



POLYESTER PANTS • C3PO • CINNAMON BUN EAR WARMERS.
DISCO • R2D2 • HARDWARE WARS • PUNK ROCK • MIMEOGRAPH

YUP, I'M THE
FIRST FAN WHO
EVER USED JUST
ONE STAPLE!



***It Was 20 Years Ago Today,
Sgt. Saturn Taught the Band to Play***
Editorial Notes by Mike Glycer

Since *File 770:1* came out in January, 1978 much has happened, unfortunately none of it involved with producing a more sonorous title for this zine. But I'm celebrating the anniversary with an expanded issue that includes Ed Green's faanfiction set at the *next* L.A. Worldcon, E. Michael Blake's guest editorial about Hugo competition between electronic and paper zines, and Peggy Kennedy's defense of the LSC 2 masquerade. Will the readers enjoy the feast? (I worry, you know: time has not loosened Ken Keller's grip, nor dimmed his eye, for throwing offending

issues against the wall.)

Many thanks to every fan among you who has sent news and articles during the past two decades. And a special salute to the artists who motivate me to keep doing a paper fanzine, particularly Bill Rotsler, Taral, Brad Foster, Peggy Ranson, Alan White, Alexis Gilliland, Teddy Harvia, Ray Capella and Diana Harlan Stein.

Accidentally Touring Alternate History: Many of you wrote letters to say how deeply moved you were to hear that Bill Rotsler passed away. Those letters, including a long tribute from richard labonte, appear in the letter column.

I must briefly correct what I wrote about Bill last issue. And I must explain some Hugo history laid between its lines.

Bruce Pelz let me know that Tim Kirk drew the famous *Harlan Elephant* comic strip that I called "a legend in its time," not Rotsler. Such work as that won Kirk many Hugos in the 1970s. Which leads into my other point.

When I wrote that "Bill was in fandom over 25 years by the time he was Torcon 2's fan guest of honor (1973) and he still hadn't won his first Hugo," I indulged in a bit of hyperbole. The Best Fanartist Hugo has only been given since 1967. Rotsler's first win came in the category's ninth year of existence, after the award has been won by Alicia Austin, George Barr, Vaughn Bode', Jack Gaughan and Tim Kirk (4 times). Bill really wasn't overlooked, rather, he was one of an especially shining generation of fanartists. With so much talent and only one Hugo per year, some top artists of the era never won: Grant Canfield, Stephen Fabian and ATom.

Bill ultimately won four regular Hugos (1975, 1979, 1996 and 1997) and a Retro Hugo (voted in 1996 for work in 1945.) Reaching for one of those Hertzian economies of wordage that assumes a knowledgeable reader, last issue I mentioned only his two overseas wins and apparently misled another faneditor into thinking that's all he had. Or maybe the fanned just made a little Glycerian mistake. After all, he himself published the news of Rotsler's 1997 win just two months ago.

File 770 122

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Art Credits

Lynn Maudlin: Cover
Sheryl Birkhead: 11
Ray Capella: 10,13
Kurt Erichsen: 27
Brad Foster: 3
Bill Rotsler: 2,4,5,6,8,13,
14,15,16,17,26,28,29
Diana Harlan Stein: 32
Alan White: 21,23
Taral: Back cover

*(We dedicate the pinup on the
back cover to the NESFA skunk)*

Ulrika Wins TAFF

LASFS member Ulrika O'Brien has won the 1997/1998 TAFF race to Europe and will represent North American fandom at the 1998 National British Science Fiction Convention in Manchester, England, April 10-13, 1998.

Ulrika polled the most first-place votes and kept the lead until she achieved a majority in the third round. Here are the *combined total* of European and North American votes by round:

	<u>1st</u>	<u>2nd</u>	<u>3rd</u>
Victor Gonzalez:	55	60	77
Ulrika O'Brien:	69	82	105
Vicki Rosenzweig:	46	57	--
Tom Sadler:	42	--	--
Hold Over Funds:	3	--	--
No Preference:	<u>9</u>	--	--
Total Ballots cast:	224		

Martin Tudor will publish the full list of European voters in the European TAFF newsletter in 1998.

Victor Gonzalez' concession speech online said, "The race was fairly run and fairly won. I still don't believe that I am truly qualified to win TAFF, but it was fun to try, and I appreciate the support given."

Runner-up Vicki Rosenzweig is announcing a mail/email fanzine auction to benefit TAFF. She is auctioning material from Chuch Harris's collection, "most of it quite old and almost entirely from Irish Fandom." If you're interested, check her web page at:

www.users.interport.net/~vr/auct-sum.html

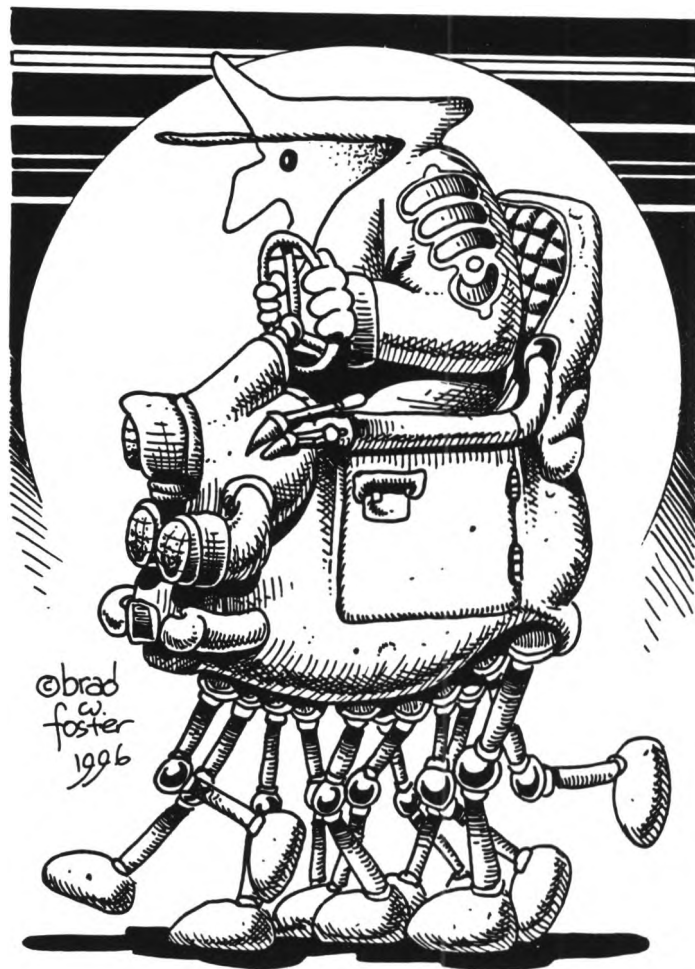
or send her e-mail at vr@interport.net for a copy of the list of items and auction details.

Return Engagement: Meantime, voting is open until April 25 in the European TAFF race to pick a delegate to Bucconeer. The candidates are Chris Bell, Bridget "Bug" Hardcastle and Maureen Kincaid Speller. Ballots are available from Martin Tudor, 24 Ravensbourne Grove, Willenhall, West Midlands, WV13 1HX, England; from Dan Steffan, 3804 South 9th Street, Arlington, VA 22204, or from:

<http://www.dcs.gla.uk/SF-Archives/Taff/taff1998.html>

No News Tonight

When I read *Westwind 221's* announcement that Seattle fans Becky and Michael would marry on July 11, 1998 at the Thurston County Fair Grounds, I just assumed I knew who they were talking about. And seeing Becky Simpson at Loscon, I congratulated her on her forthcoming marriage to Michael Citrak. Tom Veal was there and he wondered who needed medical attention more, Becky for shock, or me for the hallucinations I was obviously suffering. Attention K-Mart Shoppers: it's not that Becky!



2001: A Site Odyssey High Prices Force Boston Bid Out of Town

I'm sorry, I'll read that again: it's now the Orlando in 2001 bid. MCFI's plan to return the Worldcon to Boston has hit a fatal snag. No, the hotels are available, we're not reliving anything that happened to DC-in-'92 or ConFrancisco. The Boston Sheraton actually wants the Worldcon back, never mind that the 1989 committee needed lawyers to keep the con there last time. Here's the problem: the Boston Sheraton's wants to charge room rates of over \$200. Beyond that, the hotel requires a level of food and beverage business from the convention that could only be met by holding the equivalent of a 700-person banquet every night.

The committee did not need to imagine how fandom would respond to these prices. They'd already heard the comments about Seattle Westercon hotels in the \$130-a-night range (and needed a sailor to translate some of them.)

So the bidders reviewed the offers from three alternate Boston sites: one was already booked and the prices at the other two were no better than at the Sheraton.

With site selection only eight months away, MCFI is taking a historic chance by changing its bid venue to Orlando, Florida.



Two Orlando facilities want their business: MCFI is polling its presupporters and friends which site to choose. The first includes the Orange County Convention Center and nearby hotels, used by MagiCon for the 1992 Worldcon. They offer room rates presently averaging \$99. The second includes the Swan and the Dolphin, two hotels within walking distance of Epcot. One hotel is a Westin, the other a Sheraton, and their rates presently average \$119.

Do Florida fans approve the Boston move? MCFI answers tongue-in-cheek, "They are in favor of this convention as long as they don't have to organize it." Joe Siclari (MagiCon chairman), Edie Stern and Dick Spelman are already working on the bid.

For additional information, check:
<http://world.std.com/~sbarsky/location.html>

The Bid Formerly Known as Boston

How has fandom reacted to the news?

Todd Dashoff, of Philadelphia's rival 2001 bid, called it "a hell of a Hanukkah present!"

He added, "On the whole, it doesn't change what we've felt are our strong points: location, location, location. A great convention center with an attached hotel and plenty of others within walking

distance (not yet counting the ones under construction and scheduled to open). Easy transportation, by air, train, car and/or bus. Plenty to see and do before and after the con. And the food!

"It was going to be a close fight, and it still will be."

What does the rest of the world think about it? Here's a sampling of opinion about the effect changing sites will have on MCFI's chances against Philadelphia.

Perry Middlemiss, chair of Aussiecon 3, comments, "I can't think of any major non-media sf con in Australia that has been forced to change hotel location let alone state, so I can't speak of the implications. I would suspect that the Boston people are going to find it all that much harder to convince the site selection voters that they have it all under control and that the 'tyranny of distance' will not lead to communication breakdown. I wish them well, but this does not augur well for future worldcons in the US North-East."

Martin Easterbrook has worked Worldcons on both sides of the Atlantic, and co-chaired the 1995 con. In his view, "It is obviously a great shame that the prices quoted by the convention sites in Boston prevent a bid for a Worldcon there. I'm a supporter of the Boston bid and I was looking forward to a Worldcon there."

"It sounds as though the Boston sites may be financially impossible for some time. In this situation it would not be in the interests of fandom for a group with Boston's experience to give up bidding for Worldcons so I think their decision to transfer to Orlando is definitely the correct one."

"The Orlando site is probably a more attractive one for Europeans because airline flights and hotel rooms are cheaper

(last time I saw comparative pricing it was cheaper for people from the U.K. to visit Disneyland in Orlando than EuroDisney near Paris).

"The practice of a committee running conventions in another city is normal and unremarkable in the U.K. as is the switching of a bid to another site. Of course we are a much smaller country so this is much easier but it appears to me that the Orlando bid is an evolutionary step toward this becoming common in the U.S. rather than a revolutionary one. I already find that there are more faces I recognize working on any U.S. Worldcon I visit than new local ones that I do not. I think the more that people have been involved in the running of recent Worldcons the less they will be concerned by this move."

"I can see some problems if the local fandom was against the idea but that certainly does not seem to be the case here."

"We had a great number of people from the US helping us with Intersection so I don't see any new problems arising from bidding a convention in Orlando that haven't been encountered before. Indeed I would hope that if the bid is successful that the methods used then can be refined further, since they will definitely be needed for any future European Worldcon."

"To summarize, although I would have liked to go back to Boston I don't see any major problems in the Boston committee running a Worldcon in Orlando, with the local support they seem to have. I suspect it will weaken their bid considerably because fans who have not been involved in the running of many recent Worldcons may not realize that this is just making explicit something that is happening more and more anyway."

Cheryl Morgan has bid for Worldcons on both sides of the Pacific, and says, "Firstly, I think it is very brave of them. They'll probably lose as a result, but they've made a magnificent stab at rescuing a very difficult situation."

"More generally, it is interesting to see the U.S. finally coming up against something that Brits and Aussies have struggled with for years -- sites which are too expensive."

"If MCFI does opt for the Disney-

world option, I'm putting them last."

Kevin Standlee, chair of the SF in '02 bid, has no official opinion about the change, except to tease about this hypothetical scenario: "Say Toronto develops site problems and pulls out, allowing Winnipeg to bid again (unlikely; the Toronto bid is dominated by wannabe professionals who think they must hold a Canadian Worldcon for Canadian Professionals, according to my sources); the UK 2005 group moves to '04 and wins, bidding the SECC again. The result: 2000 through 2004 are Chicago, Orlando, San Francisco, Glasgow -- sound familiar?"

Medical Updates

Aussie fan **Eric Lindsay** suffered a heart attack on December 5, just two days after returning with Jean Weber from a trip to the U.S. Jean calls it "a relatively mild attack," and Eric was able to walk to the ambulance despite being in great pain. He was discharged from the hospital in less than a week and is recovering at Jean's home.

Jean informed e-mail readers, "The specialist noted that Eric has only two of the major risk factors for heart attacks: he's male and over 50. Needless to say, there's not much he can do about that! (He isn't sedentary, overweight, or a smoker. He doesn't even have high blood cholesterol!) But both of us could do with an improvement in our diet, so we'll be working on that."

An ultrasound test performed on Eric showed a serious reduction in volume of blood being pumped by the heart. "As I understand it, this doesn't mean an increase in risk of further attacks, but it may mean a noticeable reduction in fitness, such as tiring faster, shortness of breath, etc. The specialist says most people don't notice much if any difference, so it shouldn't make any difference in what he can do (assuming he's sensible for a month or two and builds up his exercise program slowly)."

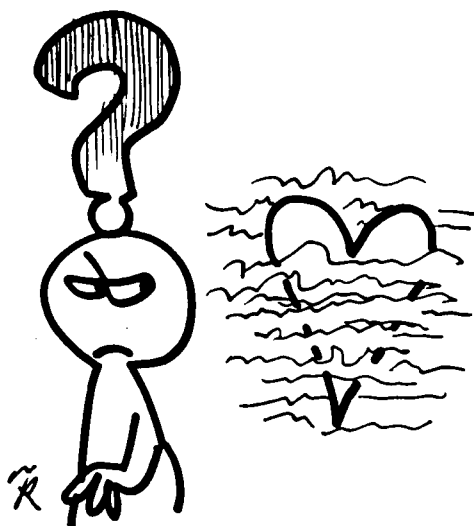
Eric plans a report about his hospital stay, researches into heart attacks, conversations with the doctors and other medical staff, and the experimental drug program he's participating in.

Another Australian fan, former DUFF winner **Nick Stathopoulos**, suffered a heart attack at the end of last summer, according to *Australian SF Bullshead* #84. According to the report it was a mild heart attack that was expected to keep him in the hospital only a couple of days.

Don Fitch entered the hospital so doctors could remove a cancerous growth in his nose, and they had to remove his nose to get at it. He seems in awfully good spirits about it, posting online about getting multiple copies of the prosthetics -- a red one for Christmas, another with a safety pin through it for punk raves....

A Flowering Career

Did you watch the Rose Parade on New Year's Day? Then you saw the South Pasadena float designed by fanartist **Marc Schirmeister**. "Goin' to the Moovies" showed a family of cows on their way in a roadster. Schirm said the float was built on the cheap, for \$45,000, with most of the money raised from donations.



