual programs had problems for various reasons: Rick Foss reports that he pursued for days a panel about the Russian Space Program that was rescheduled twice during the con before being cancelled.

Events: Opening Ceremonies: Dusty Britches, the singing cowboy led us through a "Knock, knock" joke ending, "Little Old Lady Who?" By the time the audience echoed that back, it was too late to do anything about it: we'd been duped into yodeling.

He was followed by Doug Whitaker, a quick-drawing cowboy who looked a little like actor Tom Skerritt. Doug told us, "They beamed me up from the Wagon Wheel Ranch." He showed us his gun and explained, "This is my Texas credit card." He told us to expect being frisked in San Antonio bars: if we didn't have a gun on us, they'd give us one.

Doug did stand-up comedy while showing off some dextrous six-gun- twirling. He imitated a "confused gunfighter" who drew two guns and twirled them in opposite directions. He also imitated the trademark gunplay of movie and tv cowboys from Gene Autry to Richard Boone.

The evening closed with trick-roper Kevin Fitzpatrick lassoing volunteer Sue Francis with loops of rope until she was immobilized. Then Doug returned onstage for a demonstration of bullwhip accuracy. Kevin put Doug's six-gun in Sue's outstretched hand and inserted a few pieces of spaghetti in the barrel. Doug cautioned, "Now, ma'am, it's very important that even if I hit you, you don't drop my gun." It was hyperbole, of course. Doug easily snapped the



spaghetti in half with no harm done to Sue. Sue got huge applause and was famous for the rest of the weekend.

The cowboy acts were more skillful than they were corny, and the fans who feigned to be too sophisticated to tolerate cowboy yodeling were outnumbered a hundred to one.

The only drawback of an otherwise lively Opening Ceremonies is that they failed to give the GoHs a high-profile introduction. At one point, Dusty read off the names of the GoH's seated in the front row as a spotlight picked them out for the audience, (Dusty pronouncing one's name as "Moon-cock"). I feel that wasn't enough. Opening Ceremonies needs substantial participation by the GoHs to help members recognize them later in the con.

Someone explained to me that the hotel offered to provide a stage on risers; however, since the audience would be seated on a level floor this still would not have provided them with an unobstructed view. Therefore, the committee spent extra money to have a higher stage constructed. The

fire marshal dealt the con an early blow by refusing to approve the rickety staircase at the front of the stage: it had to be torn down.

When I passed the Worldcon gavel to chair Karen Meschke, I confess the stage didn't feel entirely solid beneath my feet. I was afraid I was destined to make an exit similar to that of the villain in the movie *Charade*, through a trapdoor of my own creation.

Masquerade: Prior to the masquerade, reports that there were less than 30 registered entries stimulated debate among conrunners whether the staging and technical support for a Worldcon masquerade cost more than it is worth to please too few costumers.

But when I actually saw the LoneStarCon 2 masquerade, I was convinced all over again that the bean-counting approach to the masquerade is wrong. Incredible energy and anticipation surrounds a Worldcon masquerade, not just among costumers, but among many hundreds looking forward to what is literally a tournament in fannish creativity. The desirability of the event cannot be analyzed by dividing the cost by the number of participants, as if it was a kaffeeklatsch. This will always be a thematic peak of a Wor-

ldcon, so long as there are enough good costumes and it is well-staged.

Peggy Kennedy's crew took a little over two dozen entries (though with multiple participants, there were over 50 people in costume) and, with the masterful and witty Susan de Guardiola as emcee, packaged them into a 2-hour masquerade that is one of the most enjoyable I've attended.

(A knowledgeable committee member thought \$60,000 was in the ballpark when asked about several figures rumored as cost of the masquerade. Just the same, that's very difficult to believe, and the same person agreed some of the costly equipment and construction, like the temporary stage, was used by all the major events.)

Hugos: Anything about the Hugo Ceremonies that had been orchestrated by Lori Wolf and company worked well, whether it was the food served at the nominees' reception, the published program, or video displays. The way the toastmaster handled himself onstage was not so great.

The indispensable requirement of a toastmaster is poise, which Neal Barrett, Jr. utterly lacked. The first couple of times Barrett announced that he didn't know what was supposed to happen next I was inclined to believe it was part of his act, partly because he had sailed through his humorous set-pieces, and partly because all of us holding copies of the program knew what was supposed to happen next, so why not Barrett?

Once it became obvious Barrett really didn't know, I wondered whether someone was going to have to save him. I thought of Philip Marlowe's line (in *The Big Sleep*) about a stained glass image of a knight rescuing a maiden: "I stood there and thought that if I lived in the house, I would sooner or later have to climb up there and help him. He didn't seem to be really trying."

There's a magnitude of difference between a personable humorist delivering rehearsed stories and a personality (like Silverberg, Resnick or Willis) who plays off the unexpected in a way that makes an audience feel things are actually under control. When the Seiun Award presenters wanted Barrett to cross the stage as a proxy acceptor for the missing winner, he had to be repeatedly prompted, at first appearing as if he had not been paying attention, then as if he was afraid to move away from his podium. He was at a loss when Clayburn Moore didn't immediately answer a cue to display his design for the Hugo base. And he kept looking into the wings as if expecting award presenter Roy Tackett to emerge, even though tech had appropriately decided to have the wheelchair-bound Tackett participate from the foot of the stage.

Work, Work, Work: A wheelchair need not be any barrier to participating in a con. Early at LoneStarCon, when Judith Ward passed by in hers, she demanded of everyone listening, "Didn't I tell you that I wouldn't run the Con Suite?" Ed Wilson, a fan attending the con from Qatar, returned the obvious question, "So, you're running the Con Suite?" Judith snarled, "Yes!"

A great deal of physical work goes into assembling the exhibit areas of a Worldcon. Hearing that Bob Eggleton had helped set up the art show raised his reputation even higher. It became front page news when Randall Shepherd quoted Bob as saying, "I really like all this screwing and shoving."

Bill Parker ran Tech for LoneStarCon. The Hugo Ceremony wasn't the only place Bill had to supply fireworks that weekend: he commuted to Houston in the middle of the con because he had to supervise fireworks and lighting for the WNBA Houston Comets. Bill had this schedule conflict only because the Comets made the playoffs; the regular season ended before Labor Day. In case you care, the Comets won the league championship.

Bill also received credit for the first convention-related injury when his two-foot-long pet iguana clawed his arm. Kids, don't try this at home, these people are professionals....

Stu Hellinger did another good job racking up ads for the souvenir book, enough to cover the cost of the book. He quashed a rumor that he was told to stop selling because the committee set rates that didn't cover the cost of publishing them. Stu said the only problem was that the rates were not set until June and that kept him from selling all the ads he might have.

I wrote for Tom Becker's daily newzine, whose title was either *Newsbringer* or *Domino*, depending upon which side was up, given its Ace-Double-inspired design. Tom gathered a very interesting constellation of talent to assist him. His Thursday morning staff meeting involved Dick Russell, Robert Sacks, Doug Faunt, Benoit Girard, Spike Parsons, Leslie Mann, Teresa Nielsen Hayden, Moshe Feder, Lise Eisenberg, Beth Moursund, Bill Humphries, Adina Adler and Alice and Ken Spivey. Tom envisioned that various combinations of these people would take charge of editing each of the 11 projected issues. Nearly everyone had a good time, after all, editing the daily zine is the second best job at a con. (The best job is running the green room, when the budget allows enough creativity to keep the pros from permanently retreating to the SFWA Suite.)

Tom carried over to *Newsbringer/Domino* the successful features of his vibrant, highly-readable daily zine for the El Paso Westercon, like digital photos (snapped by James Daugherty) and fannish columnists. Yet LSC2's daily zine didn't attain the same energized feeling. The format may have been a barrier. The zine was composed of four pages created by folding a sheet of paper. In that scheme guest articles filled most of a page and, unlike pieces of similar length in letter-size editions of the Westercon zine, looked "too big to read." The Ace Double format also grated after a couple of issues -- it probably was a "funny once."

Most of all, *Newsbringer* needed more fixed distribution points. Apart from a prominent drop-off at the freebie boards in the exhibit hall, fans were never sure where to find a copy. Too many fans didn't find the evening issues with party listings until the following morning. (One issue they could easily find was the Hugo Awards issue handed to them on the way out of the ceremony: fans were suitably impressed.)