Paying for Atmosphere

Fans arriving for the December 14 NESFA meeting noticed something in the air besides the spirit of the holidays. Clerk **Claire Anderson** wrote in *Instant Message 619* that "Mr. Skunk had recently expressed himself beneath the floor of

the clubhouse." When President **Gay Ellen Dennett** demanded to know what would be done, there was a decidedly LASFSian tone in the response. "Dun the skunk for dues!" said one. "Make him a member and charge him skunk fines!" said another. And **Tim Szczesuil** wanted to relocate the skunk to a site determined by auction. (*Attention LASFSians: Do not open any crates with Boston postmarks!*)

Tediously useful advice, such as consulting the local animal control officer or calling the Animal Rescue League, fortunately was overwhelmed by **Mark Olson's** protest that, "the skunk was useful -- it ate grubs under the clubhouse." Mark also said he "found the smell rather pleasant."

The Sloan Arranger

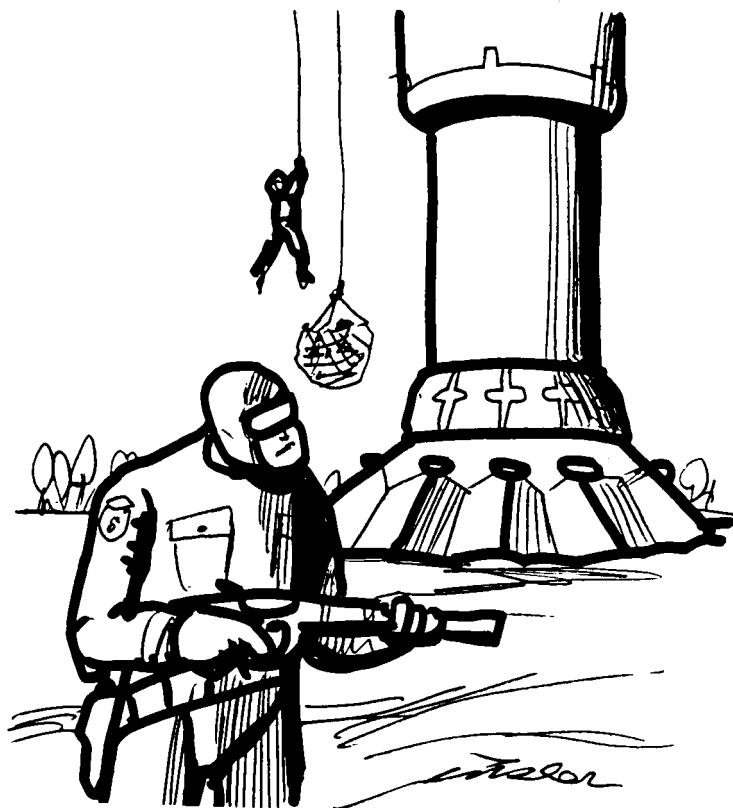
Marie and Kirby Bartlett-Sloan moved from Illinois to Georgia in October, and needed some emergency help along the way. The move was delayed a week because Marie broke her ankle. She writes, "A well-planned move turned into a logistical nightmare. Fortunately, Chicago fan **Frank Darrow** stepped in and was a tremendous help. He did most of the truck packing -- has as good a three-dimensional ability to visualize and pack as I do, but has the height and reach to actually do it too! Then, he helped Kirby drive the truck and one car down into Georgia. The two of them unloaded the truck into our garage and flew back. Frank really saved the day!"

"So we are still unpacking very, very slowly as I hobble around. The cast is off, but the tendons and muscles are still healing."

Now Marie and Kirby are living in a 4-bedroom house on an acre lot with a view of the mountains. There's room for a vegetable garden, but Marie concludes, "I suspect it will be a race to see who harvests first -- me or the raccoons."

A Good Day to Dye (Argh!)

Blame Bjo, it's her line. Once she's hooked your attention, she leads on with



news that she's sold a book, tentatively titled *New Ways With Old Dyes*. Biotech Publishing of Angleton, Texas will make it their first hardcover, and list it in their Spring catalog.

"I feel that many nature dye books are simply 'rubber stamps' of earlier nature dye books," Bjo writes in her release, "rather like so many copies-of-each-other costume books, which seem to imply that there were only 18 costumes total in all of Europe during medieval times! Over the past 15 years, I've done a great deal of primary research and practical experimentation. I've given workshops and demonstrations of nature dyes to schools, groups and at Texas Heritage Day, Texas Renaissance Faire, Pioneer Days and at historial recreation events."

She's also worked with premier nature dyers on both sides of the Pacific.

NESFA Tangles With NAFTA

Relentless in its efforts to suppress the pun trade, many of NESFA's best minds recently focused on Teddy Harvia's flight to Montreal to avoid punfines imposed on his artwork. According to *Instant Message* 614, Teddy scoffed in a postcard from

Montreal that due to a lack of extradition laws between Texas and NESFA, the club will never collect the fines.

One of NESFA's political scientists remembered that the club has recognized LASFS' sovereignty over all parts of the country west of the Mississippi River, and proposed to negotiate with LASFS regarding Teddy's extradition."

But *Instant Message* 615

revealed that the club gave up on diplomacy and took a page out of the U.S. Marshal's book. On their way to Montreal to attend a con, Lisa and Mark Hertel were designated "Official Bounty Hunters" for the purpose of collecting Teddy's pun fines. Lisa told the next meeting they failed to serve Teddy with the legal papers, then brightened and said, "At Smofcon we can try again."

Out, Out, Darned Spotlight

Bjo Trimble has declared a one-year hiatus for *Sci-Fi Spotlight*. She and John and supporter David Blaise (who produces the *800-Trekker* catalog and had advertised the zine extensively) have come to the reluctant conclusion that *SFS* shows no signs of paying for itself.

"Naturally we'd like to blame anything other than thundering lack of interest for the problem," she admits.

Bjo wanted a profit-making, printed magazine and felt undercut by her own website: "Larger publications note a decline in subs and feel the Internet is the reason. I got gleeful e-mails from my own subscribers willing to cancel their *SFS* subs and collect FREE up-to-date issues on-line. How do these people think

I can make a living at my craft? At present, the Internet is one big free candy-store, but that will change as we learn how to make it a paying proposition."

Meanwhile, Bjo says she will keep on posting news at her website, as time permits. Check it out: www.sfsfspot.com

Aurora Awards

The winners of the 1997 Aurora Awards are:

Best long-form work in English (1995--6): *Starplex* by Robert J. Sawyer

Best long-form work in French (1995-6): *La Rose Du Desert* by Yves Menard

Best short-form work in English (1996): "Peking Man" by Robert J. Sawyer

Best short-form work in French (1996): "Lamente-toi, Sagesse" by Jean-Louis Trudel

Best other work in French (1996): *Solaris* edited by Joel Champetier

Best other work in English: *On Spec* science fiction magazine (Copper Pigs Writers' Society)

Artistic Achievement: Jean-Pierre Normand (various cover art)

Fan Achievement (fanzine): *Sol Rising*, Theresa Wojtasiewicz, ed. (Friends of the Merrill Collection)

Fan Achievement (Organizational): Yvonne Penney, chairman of SF Saturday

Fan Achievement(Other): Lloyd Penney, for fanzine writing.

Attention Club Librarians

Vonda McIntyre posted online that Pocket Books has set aside some copies of her novel *The Moon and the Sun* to donate to organizations (libraries or fan groups) with sf collections.

If you're a member of an sf organization with an sf library and would like a copy of the book, or of you know of such a library, please e-mail the organization's name and the street mail address to Vonda McIntyre at:

vonda@oz.net

Excerpts of *The Moon and the Sun* are available on McIntyre's web page:

<http://www.sff.net/people/Vonda>

Fafia in the Heartland

Murray Moore worked as a newspaper reporter for 20 years, mainly for the *Midland Times* in Ontario until it closed in 1992. Murray continued as a free-lance reporter for three area papers until that work was cut to a trickle last October. Murray made the hard choice to study for a new career in Information Technology. He's spent the past several months taking DeVry Institute's relentless course of training in MS Word, MS Powerpoint, Excel, DOS and UNIX operating systems, Windows 95, Windows NT, etc.

He contrasts this course with his days at the University of Guelph: "I wasn't mentally engaged at university. This is different. It is my idea, my money (\$16,000!), and my future...."

"However, I can fill any lapse in conversation, stating, 'You know, before I took the IT course, I had no idea that UNIX was a multi-user, multi-tasking, multi-threading operating system that is powerful, open and robust.' Would you disagree with me?"

French Postcard

Teddy Harvia sends this sad news, "As the only outsider ever to visit the lair of the Frozen Frog in Quebec City, I have had the task fall to me of telling the rest of fandom that Benoit Girard has decided to go into hibernation -- indefinitely. The ice storm in Canada is not the culprit. Benoit did not lose power.

"Divorce drives him underground. Ginette Belanger, his wife, has already moved out. He is preparing their house for sale. Because his anticipated new residence, most likely a condominium, will have less space, he has offered his home library of thousands of books on permanent loan to a friend.

"Unique among French-speaking fans, Benoit reached out to make contact with the rest of the world. He wishes to keep in touch with the friends he's made, through e-mail, correspondence (although probably not letters of comment), and telephone conversations. Benoit will be attending no more conventions. And he intends to publish no more issues of his

fanzine, *The Frozen Frog*.

"Shelved for the moment, too, are the cartoon collaborations I drew with Ginette when she came with Benoit to Montreal for a convention. I was preparing to ink them for *The Frozen Frog*. Now, unless she gives me permission to send them to another fanzine, they will remain mere pencil sketches."

Rotsler Award Created

The William Rotsler Award for Fanzine Artists is being established by the Southern California Institute for Fan Interests, Inc., usually known as SCIFI. It will be a cash award of \$300, based on lifetime work, and will be presented at Loscons beginning in 1998. Winners will also receive an award plaque.

At its January meeting, the SCIFI Board of Directors appointed a panel of three judges to select the award winner, Geri Sullivan, Dick Lynch and Mike Glycer. The judges will serve three-year terms on a rotating basis. The Board will appoint a new judge each year to replace the retiring one.

Winners will be requested to submit material for an exhibit of their work, to be presented in the Loscon Art Show. SCIFI will also request permission to publish, every four or five years, a fanzine showcasing a few pages of artwork by each of the winners for the previous years.

Fan Organizes Comics Exhibition

Last summer Ellen Vartanoff organized "Cartooning 101," an exhibition of cartoons, comic books and comic strip art at Rockville Arts Place in Maryland. Vartanoff told the *Washington Post*, "I've been in love with cartoons since I was 7 years old.... My sister and I have been collecting comics since 1957 and began collecting original cartoon art in the 1960s, way before it became a popular thing to do." The show contained everything from political cartoons by Garry Trudeau and Mike Peters to underground comics, animation cels and cartoon-related artifacts. There was an abundance of

comic book art, just about all of the main superheroes from Marvel and DC were represented. Not coincidentally, Steve Stiles was one of the "alternative" comics artists whose work was displayed. (Martin Morse Wooster believes this is the first time Stiles' name has appeared in the *Post*.)

Smash the C-Beast!

Ian Gunn has a riddle for you....

Q: Why is Ian Gunn like a Christmas Ham?

A: Because he's pretty much cured!

After months of hairloss and out-of-stomach experiences, his doctor declared, "No more chemotherapy for you!" He's cancer-free!

Ian wrote online, "The good doctor says that according to my CAT scan, all those swollen, tumorous glands have reverted to their original size. Well, okay there's still a few mysterious spots on the liver, but Dr. Joe says not to worry about them, probably just harmless little cysts, we'll have another CAT scan in a couple of months and see what they're up to. But generally, the news is good!"

Fan Finds No Limit at 55

In the course of reviewing some of his 55 years of life, in *Derogatory Reference 87*, Arthur Hlavaty pens an abbreviated history of NYUSFS, a club distinguished by being thrown out of even more places than the LASFS After-Meeting, for most of the same reasons. NYUSFS started by getting kicked out of New York University (becoming NY*SFS in the process), and worked its way down from there. Hlavaty comments, "You know what's worse than being drummed out of McDonald's? Deserving it. We took up most of the second floor (there were about fifty of us); we made more noise than two orgies, discussing (among other things) where we wanted to go to dinner; and we gave them a total of approximately \$12.50 in orders."

GUEST EDITORIAL

**Paperzines, Webzines
and Hugo Awards**
by E. Michael Blake

A couple decades ago, there was some grumbling over technology changes that seemed to make fanzine publishing too easy, in the eyes of some -- as though one had to master the arcana of mimeo, ditto or hecto in order to make a *real* fanzine. But photocopying brought pubbing within the reach of a great many more people, and generally made it possible to use a wider variety of graphics. To me, as a sometime-reader of fanzines, it didn't seem to make any end-user difference in what made a fanzine: the content and delivery systems were the same.

Does this mean that the controversy over paper-versus-website zines will similarly blow over? I don't think so. Now, it appears, there is a radical difference in the delivery system and the potential for quite a lot of difference in content. From the end-user standpoint, this is probably terrific, if the end-user happens to be online -- and, qualms over elitism notwithstanding, it seems likely that a great many end-users are, or eventually will be. Still, even if the trend ultimately favors web publishing, the fannish community should not actively encourage this by allowing webzines and paperzines to compete for the same award. There's just too great a difference in kind.

A paperzine, like an actual book with for-real pages, remains more accessible than anything that requires an electronic interface. Perhaps many fans are or can be online, but few of them can be at all times. A book or a fanzine is a nice thing to peruse while on a park bench, in a bus or at the beach. I'd rather not so peruse, in such venues, if doing so required a laptop, a modem or a cell phone. And, to return to the old mimeo-vs.-photo tussle, photocopying made publishing more accessible for more people, while web publishing is accessible to far fewer than any sort of paper pubbing. Elitism may not be a factor from the end-user side, but even with ISP's desperately offering web pages to anyone who'll sign up, the people who can and do put things on the web will probably remain a *de facto* elite for some time.

Then there are the issues of what the Hugos are for, and what role fanzines fill (intentionally or not) in the fannish community. My old codger gut-feeling is that paper fanzines are vital to the maintenance of such a community, even as the short story is vital to the maintenance of the literature of science fiction. I

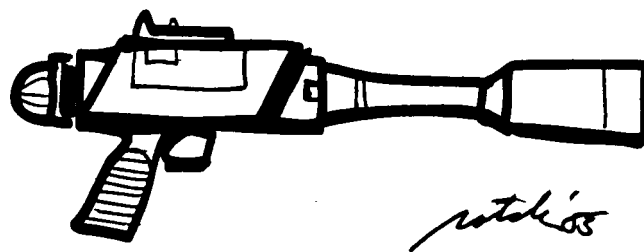


also believe that those Hugos that pertain to the community -- the fan awards -- should be potentially as inclusive as possible. Thus, there should be paper fanzines, in which fans can write and draw on paper, for as long as any interest in them can be sustained.

But what if fans also want to write hypertext links, draw 3-D animations, and explore all the multimedia expressions made available via the Web? Either add a new Hugo for electronic amateur publications, or require that all webzines (including those published on both paper and the Web) be considered semiprozines. Because I think there are already more than enough Hugos, I prefer the latter course. A really awful webzine by beginners, getting thousands of hits, is by its nature a larger media outlet than a top-drawer paperzine by seasoned veterans, with a print run of a few hundred.

In any case, if the paper fanzine must eventually wither and die, so be it. I'm just concerned that the moment might be needlessly hastened by poor judgment on the Hugo eligibility issue.

— E. Michael Blake, 907 S. Kenilworth, Oak Park, IL 60304



Graphic Examples

by Mike Glycer

There are a few masterful editors among us proving that clubzines can also be excellent fanzines. I want to highlight two of them in this column. In the November issue of *DASFax* Sourdough Jackson announces he's running for re-election as editor of the Denver clubzine. I'm glad to hear it, because the addition of his strong editorial personality to the zine's existing mix of contributors made *DASFax* into a zine I want to read immediately upon arrival.

Sourdough's November editorial takes three fannish obituaries as the occasion to analyze his personal discouragement about a missing next generation of mainstream fans, in a way that is satisfyingly self-revealing about the author. "Where are the young, brainy bachelors that made up a great proportion of the fandom of my neohood?" Sourdough may not know the answers to the questions he asks, but they are questions many of us are pondering: "MileHiCon is 2-3 times the size it was when Gail and I got married. There are a lot of youngsters floating around it. For some reason or other, they are not gravitating toward DASFA, or to any other organized literary SF groups. Where are they coming from? Where are they going? Do they perceive DASFA as a stodgy group of people their parents' age?"

Sourdough's personality is something around which to crystallize the good features *DASFax* has had all along. Stfnal film critic Laura Givens conveys her insights with an energetic style in a column unfortunately titled "Confessions of a Movie Slut." This issue, her fair, warts-and-all review makes *Starship Troopers* sound irresistible in spite of its flaws. Fred Cleaver's column, tamely titled *Book Reviews*, this time is filled with infectious enthusiasm for two epic sf series: Peter Hamilton's *Reality Dysfunction* and Dan Simmons' *Hyperion* (concluded by *The Rise of Endymion*.)

Rhonda K. Marsh's *Secretarium* highlights club programs in a way that makes me wish I was close enough to visit. "[John Doran] passed around snapshots he took at the Tripoli Rocketry Association's annual LDRS ('Large, Dangerous Rocket Ships') launch, and showed us two of the good-sized model rockets which he has built and launched himself, along with his own launch pad and launching system.... As a brand new model-rocket fan myself, I can heartily agree with John -- it's a blast! (pun intended!)"

Letters of Comment so often consists of Harry Warner Jr.'s letter standing alone that it practically constitutes a Warner column. Warner's letters crackle with wit and wisdom, for instance: "I was disgusted with the play the media gave to non-entities' complaints about the danger threat in the *Cassini* flight to Saturn. You never read in the newspapers or hear on television about the possibility that ten thousand or more people could die if a trans-Atlantic plane should crash in Shea Stadium during a big game. Every other day, as I understand it, the outgoing flight pattern is over the stadium. The only complaint I have about the

Cassini is the great probability that I won't be around to get the news about what it discovers and photographs when it arrives at its destination. It seems so long to wait, as Mabel complains in *The Pirates of Penzance*."

The November *DASFax* scores a coup in the form of Bob Vardeman's report of MileHiCon 29. Bob's a wonderful humorist and his report has lots of jokes even better than, "Took an extra 15 minutes of circling DIA (the Denver International Airport is going to be renamed to honor John Denver and will henceforth be known as the Denver International Airport) until visibility was enough to land." Then, Don Kinney's report of Jeff Conaway's appearance at Starfest 97 gives readers the full benefit of the actor's storytelling skills while saving the price of admission.

Ian Gunn won't be giving up editing *Ethel the Aardvark*, the Melbourne clubzine despite of the rigors of chemotherapy. In the October issue he explains, "I can do it in my own time during my lucid weeks, and besides, it's good therapy." So we are spared the tragic silencing of an inventive newswriter. Here are two items to admire from Gunn's latest issue:

Christine Young joined the growing band of MSFC victims of theft when her car was stolen whilst shopping. The vehicle has since been recovered, somewhat the worse for wear, but no so the week's worth of laundry in the back, thus requiring the purchase of a new wardrobe. Ethel emits squeaks of sympathy.

Hyperactive Sydney-based professional artist, book jacket painter and games designer Nick Stathopoulos was recently admitted to hospital following a heart attack. He's recovering nicely following surgery, but has been told, sternly, to Slow Down. Ethel says our thoughts are with you, but you'd better get better, Nick.

Ian's also a dangerous hand with an editorial. His column, *Gunshots*, more than lives up to its name this time. Animated by a chairman's sensitivity toward his own convention (what makes that so familiar?), Ian diplomatically praises Basicon 2, this year's Australian National Convention (NatCon) organized by Ian and Karen Pender-Gunn. But Ian can only tolerate such niceties for about three paragraphs before veering away like a pirhana in search of fresh meat, found in the form of Australia's literary fanzine community. It seems the business meeting of this year's NatCon scrapped the system of having separate Literary- and Media-oriented NatCons, making official the trend of combined NatCons (according to Ian, a single, merged-theme NatCon was held in three of the last four years.) He's not happy with the ivory tower complaints coming from parts of fandom who aren't helping energize the con.

Fanzines Reviewed:

DASFax, c/o Sourdough Jackson, 31 Rangeview Dr., Lakewood, CO 80215. Included as part of club membership (\$10/year) and available for the usual.

Ethel the Aardvark, MSFC clubzine edited by Ian Gunn. For availability information, E-mail: fiawol@ozramp.net.au

The LoneStarCon 2 Masquerade Director's Report by Peggy Kennedy



Introduction

It is time to tell the sad story of what it was like to run the LSC2 Masquerade. Before I disclose the dismal details, I need to do two things. The first is to acknowledge with gratitude the rewarding part of the ordeal: my Staff, along with their deputies, assistants, and volunteers. I should also mention Patty Wells and Ben Yalow, co-Hotel Liaison, and Kurt Siegel, Safety Officer. They answered all my questions regarding their areas promptly and to the point.

The second thing is to explain the duties of the Masquerade Director to those who have not themselves worked the Event. Running the Masquerade, the most labor-intensive area at WorldCon, amounts to putting on a stage show with almost no rehearsal on a stage which is being used for other events while working

with people who may never have met.

Some idea of the scope of the job can be gathered by reading the Staff List at the end of this article. Add Tech to the list. The Director must work with the techies, but has no control over them, and little input. Counting staff, volunteers, techies, and costumers, I was working with about 200 people.

The Director is also responsible for formulating the rules under which the Masquerade will operate; designing forms -- about 10 different ones; keeping track of costume entries; arranging order of stage entry; and getting information about all these to the people who need it at the time they need it. Add to this finding half-time entertainment; recruiting the various Judges; and getting the Award certificates designed, printed, signed, and distributed.

The Sad Story

It all started in October of 1996, when I received a letter from Sue Francis, Head of LSC2 Events, asking if I would accept the position of Masquerade Director. Twilight, who had had the job, realized at about the time of the 1996 WorldCon that she would not have time for it. Up to this point she had done nothing, which gave me the advantage of starting clean, along with the disadvantage of having only 10 months in which to organize something which generally takes three years.

I wrote back that I thought I could run their Masquerade, but had not budgeted to go to LSC2 and could only accept if all my personal expenses were covered. They must have been desperate. They agreed, and I was stuck with it.

I had known that the job would involve a lot of work. I had not bargained for there being several times as much work as there should have been. There were a number of problem areas. Probably the most frustrating area was communication, or rather, the lack of it.

Communications

The first thing I did was work out the rules, registration form, and information sheet, and rush them to Publications for the next PR. This was supposed to come

out in early December, which was why I rushed. It came out in late January. This meant that the costuming community did not know anything about the Masquerade until seven months before the convention.

I believe that this lack of timely information contributed to the unusually small size of the LSC2 Masquerade. Costuming is an art form. It takes time to plan, design, and construct a costume. People are just not going to take that much time out of their lives without knowing something about the event where the costume will be shown.

I put out a request for information on the Con, saying that people were to assume I knew nothing about it. After a while, I concluded that nobody else did, either. I asked a lot of questions, starting with the identities of the persons to whom to direct my questions. I had to ask two or three times just to get a name. Often it turned out to be the wrong name.

When I did get the right name, I had to make a fuss to get useful information, sometimes months after first asking and sometimes never. Between mid-July and mid-August, I sent out about 250 E-mail messages in search of needed information.

Most messages on the LSC2-apa had nothing at all to do with running the convention. The topic which generated the most E-mail concerned getting J. Michael Straczynski to give a presentation during a time period when the stage was needed for Masquerade tech rehearsals. More on this later.

Budget

The Masquerade was one of two sections to complete a line item budget and get it in on time. This budget was cut, and cut again, as the ConCom became increasingly anxious about going into the red. As a result, my own expenses made up a larger and larger percentage of the whole. However, I was not about to give them my money along with my time and energy and did not offer to pay my way. In fact, I came in under budget.

Once the ConCom realized that they might be in financial trouble, they went into a penny-wise, pound-foolish mode. We nearly lost our Official Photographer

because they refused up until the last minute to insure his personal photographic equipment, even though renting would have cost more than insuring. They did lose their Registrar, along with the \$20,000 worth of computers he was going to bring.

The Con assured us that they would cover any damage -- this at a time when they were fretting over having a deficit. Let me make it clear that I did not doubt their intention to make good on losses; just, based on what they were saying about deficits, their ability to do so.

Computers

Starting late, and with Staff and Committee scattered around the country, it was obvious that I had to do as much as possible by computer. I taught myself Access so that I could set up databases of costume registrants and staff, design the forms, and print out updates at-Con. So I needed a computer at-Con. The committee fumbled around on this for so long that my Deputy decided he would take care of supplying it. A good thing, too. Without the computers that the Registrar was going to bring -- see Budget -- I would have had no way to get at the databases or print out the forms.

Signs

Those of you who attended LoneStar-Con must have observed the almost total absence of signage. I asked about this back in December of '96 and was told that Sherlock was making some "artistic" signs which would eventually be sent to the Art Auction.

I wrote Sherlock and discovered that she was making signs only for major areas, having neither the time nor the resources to do all those needed for a properly signed convention. In addition, the Art Auction was to be on Sunday afternoon while the Masquerade was scheduled for Sunday evening. There was no point in having her make any Masquerade signs, since they would have been whisked away to be sold right at the time they were needed.

The Committee, however, had apparently decided that having an artist do some fancy signs took care of the entire

problem. The consequences of this decision could be seen in the few scribbled posters that some people eventually put up.

It being clear that I could expect no help on this matter, I bought PrintMaster Gold, taught myself the program, designed my signs, printed them out on a borrowed color printer, bought foam board and adhesive, and pasted them up. Many, many hours of work to do something for which the committee should have been responsible.

Space

The Ballroom was where all Events were held, Opening Ceremonies and Hugos as well as the Masquerade. Initially, there seemed to be enough time available for costumers to practice their presentations on the stage. This, by the way, is a matter of safety. It is dangerous for people, especially those in costumes with restricted vision, to go out on an unfamiliar stage. Then some one recruited Straczynski (as in Babylon 5) to give a show on Saturday. There went much of the costumers' rehearsal time, over my loud protests.

That my protests fell upon truly deaf ears was illustrated by what happened soon after. Someone else on the apa bubbled enthusiastically that she could get Michael Crichton to give a talk on Sunday, now the only available Tech rehearsal time. Surely, she said, he could use the Ballroom at lunch time or during a break.

I replied that there would be no time for the Tech crew to have lunch, breaks, or (probably) dinner, and that if the stage were preempted on Sunday, I would resign. Sue Francis stepped in and vetoed the project. If she hadn't, I really was going to quit.

There were noises made that I should be prepared to sacrifice rehearsal time for "the good of the convention." I replied that my responsibilities were to my Staff, to the Costumers, and to the audience, in that order, and if they had

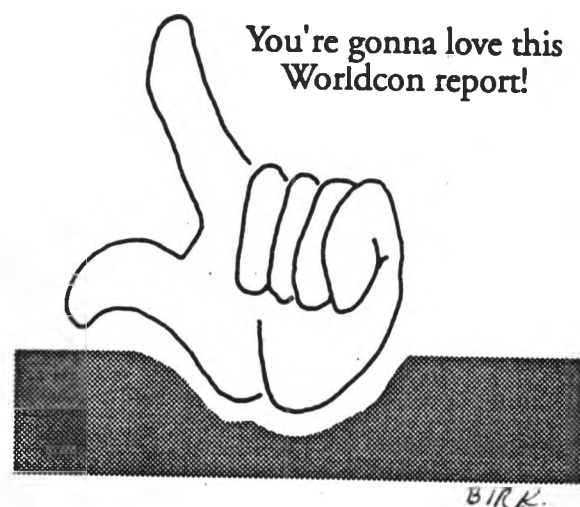
wanted a wimp for a Masquerade Director, they should have found someone else to do the thankless job.

Concerning other space: getting even a small section of the Ballroom walled off for the Fan Photo area took some doing. The ConCom was worried that this would leave too little seating for all the people who would want to attend the Masquerade. At the same time, they were concerned about low membership, but did not perceive that the two conditions were mutually exclusive.

Green Room Munchies

Having appropriate food and drink available in the Masquerade Green Room is a necessity, not a luxury. They are there to provide sustenance for crew and costumers who may have been too busy -- or too nervous -- to eat before the event.

When I raised this subject, I was assured that I could get much of what was needed from the Hospitality Suite. This, alas, was being run by an individual in the throes of acute disappointment over the loss of a long-cherished dream -- a properly sanctioned Chili Cook-off -- which had been cancelled at the last minute for lack of local support. She refused outright to supply any food for the Green Room. My Personal Assistant had to go out and buy the food, then sneak it in so that the hotel did not charge us for bringing our own instead of buying catering's unsuitable and exorbitantly priced offerings. She did it for a tenth of what catering would have



charged and she did it better.

Tech

Bill Parker, Head of Tech for LSC2, is a professional Tech person who works for the Houston basketball teams, male and female. Both teams made the playoffs. This meant that Bill had no time to work on Con stuff up until maybe a month before the event.

To take care of communications while he was out making a living, Bill assigned a living example of the Peter Principal. I asked this person about tech and stage setups, telling him that I was not a theater professional. This person thought that the way to handle his ignorance of the Masquerade was not to amend it, as I was trying to amend mine of Tech, but to be gratuitously rude. He answered my questions with snide remarks about my lack of expertise. Eventually, before I said anything unforgivable, I gave up on getting through to this person and asked my Stage Manager to be Speaker-to-Tech.

When Tech said that they would get the equipment needed for Fan Photo, the Fan Photo Director sent a list of requirements. The same incompetent got it wrong. The Director managed to cope, but he should not have had to.

I could not get a stage plan out of Tech, presumably because Bill Parker was too busy with his real job, and I needed one to help the costumers in planning their presentations. Finally, working from the inadequate Ballroom plans supplied by the hotel plus the small amount of information Tech saw fit to part with, I did my own scale drawings for the stage and for front-of-house. I sent the plans out to Tech for comments, which I did not get. Later I noted that they had used my plans as the basis for their own. No acknowledgement, of course.

Tech rehearsal ran long because they calculated the time needed as if the costumers were professionals. I thought I had made it clear we were amateurs, but they didn't get the message.

Tech also dropped the ball by neglecting to tell the Head of Catchers that there would be a roving videographer right in front of the stage. That, of course, is where a number of catchers are

stationed. Advance warning would have let us work out how to keep the videographer and his attached cables from interfering with the catcher crew. The problem had to be resolved after the Masquerade had started. This was done by telling the videographer that if a costumer got in trouble, he and his camera had better get out of the way, because the catchers would tank right over him.

Most of Tech was competent and, with the help of techno-fandom, did a very good job with sound and lights. This was particularly impressive in view of the large amount of work that tech setup involves and the inadequate time they were given to do it. However, Tech lives in its own world, regards all non-techies as enemies, and will not pay attention to anything they say. Pity. If they had paid attention, they might have noticed that I was trying to cooperate with them, at least at the start. That was before I realized they got their kicks out of being clannish and superior.

Aftermath

In spite of everything, the Masquerade went off quite well. From the reports I have heard, none of my problems were apparent to the audience. I will do this job again at about the same time that Hell freezes over. Anybody who wants can have my Rules, my info sheet, my Access databases and forms, even my advice. Just not my person.

Peggy Kennedy: The Once and Never Again WorldCon Masquerade Director

LSC2 Masquerade Staff

Carl Mami, Deputy Director; Tina Connell, Director's Personal Assistant; Sandy Manning, Green Room Director; Suford Lewis, Backstage Coordinator; Susan de Guardiola, Master of Ceremonies; John Blaker, Head of Catchers; Charles Mohapel, Fan Photo Director; Tom Whitmore, Front of House; Larry Schroeder, Stage Manager; Ken Warren, Official Photographer; Don Simpson, Awards Design; Bobbie Gear, and Pierre & Sandy Pettinger, Hall Costume Awards; David Cherry, Byron Connell, & Elaine Mami, Presenta-

tion Judges; Cat Devereaux, Workmanship Judge; Heather Alexander, halftime musician.