(Hugo Ceremony footnote: I have to say that while I've grown tired of Martin Hoare's annual variation on "I'm-going-to-wake-Dave-in-the-middle-of-the-night-to-tellhim," I still enjoy the Cheshire Cat effect of his blinky-light bowtie as he vanishes back into the audience.)

Riverwalking: One night of the convention Ross Pavlac led 13 of us to the County Line on the Riverwalk. Things began as usual with a demonstration of Ross's uncanny knack for arriving without reservations at a busy restaurant and instantly arranging seating for all.

The County Line chain is renowned for serving mass quantities of BBQ brisket, sausage, ribs and chicken, and we went right to work, with one exception. The woman next to me methodically chewed a serving of tofu and chased it with the contents of a small can of tuna. I thought to myself, what a wonderful force of will she has. However, it seems all fannish dinner conversation eventually disintegrates into a discussion of religious dietary laws or the secular equivalent. She and another fan excitedly reviewed their allergies and diets -- "Intestinal yeast" is not a phrase I care to hear at dinner.

Rick Foss' thoughts were elsewhere. With a faraway, philosophical look in his eye he asked, "I wonder when heavy metal blues became acceptable dinner music?"

Speaking of heavy metal. On the way out of the County Line I saw a familiar Worldcon figure -- the fan who wears the gold-painted Viking helmet topped with a beanie propeller. Tonight he'd even attached a little battery-powered fan to blow on the propeller. Sort of a fannish JATO unit.

The Bidder End: I spent two shifts at the LA in '99 NASFiC table, part of an archipelago of bid tables at the entrance to the exhibit hall. As such, it was an excellent place to spot friends.

Kevin Standlee captained the SF in '02 table when not at the Business Meeting or setting up the nightly bid party. Standlee told me the Bay Area SF Association reacted to Gary Farber's staunch traditionalism on rec.arts.sf.fandom by electing him its "Ambassador to 1978."

Larry Hancock, co-chair of the Toronto in 2003 bid, said he had 50 people volunteering to do stuff for the bid, 44 of whom want to do the web page. He said when he asked the same people about being on the sponsorship committee.... [sound of wind blowing across a deserted prairie]

I e-mailed bidders after the con inviting them to publicize how many presupporting memberships they sold. These bids responded -- Philadelphia in 2001: 156; Seattle in 2002: 180; San Francisco in 2002: 156; Cancun in 2003: 155.

Don Eastlake III wore a great t-shirt, a color reproduction of the "Four Seasons", dominantly purple and white, with eagles and tigers. Janice Gelb saw his aqua and pink committee ribbons and praised his good taste in volunteering only for departments with ribbons that complemented

his clothing.

Parties: Friday night, the Boston bidders threw a "2001 Leagues Under Texas" party, perhaps the ultimate permutation of the "Enchantment Under the Sea" theme made fannish by *Back to the Future*. The ceiling was covered with hundreds of blue and green balloons, the walls were covered with fishnet and toy fish. Forty pounds of shrimp were converted into an endless supply of shrimp cocktails. Mock sushi was artistically prepared on the spot from candy, food coloring and frosting.

I'll never forget being in the CFG Suite when a late-night edition of the daily newzine arrived, and the way all the hands grabbing in the air for copies reminded me of *Night of the Living Dead*.

I also saw KIM Campbell talking to Ed Meskys while Mark Blackman talked to Ed's seeing-eye dog. And when Ed Meskys was ready to leave, he cleared a path by yelling, "Kill! Kill!" at the dog!

The CFG Suite has a long reputation as a retreat for First Fandom, among others, but at this party everybody was gray, or getting there. Dick Lynch, Nicki Lynch and I were sitting on the end of a bed when a first-time con volunteer (recognizable by his badge and because his hair was its original color) asked if he could bring Nicki anything to drink. He was practically shaking and I wondered if he was sick. Then it dawned on me and I asked the Lynches, "Is that what we looked like the first time we met Lou Tabakow?"

At the Chicago in 2000 suite I heard a story from someone who had been in the women's room when a cell phone rang several times inside a stall. The voice answering the call was Karen Meschke's. (Karen later confirmed that it happened.)

The midnight drawing at the LA in '99 bid party was won by Allen Varney of Austin, after about 20 tickets were pulled for missing persons. He won the complementary snack basket the Marriott had delivered to the suite. Craig Miller teased, "A truly grateful winner would share." Allen did -- doling out chocolate, kiwi fruit, grapes, cookies -- promptly converting one winner into 35 winners.

The Former Worldcon Chairs Party was ritzy and invitation-al (for the first couple of hours). LSC2 hosted it in a suite that overlooked the Alamo and Riverwalk. Karen Meschke greeted and Fred Duarte poured wine. Some of those posing for pictures were Peter Weston, Craig Miller, Bruce Pelz, Joe Siclari, Roger Sims, Ross Pavlac, Mark Olson, Dave Kyle, Robin Johnson, Mike Walsh, Tony Lewis, John Guidry, Kathleen Meyer, Martin Easterbrook and myself. (Meschke and Peggy Rae Pavlat were also in the group shot.) Leslie Turek was delayed by a Magic tournament, and

2000 Worldcon Site Selection Vote

	<u>Mail</u>	<u>Thur</u>	<u>Fri</u>	<u>Sat</u>	<u>Total</u>
Chicago	304	148	343	498	1293
Others					39
None of the above					37
Subtotal					1369
No preference					98
Total					1467

Others: (6) Highmore, Minneapolis in '73; (2) Boston in 2000, Hawaii in 2000, Kansas City in 2000, Wigwam Village, Winnipeg, Zagreb, Z'ha'dum; (1) Albania, Alcatraz, Angel Grove, Antarctica, Boston Mountains, Brighton on the Green Line, Europa, Gnome of the Above, Joliet Prison, Milwaukee, New Orleans, Takoma Park, MD, The Boat.

Worldcon Christened: The name of the convention will be Chicon 2000. Its guests of honor are -- Author: Ben Bova; Artist: Bob Eggleton; Editor: Jim Baen; Fan(s): Bob and Anne Passovoy; Toastmaster: Harry Turtledove. The Hyatt Regency Chicago is the

headquarters hotel. Tom Veal is chairing the convention.

Memberships: Rack rate for attending memberships is \$125 through at least March 1, 1998. Supporting memberships are \$40. If you presupported and/or voted in site selection, contact the committee for the correct conversion rate. (Voters with 20 bid trading cards pay no conversion for an attending membership -- no deadline given.) Mailing address: Chicon 2000, P.O. Box 642057, Chicago, IL 60664. E-mail address: chi2000@chicon.org

John Mansfield also came later. Dave Clark was at the con but missed the party to photograph the Masquerade.

The Con Suite hosted a nightly Chili Cook-off. Fans' good taste, always in doubt anyway, was further discredited by what they picked as the winner on Sunday night: Generic canned chili.

Don Fitch, standing in front of the entrance to the Rivercenter Marriott bar, told me, "This is the first con in years where I've seen a lot of people in the bar. Usually I go past and nobody's inside."

I looked in, saw Tim Illingworth, and realized there was a common denominator. "That's because they're all Brits, Don."

Program Notes: GoH Algis Budrys seemed to come in for less than his share of attention. No convention can make people come to a GoH program, but the fact remains that when one draws poorly, people will feel that the guest has been disrespected. Sometimes the reasons are beyond the control of the committee. Press liaison Laurie Mann regretted that reporters who told her before the con they were interested in a press conference with GoH Algis Budrys "got too distracted," so it never took place.

Sometimes this happens because the committee has not planned correctly. Budrys' GoH interview on the main

program attracted only 60 listeners, according to Mike Kennedy in *NASFA Shuttle*. It's easy to see why. Not only were 14 other panels (and three readings) scheduled at the same hour, Budrys was put opposite a panel which included GoH Michael Moorcock. That was a major gaffe.

The Roy Tackett Roast went better. Eleen Tackett wrote in *Asfacts*, "The worst things said about him was that he drives too slow and snores too loud. Jack Williamson was on the roasting panel, which neither he nor any of us understood why, as he and Roy hardly know each other. Richard Brandt, Jack Speer and I, along with others, knew all the 'dirt' on Roy."

Rick Foss said he heard a lot of panelists at LSC2 saying, "I don't know why I'm on this program." Program participants were told in a pre-con mailing not to say this sort of thing because they were only being assigned to programs in which they expressed interest. They did not obey.