Friends of Gary

Janet Wilson Anderson sent thanks to friends online during the holidays: "Gary and I just want to let you all know how very much your support has meant to us this year. As we celebrate the holidays with decorated wheelchair, surrounded by friends and family, we want you all to know that Gary is still here, still in good spirits, still making bad puns, still giving good hugs and still a part of this wonderful community that's spontaneously grown up around us."

The results of the MRI mentioned last issue came back, and they're encouraging. The various tumors have shrunk or stayed the same, and more importantly, there were no new growths.

At this point, it looks like Gary Anderson will be participating in a clinical trial of a "special" kind of chemotherapy, reports Cat Devereaux. She adds, "Everyone, keep saying 'special.' Don't say the word 'experimental' anywhere the insurance companies can hear.)" The treatment involves taking stem cells from Gary's bone marrow. Then they dump enough chemo in him to make him really glow. (Enough that he stays in the hospital for that.) Then they re-implant the stem cells to give him back his immune system. Cat warns, "It's a nasty chemo, but it's been used successfully in some patients with other cancers. They can use it on Gary, because da Ook is 'strong like bull' and 'healthy like horse.'"

Cat reported in another message, "Gary has discovered that by using a rubber tipped cane like a gondola pole, he can maneuver himself in the wheel chair. It may sound a bit silly, but what this means is that Gary can now start to maneuver himself around canals of Venice, errr, the house. To quote the Ook, 'Freedom!!!' He's jazzed to be able to move on his own again."

Gary and Janet started the new year



sick as dogs from the Southern California flu, but Gary is continuing to gain back ground.

In Gary's Name, We Call All Wizards, Warriors and WiseAcres

By Karen Wilson: Just three months ago, cancer gave Gary Anderson, his family and friends a wakeup call to arms. Gary and Janet are looking at experimental treatment options to kill the cancer beast that is making a game over, end run on our friend. These are treatments that are not covered by insurance, but may make all the difference in the world. To be brief and blunt, there's bills to be paid and a life to be fought for.

Christmas and Yule are a time for celebrating life, friendship and all that is good that draws us together as one family. Together, we light candles against the darkness. At New Years we raise our glasses to toast life and all its possibilities. In that spirit we would like to invite all of you to stand beside Gary on one special night. Help us open a New Year of Possibilities, Gary's friends are organizing a

costumed fund-raising even in Gary's honor. There will be dancing and filk singing and contests for the best "kill the beast" themed costume, filk songs and dramatic presentations.

The date will be Saturday, January 31 in Huntington Beach, CA (near LAX). If you would like to help out, attend or need more information, please contact Karen Wilson and Chris Weber at 760-631-1498 or e-mail chrisweber@funtv.com. Please help spread the word. Tell a friend, tell a costumer, tell a filker and tell a fan.

Additional information: The "Warriors, Wizards and Wise-acres Ball" on January 31 will start at 7:00 p.m. at Trinity Lutheran Church in Manhattan Beach. Tickets are \$25. Since Gary is busy "killing the cancer beast", the theme for this party is "Kill the Beast!" Feeling adventurous? Come in costume! (costumes are

optional) There will be contests for best costume (individual and group) illustrating the "kill the cancer beast" theme, best dramatic presentation or poem, best filk song, and best couple or group at a "Kill the Beast" dance set. There will also be a raffle and an auction for interesting and unusual items that reflect some of Gary's tastes.

According to Cat, "Right now our most killer donation is a set of the Original Star Wars posters. They're framed and in excellent condition. (This will have a minimum bid of \$300, which is about the cost of the framing alone.) If you can't make the event, have a friend big for you. It's a magnificent addition to your collection."

To reserve your ticket or to send a donation of any size if you are unable to attend, please make out checks to: FR.-O.G.

Send to: FR.O.G., c/o A Girl's World Online Clubhouse, 825 College Blvd. Suite 102-442, Oceanside, CA 92057. Official webpage: www.filk.com courtesy of Eric Gerds.

FrOG is a non-profit organization founded to help with Gary's medical bills. In the wonderful case that not all the money raised is not all needed, the rest of the proceeds will be donated to the National Brain Tumor Foundation and the American Brain Tumor Association.





OBITUARIES

Ross Richard Pavlac **April 10, 1951 - November** **12, 1997**

Appreciation by Mike Glyer

Ross Pavlac, 46, passed away on Wednesday, November 12. He discovered fandom while growing up in Cleveland, and was involved with the Worldcon held there in 1966, doing things like stuffing envelopes. In time, he became among the best-known conrunning fans. He chaired some of the early Marcons in Columbus, having moved there after graduating from Ohio University. A few years later he moved to Chicago, and is most well-remembered for co-chairing the 1982 Worldcon in Chicago with Larry Propp. Ross was active in conrunning to within a few weeks of his death. He served as chair of the 1997 Windycon, but he became too sick to attend it. Ross's legacies to fandom include the *Worldcon Runners'*

Guide, which he edited for WSFS, and a comprehensive bibliography of Christian SF and fantasy.

I met Ross Pavlac at the 1974 Worldcon. In the eyes of this 21-year-old fan, he presented an impressive image. As the years passed and I understood more fully what was behind the image, I actually became more impressed.

Ross was a fanpolitical insider. (When we both went to the 1975 Midwestcon, he attended the closed-door meeting where staff was recruited for next year's Kansas City Worldcon; I cooled my heels in the Con Suite.) He was a

convention trouble-shooter. (Magicon's officers found out only five days before the con that registration software hadn't been perfected: Ross wrote them a program before opening day.) He was an experienced fanzine editor. (He produced *Avenging Aardvark's Aerie* in the 70s and 80s; the title later returned as the name of Ross's web page.) And a highly knowledgeable comic collector. (He owned two copies of *Fantastic Four #1* until he sold one to pay for his first PC.) Ross worked in the pioneer field of microcomputer applications. (As a byproduct, Ross was gainfully employed to help solve the Y2K crisis.)

He was only 23 years old when I met him. Initially, I thought he was fearless. He wasn't. I thought he was better equipped to face adversity than I was. He wasn't. What I discovered was that he willed himself to follow through in situations that my own fear of rejection kept me from, though he had the same fears.

Even real rejection didn't keep him from a bold attempt. One of his boldest moments was at L.A.con III. Craig Miller, looking to diversify the program,

wanted to set up a debates. He learned that J. Michael Straczynski was willing to take the negative side of "Does God Exist" -- but who would take the "pro" side? As if Craig needed more than one second to answer that: Ross Pavlac -- probably fandom's most outspoken Christian, and a devoted Straczynski fan besides. The pair debated the existence of God before a large audience at the 1996 Worldcon. Don't kid yourself that Ross wasn't terrified (though he'd never have admitted it to us.) What closely-held belief of yours would you subject to the scoffing of the day's most popular sf figure before a roomful of people? But he hung in. And as David Bratman wrote, "He totally outclassed J. Michael Straczynski in their debate at Anaheim, being prepared and articulate where his opponent wasn't really either of these."

Since Ross was a fighter, I was a more than a little stunned to be sitting in the Hillside Free Methodist Church of Evanston, IL, on November 22, waiting for the start of Ross's memorial service. He died only two months after sending fandom an e-mail announcing that he had cancer, giving this stoic explanation: "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."

Death tragically ended his marriage to Maria Pavlac after only three years. Before they married, Maria was a graduate student attending Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in the Chicago area. Her roots in fandom go back to 1973: she has belonged to the University of Massachusetts club, worked on several Boston-area conventions, and is a member of SFWA. They wed in 1994 in the seaside Massachusetts backyard of Maria's brother, with Rick Foss as best man.

Ross was gone in a shockingly short period of time. But to a group of us at dinner after the memorial service, Maria explained that there had still been time enough for the important things, to say goodbye, to cry together, to express their love for each other. She felt fortunate, compared to a wife who loses her spouse instantly in a traffic accident and gets to

do none of that. Maria generously shared the moving details of those last days with those of us who hadn't been there, and remembered warmly all the people who supported Ross with visits and in prayer in the final days: including her many "sisters" -- the rules only permitted immediate family into his room.

One "sister," Diane Miller, wrote that she last saw Ross conscious when she talked to him late on November 10: "I did manage to tell him how wonderful Windycon had been and what a great theme 'Scots in Space' turned out to be with everyone running around in tartans."

Darrell Martin began the sharing time at the November 22 memorial service with a tribute from the heart: "I don't know if I was Ross's best friend, but Ross was certainly my best friend." Darrell challenged us on the basis of our knowledge of Ross's character to hear the hope of resurrection discussed in I Corinthians 15, substituting Ross's name where appropriate. It was a brilliant idea that Darrell said had just come to him that morning. Part of the text as he read it said this:

Now if Christ is preached as raised from the dead, how can some of you say there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there has been no resurrection of the dead, then Ross has not been raised; If Ross has not been raised, then our preaching is vain and your faith is vain. Darrell went on to emphasize that since Christ has been raised from the dead, and Ross put his trust in Christ, Ross, too, shall be resurrected.

Eric Pement shared his memories about Ross's contact with Jesus People USA in the late 70s, which was one of Ross's formative experiences as a young Christian. Ross was raised as a Unitarian before making the short jump to agnosticism. When he committed his life to Christ, Ross attended weekly services at JPUSA, a full-time Christian community in uptown Chicago. He became a contributing editor for their *Cornerstone Magazine*, and also wrote for *His*, the magazine of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship. He reviewed music and concerts, and interviewed contemporary Christian musicians. He wrote a groundbreaking

article about Amy Grant when she began to have crossover appeal. He also served as head of security for Christian rock concerts.

The sharing started in a spiritual vein and people stayed in it until someone from the Hillside congregation struck a familiar fannish note with his description of a Pavlac dinner expedition, concluding: "Ross made the steak sizzle: It wasn't just the food you ate, it was the story behind it." These food adventures became the common ground where Ross's friends from different communities could relate.

This conversation continued -- over food, of course -- after the service. A lot of fans were there (others had come to the wake.) Lynn Maudlin and I talked many of them, including Dina Krause, Glen Boettcher, Terry Patch, Glenn and Mia McDavid, Darrell Martin and Jon Stopa.

Dina Krause said the Windycon committee kept a low profile about the chairman's hospitalization, not wanting to overshadow fans' enjoyment of the con. Fans were mindful of it in their own way: an auction conducted by Bob Passavoy raised over \$3,000 for cancer research.

Ross is so identified with certain events, places and belief that it's hard to remember that I met him (1) before he chaired a Worldcon, (2) before he moved to Chicago, and (3) even before he became a Christian. Ross came looking for me at Discon in 1974, having heard from Bruce Pelz that I was about to spend a year at Bowling Green State University in Ohio. His brother was going there as a freshman, and so was Diana Sainsbury. Ross was living in Columbus, involved in the local Marcon,

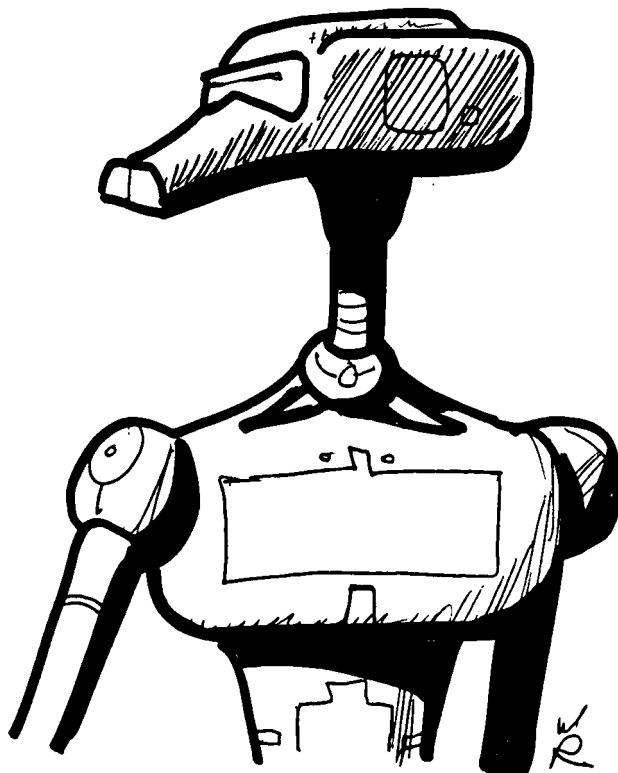
and supporting the Columbus in '76 Worldcon bid which would lose to Kansas City later in the weekend.

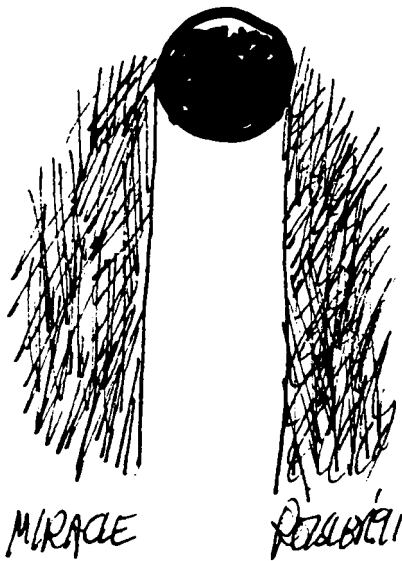
Ross gave me my first chance to be one of the marquee names at a convention when he chaired the 1977 Marcon and offered to make me the Toastmaster if I provided my own transportation to Columbus, Ohio. He gave the same gift to others: as Fred Levy Haskell remembered, "'Twas Ross who gave me one of my priceless Fan GoH gigs, back when Marcon was still an sf convention."

Riding Greyhound to Columbus cost a lot less than flying, and I could get the time off, so I took the bus. A late-night harmonica player in the back of the bus kept me awake. I tried pretending I was encamped with the Army of the Potomac and this was actually a touch of home. It didn't help.

I stayed at Ross' apartment in Columbus. It was a typical fannish apartment, piled waist-high in reading material. Ross's vast collection filled a second bedroom. I never saw all that was in there because I couldn't even squeeze past the row of bookcases blocking the door. He owned a lot of comics, of course, because collecting them was one of his first fannish obsessions.

Ross also had on display the ashes of





his favorite sf writer, A. Bertram Chandler. Meaning, I found a heap of dead ashes from A. Bertram Chandler's pipe still undisturbed in a living room ashtray a year after Chandler visited there in 1976. Chandler had been given airfare from Australia to attend SF Expo. That infamous attempt at a for-profit convention was postponed, but Chandler didn't waste his chance to visit the U.S., and Ross was his host for an evening. Ross didn't smoke, he just left the ashtray as a tribute. Even after I clumsily knocked it onto the rug. Ross declined my offer to vacuum up the mess, and I know from another visitor that he left it there after I was gone.

At that time, Ross worked at Battelle Laboratories, a leading computer application development company of the day. In his spare time, he made sure Battelle also had the best online Star Trek computer game of the day. The game consisted of piloting the Enterprise throughout a 64-quadrant universe, avoiding stars, probing for Klingons with long-range sensors and fighting them with photon torpedoes and phasers, all frequently interrupted by emergency missions from Star Fleet to pick up brandy for diplomats, etc. Ross added code whenever he discovered a variant version with some keen new feature. He could play at home on a borrowed remote terminal, but only as long as the thermal paper lasted. Which was never long enough!

Ross's mentors in the Columbus days

included Larry Smith and Bob Hillis, who would have major responsibilities at Chicon IV. In some respects, the 1982 Worldcon vindicated the core of Columbus fans who never had the chance to run one in their home town.

Wherever he lived, Ross became a defining force in local events. He used icons adroitly to convey a personal vision of how to run things, such as his "Avenging Aardvark" persona. For example, he called his special assistants at Chicon IV the "Aardvark Flying Squad," and gave them distinctive buttons. Many fans found him a pleasure to work for because he created unique identities and loyalties for the team. Fans who caught the vision found it wonderful, exciting and mesmerizing; however, those who didn't criticized it as overly grandiose.

For example, Ross loved the idea of being a member of the 1976 Worldcon-rescuing Columbus Cavalry. It never was enough for him to have been "very helpful" to a Worldcon, he needed to make a legendary contribution. It was not simply ego. Fandom was his civilization and he aspired to achieve something heroic in it. If fandom, like the Roman legions, awarded a *corona graminea* ("grass crown") for personally saving the day, he would have sought that honor more than any other. He won something of that kind at the 1992 Worldcon, where he was presented with a "Magicon Hero" medal at the end of the con for his last-minute creation of the registration software.

Chairmen sensitive about the notion that they might need rescuing deprived themselves of Ross's heroics, but he worked wonders for the committees that brought him aboard. He was one of those who ran into the burning building of Nolacon just before Labor Day, recruiting 25 people to handle program operations. (Rick Foss remembers those days in the following article.)

When he was problem-solving, he did so with a wonderful level of panache. Ross started one Worldcon with a six-pack of beer in hand and, when he found Jerry Pournelle, delivered it to him on one knee like a squire presenting his knight's sword. It was an active symbol of appreciation that pleased a writer other

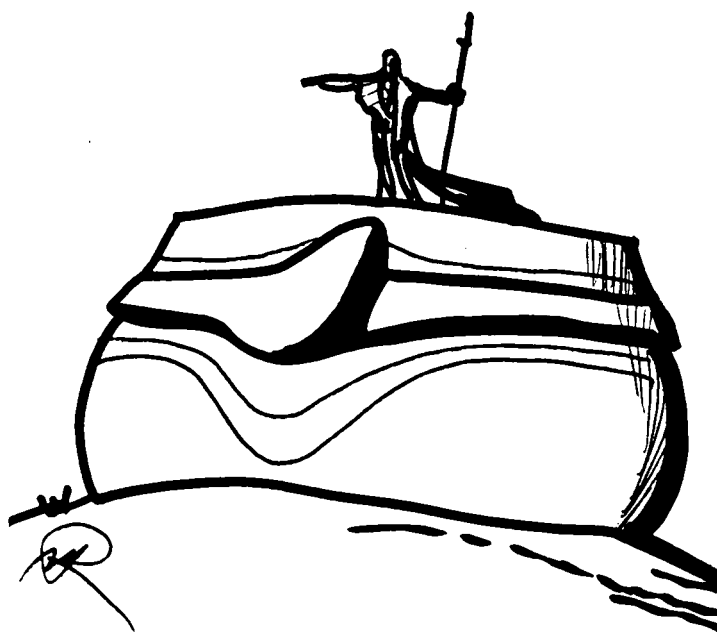
committees claimed they couldn't deal with.

Ross really loved to exploit his dramatic flair as a gift for his friends. At Chicon IV I shocked him by saying I planned to skip the Hugos in order to see *Buckaroo Banzai* -- I'd seen *Locus* win before. Ross played on my sense of duty to cover the event for *File 770* readers, thus making sure I was on hand to be surprised with a special committee award. He struck again at Chicon V with a special committee award for Elst Weinstein. Ross convinced the reluctant Elst to dress in a suit and attend the Hugos by telling him he was going to help present an award to *me*. (The hoaxer hoaxed!)

Maria Pavlac would like anyone who has a story about Ross to e-mail it to gabfest@execpc.com -- she is gathering memories of Ross to share with family and friends.

Every time death claims one of our fannish friends it hurts. It hurts even more when we knew the person well, especially someone who was still in his most productive years. In Ross's case, so many possibilities were ready for harvest. Ross and Maria got established in a new church within the last year. Ross was on the verge of fulfilling his ambition to design a Worldcon program. And he continually added to *The Worldcon Runners Guide*, which he saw as his lasting legacy. He intended to synthesize the whole picture of what it meant to run a Worldcon and do it well.

Conventions and writing projects helped Ross create friendships. Greg Thokar wrote, "So devastated to hear about Ross. He was one of the nicest fans I knew." Kevin Standlee said, "Ross is one of the first people in fandom who took me seriously and gave me a chance to show that I could be trusted with a task when he appointed me timekeeper of the 1991 WSFS Business Meeting which he chaired. I've always been grateful for this and for him. He will be missed." Other friends pay tribute to him in this issue, and many have posted on the Chicago 2000 website. While it's sad that Ross died with certain dreams unfulfilled, there's a balancing joy in the many friends he made in a lifetime of fanac.



Ross Was His Courage by Diana Glycer

The thing that first attracted me to Ross was his courage. I was in high school, barely sixteen, and he had already mastered that characteristic swagger. He talked about authors that he knew, famous people that he had interviewed, articles he had written. "You aren't afraid of anyone?" I asked. "Nope," he grinned. "You'd even walk up to the president and talk to *him*?" He didn't hesitate: "In a heartbeat."

He did talk to everyone and anyone. When we were touring Austria, he'd walk up to strangers and try out his high school German. When we went to concerts, he'd finagle backstage passes and talk to the band. And when we went to science fiction conventions, he'd walk up to the guests of honor and chat away as if he had known them all his life. I always assumed he *had* known them all his life. I found out later that he'd never even met most of them before.

Back then, someone in fandom coined the phrase "Pavlackian Proportions" to refer to anything that was larger than life. That was Ross. He loved the dramatic. He'd show up at the door in a blue aardvark suit. He'd attend the convention in

full kilt. He'd hold forth on a panel with bluster and bravado. And if I'd dare scold him for stretching the truth, overstating the case, speaking too boldly, arguing too loudly, stepping on toes, he'd say, "It's just the way I am. Everybody knows that."

When I heard he was sick, I was convinced he'd lick it. A little cancer cell? A mere *disease*? He'd find a way. He'd overcome. I knew he could do it. But then we got the series of

phone calls, bleak and unbelievable, that told us he was losing.

When I woke up the morning after Ross died, the whole world seemed a different place. There an enormous sense of loss, as if I had thrown open the curtains in our dining room and instead of seeing the peaks of the San Gabriel mountains, I saw nothing but acres of empty air. When Ross died, it was a loss of Pavlackian proportions.

In Memoriam: Ross Pavlac by Richard Foss

I met Ross Pavlac in a time of chaos and emergency, when there was a job to be done and a con to be saved -- in short, when he was in his natural element. It was shortly before Nolacon, and Mike Glycer and I had just been put in charge of programming. As we finished the process of assembling hundreds of pages of scribbled notes and unanswered correspondence from previous program chairmen into a convention program, it occurred to us that we had been so consumed with this part of the process that we had no staff organized to run program ops.

"Let's see, what kind of person do we need?" asked Mike.

I tried to think of someone who might have the skills necessary for the job: organization, energy, leadership, the ability to make things run on time, and complete ruthlessness. "Benito Mussolini," I suggested.

"I'll call Ross Pavlac," Mike replied immediately. Who? I wondered, as Mike punched enough numbers into a telephone that I was immediately sure it wasn't a local fan. After some preliminary conversation I got on the extension, and Mike and I were interrogated about the convention by someone who had such a terse style of speech that I actually thought he was doing a Jack Webb imitation. The voice on the phone peppered us both with questions -- *Who was handling the pocket program? What about the liaison with on-site publications? When had the program participants been notified of their panels?* I marveled later that he asked so many of the right questions and had gotten as much useful information as he had from a pair of exhausted and demoralized people at two thousand miles distance. At the time I just thought foggily, well, it sounds like that's handled.

Handled it was. I won't go into the details of the disaster that was Nolacon, which would have strained the capabilities of the most skilled of professionals. Ross had called in favors and assembled something magical -- a team of the most skilled conrunners in fandom, who struggled and largely succeeded at pulling the con together. In the course of that week of early mornings and late nights I discovered that Ross had all the qualities I had asked for -- he was organized and energetic, and his morning pep talks to the staff kept the morale up during nightmarish circumstances. He was even ruthless -- with me, as a matter of fact. He threw me out of Program Ops when he found that I'd had one real meal and three hours sleep in the previous 24 hours; he remanded me to the custody of my wife, recommending that she seduce me and make sure I slept afterwards. She did and we did, and we conceived our son that evening.

In the course of that convention I discovered that Ross and I shared a com-

mon passion for food and good conversation, and our friendship deepened over plates of jambalaya and crawfish etouffee in K-Paul's Creole Kitchen, Patout's, and other cathedrals of New Orleans hospitality. That bond was a strong one for us, and I came to every convention after that looking forward to the Aardvark Run, where we and twenty or so close friends would descend on some unsuspecting eatery. Local ambiance was a plus but not an essential -- the food was the thing, and Ross and I each tried to find something strange and wonderful that the other didn't know about. At this year's Worldcon in San Antonio this consisted of going to a barnlike structure in a rundown warehouse district and dining on chicken-fried steaks the size of sofa cushions. The portion size was so ridiculous that when our meals arrived Ross let out a bellow of laughter, which the rest of us joined wholeheartedly.

This cheerful, fun loving side of Ross wasn't someone everyone in fandom knew; some people thought of him only as an efficient conrunner or outspoken fanwriter, and so were surprised when he launched into a humorous story or ran across a hotel foyer to bearhug a friend. Ross could be confrontational, direct, even irascible, and he was a man of firmly held convictions, religious and otherwise. This did not prevent him from maintaining deep and warm friendships with people of strongly different views. He never demanded that people agree with his beliefs, only that they respect them, and as a result he and I were close friends despite a huge gulf in worldviews.

I was delighted to be best man at his wedding to Maria, and we joked at the time that the usual confusion of an outdoor wedding for a hundred people was a piece of cake after Nolacon. I believe that the period from then until his cancer was diagnosed was the happiest time of his life, and as short as it was, I'm glad I shared some of it with him.

After his cancer diagnosis was known, Ross retreated somewhat from fandom. This was at least partly because he was always a private person who did not want his friends to see him in pain. While Ross was in the hospital during his

final illness he was visited not only by members of his very Christian church, but by my wife, my brother and I, and Jeremy Bloom, a rabbi's son who recited psalms softly in English and Hebrew to the once powerful man who lay semiconscious and attached to machines. Others of many faiths would have been there, but by Ross's choice they did not know how grave his condition was. Instead they were at Windycon, the convention of which Ross was Chairman, and which he outlasted by only two days.

When we mourn anyone loved and lost to us, we mourn not only them, but the things they dreamed of achieving but did not, the things we might have done with them but never will. I will miss Ross over dinner at Bucconneer, and at every Worldcon and Windycon hereafter. I will miss him at conventions when there is some awful mess happening and he isn't there to joyously wade in and sort it out. And I will hope that if the universe is as Ross believed and he is now in heaven, they keep one part of it really badly run just so people like him can show up and fix it.

Ross Pavlac Appreciation by Lynn Maudlin

I met Ross Pavlac at L.A.Con II in 1984; I'd known Diana, his wife at the time, through the Mythopoeic Society for more than a year and she invited me to the post-Chicon party they were hosting. Ross immediately decided I was okay, based upon God only knows what criteria, and we hunkered down on the floor beside one of the beds and talked for somewhere between four and six hours; we've been good friends ever since.

Everyone who knew Ross knows he was highly intelligent, highly opinionated about virtually everything, fond of good food, a talented organizer, motivator, mover and shaker. Ross had a "larger-than-life" quality which encompassed much more than his size and a remarkable talent to make you feel important, special, by bestowing his attention and favor upon you.

Ross had a capacity to alienate and make enemies as well as friends although,

even there, I suspect they held him in grudging esteem rather than in cold hatred. I know that Diana continued to love him and pray for God's blessing upon him until his death. When even your ex-wife doesn't hate you, that says a lot.

I succeeded in remaining friends with both Ross and Diana after their divorce, although I saw Diana more frequently because she lives locally and she made a greater effort to stay in close touch. And yet, despite sometimes a year between contacts, Ross was one of those rare people I felt I could talk to about anything -- deep personal difficulties, movies, faith. We rebuked each other from time to time, called each other up and said, "Hey! I've got a problem with you--" and then proceeded to talk it through.

His passing is tragic for us -- for Maria, his beloved wife, for fandom because there will be a void not easily filled, for his friends because we won't enjoy his company, his laugh, his opinions, his humor. But for Ross it is the passing from life into Life and his memorial service in Evanston, November 22, was appropriately evangelical. Ross, knowing he would die sooner rather than later, made his wishes very clear to his minister and the gospel of Jesus Christ was preached -- briefly, with good humor and love -- at the service.

The kilted piper made us all weep with the sound of placid lochs and lonely, heather-covered hills and then finished with a rousing "Scotland the Brave." We should have had ribs from Robinson's and custard from Cobbs but, short of that, it was good to share memories over a soup and sandwich lunch. So I celebrate this life, this Ross Pavlac, friend, fan, smof, computer wizard, gourmet, writer, Christian. And in Ross's memory, I quote Psalm 95: "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as you did at Meribah..."

I look forward to the next time I'll see Ross -- I hope you do, too.

Ted Pauls

Appreciation by Charlie Ellis

On Wednesday, November 11, 1997, after a 3-week-long coma, long-time Baltimore fan Ted Pauls died.

Ted complained of a headache October 12 and missed a monthly fan brunch, The Feeding Frenzy, that he co-founded and rarely missed. He was found unconscious by his wife Karen upon her return from work the following Tuesday. He had suffered a neural aneurism. He was in a coma until about a week later. He began making small improvements, responding to requests to move his hands and the like, but was unable to speak or move much. He suffered a reinfarction (the blood vessel leaked again) on October 22. He succumbed two weeks later.

A fannish wake was held at the home of Mike and Nina Kurman, whose graciously volunteered home was large enough to hold a crowd of Ted's friends from Baltimore fandom. Among others in attendance were Jack and Eva Chalker, Steve and Elaine Stiles, Pat and Miriam Kelly, Ray and Susie Ridenour, Kim Weston, and Charlie and Natalie Ellis. Rick Dixon provided a restrained and tasteful background mix of Ted's favorite 60s rock with his massive space DJ rig. Ted was in attendance as well, Karen had brought his ashes in a box. They were kept under his trademark leather hat, that is, when the small children in attendance did not take turns wearing "Mr. Ted's hat."

Condolences can be sent to his wife Karen Pauls, 6603 Collinsdale Rd., Baltimore, MD 21234-6549

Ted was my mentor in fandom, being himself an old hand back in 1969 when I straggled in. At the time, he was a prolific fan hack with hundreds of *Kipples* and other Paulsian journals on his sagging shelf. For the other prominent zines of the day, including a mimeographed *Locus*, as I recall, Ted contributed reams of SF book reviews and was crossing swords with Isaac Asimov in the critic/writer feud department.

Ted and Jack Chalker started jaunting up and down the East Coast attending regular monthly meetings of the Lunar-

ians in New York, PSFS in Philly, their own incarnation of BSFS complete with all-night RISK tournaments and poker games ending with the viewing and sing-along of the then-new Sunday morning *George of the Jungle*, and WSFA in DC every other Friday. Ted held offices and committee positions on all the conventions sponsored by these groups. Ted documented his journeys through the burgeoning fannish explosion of the time in his *Wokl*, a widely-read personal/SF zine of the day. Ted was truly a SMOF and I am proud to display the *Baltimore Mafia* card he once gave me.

When Jack Chalker became too busy to run BaltiCon, Ted took it over and ran it almost single-handedly (with Karen, of course) for three years. As the company they founded, TK Graphics, took on a life of its own, Ted formally and graciously turned the BaltiCon over to the fledgling BSFS, Inc. in 1975, which runs it to this day. This began Ted's career as a dealer, although he stayed active on convention committees well into the 80s.

I doubt that Baltimore Worldcons, Constellation and now Bucconeer, would have happened without Ted's pioneering efforts for BaltiCon and his avid support and energetic support and involvement for the Baltimore-in-80 bid. Baltimore fandom today owes a lot to Ted's reservoir of fannish goodwill. A group of us are conspiring to have an hour or so of readings from his fanzine writings at Bucconeer.