Foss said one example of a panelist saying the forbidden phrase was Robert Silverberg, assigned to a panel on collaboration though he had collaborated on only two things in his life. He wrote with Randall Garrett; one of them was a day person, the other a night person, and when Garrett was too drunk Bob pulled him away from the typewriter and took over.

Alternate Worldcons: I was on Mike Resnick's panel of

contributors to the *Alternate Worldcons* anthology along with Bruce Pelz, Tom Veal, Tony Lewis, Leah Zeldes Smith and Dick Spelman. Resnick said the book was conceived in the CFG Suite at ConFrancisco while people were bitching about the con, one insisting a case could be made that Zagreb, even then being bombed, still would have produced a better con. Resnick announced his idea for the anthology and said he was now open for business paying a cent a word. That emptied the room. But soon they all came back in, sheepishly saying which story they would write.

Tony Lewis reminisced about the basis for his story, an actual Highmore, SD, bid with one co-chair, Richard Harter, who gave a "speech." Asked, "Would you like to say anything?" he answered, "No." Also, George Flynn, wearing a paper bag over his head, came up and read a piece in Frisian, which is why nobody realized it was in foul language.

I'm Sorry, I'll Say That Again: Marci Malinowicz pointed me out to a genial, hyperactive gray-haired man with a little tape recorder. I was supposed to be on a program in 10 minutes, yet he asked so politely for two of those minutes I said yes. I was glad I did because it turned out to be the legendary Lionel Fanthorpe in the flesh -- not a house name, not a myth, not deceased, just a friendly guy working the BBC for his transportation by producing a show on LSC2.

Dead Dog: My "dead dog" rounds began in the Rivercenter's lobby with Joey Grillot, Debbie Hodgkinson and Dick Spelman. Joey told us a story about being locked in his brother's closet, which is why he never goes anywhere without his Leatherman (a one-piece pocket tool.) Debbie looked skeptical, but I think that when you live the kind of life where you get locked in closets, it makes sense to take precautions.

1999 NASFiC Site Selection

This postcard dispatch from the L.A. in '99 NASFiC bidders in San Antonio came to Ed Green at Washington-on-the-LASFS:

Dear Ed: The weather here is very hot. I don't know how long we can hold out. There are only 6 of us in the party garden against the 4000+ forces of the San Antonio Regiment. Christian McGuire has lost hope for the NASFiC. He is doomed to chair the bid. I want you to know we held out to the last. We will never surrender! We already tried to but Phoenix wouldn't let us. If things become too grim we will make a break for the Alamo only 200 yards distant but I doubt that we will survive. We can hear the fans in the hall. We expect an attack right after the masquerade. Yours faithful to the end. Mike Donahue & Co.

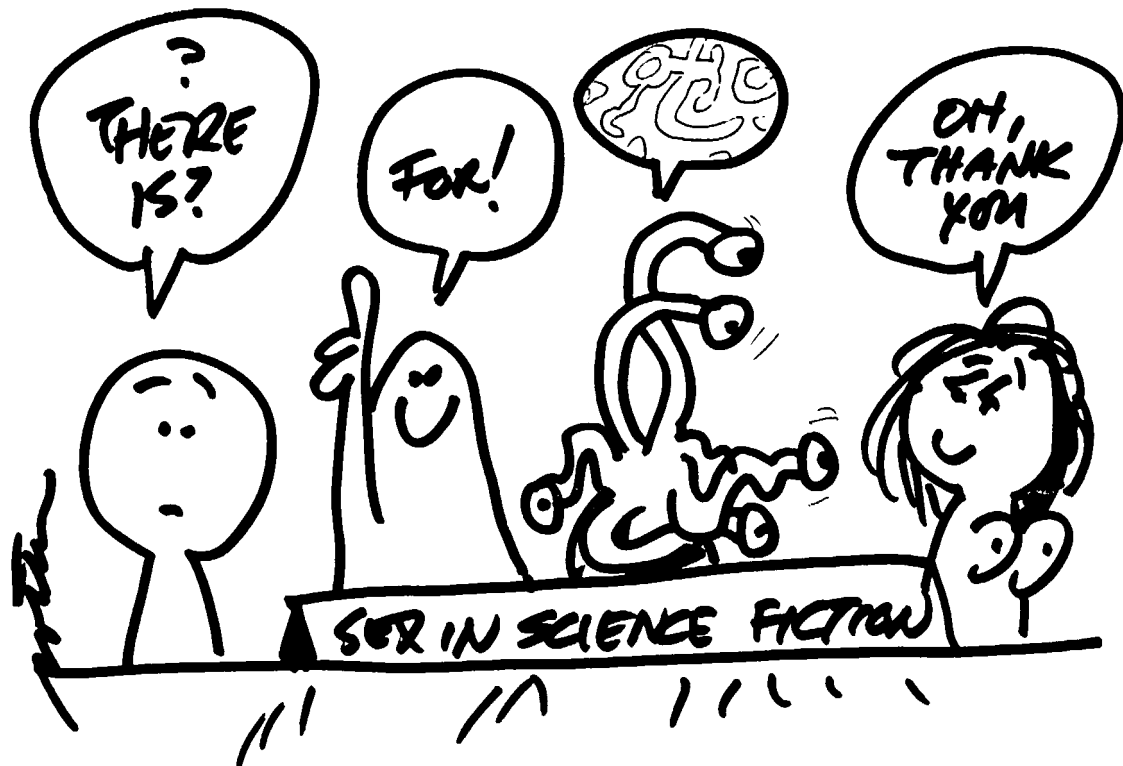
Only bullet-riddled ballots remain to tell the tale:

	<u>Mail</u>	<u>Thur</u>	<u>Fri</u>	<u>Sat</u>	<u>1st Total</u>	<u>2nd Total</u>	<u>3rd Total</u>
Santa Clara	13	5	12	36	66	69	X
Los Angeles	51	19	55	63	188	216	241
Phoenix	27	15	52	84	178	179	192
Others	1	--	1	3	5	X	X
None of the above	<u>5</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>
Subtotal	97	42	130	204	473	464	433
No preference	<u>4</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>58</u>
Total	101	42	132	216	491	491	491

The number needed to win on the first ballot was 237, dropping to 217 on the third ballot because so many voters only marked their first preference.

The NASFiC, called Conucopia, will be held August 26-29, 1999 at the Anaheim Marriott. The guests are -- GoH Jerry Pournelle, Fan GoHs Richard and Nicky Lynch, Editor GoH: Ellen Datlow. Artist and Filk GoHs to be announced. Christian B. McGuire is the chair.

Memberships: Rack rate for attending memberships is \$55 through December 31, 1997, then goes up to \$70. Supporting memberships are \$20. If you presupported and/or voted in site selection, contact the committee for the correct conversion rate. Mailing address: SCIFI, P.O. Box 8442, Van Nuys, CA 91409. E-mail address: info@99.nasfic.org



Dick Spelman had made sure nobody would be locked inside the exhibit hall. He told us, "It's 9 p.m. at night, and all but 1-1/2 dealers are out." Willie Siros was the half, having already removed everything he brought on skids. Joey nodded, "Willie brought in every book in the known universe -- even some books that haven't been printed yet."

Spelman says that after *Bucconeer* he's retiring from running Worldcon dealers rooms. He's run them at nine Worldcons and a NASFiC, in the process becoming one of the few fans committees ask to repeat in the same position year after year.

Inside the Sausage Factory: They say if you like sausage never visit a sausage factory, and behind the scenes LoneStarCon 2 was a bit more like a sausage factory than usual. But at a restaurant when the food comes on time and tastes good, nobody ever thinks about conditions in the kitchen, and at LoneStarCon 2 things usually made it to the table in good shape.

Committee shakeups fed the gossip mill in the weeks before LoneStarCon. It sounds bad when people are sacked from a committee because they failed to accomplish what they volunteered to do, or because of deteriorating relationships. But there's no question it's an awful lot worse if a chairman fails to realize essential work is not getting done, and to make personnel changes once that is realized.

As already mentioned, registration was turned over to John

Lorentz just three weeks before the con.

Ruth Sachter was given the same three-week window to reinvent the con's critical Volunteers department. She used the Internet to broadcast an appeal to her hundreds of conrunning friends. Those who volunteered all received purple ribbons at the con identifying them as "Emergency Holographic Texans." The title mystified the couple I met from Plano who had come to their first Worldcon. The wife asked, "Does that mean you're a Texas transplant to California?" I told her, "I'm not a real Texan, but I have been programmed with the memories of all previous Texans."