Ted Pauls truly loved fandom and practiced FIAWOL to the benefit of us all.

Lester Simons

by Lynn Maudlin

[[reprinted from Mythprint]]

I never knew Lester Simons' age. I knew him as a fellow devotee of J.R.R. Tolkien. We met at Mythcon XV in Berkeley; I have photographs of him in elvish garb at the banquet. Our paths crossed more often when I joined the 1992 Tolkien Centenary Conference committee and for four years made trips to England to coincide with committee meetings and inmoos. Lester was always delighted to see me and it was mutual; he made me

feel very special -- it was one of his gifts.

Professionally, Lester was a computer wizard and he was the webmaster of the Tolkien Society webpage. But within fandom, Lester also enjoyed costuming, he loved well-crafted items. He would show me a new acquisition: a silver chalice for wine at the AGM; a finely tooled belt; a handmade leather case for his laptop computer. Lester was a remarkable cook and I regret I was never able to attend any of his famous feasts -- but I have seen the menus. Let me simply say the Banquet at the Tolkien Centenary Conference pales in comparison.

We'd share a meal together, at Oxonmoot or the AGM or the occasional Worldcon. We planned to visit the renovated Globe Theatre together before Oxonmoot this year; sadly I didn't get to Oxford and, despite his e-mailed reports of his improved health, neither did Lester. I came home from a visit up to the Bay Area and got the word from England -- Lester was dead. It was like a punch in the stomach -- I would never see this man again? This dear, funny, brilliant, exacting soul had left the planet?

In the course of sharing grief with mutual friends, I've learned how central to the Tolkien Society and the various linkages Lester Simons was. He introduced so many people; he drew so many people in and encouraged them and made them welcome. His like is precious and rare and he will be greatly missed by all the Tolkien Society and friends thereof. Godspeed, Lester -- you are now one of the absent friends we toast.

He never quite made 47.

Ed Cox

Ed Cox won't be doodling here anymore. The long-time LASFS member succumbed December 9 after a 3-year fight against pancreatic cancer. Len Moffatt rose at LASFS a few days later and began his tribute to Cox with the ironic comment, "It keeps happening -- my younger friends keep dying."

Len and Ed met through the N3F. Ed came out from Maine in the 1950s and stayed for awhile at Len's place. Len admired him as a quiet, soft-spoken guy

who drank a lot of beer. Ed was in the Korean War. He took turns with Len editing the *Shangri L'Affaires* lettercolumn.

No religious service was held; a memorial gathering for fans and Ed's co-workers was held January 17.

Samuel L. "Camuelyon" Nickelberry, Jr.

Cam Nickelberry made many St. Louis area fans happy by moving back there from New Orleans to accept a new job. But their joy turned to mourning when Cam, 39, suffered a heart attack on October 21 and died nine days later.

In *The Insider* #207, Michelle Zellich tells about the scene at Cam's bedside in the hospital:

"His sisters, Pat, Terry, Jackie, and Candy, must have been overwhelmed by the outpouring of love from the fannish community. I'm sure friends of the family coming to the visitation must have thought they were in the wrong place at first. People just kept coming and coming. Rich and I had to leave after 3 or 4 hours and people were still coming in to express their grief and share their love for Cam with his sisters. When we attended his funeral, it was practically standing room only. When the minister called for pallbearers, 15-20 went up; he said that it was a great tribute to Cam for so many to volunteer."

Local fandom is raising money to help defray any costs associated with Cam's untimely death, and the family has asked them to buy his headstone.

G. Harry Stine

G. Harry Stine, died at his computer keyboard in his home in Phoenix on November 2. Jerry Pournelle related that Stine was found by his wife when she came back from buying groceries. Jerry approved that the last entry on the monitor was a command saving Stine's work.

Stine authored nonfiction like *The Third Industrial Revolution*, and as "Lee Correy" wrote science fiction. His best known novel was *Shuttle Down*, which made NASA rethink its procedures.

Pournelle, Stine and others co-founded the Civilian Space Advisory Council. The group made its first recommendations to the incoming Reagan Administration.

Chuck Kuhlman's online obituary adds that Stine is generally acknowledged to be the father of model rocketry, having authored the definitive texts, and he had considerable influence on NFPA regulations as well as with the model and engine makers themselves.

In lieu of flowers, donations were requested for the G. Harry Stine Space Pioneers Memorial Fund, c/o Bill Stine, 6012 E. Hidden Valley Dr., Cave Creek, AZ 85331.

In Passing

Billie Madle, wife of Robert Madle (an early TAFF winner and a founding member of PSFS), passed away in December. Condolences should be sent to: Bob Madle, 4406 Bestor Dr., Rockville, MD 20853.

Owen Barfield died December 14 in Forest Row, East Sussex. His eldest son and daughter-in-law were at his side, as was Walter Hooper (executor of C.S. Lewis's literary estate.) Barfield scholar G.B. Tennyson reported, "He suffered only a brief illness and the end was peaceful. I hope you will join me in praying for the repose of his soul."

Clipping Service

John Hertz attended the services conducted by Bartholomew I, Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, on his historic visit to Los Angeles, it being the first time a Constantinopolitan Patriarch has visited the U.S. No local church being large enough, the service was held in the L.A. Convention Center. John closed his report in *Vanamonde* No. 236, "I was with Sean Smith, an Anglican, much closer to the theology of the morning than I, a Reform Jew, and thus maybe more disquieted by the conviction of error, but for us both all such was happily over-

whelmed by the historic moment and the main current buoying everyone there."

Charles Sheffield and **Nancy Kress** are engaged, and plan a January 10 wedding. According to Mike Flynn, "Evidently, they credit me with their forthcoming connubial bliss, since it was me who introduced them at a Philcon two years ago."

Acclaimed science fiction author **Arthur C. Clarke** has been named on this year's Honors List, and will be knighted.

Animal Crackers from Instant Message 617: NESFA sponsored a horse race at Suffolk Downs. Ten NESFen (8 women and 2 lawyers) went down to the track to present the trophy to the winner.

Martin Morse Wooster sends along an entire magazine (not a cheap one either) with the explanation: "I normally would not send Trek news. (I read *Cinefantastique* under an assumed name.) But when **David Gerrold** chats about what **Bruce Pelz** did during a 1966 LASFS meeting, I figure that it has to be of interest." The November *Cinefantastique* includes an article about "how a 'skinny little college kid' wrote one of the most popular Trek episodes ever." At the same time David Gerrold first visited LASFS he discovered that "The Trouble With Tribbles" was nominated for a Hugo. (He would lose to Ellison and "City on the Edge of Forever.") The magazine's account of Gerrold's backstage insights into Classic Trek is consistent with what he's been saying about it for 30 years, with one exception. David is no longer worried that Roddenberry will screw it up....

If you're interested in making a donation to the SFWA Emergency Medical Fund in memory of **Bill Rotsler** make your checks payable to "SFWA EMF" and send it to: Charles G. McGraw, SFWA Treasurer, 112 Richfield Blvd., Mattydale, NY 13211.

2011 -- The Year We Almost Made Contact

By Ed Green

Staff Sergeant Leo Ruby, US Army (Retired), crawled low through the sand and Joshua tree roots of the California desert. The heat that Palm Springs was famous for was slowly lifting. Though he had spent most of his military career with the Intelligence Corps, he'd been assigned to a lot of Infantry units. Working with grunts gave you certain basic skills you had to learn to survive. Even after ten years of retirement, he remembered how to crawl, move under cover and avoid being seen by the enemy. Behind him, in more or less single file, crept four members of the 2011 WorldCon committee. They didn't have the same training and it showed. Every few minutes Leo would hiss a warning or a threat to someone that made too much noise or exposed themselves to possibly unfriendly eyes.

Leo reached a low rise in the sand, slowly lifted one hand and waited. The rest of the fans, breathing heavily, lowered themselves onto their bellies. Leo inched his way to the top of the rise and lifted a pair of binoculars. He stayed low to the ground, exposing just the top of his balding head and the bins. The bins were light amplifying, IR-capable, gyro-stabilized, and laser safe with a built in range finder. Just the sort of toy that a fan with money would buy. Not that Leo

owned them; his military retirement pay wasn't that good. But when he had asked the owner for the loan of them they were handed over without a question. Either Leo returned them unbroken, or he returned the parts in a brown paper bag cushioned with a wad of cash.

Leo had always been considered one of the most competent members of the Los Angeles conrunning community. Not the most inventive, nor the sharpest, but certainly one of the most stubborn. He could make tough decisions and had a knack for handling problems. He had been the only fan in the LA area with the desire to run the bid for the "South Gate Again In 2010+1" after the strife ridden NASFiC in 1999. At the end of the eight-year campaign, he asked for, and got, the position of chairman of the convention.

Behind his back, almost everyone said that Leo wasn't really ready to chair a Worldcon, but no one on the bid committee could say no to him. Leo was driven to be a success in fannish eyes. It was his biggest shortcoming. Leo knew his demons, knew that he was perceived as not having the background to run a Worldcon. But he could delegate, and seemed to know whom to place in what positions. By god, he swore to himself, I am going to run this, and make it a great con.

Leo could also think on his feet. And for this Convention, it was fast becoming a requirement. One of the pros known for throwing loud and violent fits was complaining that he had been asked to leave the dealer's room because he was carrying a drink. The pro pointed out that he never spilled his drinks. In all his years of drinking, he repeated over and over, he had never spilled one. Leo told him that he could believe that he would never spill a drop, since drinking seemed to be so very important to him, and moved on to the next crisis. One of the Hugo nominees for best fan writer was being stalked by someone he had insulted over the 'Net. Wistfully, Leo almost wished that everyone he'd insulted over the 'Net was at the convention. It would have boosted the con's attendance figures by another grand. Leo assigned one of the Rovers, who'd been an MP in the Marine Corps years ago to follow him around and watch out for trouble.

And then a flying saucer flared out of the inky night sky during the Masquerade and landed near to the convention hotel.

Leo was leaning against the back wall of the main ballroom when his pager went off. In a series of cell phone calls and buzzing pagers, Leo learned that the first alien ship to contact the Earth had



decided on this night, and this location, to say hello. Leo was livid.

"Damn it! That thing has just ended the convention!"

A meeting of select Committee members had hastily formed in the hallway. Several of the security folks formed a bubble just out of earshot around the meeting. The fans that passed by just figured the snobs of LA fandom were at it again.

All of them had seen Leo switch to military Sergeant mode. Any pretense of a democratic discussion vanished. But some of them tried.

"No, Leo. It's not the end of the con. What makes you say that?"

"If I hadn't called this meeting, where would you be right now?"

The tall fan with the curly hair and bushy beard looked down at his feet. Next to him, his Canadian wife looked up at the ceiling. "Well, maybe, if I found the time, when I could, I might, just, ah, go out and visit the saucer."

Leo looked at the other fans around him. "Who else agrees with him?" After a brief moment, everyone raised their hands. Leo shook his head and sighed. "And there's about five thousand fans running around this place who will have the same idea. I don't blame them. I want to get out there too! That's the problem. When the word about this gets out, nukes won't be able to hold them back."

The computer guru who also ran the daily newzine started to shout and wave his arms. The fake rabbit ears he always wore at fannish events bobbed up and down every time he ended a sentence. "For God's sake, gang. This is first contact! The initial contact! No one has done this before! This is history, this is something that will change our world forever!"

All half dozen Committee members started shouting at once.

"We can't screw this up! Think of the dangers!" said one.

Another asked, "Where are the cops? The Army? INS?"

A third fan answered. "We're on the outskirts of town. Hell, it took the shuttle bus almost an hour to get here. One reason we picked this site was so we had a place we could overrun if we wanted to.

Even if the cops know about the saucer, it's gonna take them a couple of hours to get a car out here, much less find the thing."

"But we can't be the only fans who know about this."

The convention Guest Liaison piped in "I saw it. I only told the shift boss in Con Ops. I was afraid that we'd get a panic if everyone found out about it. I know the hotel hasn't a clue. Their security chief would be shutting us down if they did. They'd probably run an earthquake drill or something as cover. But, now that I hear all of you, I think a rush out to the landing site is a bigger danger."

The Con Ops head nodded. "Our computer geeks haven't heard or seen anything go out over phone or modem line." After a few sharp looks at him, he shrugged. "Look, we know some of them are hackers. I can't stop them from doing that stuff. Sure, it's illegal, but..."

Leo shook his head violently. "I am not going to be the first chair of a Worldcon to let something shut down the entire convention. That is just not going to happen!"

"So, you have a plan to prevent that? One that won't require a division of soldiers to hog-tie all of the members? Although I suspect they'll be here in about six hours." The treasurer, one of the bigger fans in the LA area, frowned as he said this.

Leo's eyes lit up. "Why, yes, I do!"

The Convention Vice-Chair, a woman he had married years ago, grabbed him by the shoulder and pulled him around. "What are you planning? I want to know. Now!"

"Honey, trust me, it'll work out."

"No, no, no! I trust you, but this isn't something every wife has to deal with. I don't want you running off and getting hurt! I've stuck by you over these last ten years and had to deal with all your crap. You are not going to do something noble or stupid or dangerous and expect me to just wait around!"

He looked into her eyes, and smiled. He put his arms around her and pulled her close, squeezing her tightly to him. "Love, since I can't keep the convention from going to them, I'm going to invite

them to the convention!"

The committee almost revolted on the spot.

"Who said you get to make first contact?" The woman who asked was working at the Jet Propulsion Lab in Pasadena as a systems designer.

"I'm the flipping chair of the con. I'm the representative of everyone on the committee!"

The newzine editor almost screamed. "But, that doesn't make you the person who should be the first one to say hello!"

Leo was starting to lose his temper. He saw the situation starting to get away from him. "Look, when you all signed on, I said right from the start I was going to be in charge and I was going to be a hardass about it. You all agreed."

"But this isn't something anyone ever dreamed about." The GoH Liaison was speaking low, trying to calm everyone down.

"We're wasting time!"

"Look, you can't go alone." It was Tina, his wife who spoke. "You have to take some others along."

Leo threw his arms up in disgust and sat down on a chair in the hallway. He looked at all of them and said, "I leave in ten minutes. Four of you can go. Figure it out."

The ensuing fight reminded Leo of what happened when he used to throw hand grenades on practice ranges, and the time he threw one for real in Korea. One fan that could speak six languages was selected right away. Another fan with a degree in math got the next slot. As the bickering and jockeying for positions went on, the head of Con Ops looked over to Leo.

"I don't buy the reason you're using. Just because you're chairman, you get to go?"

Leo smiled. "Well, if that isn't a good reason, I have a much better one."

"And that would be?"

"I'm a trained military intelligence analyst. What if they aren't here for a friendly visit? If it gets violent out there, who else here has dealt with that?"

Tina piped in, "You often get attacked by aliens?"

"Well, three fans dressed like Kling-

ons got pretty aggressive last night at that party."

More bickering and positioning. Finally an artist and the newzine editor were selected.

Leo took off his jacket and began to strip off his tie. He started snapping out orders to all around. "Grab some cameras, something we can upload quickly to the Net. We need to keep a record of what's going on. But I don't want any thing transmitted, just recorded. And grab three walkie talkies from Con Ops. Make sure they have a secure channel." He tapped one fan on the shoulder as he said that, and watched as the fellow ran to obey.

Despite the protests of all involved, Leo lead his band out of the hotel and across the cooling desert to the landing site. The walk took a little over an hour. In the back of his mind, Leo remembered the time when he could have knocked out the distance in less than twenty minutes. But he was out of shape. And there were fans along. It was like herding cats, and he'd forgotten to bring the tuna fish. With muted curses and the threat of physical violence, Leo got everyone to where the aliens landed.

Telling the rest he was going to do a recon of the area before they got any closer and that they should stay put and shut up, he moved up the rise. He spent a few moments watching the visitors and slid back down to the other four.