A lot of programming was pulled together at the last minute. An embarrassing side-effect is that only 141 out of nearly 400 participants listed in the Pocket Program had bios in the Souvenir Book, rendering meaningless an otherwise nice feature of the book. Presumably it was already at the printers by the time the fan program was created: none of the 20 fans I was on panels with had a bio in the book.

If Cows Could Fly: The Souvenir Book's one widely-discussed mistake was the misspelling of a GoH's name as "Moocock" in the headline to his introduction.

Little did we know there might have been no need for an introduction at all. Moorcock, discovering before the con that John Norman (author of the *Gor* books) was included in LSC2's program, declared he would not attend unless Norman was removed. He reportedly faxed this announce-

ment to *Locus* and other places, commenting that he and his wife are on the board of a battered women's shelter and he did not want to be associated with a John Norman appearance. I was told the committee persuaded Moorcock not to cancel by agreeing that Norman's name would not appear in pre-con publications.

LSC2 would have been exceptional by having *any* instances of guests publicly complaining, much less two. Besides Moorcock, Eleen Tackett wrote in the September *Asfacts* that the guest liaison had told them they would be on the fifth floor of their hotel, but booked them on the 14th floor. Eleen said, "Love being up high, but if there had been a fire...." She also mentioned accessibility problems with the room's facilities. According to the committee, the room arrangement was communicated well in advance and the room itself was a handicapped access room which complied with ADA requirements.

Nice Kaffeeklatsches Don't Explode: An admitted problem with management of the Lois McMaster Bujold Literary Tea contributed to the con's best-known blowup.

Reservations for the Bujold Literary Tea were accepted in several mediums -- including snail mail and e-mail -- but they were never effectively collated, leaving the people in charge unsure exactly how many and who had confirmed attendance. Then, food and beverage was rounded up at literally the last minute. That may be why a panicked staffer confiscated Jack Chalker's well-earned cup of coffee.

According to one participant, the story is this: Before Jack Chalker got to his *kaffeeklatsch*, a member of the convention staff came in and rolled their coffee away to the Bujold reception, over objections. The staffer answered rudely that he didn't care if some no-names didn't have coffee, it was needed elsewhere. Jack heard this when he arrived and stormed into the other event, reamed the guy out, started pouring coffee and announced that if anybody else in his group wanted the coffee stolen from them, then they better damned well be allowed in to get it.

The staffer called for help, and help turned out to be smofs who immediately ordered more coffee, then reamed him out themselves.

This satisfied Chalker, who had mainly responded as someone needing to defend his insulted guests against bad hospitality.

Question Time: Of course, who is better than fans at broadcasting the message "hey, you're only fans"? I felt I was getting that message from Press Relations head Laurie Mann. Before the Hugos, I touched base with her about getting a copy of the press release containing the full voting

runoff (different than the truncated version run in the daily newzine and posted online.) I couldn't show up after the awards to get a copy because I had to run a party. When I asked her for a copy the next day she said she had given all of them away. I would have appreciated hearing "I'll make sure you get one," instead of the answers I got, "Borrow George Flynn's copy," and "E-mail Nina Siros and see if she has one." Well, by now I have read it in *Locus*. I hope Bucconeer will work a little harder to help the fannish press.

Departure: Anyway, it's not as if what happens at a Worldcon is really a matter of life and death, no matter what our overly sensitive egos may feel. We were all reminded what life and death is on Saturday night, when reports came in that Princess Diana had been in a major auto accident, followed by the announcement of her death. Quite a few fans stopped at parties to huddle around a tv set and watch the CNN coverage.

Epilogue: Fans' expectations play such a powerful role in their ultimate opinion of a Worldcon that what someone expected from LoneStarCon 2 is probably what he got. Enough of LSC2's pre-convention problems became general knowledge that a number of fans involved in conrunning came looking for chaos to condemn and presumed to find it in run-of-the-mill problems. I disagree with them: the committee turnover appeared to me to have paid off. People who hadn't heard the stories came to LSC2 with an unjailed eye and observed few ripples.

I like to keep three questions in mind when I sum up a Worldcon. Did I enjoy myself? I enjoyed LSC2 very much. Did the con satisfy average fans (those not involved behind the scenes)? The fans I talked to were dazzled -- for example, excited by finding a sought-after book in the dealers room, hearing Brin and Bear talk about Teaching SF, joining the hordes at the *Babylon 5* presentation, praising the masquerade. Lastly, a more abstract question, how well did the con develop the many aspects that identify a Worldcon? I would draw an analogy between LSC2 and the type of grand-scale art that is most beautiful if viewed at a certain distance. LSC2's major elements, the big events, the dealers room, etc., were memorable. The Riverwalk was an outlet for the adventurous, and thanks to all the bidders the con had an abundance of creative parties. The con was missing some finer details. LSC2's low membership translated into budget constraints that understandably prevented many comfortable touches -- like no carpet runners in the exhibit hall, just to name one. But whether finances played a role in the decision not to have evening programs and films/videos, or to have the Con Suite open only during evenings, it is hard to accept the absence at a Worldcon of some things every regional provides. By day, LSC2 was the 24-ring circus we love, a showcase of literary sf and the world's fair of fandom.

1997 Hugo Awards

Best Novel
Blue Mars, by Kim Stanley Robinson

Best Novella
"Blood of the Dragon," by George R. R. Martin

Best Novelette
"Bicycle Repairman," by Bruce Sterling

Best Short Story
"The Soul Selects Her Own Society," by Connie Willis

Best Non-Fiction Book
Time & Chance, by L. Sprague de Camp

Best Dramatic Presentation
Babylon 5: "Severed Dreams," (Warner Bros.) Directed by David J. Eagle, Written by J. Michael Straczynski, Produced by John Copeland

Best Professional Editor
Gardner Dozois

Best Professional Artist
Bob Eggleton

Best Semiprozine
Locus, Charles N. Brown, editor

Best Fanzine
Mimosa, Dick and Nicki Lynch, editors

Best Fan Writer
Dave Langford

Best Fan Artist
William Rotsler

Other Awards

John W. Campbell Award
Michael A. Burstein

Big Heart Award
John L. Coker III

Special Delivery: During the September 11 LASFS auction, Ed Green opened a box with a San Antonio return address that was packed with foam rubber and peanuts. Despite the seeming worthlessness of the contents, there was furious bidding to give the box to Bill Rotsler, attending his first LASFS meeting since his surgery. When bidding closed, it was revealed that the box contained Bill's Best Fanartist Hugo from LoneStarCon2. Bill received a standing ovation, and accepted by telling us, "I now have a standard Hugo acceptance speech, which I've used on winning my third, fourth, and now fifth Hugo: I wish to thank all the little people I squashed like scampering bugs on my rise to the top."

LoneStarCon2 Attendance

John Lorentz (LoneStarCon2 At-Con Registration, retired), announced that 4,650 different people attended this year's Worldcon, with peak attendance of 4,350 on Saturday.

There were 4,450 full attending memberships (4,030 came to the con, 420 stayed home), and 590 supporting memberships. The con sold 703 daily memberships; tops was Saturday, with 386. (Multiple-one-days were not double-counted.) John adds that all figures are approximate and subject to revision "once the folks in Texas go through all the paper records."

Next Year's News: Buccaneer

Michael Nelson has unveiled the winner of the Bucky the Crab contest online at <http://members.aol.com/worldcon98/-buckcrab.htm>, by Minneapolis artist Derrick Dasenbrock.

However, Nelson is refusing to unveil a picture of John Pomeranz in his Loony Tunes underwear as a centerfold in the con's next *Broadside* despite an overwhelming popular vote in favor. Nelson explained, "I feel as editor, that this would not be a good idea. When you compare John against those pretty boy models used on the covers of pirate romance novels, you quickly see that John is twice the manly man of any of them. I'm afraid John's daring pose would just inflame the hearts of too many of our members."

The Buccaneer committee roved LSC2 searching for recruits. Among the fans they signed up were Mike Donahue and Chuck Shimada, who agreed to run Bucky's film program. Both contributed to L.A.con III: Donahue created its film program, while Shimada was its lead tech.

News of Fandom

Society Page

Mathews-Higgins Wedding Highlight of Chicago Social Calendar

by E. Michael Blake: Kelley Mathews and Bill Higgins were married on August 23 at St. Irene's Catholic Church in Warrenville, IL. More than 200 celebrants joined the happy couple there or at the reception in the American Legion Hall in nearby West Chicago. Bride and groom entered the reception through a gauntlet of crossed Swiss Army knives. The deep involvement of General Technics in the festivities was further evidenced by the prank directed at the groom's car, in which a dorsal fin was placed on the trunk, a beam cannon of red LEDs and lucite was attached to the hood, and an inverted, spinning ceiling fan gave a propellor-beanie accent to the roof. The bride's lacy white gown had been crafted splendidly by three of her friends, and her garter was a tasteful blend of white lace and blue LEDs. For many of the Chicago-area fen in attendance, the event marked one last opportunity to enjoy not being in charge of an official upcoming worldcon.

Home is the Hunter

Dennis Caswell has come home to Canada after a stint working in Saudi Arabia. "Even though this means I am not working, I am not greatly concerned about this. I have enough put away that I could live for at least two years with no problems."

Smoke and No Mirrors

Fannish skepticism has begun stalking

the Berlin in 2003 bid, owing to its lack of visibility even in Europe. Eckhard Marwitz' announcement of the bid at this year's Eastercon has not been followed up in any systematic way. In online discussions he pointed to the high cost of international travel as a reason for not following certain advice about how to pursue North American votes. However, the bid's web page has also disappeared. Technical problems were blamed, though one Norwegian fan wondered why the bid hasn't set up a mirror site.

I Can See Clearly Now

Jean Weber celebrated the restoration of her vision through laser surgery in *WeberWoman's Wrevenge 51*. She had her left eye done March 27 and the right eye on April 10. Jean's surgery was even more successful than expected; a large amount of correction was needed, but when her vision "settles down" (she's still having intermittent double vision) the only time she will need glasses is for close work. She underlines that the "discomfort" she was told to expect translated as serious pain that panadol-plus-codeine tablets were barely adequate to control. Apparently, controlling pain was not a problem after the first night. The procedure cost A\$2,300.

Major Kelly Freas Art Theft

Thursday morning, August 28, someone transporting \$25,000 worth of Freas art to the Worldcon discovered it was missing from the trunk of the rental car upon his arrival at the Los Angeles airport.

There were 10 large-scale color paintings, matted and framed. The remaining 18, also matted, were mostly black-and-white, a few in color, some roughs, a few finished.

Kelly and Laura Freas' online message sounded resigned: "Actually we don't expect to ever see any of this again. Odds are that the thief is not oriented in the direction of art or science fiction, and that everything will have wound up in a Los Angeles dumpster. Got themselves one hell of a nice bag, though. Expensive!"

Always Coming Home

Eric Lindsay announces plans to visit the U.S. in October and November, attending Ditto in Cincinnati and local fans for a week. He'll move on and stay five days in Minneapolis. Then he'll meet Jean Weber in San Francisco and they'll fly to Las Vegas to see fans and attend Comdex. They'll spend Thanksgiving with Jean's parents before going back to Australia on December 1. Eric would like to catch up with as many fans as possible during his visit and invites anyone wanting a detailed itinerary to email him at eric@zen.maths.uts.edu.au

Now you can also find Eric's perzine *Gegenschein* on the web at <http://www.maths.uts.edu.au/staff/eric/sf/geg.htm>

He Auditions Among Us

You can find Norman Spinrad's "Electronic Soapbox" at <http://outworld.compuserve.com/homepages/norman-spinrad>. Check there for his full rant about publishers' general disinterest in his new novel, *He Walked Among Us*. Read a chapter yourself. The many publishers who turned him down included L.A.con III, offered free a 5,000 word excerpt for its souvenir book. Spinrad said the excerpt was a thinly fictionalized account of one of his visits to LASFS. It was not what you would call a tribute.

A Contest For Fan Writers

Loscon 24 is sponsoring a series of (two) one-shot fanzines featuring Convention Reports of itself. The first of these will be limited to Reports written Pre-Con, with submissions due by November 24. The very best submissions will win a prize.

So: What Will Loscon 24 Have Been Like ???!

Send your reports to: Loscon 24 Fan Lounge, c/o LASFS, 11513 Burbank Blvd., North Hollywood, CA 91601.

(Make sure Norman gets that address...)

Original Neofan Returns

After more than a decade, Bob Tucker's *The Neo-Fan's Guide to Science Fiction Fandom* is back in print again "to lead the sheep to the slaughter." This 8th edition follows the complete text of Bob's last major (and final) *Guide* revision, completed for the 4th edition in May of 1976 for distribution at the 34th Worldcon, MidAmeriCon, in Kansas City. To the 8th edition, contributing editor Ken Keller has added a three page afterword "From Kansas City...To Kansas City" which places this edition within the proper fannish context.

Additionally, one unpublished Jim Shull and nineteen never before published Bill Rotsler cartoons, drawn in the mid-seventies fannish era, have been added to the 8th edition, including front and back covers. Most of the original fannish illos by Terry Austin, Grant Cantfield, Jay Kinney, Bill Rotsler, Stu Shiffman and Jim Shull have been reprinted.

Contributing editors to this edition are the late Robert Bloch and the late Red Boggs, Linda Bushyager, Dick Eney, Joe Fann (Bob Tucker), Ken Keller, Linda Lounsbury, Boyd Raeburn, and Harry Warner, Jr.

This 30-page 8th edition should be considered an interim edition, a still useful but nostalgic blast from fandom's past, until a completed updated and greatly expanded international 9th edition can be completed and published in a few years by Dick & Leah Zeldes Smith.

Proceeds from the sale of this edition (after printing and postage expenses) will go to The Science Fiction Hall of Fame, a joint project of the Gunn Center for the Study of Science Fiction at Kansas University and The Kansas City Science Fiction and Fantasy Society, Inc. (Author induction ceremonies into the Hall of Fame are held every July in conjunction with the Campbell Conference in Lawrence, Kansas.)

The *Guide* costs \$3.00 in the U.S., \$5.00 overseas (sent air mail.) Make checks payable to KaCSFFS, Inc. and sent to: P.O. Box 36212, Kansas City, MO 64171-6262. E-mail queries can be addressed to Ken Keller (Solar-Wind1@aol.com).

Medical Updates

Ross Pavlac Diagnosed With Cancer

Ross Pavlac has announced online that he has been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. Pavlac, 46, has been in SF fandom since 1965 and was co-chairman of the 1982 World Science Fiction Convention in Chicago. In recent years he has edited the *Worldcon Runners' Guide* and a comprehensive bibliography of Christian SF and fantasy.

According to Ross, "Pancreatic cancer is one of the nastiest ones. Basically, when chemotherapy is started, it either kicks in or it doesn't. As a result, 50% of patients are dead in six months. The one year survival rate is 20%. If you make it to the one year mark, your life

expectancy is measurable in single digit years, depending on whether chemo continues to work and how badly you are affected by chemo side effects. Cardinal Bernardin of Chicago survived for several years, but finally could not deal with the side effects crippling his lifestyle, so he went off of chemo and died a few months later."

Because conventional chemotherapy has such a poor track record against this type of cancer, Pavlac is, in consultation with his physician, long time SF fan and Chicon 2000 Fan GoH Robert Passovoy, looking into cutting edge research programs and emerging technologies that might improve the odds.

Ross describes his current mood as "pretty stoic" because he has a huge laundry list of things to do in event of the worst case scenario occurring. He feels a lot of sadness that his three year marriage to Maria may be coming to an abrupt end. He also feels frustration that certain major projects (such as a series of novels) are not likely to happen now.

If you wish to send condolences, Ross welcomes email at 76636.1343@compuserve.com. If you are a close friend of Ross, he is accepting a LIMITED number of phone calls at (773) 764--4583. Please do NOT contact Dr. Passovoy regarding Ross.

For those who adhere to the Jewish or Christian faiths, Ross welcomes prayer. His top three needs for the moment are:

1. Stop new tumors from forming.
2. Halt the growth of existing tumors -- and get them shrinking.
3. Enable Ross and Dr. Passovoy to find a research program with some emerging technology that will improve the odds.

Depending on his health, Ross is considering putting up an online journal

on his web page. If he does so, notice will be posted on the net in rec.arts.sf-fandom.