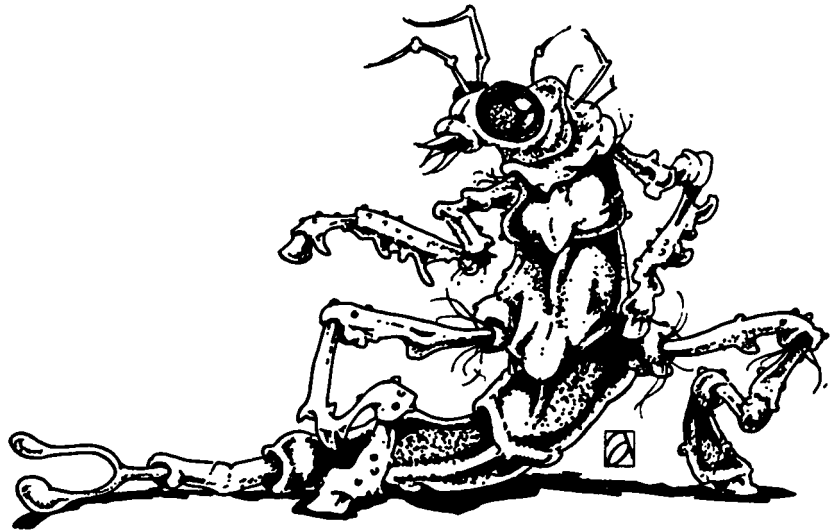
They all looked at him for a moment. He hung his head. "Oh, man, we've got a problem already."

All four shot questions at him. Leo chopped a hand in the air when their voices got too loud.

"They look like bugs!" He hissed.

"Oh, no!" A tall fan, named Mike, grabbed the glasses and climbed up. He looked for a second and came back down. He coughed. He looked at Leo with his eyes wide open.

The remaining fans stared at each other for a moment and as one mass moved up the sand. Leo thought in the back of his mind that the aliens must be bugs. With all the noise being made, he was pretty sure they didn't have ears. They couldn't have and not have heard the racket. The fans came back and sat



down next to Leo and Mike. After a moment, they all started to giggle. They bit their tongues and rolled on the ground.

Leo wiped a small tear out of the corner of his eye and whispered softly. "Okay, so we all agree. It appears these beings evolved from a bug." A nodding of heads showed agreement. "So I'm about ready to invite a bunch of aliens to a convention, where their first contact will be with fans that will end up dubbing the race the Yngivs."

Mike chuckled and said, "Oh, yeah. You can make money on that bet!"

"They'll slag us and sell the survivors into slavery." Leo sighed deeply and stood up.

The newzine editor, Richard, swiveled his head towards Leo. The rabbit ears waved slightly in the night air. "Wait, you mean you're going really going to invite them to the convention?"

"Yeah, I mean to do that. Okay, I'm going over the top."

"How very fannish of you, Leo," drawled Mike.

"Oh, shut up. Look," he continued, "if anything happens out..." he cleared his throat. "Something bad, something violent or just something weird, get out. Don't wait around, don't play hero. Just run. And if anyone from the con shows up, don't let them get past all of you."

They all promised, and Mike came up with another question.

"How do you know they can speak

English?"

"I don't, but what else can we do? If we don't try this now, those poor things out there" he thumbed his hand at the aliens over the rise "will have a million fans descending on them." The newzine editor started to say something and Leo cut him off by saying "Okay, 5,367 fans. We owe it to the aliens to prevent that."

Brushing himself off, Leo started up over the rise. Over his shoulder he said, "Get those cameras up and rolling."

With faint calls of good luck, and one bad imitation of Frank Oz saying "May the force be with you!", Leo started walking. As he moved out, three video cameras poked their lenses over the dirt, recording every step and sound. Leo turned on his walkie talkie, tested it and continued on.

So, his internal voice began, *they all fell for it. They actually think this is just fannish ego. That's cool. This is the only way I can think of to find out if these things are friendly or hostile. If they welcome me with open arms, fine. But if they fry me, it'll give the folks back there a little warning.* With a sigh, he muttered, "Sorry, Tina." And trudged on.

The ship was indeed a large saucer, pale pearl and blue in color. All around the base, and near the entry ramp, dozens of huge bugs wandered around, moving boxes and bundles. Leo felt coldness growing inside of him. He marched on, but fought to control his face, his heart.

He realized he was making first contact! He broke out in a sweat. He wasn't the right person to do this, he didn't have the skills. He was in over his head. Just turn around and run back. That's what he should do.

Then one of the bugs spotted him. Its eyestalks moved towards Leo and then locked on. It raised on leg/arm and started to squawk in a high pitched voice. Leo couldn't understand word one. But he couldn't see anything that looked like a weapon, so he continued.

He kept walking and found himself in front of the ship. Four of the insects, each almost eight feet tall, stood around him. They had black shiny coverings. Leo couldn't tell if it was body armor or an exoskeleton. He saw an obvious bubble over their heads, and guessed they weren't oxygen breathers.

He started to speak and found that his voice cracked. He cleared his throat and began a second time.

"Welcome! We call this planet Earth. I am a human being, one of the members of the sapient species here. I come from over there," he pointed at the cluster of buildings behind him, where the lights could be seen on the desert horizon.

He paused, waiting for a response. He heard nothing. Maybe came the thought, they're collecting a sample of my speech for a translator. Leo froze for a moment. He ran through all the possible things he could say or do. Nothing seemed right.

"On behalf of the Planet Earth, and the 65th World Science Fiction Convention, I wish to invite you to our convention!"

All four of the aliens stared for a long time at him. Then, just when Leo was convinced that they would never answer him, a tinny noise buzzed in his ear. After a long minute, he heard a high, whiny voice.

"This... convention... is... it... a... sample of... the high order life form... err... no... hive order life form?"

Shaking his head, mostly to himself, Leo answered. "No, not the hive order. We are not a hive species. But we are more tolerant than many other members of the dominant species here." *That's the party line, Leo thought and I'm sticking*

to it!

He heard more buzzing and after a moment more words formed.

"We will join you... and meet these... members of the dominant life form. Will they be... friendly?"

"Oh yeah. Ghod help us."

"Ghod?"

"Well, there's a panel on that tomorrow at noon. I'll get you front row seats."

Leo turned on his heel and walked back towards the rise. He looked calm, but in his mind, he thought *Oh they said yes. Now what?* Turning around briefly, Leo saw four of the aliens move forward, following him.

He pulled the radio out of his back pocket and keyed the switch on the side.

"Con Ops, this is Chair 6."

"Go ahead, 6."

"Tell reg we need four guest badges made up ASAP. I'll be picking them up in about an hour."

"Wait one." The radio clicked off. After a moment, the voice came back on. "What names?"

"Names? Just pick four!" Leo kept walking, not turning back once. He was too afraid at this point.

"6, this is Ops. Reg wants to know if anyone is going to be offended by the name Shemp?"

"NO! I mean yes! Try four other names!"

"Roger, Wilco, Over and Out."

Leo stared at the radio for a second and spoke again. "Ops, do you know what 'Roger, Wilco, Over and Out' really means?"

"Yeah. I'll tell you when you get back. Out." Leo sighed.

Walking to the rise, Leo stood at the top, and waited. The four aliens topped the rise and stood with him. All five of them looked down at the waiting members of the convention. Leo looked around at the aliens and smiled. "What's the matter, gang? You never saw a neofan?"

Just over an hour later, the party walked up to the delivery entrance of the hotel. Tina stood on the loading dock, with four reg packets in her hand. When Leo came into sight, a great smile crossed her face. When the visitors walked into the parking lot lights, her faced changed

to one of shock and horror. *Oh no... He thought I forgot, she hates bugs!*

With a visible effort, she took control of herself and walked down to meet them. She hugged Leo briefly and turned to the bugs. "Hi, welcome to the convention! I'm glad to see you all. Here are your badges." She looked at the name badges. "Let's see, if I have this right, we have Groucho, and Chico..."

"I'll kill Reg."

"Well, we couldn't name them all Harpo. Although, maybe we should have."

As they spoke, the aliens stood, watching. When Tina reached for the first one, it took a small step back. Tina stopped. With a whirring noise, the four turned to each other and waved antennas at each other. One finally shuffled over to Tina, and leaned over, allowing her to place the badge on him. The other committee members slowly moved away. Leo had spoken with them as they returned, and given them all missions. The four con runners slowly vanished into the darkness.

Leo moved up the steps and waved for the bugs to come along. All of them moved in line. The first one pulled and dragged itself up the stairs. Each step was too small for its legs to move up, but it tried.

And failed. With a squawk and a wave of its limbs, it fell off the steps and landed face plate first onto the ground. With a loud metallic ping, the clear material shattered. It began to thrash around on the ground.

Everyone, earthling and insect, stood in a circle. Leo was the first to react, moving quickly between his wife and the aliens. Shoving her away, and whispering for her to leave, he bent over and looked at the creature. His immediate thought was first aid, but as he grabbed it to turn over, he felt it shiver and kick its legs. Then it froze.

Great, came the morbid thought to his mind, two firsts in one night. First contact, and first person to hold a dying alien. He looked as the other three approached him. And the first to be mugged...

They gathered around him for a moment, and Leo heard the voice again.



"Are we... going?"

"I'm sorry about your friend. We didn't mean for him to fall!" Leo was terrified. He could see them running through the halls of the Con, death ray guns blazing.

The three remaining stood still. After a moment, their voice spoke "Can we go now?"

Tina leaned over and shook her husband's shoulder. "Honey, I don't think they care." Leo looked up at her. She shook her head, puzzled. "Insects. Hive instinct, maybe?"

Leo nodded, reached down and took the badge off the dead bug. As he handed it back, he saw that it read "Zeppo". "It's not like he was that popular," he muttered.

Waving his hand, he moved the party over to the ramp. He leaned over to Tina and told her to get con ops down right away to move the body off the loading dock. Possibly into one of the committee suites. Tina nodded and left.

He led his small party into the hotel.

The masquerade had broken up, although the fans hadn't gotten out of costume. As always, Leo was reminded of that old rule that Spandex wasn't a right, but a privilege. The visitors were quickly surrounded by the hordes of fans running through the hallway. Surrounded, and to his total horror, carried away in the tide of costumed fans!

As he struggled against the flow of fandom, Leo's mind flashed to the old 50s film *The War Of The Worlds*, and the scene near the end where the two leads are fighting to reach each other as the city of Los Angeles burns around

them. Although Leo couldn't remember Ann Robinson having brown antenna. The visitors didn't seem concerned, and willingly went with the crowd.

Within moments, Leo had lost sight of them. He fought his way back against the tide and ran to Ops.

Inside, the head of Con Ops stood next to the table covered with radio equipment.

Next to him stood the hotel liaison, Peter O'Rielly. "Leo," started Pete. He was wearing his traditional short pants, and his balding head glistened with the sweat he always got when he was upset. He was swaying back and forth as he spoke.

Leo waved a hand at him, "Not now!"

"Leo, the hotel's mad. They're gonna hit us with another charge. It's for the..."

Spinning on his heel, Leo stared at O'Rielly and said very slowly and very carefully, "Pay them what they want. We have the money. I'm too busy with something else."

"More important? Than what? It's not just the money, they want to know what to do with the thing. Is it a center piece, or what? For that matter, I'd like to know what it is, too!"

Fighting to control his anger, Leo looked Pete in the eyes. "I don't care. This is not an important problem. Solve it. Do whatever you think is right and fix it. Now!" Pete looked at him for a moment and stomped off. In his mind, Leo knew he'd have another fannish ego to smooth over later. He was more concerned with there being a later.

Placing a hand on the shoulder of the radio operator, Leo grabbed the microphone from him and spoke into the mouth piece.

"This is Con Ops to all rovers. If anyone sees any fans dressed in large, black colored insect costumes, they need to report it directly to the Con Chair. Report where you see them as soon as you see them. The Chair will have a radio, so call him direct."

Leo stood straight up and rubbed his eyes. He felt a hand touch his arm. He looked down and saw a can of Diet Coke

being held out to him. With the first real smile of the evening, he took it and drank it down. Sighing, he sat next to the radio table and waited.

And waited and waited. He paced and cursed. "How the bloody hell could we lose three alie...." Tina shot him a look. So far, they had managed to keep the actual identities of the visitors limited to about a half dozen fans. Leo didn't believe that could last. After almost three hours, Tina considered calling in a doctor to give her husband a Valium.

Finally the radio hissed. "Con Ops, this is Alex. I got one."

Leo leapt on the mike and keyed it. "Location?"

"Suite 126, by Con Suite."

"Roger, on my way, don't lose sight of it!" Dropping the handset, Leo dashed out at top speed. As he ran, he remembered the times he had run in the military and how much he hated it. Now, he hoped the years of retirement hadn't slowed him down too much. As he jogged down the hall, he became aware of a half dozen others running behind him. Most were Rovers from Ops, but the head of the newzine was there, too.

The gaggle skidded to a stop in front of Suite 126, and a tall thin Asian fan stood next to the door. Alex had been working operations for years, and had met Leo while he was in the Air Force. The two worked well together, and Leo was relieved to see him standing at the door.

Alex jerked a thumb to indicate the alien was still in the room. During a brief discussion while he caught his breath and several members of his team collapsed on the floor, Leo found out that the creature had been bounced by the crowd into that room almost two hours ago. Alex hadn't seen it since, although there had been a steady stream of fans in and out of the room. Wiping his forehead, Leo looked at the door with a question in his eyes. Alex nodded and said, "It's the Filker's Room."

Leo's eyes got wide all around, and he went to the door. Pulling it open he stepped inside.

There were an even dozen filkers in the room, singing in various keys some song lampooning a convention of years ago. When Leo stepped in, every voice

quieted, and all the instruments save one went silent. A giant insect was strumming the one continuing to play.

As far as he could see, someone had used duct tape to attach the guitar to the arms/legs of the alien. It looked as if it was wrestling with the instrument; with the winner as yet undecided. Under the clear helmet, its head turned slightly to Leo and its antenna stood up. Pulling itself out of the sofa it was sitting on, it shambled over to Leo.

"Ah, you are the one who brought us here. The one these life forms call 'That-Asshole-Ruby'. How are you That-Asshole-Ruby?"

Eight of the twelve filkers in the room made a dash for the door upon hearing the alien speak to the convention chairman. One did a quick tuck and roll out the window. Looking around, Leo breathed deeply and responded. "I'm doing well, thanks. And how are you doing?"

"I am... am... engaging myself? No... I am enjoying myself. Yes, that's it!" It flayed at the strings of the guitar, and produced a series of discordant notes. It hopped a bit, and shook itself. "This is filking! This is why I am enjoying myself!"

Leo caught the eye of the lead Filker and motioned for her to come over. Without losing his smile, he asked "Has he memorized anything yet?"

"No. We're trying though. He's close to picking up one tune. No offense, Leo, but only a pig would pick up on that one."

"Or maybe a cockroach." Leo responded.

"You know who it is under that costume?"

"Yeah... but, I'm sworn to secrecy. He doesn't want to ruin the effect."

The alien was trying again to break into song. He spun about and with the neck of the guitar, knocked over a lamp. He jumped and banged it, and all around heard him start to sing. Well, the assumption was it was singing, but there wasn't a lot of evidence.

After a moment, Leo identified

one of the lines.

"Do ya know what pistons are?"

Leo ran out of the room. The alien was learning *The Ballad Of Eskimo Nell!* He stopped next to Alex and told him to stick with the Visitor, and try not to get in its way. Waving his friends over, Leo started to ask suggestions about what they were going to do with the new convention members when the radio called out his name. The Rover on the other end related that the second Visitor was currently in the bar.

With another curse, Leo and crew sprinted off towards the hotel lobby.

As they approached the bar, Leo saw the old Pro Writer, Mark Garner, storming out of the bar. Mark was one of the milder fellows Leo knew, and he never stormed. When Garner saw the Convention Chairman he stormed over to him. Using a very loud voice, and a lot of waving of arms, Garner proceeded to tell him about this mucking idiot fan in the bar who was sucking up every drink in sight, and getting into debates with the Pros. As bad as that was, the fan (still dressed up like some Roach Motel target) was pointing out how wrong some of the writers were about their work.