Gary Anderson Test Results

Cat Devereux posted on September 5, "Gary Anderson has been diagnosed with a nasty, rapid growth brain cancer called 'glioblastoma multiforma' (GBM). As Gary and Janet got a chance to talk to people that were more familiar with the cancer, [survival] estimates got better -- six months to 2 years to we-just-dont-know. Apparently, the timing on the discovery of the tumors was quite good. The estimates from the doctors are based on the standard discovery time -- when the tumor is normally 2 or 3 inches and has tentacles running through out the brain, but Gary has none of these. He's got more than one spot, but the only mass of any size was on the surface of the brain and was almost completely removed. (It was just the size and flatness of a nickel -- much smaller.) The others are much smaller than even that.

"The bad news is that these tumors are not very responsive to chemo. It takes radiation to womp the nasty cells. However, the good news... since Gary is in very good health (outside of this) and the doctors found the tumors while they were very little, this makes him a great candidate for special experimental programs. They are looking into these now...."

Cat always keeps an upbeat tone in her posts. "One of the requirements by all the doctors is that Gary continue to eat well. Janet is cooking (no giggles out there) and Gary is washing dishes as part of physical therapy (left hand/right hand coordination exercises -- see ook wash, see ook dry, see ook pick up the pieces). They have asked for easy low fat side dish recipes... that do not use nasty onions."

Gary began radiation therapy September 7. "The good news is that because they are just frying his head, he's not

likely to have symptoms like nausea. He's more likely to be sleep afterwards. Bad news is that since he has to wear hats outside, he gets to pick what hes going to be wearing! (You should see what he chooses for socks!) They're blinding."

After a week of radiation, Cat was happy to report there is a brighter side to things. "[Gary] is just warped. He's been having radiation for over a week now. Is he loosing his hair like he's suppose to? No! It's growing incredibly fast so he's starting to look like a beatnik.... Also the doctors have him on steroids, so he should be gaining weight. Nah, he's eating too healthy. So he's trimming down. Looking younger if not a little shaggy. Staying strong and giving great bear hugs."

Gunn Coming Around

Ian Gunn's newest e-mail update, "The Bald And The Beautiful," said he was due to get a CAT scan before his fourth chemo session. Ian's doctor, looking quietly confident, told him, "I know what the result will be..."

So fingers crossed!

Ian actually went to a Melbourne Science Fiction Club meeting, and thinks he'll be able to manage Basiccon.

The Most Encouraging Words

Marjii Ellers, sent a letter to the LASFS in August to share the news about her recovery:

Grateful greetings from another cancer survivor. The chemotherapy has worked a wonder and all 8000 nasty little cs125 cells have packed their cheap suitcases and departed, leaving their rooms a mess. My cane is hung in the closet, and the maternity outfits are at Goodwill, if anyone is interested.

The trade of my eyebrows, hair, figure

and eyelashes for this freedom from a deadly peril bothers me not a whit. Just glad to be alive says it all.

The Jewish and Christian Intensive Prayer Unit (Turtledove reference) and the good thoughts of the Secular Humanists have supported me in the past four months. No one can doubt the power of the intangible. Your three cheers for me on the 17th of April (my 58th wedding anniversary) came at the lowest point of my depression. From that evening on, I knew I would get through this somehow.

I read with interest the suggestion of posting the Saint of the week. Enclosed you will find me as I hold the whole world in my hand (Marian Anderson reference.)

Marjii Ellers, member since 1973.



Graphic Examples by Mike Glycer



Mimeographed on classic twiltone, Geri Sullivan's *Idea 10* is both a fanzine and a fannish artifact. Some have claimed twiltone is made in Japan from recycled Kleenex, but we really know that's only the jealous cant of editors who have sold out to for cheap copying at Office Depot.

Twiltone once recommended itself to fans as the cheapest stuff on the shelf. No faned uses it today as an economy move. Its use symbolizes fannishness by evoking the literal feel of traditional fanzines. Nor is it an easy medium to work in for anyone who cares about achieving excellence in design and legibility, as Geri obviously does.

Translating text created with a desktop publishing program into the medium of mimeo is risky with the best of materials, and twiltone is not a surface equal to the challenge of faithfully reproducing computer-precise typefaces. *Idea's* fine serif body text (what my program would call 11 point Gourmand Book) reproduces gray -- and I don't for a moment underestimate the technical prowess required to achieve a uniform, readable gray, having seen other fans' attempts to mimeo DTP text turn out

looking like zebra stripes and ocelot spots.

The fact that such effort is worth remarking also illuminates the clashing values that underlie various approaches to judging her success. In the 1990's, the production of a mimeographed fanzine on twiltone may be a value statement in its own right that needs no further analysis. Would it miss the point to suggest that Geri might honorably use the same materials as the Glicksohn *Energumen* to improve her results? Yes. A twiltone fanzine is a revolutionary homage.

All right, enough for the technical hooley. I don't know what it is about *Idea's* feel and appearance that compels a fanzine reviewer to comment about it before anything else, though I noticed in *Attitude 11* that Steven Cain also spent his first two paragraphs on *Idea's* feel and appearance. And why, when there's such excellent written material to discuss?

Imagine if Steve Stiles had gotten a full-time job drawing the revived *Li'l Abner* daily comic strip. Now, stop imagining that because Steve did get the job -- or would have, if Abner had actually revived. Steve not only tells the whole, maddening tale in this issue of *Idea*, but supplies four pages of trial strips, brilliantly drawn. What if? Then, for sure, Steve would have become rich enough to retire in the Bahamas, and fulfill his dream of subcontracting the actual work to Dan Stefan.

Jeff Schalles follows with a very interesting column, *Adventures in the Wimpy Zone*, called "If It's Too Loud, You're Too Old!" Jeff reminds everyone that however long as his history in fandom may be, his history as a rock'n roll drummer is even longer. He's been acquiring hi-fi components for decades, and blowing them up by playing them at full volume. He sloughs off the dead bits and regenerates his stereo from garage sale cast-offs, much as the

human body deals with dead cells and other matter. What's left of our original body after several decades is open to debate, whereas Jeff is certain that the speaker mounting boards are all that survives of his original system.

And isn't blowing out speakers hard on the ears? "After more than 30 years of this, my hearing is just fine, thanks. I think it's all the vitamin C I take. Keeps your tissues elastic." Hm, I've been taking vitamin C all along, and I'm half deaf. Maybe I needed Led Zeppelin therapy along with those megadoses of C?

The most compelling piece in the issue is Kathy Routliffe's autobiographical account of her mental illness, "My Trip To Jupiter." Her illness involved an obsession with the late singer, Tim Buckley.

In a touch of irony I certainly appreciated, the gentleman was actually a casual Tim Buckley fan. As he looked over my chart he said, "The doctor writes that you're obsessing with a country singer?" "Country? No. Buckley's not country." "Tim Buckley?" "Yes, you know him?" "I've got an album or two of his. What is he doing these days?" "He's dead. Been dead since 1975." "I guess that's why he hasn't been doing anything."

As much trouble as Kathy's obsession led her into, it would have been a great deal worse if the object of her obsession had been alive. A friend of mine is still lost in such a maze, but unlike Kathy, never wanted to be treated; she even travelled to distant cities to stalk the celebrity's family members.

Kathy's article is preceded in the issue by Mike Scott's satire about Karen Cooper's and Geri Sullivan's supposed obsession for collecting Pez dispenser

Body Parts, something unavailable in America. Scott begins, "Obsession is a strange thing." I know none of us are so delicate that the juxtaposition of these two articles will prove upsetting, but I know I would have made a different choice just the same. The article's placement aside, Scott's mock heroic quest through Britain's highway rest stops for these elusive cheap toys is pleasingly ridiculous. Not discouraged by the slim pickings at England's answer to 7-11, Scott admits, "I dived into disreputable toy shops on the off-chance that they might stock PEZ. I was being overcome by the obsession, and it wasn't even my obsession."

Idea also boasts a lettercolumn full of rarely-seen BNFs. You should read it!

Fanzine Reviewed:

Idea 10, available from Geri Sullivan, Toad Hall, 3444 Blaisdell Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55408-4315.

Illusion Inc.'s Race Car Attraction Brings New Dimension to Location-Based Entertainment VR

by Francis Hamit

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I was rounding the club house turn on the Las Vegas Motor Speedway for the tenth time when it happened. The Formula One race car I was driving skidded sideways and slowly spun into the wall. The world whirled and then froze with a tremendous crash. I held up my hand and the pit crew rushed to my aid.

Well, not really.

Actually, I was sitting in the prototype race car simulator at Illusion, Inc.'s development lab in Westlake Village, California, having been invited to give their latest product a test-drive in the most literal sense of the word. How real was it? Real enough that I could feel the pavement under

the tires as I drove. Real enough that I kept slowing down to avoid over-steering myself into a crash. Real enough that my fragile bad back was already screaming threats of retribution. I quit while I was behind.

It had been as close to the real thing as I ever hope to get -- and that was the point. Illusion, Inc. developed this simulator more to entertain than to instruct. They are busily preparing for the opening of a 40,000 square foot VR interactive entertainment center, with two accompanying ride-film theaters, at the Sahara Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas in September.

24 people at a time will be able to experience the thrill of Formula One racing, competing not against a machine in a computer-generated environment but against each other, in a virtual world replica of the Las Vegas Motor Speedway, the dimensions of which have been incorporated into this new virtual reality attraction.

It is a step beyond previous VR Location-Based Entertainment facilities: close enough to the real thing that it can be fairly said to mimic the real world. Not surprising, since these are the people who helped develop SIMNET for the U.S. Army.

That shared object training system relied upon "selective fidelity" to create the illusion of armored combat. The same principle has been used here.

The race car is carefully crafted to look like the real thing, at 3/4 scale. It is mounted on a six-degree-of-freedom motion base. The fat Formula One racing tires are made of fiberglass and weigh nine pounds, not 500, but the steering wheel, tachometer and speedometer are authentic, while a clamshell hood provides ease of entry and exit.

That's just the icing on the cake, however. What really makes the experience flow is the large curved screen directly in front of the driver, and the six computers that control the relationship of the driver to the virtual world ahead. These are further enhanced by the motion system and the three-dimensional sound used to exactly recreate the feel and sounds of a Formula

One raceway.

Before the firm was Illusion, Inc., it was Illusion Engineering, founded by Bob Jacobs and James McDonough. Its bread and butter was in defense simulators like SIMNET. The firm merged with another company owned by Peter Beale, one of the founders of Showscan. Beale's entertainment and attractions industry experience made him the obvious choice for the post of Chairman and CEO of the new firm, while Jacobs became President and McDonough the Vice President of Operations.

The Sahara project is the firm's first large scale venture in taking this level of simulation to the entertainment business. Along the way, they've broken new ground in a number of areas.

"The intention was to create, for the first time, a simulator that the public could use with a technical level of fidelity never available before," Jacobs said. "This is not an arcade game. It's a system that has as its purpose to calculate with a very high precision the way that a race car responds to its driver's commands. Through the controls and feedbacks, it communicates all of the sensory experiences that a driver perceives when actually operating a high-performance vehicle."

Jacobs identified four modalities that are used to create the illusion. "Some of the most overpowering sensations are the heavy levels of sensations experienced when braking, accelerating or turning a race car. We are limited by what can be physically realized within a fixed location. We have overcome this with a motion base that has a responsiveness of more than ten Hertz, provided by a European manufacturer. In other words, it can move more than ten times a second in a particular direction, which is very fast for a motion system.

"We are also using sophisticated motion-sensing algorithms that interpret the objective state of the simulated race car and then determine how to move it in that state. We have the capability to display substantial longi-

tudinal and lateral acceleration, which are used to add motion textures and to display event-driven motion special effects.

"Another area of display is the audio environment. We have created, I believe, the most advanced interactive spatialized audio system ever put together. It has the ability to synthesize and spatialize approximately 96 separate sound effects which reproduce sounds that would originate from your own car, other competing cars, or from approximate localities in the terrain. These could also be from any other moving source such as a news helicopter overhead, an ambulance racing to the scene of a crash, or a fire truck.

"We are also using what is called 'control loading' where we calculate at a very high rate the physics of the car's interaction with the ground, and use force feedback to give a dynamic representation of the experience. It does this over 500 times a second."

Of course, the primary output is the visual display. "Here again," Jacobs said, "I think we've done something pretty outstanding in the price range that can be rationalized for public entertainment. We have a three channel PC-based graphics accelerator board and 3-D graphics system. Each car has its own stand-alone capability and can communicate with each other."

This feature is a derivative of the Distributed Interactive Simulation (DIS) system first developed for SIMNET and its successor military VR simulators. The firm was instrumental in the development of DIS which is now an IEEE standard.

"The on-screen graphics have a refresh rate far in excess of 30 Hertz," Jacobs continued, "and are presented on a 20 foot diameter screen that covers 135 degrees of the field of view. It is a cylindrical screen illuminated by three video projectors to create 2200 by 600 pixels. We had a choice here. We could have gone with one huge projector, but that would have driven the cost out of reach. Instead we went with three smaller projectors, purchased off-the-shelf, and then created a

unique proprietary blending algorithm. We used a 3DFX 2440 SLI Obsidian board set with their Voodoo graphics to drive this display, but we can add alternative graphics solutions can be added later if they meet our cost and performance standards.

"This is driven by six PCs per car -- brand is not important, since we buy them off the shelf and try for the best price for the combination of Intel P5 and P6 chips we need. It's the equivalent of three and a half billion transistors with a total of more than 500 megabytes in RAM. The program has over half a million lines of code."

The technical aspects are, according to Jacobs, the least of the solution here. Citing his own degrees in systems engineering, mathematical modeling and psychology (his Ph.D.), he related how the research for this race car attraction began with several of the firm's executives taking a professional race car driving course at the Russell School (then at the Laguna Seca raceway in Monterey, California, and now at the Sears Point Raceway in Sonoma, California).

The firm employs a number of psychologists on staff who specialize in the designing the fundamental aspects of a simulated experience. The experience of a skid or a fast turn cannot be replicated by the motion base alone. The physics are the reverse of what would happen in the real world. The visual display tilts in a way to counter this and give the illusion of the real motion, and the sound system and tactile feedback are also used to support the illusion.

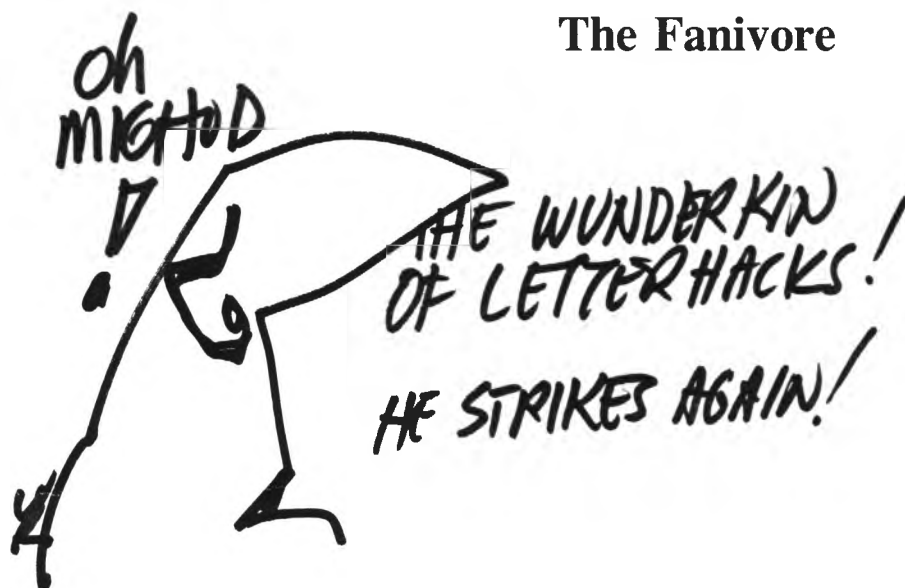
There's another feature which should keep customers coming back for more. "The race car will have an extraordinary prescriptive and scoring feedback. It will be able to tell you, for instance, that you should start your turn 15 feet sooner into a curve or whether you should go faster or slower at a particular point in the course. This will allow people to really explore the capabilities of the machine and how well you (the driver) took it to the limits of its envelope."

Jacobs also said that the new race car attraction has significant differences from its progenitors like SIMNET. "In SIMNET the emphasis was collective training. Here it is a way to bring people together in a way that they can compete and have an experience that they would never have in the real world. It will provide a challenge to both the novice and the experienced driver."

The system is not just replicating the real world environment of the Las Vegas Motor Speedway; there is also a Sahara Grand Prix being laid out that uses a simulated version of the Strip, complete with many of the famous landmarks that give it its unique character.

On October 9th, there will be a celebrity race where famous race drivers, other celebrities, and ordinary people who have been pre-qualified in a series of heats, will compete on Illusion's new attraction.





Lloyd Penney

The last two issues of *File 770* have come out so quickly and so close together, I've fallen behind without really meaning to do so.

Well done to Aussiecon III to honor George Turner this way. After the trouble the con has run into with worldwide skepticism about how the con will turn out, this decision will go a long way to bolstering confidence in the committee. The decision to ask Turner to be a guest in spite of his failing health is an indication to all conventions to appreciate our remaining classic sf and fantasy writers before they're gone.

Is that short paragraph all there is about Roger Reynolds? I remember Roger from about ten years ago when he premiered a new issue of his fanzine *Future Focus* at Ad Astra 7. Roger was a huckster in the best senses of the word, and he made things happen. The *Future Focus* party was a lot of fun, and I still have my copy of the zine. I lost touch with him after the con, but still heard about his various medical problems through the grapevine.

I don't necessarily want to increase the

The Fanivore

number of fans willing to run as fan fund delegates; I want to learn how to administer one, so that I might consider running. There may be a few others who feel that way, so a guide might educate us. Of course, that guide might increase the number of ...never mind.

Buck Coulson

I've been at one con where the name badges were to be hung around the neck. They did have two holes punches for the ribbon, but it wasn't very satisfactory, even so; the ribbon still twisted and let the badge show a blank face all too often. Bad idea, folks; use the pinned-on badges.

I'd take the side of visionaries as annoying madmen, any day. Of course, fans like to think that they're visionary, but they're not.

All the SCA people I know in the midwest are also stf readers and fans, though they may spend most of their time whopping each other with swords or quarterstaves. They can readily converse about stf authors or criticize concons like the rest of us, and the midwestern headbangers are also prominent in the filksings.

On obituaries, now that Juanita and I are more convention fans than fanzine

fans, we appreciate them to let us know who's stilla round and who isn't. Personally I don't need a long obit, but with fandom so large and diverse these days there are a tremendous number of fans whom I'm not enough in contact with to be sure of knowing about their deaths. So the obit is a good idea to fill in background on some of the deceased. (Now the rundown on 1999 Worldcon bids was wasted on me because I'm not going; we don't travel that far anymore.)

I've always liked black clothing, but I never gave a damn what anyone thought of me. Though it could have been a reaction to all the people who advocated being and looking cheerful in order to make friends and influence people.

Joseph T. Major

On the other hand, perhaps we should blow up Charlie Sheen and sniff (at) him as he drifts past.

Tell Dave Clements that Glen Cook's humor pseudonym did a novel about "the seven other dwarfs" (note that the Poopy Panda Pals are pre-Tolkien in their plurals) and he had eight of them.

I am afraid that the influence on my choice for 2003 will be that we can drive to Toronto in a day. It takes longer to Cancun, and even longer (and we would have to rent an amphibious car) to drive to Berlin.

At the Sherlock Holmes/Arthur Conan Doyle Symposium last March, the director, Greg Sullivan, gave a paper on the Granada Productions Sherlock Holmes adaptations starring Jeremy Brett. "The Last Vampire" was one of the ones he thought poorly of. The last year of [the series] tended to be inferior adaptations of less-well-considered Holmes stories. I think I saw the first hour of "The Last Vampire" (based on



"The Sussex Vampire") and, noting that the bulk of the hour was an entirely new subplot not in the original, gave up. The earlier productions had been noteworthy for their adherence to the original; I would sit in front of the television, *Annotated Sherlock Holmes* in lap, and follow the show word for word.

Henry Welch may be down on the Hogue, but you must admit the award of the Hogue for Putridity to the *paparazzi* [at LoneStarCon] was a neat touch.

Teddy Harvia

Those who believe that only active sf fans know and value the Hugo Awards are mistaken. I am constantly surprised

by the people I meet who know nothing about sf conventions, fanzines, or fandom but know about the Hugos. It may be vague knowledge based on book cover blurbs, but it is knowledge.

Some fan feuds are over simple miscommunication, or minor differences of opinion. To never talk with someone again because of a feud is to cut yourself off from any number of active and interesting fans.

Sheryl Birkhead

Congrats to the Graeme. I should send him a note -- but at least this way I've expressed it.

Westercon -- I couldn't get past the

golden raspberry preserves.

My reaction to the obituaries is that of having a true feeling for both the incident and the fan.

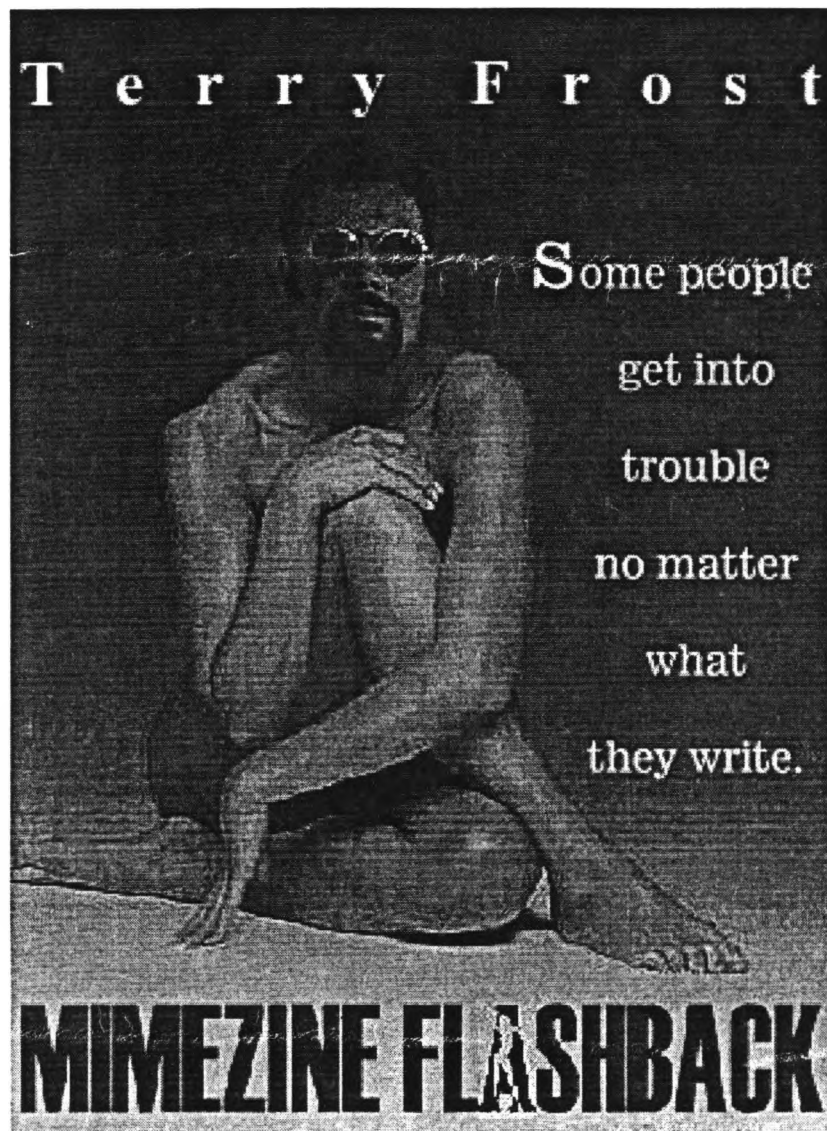
Paul Ewins

The issue of *Ethel* you reviewed (#69) featured all the bits from the various issues that I thought worked well. I produced 24 issues in my four years as editor and the layout was different for each issue. This was a deliberate ploy to try and avoid getting in to a rut and also because a lot of the other local clubzines had stuck with the same layout for years and were looking rather boring. The only constants were the font (Palatino) and the placement of the features, i.e. Editorial, club stuff, articles, letters. I used Pagemaker for the layout but most of it could be achieved in one of the newer word processing packages. The big advantage of Pagemaker (or Quark Xpress) is the fine control they allow over the various elements and the ease with which you can play around with a layout.

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Australian Fandom has a new face



Vote Terry Frost for DUFF

The Down Under Fan Fund helps US and Australian fans visit each other's countries for fun, frolics and explosion of cultural stereotypes. For more information, contact the current US Administrator, Janice Murray (janicemurray@compuserve.com) or check out the fan fund auction at LoneStarCon 2.