"Leo, I'm known for being good with writing about alien cultures. I'm probably the best. That jerk spent the last half hour telling me how an Insect Hive would really work. What does he know about that?" Garner spat the last out. "Just 'cau-

se he's dressed in a funny costume?"

Making apologetic noises, and promising to fix everything, Leo continued on to the bar.

And was almost run over by another pro, Wade Caisson.

"That son of a bitch!" He bellowed. Wade never talked, he just bellowed. "Where does he get off telling me how a space-based defense system should work? Some dweeb in a stupid costume? Idiot!" Caisson passed by and Leo finally found the Rover. As Leo was getting updated, a third Pro, Harold Partridge came out, shaking his head and smiling. The tall, bearded author was an old friend of his. Leo asked him what was wrong.

"Wrong? Well, nothing, but it's getting rough in there. That fan in the bug suit? That's one smart guy."

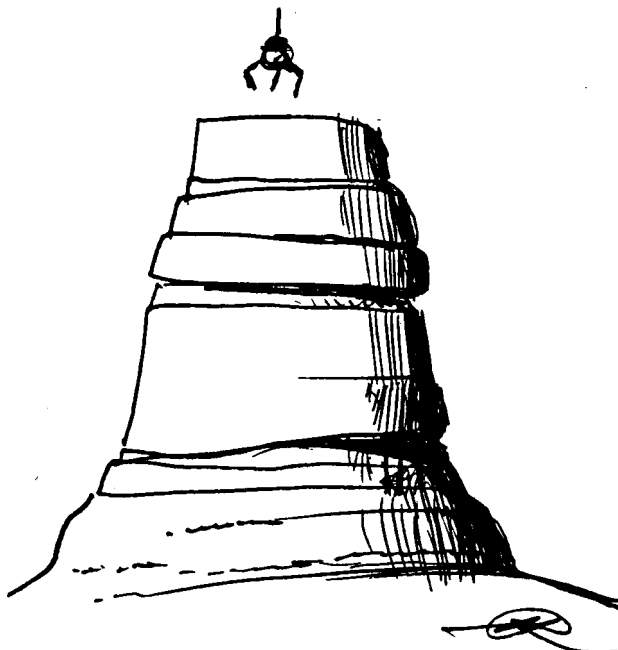
"Oh?"

"First, he ripped Garner to pieces about alien cultures. Mark refused to admit it, but you just knew that Mark saw he was right. And Caisson? That guy had the whole SDI program's head handed to him on a platter. Although the kid is dressed funny, he knew the math. He proved, on a freakin' cocktail napkin, that the numbers didn't work. Wade almost blew a heart valve!"

Before he could answer, there was a series of shouts and curses from inside the bar. The Rover looked inside, turned around and yelled at Leo.

"Cordwainer was playing pool when that fan in the bug costume tried to butt in. It's getting ugly!" Just as he finished, a small and pale man came flying out of the bar, crashing into a set of chairs set in the lobby. He rolled and lay on the ground, moaning. Leo sent the rover over to check on him and continued into the bar.

It was easy to spot the alien. He was standing at the bar, surrounded by a dozen pros, all demanding to buy him a drink. As Leo made his way through the small clump of writers, he gathered from shouted comments that Cordwainer had actually started the fight, and the "fan" was simply defending himself. Leo also





heard all of them begging to talk to the mystery fan, who seemed to have some incredible grasp of hard science. Fighting his way forward, Leo finally got to the side of the visitor and tugged on one of its limbs. It glanced around and said "Oh, hello That-Asshole-Ruby. Would you like a drink?" Leo stopped and stared at the insect. Whispering into one of its antenna, he asked "What, you guys are telepathic?"

"Telepathic? No, why do you ask that?"

"Well, your friend called me by that name earlier, and I just thought that..."

"No, everyone here is calling you that. I've heard a lot of these... pros? Is that the word?" Leo nodded. "I've heard a lot of them call you by that name."

"Oh." Leo said quietly. He was about to take the alien by the leg/arm when three of the pros grabbed it and loudly invited it to the Golden Gate Publications suite upstairs. The Visitor paused long enough to suck down (literally) another drink, and then asked if other such refreshments would be there. Like a row of toy dogs in the back of a 57 Caddy, all the pros nodded. The alien shambled off

with them, and Leo, running next to it, shouted for it to hang out there as long as it wanted to, he'd be by later to check on it.

Outside the bar, Leo slapped the Rover on the shoulder and told him to stay close, but not to interfere. The guy followed the pack of circling pros off into the elevator.

"Are you nuts?" asked the head of Con Ops. "Letting that thing loose among the Pros?"

Leo shook his head. "Nope. They'll keep that thing in the Golden Gate Publications suite until Ron gives them an all clear. That's one less beastie we have to watch over."

"Don't you think one of them might tumble to the fact it's not really a fan?"

Leo smiled a bit. "As long as it keeps talking and giving them story ideas, they won't bother looking any closer at it. I think we're safe, for the moment. Now, we just have to find that last one. The way they're acting, I don't think they're a threat. I just want to protect them!"

Off into the halls of the convention, Leo led his small clan. All through the night and into the morning they searched, but they couldn't locate the final Visitor.

As the hotel was opening the coffee shop for breakfast, a disgusted and exhausted Leo told everyone else to head to bed. He was going for a quick cup of coffee and get some sleep. He passed the Fan Lounge, and heard a thumping from inside. He opened the door and stuck his head in. The final Visitor was standing over one of the tables. The card table was covered with fanzines and old paperbacks. It had knocked over a stack of them, and was bending over to pick them up. As Leo watched, it picked one zine up and began to read it. It whipped one of its legs/arms through the pages quickly. With a brief pause, it carefully placed the zine back on the table and picked up another one. It read that one the same way too.

Leo stood very still and watched it. He didn't keep track of the time. The alien finally finished reading all of the fanzines in the room. Then, it noticed Leo. Leo asked, "Hi. Enjoying the Con?"

"I am not sure. But I understand

much more now."

"Really? That's amazing. I've been in fandom almost 40 years and I still don't understand much of it."

"That's because you're an Evil Con-Runner and a Fugghead."

Leo chuckled a bit. "You read the LosCon report from a few years back, huh?"

"Yes, it makes it easier to proceed with our plan."

"Plan?" Leo felt a cold shifting in his stomach. It was an old sensation, one he got when he was afraid.

"We intend on slugging your planet and selling the survivors into slavery!"

Leo stood there, with his mouth open. He was trying to grab on to one thought in his churning mind. He hadn't quite decided on whether to run away or try to kill it when he heard the Visitor make an odd noise.

It walked up to him and laid a limb on his shoulder. "Or maybe we could introduce ourselves to the rest of the world as the Yngivs." Leo coughed and started to stutter.

It made the same odd noise again. He continued, "You think we didn't have ears? We heard you all making noises." Leo choked again. He looked up at the creature. "You bastard. You not only heard, you understood it. You're making fun of me."

"Of course. I'm making a joke."

Wonderful, came the thought to Leo, *first contact and the first human to have his chops busted by an ET.*

"We will leave soon. Please let us go on our own. We know which way we need to go. We all thank you for everything you've done for us so far."

"Okay, is this the part of the story where you all become fans and promise to come back to the next Worldcon?"

"No. It's the part of the story where we all leave and report to our Queen what you people are like. You're all a little mad. Maybe more than a little. But, you're all also very good. We probably won't be back. Not soon. But when we do, we'll look for fans."

"Oh, come on! I mean, that's very nice and very cute, but..."

"But it's very true. Your writing and

your manners here show that you are all indeed open minded. And you have that... wait a moment." It pulled a fanzine off the stack and referred to it quickly. "Yes, that Sense Of Wonder. It makes you all less afraid of the unknown. That will mean a great deal when it's time for more of us to come." Outside in the hall, they heard several fans talking about why Sherlock Holmes just had to be the great-great-great-great grandfather of a android character from a popular series of movies.

"Of course," continued the alien "we're going to have to work on our Sense of Wonder too."

It shuffled around, and collected several copies of fanzines. Leo watched it, and it shook itself a little bit. "Just for further research, you understand. I only have... professional interest."

"Of course, help yourself." Leo fought not to laugh.

After collecting several large bags of zines, it shuffled out of the fan lounge and walked down the hall. Leo thought, *I gotta remember to thank the folks for doing a great job with this room!*

Within an hour, the other rovers watching the Aliens reported that they were all leaving the hotel and walking off into the desert. The summer sun kept all but the most fit fans inside, so no one ended up following them. A little while later, several con goers reported seeing a flash of light from the desert.

Leo, Tina and the rest of the people who had contact with the Aliens ended up meeting with each other in the hallway by the Con Suite. They kept their voices low, each trying to understand what really just happened to them. All of them agreed very quickly that they wouldn't admit to anything. It would raise too many questions and they didn't have any physical proof. Everyone discounted the videos and audios. JMS was doing that level of stuff when they filmed *Babylon 6*, *The Never Ending Story*. At least, they thought they didn't, until Tina suddenly hit her forehead and said, "The body! They didn't take the body with them!"

Leo started shouting again, yelling for somebody to find the thing. Then Peter O'Rielly walked out of the Con Suite,

with a plate piled high with... something. He was shoveling forkfuls of the green goop into his mouth. As he walked by Leo, he made a circle with his thumb and finger and said through a mouthful of stuff "Great idea, Leo!"

"Gee, thanks, Pete."

"I didn't know you guys had someone make a desert shaped like a giant bug. Great idea! There must be about two hundred people in there, they are eating it up! No wonder you didn't want to tell me what it was. Great surprise, Leo!" He paused in mid-bite, "It tastes awful, but it's a great idea!"

Peter walked down the hall. Looking ill, Tina said in an awed voice, "Dear God, fans *will* eat anything!" Everyone there looked at each other for a brief moment and walked very quickly away from the Con Suite.

As Leo and Tina walked towards the main hall, Tina looked down at the ground and then up at her husband.

"You did it. You lucky bastard. You really did it. You kept the convention going. Even during an alien invasion!"

Leo laughed. "I got lucky."

Tina smiled at him. She stopped and looked at Leo with an odd expression. "I have one more question." Leo asked what it was. She explained that when the aliens left, they went out the lobby and passed her. They all said goodbye to her and were very nice, but called her a very weird name. "Do you have any idea where they came up with it?"

When he asked her what it was, she got a funny smile on her face and said, "How-does-Tina-put-up-with-that-"

"Don't say it," Leo sighed.

More Clippings

From the *Sierra Madre Mountain News*: "The Mel Brooks comedy classic, **Blazing Saddles**, will be shown in Memorial Park on Friday, September 19, at Sundown.... It is rumored that the Sierra Madre Volunteer Firefighters Assn. may offer a pork & beans dinner just before the movie begins."

Changes of Address

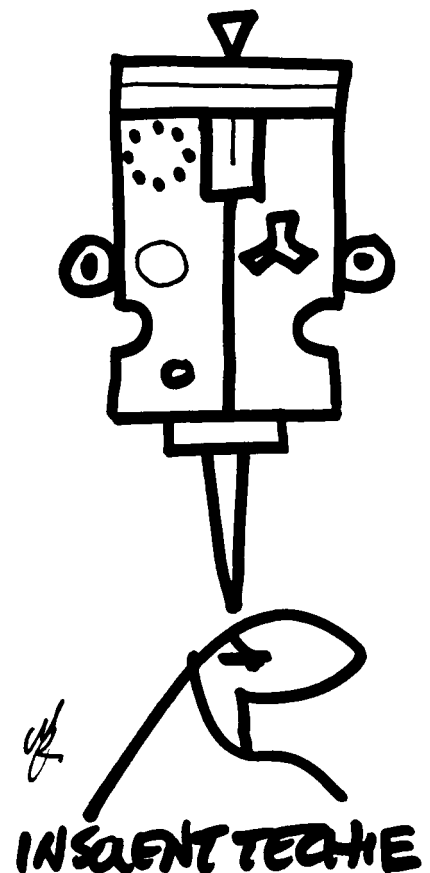
Nicki and Richard Lynch, P.O. Box 3120, Gaithersburg, MD 20885

Janice Gelb, 1070 Mercedes Avenue #2, Los Altos, CA 94022

Gary Farber, c/o Rebecca Lesses, 419 W. 119th St., Apt. 7H, New York, NY 10027

Gary emphasizes this is a temporary mailing address only: "I will not be living at this address, but only picking up mail on an approximately weekly basis."

And Janice Gelb has found, after more than two years of searching, a condo that meets her "very stringent" requirements -- walking distance to synagogue, no one above or below her, a quiet bedroom not overlooking the street, or parking, etc.) Janice saysm "It's tiny but liveable. To prevent coronaries in anyone who lives outside Manhattan, California, or the Pacific Northwest, I will not divulge the price here...."



INSANE TEAHE

The Fanivore

A TYPICAL FILE 770 DAY



Alexis A. Gilliland

The news of Bill Rotsler's death was not unexpected, and while I will miss him, it is impossible to mourn for someone who lived so fully and so well. To be working until the last day of your life, and then dying instead of getting up the next morning is not a bad way to go, either.

Certainly, cartooning with Bill in and around conventions was one of the things, maybe the thing, I enjoyed most in fandom. We sought each other out, and the act of collaborating -- sitting there drawing cartoons together -- just gave me an enormous charge of psychic energy. Clearly, Bill got a charge out of it as well. As I recall, we started in 1979, at Brighton, when we were signing autographs together after he had won his second Hugo, and

I was standing downstream from him. He drew little pictures, with his signature, of course, and I added onto them, and the fans began taking the books back to Bill to show him. Enclosed are three cartoons, two being set-ups he sent me which I completed after hearing the news, while the third is the juxtaposition of two of his set-ups, to which I added "May I?"

What else? Lee was surprised to learn that Bill was 70, she thought he was in his 50s.

richard labonte

there have been a number of moving, memorable matter-to-me deaths in your pages over the many years that i have been a faithful subscriber. but that of bill rotsler, more than any other, has reminded me why fandom, for almost three decades an essence i've been aware of, for almost two decades something which has been peripheral to my life, still matters to me: it is filled with women and men who spark pleasure and incite retrospection, introspection, inspection.

here's how i met bill rotsler, back in the fall of 1966: i had started a science fiction club at carleton university in ottawa, ontario, canada, and drawn to it susan wood and rosemary ullyott and alicia austin and eventually mike glicksohn and boyd raeburn and norm clarke, and we and they created acusfoos and hugin &

munin and energumen and aspidistra and a relatively famed hugo-nominee fanzine whose name i've forgotten (help me here, mike: we produced it in the garage of my home the same weekend of the apollo landing on the moon, or maybe those were separate weekends of our fannish clan); we travelled to philcons and boskones and worldcons together; we eventually put together the second torcon, though by that time i was caught up in politics and a career as a journalist and not too involved, and most almost all the work was done by others (some of whom are involved in the next-millennium bid for toronto: you go, girls.)

well, in fact, i didn't actually meet bill, except maybe at a philcon or lunarian (lunacon? the memory dims) or westercon in 1967 or 1968, or maybe at the st. louiscon in 1969, when a bunch of us took a numbing trip from ottawa/toronto to st. louis in the back of a bumpy greyhound. in fact, though i "met" him, i really can't remember where or when.

but i "knew" bill rotsler for 30 years. in the spring of 1967, when i should have been studying for my final exams in the first year of my university career, i instead spent several weeks sitting in the back yard of my home reading and reading and reading, loving and learning from and exulting in, six or eight or 10 large boxes of 1945-1965 fanzines, maybe as many as a 1,000 of them, including long runs of FAPA and other forgotten apa's and the work of early bergeron and geis and white and carr and the coulsons and the irish guys and way more my memory has made fade (though i recall master LOCer harry warner, even then), all passed on to me by boyd raeburn, maybe directly, maybe through norm clarke.

there were a whole lot of drawings and cartoons from a whole lot of artists, some of whom are still at work. but the ones i remember most are the simple/profound comic/reflective pointed/sweet doodles (in the best possible sense) of rotsler. they made me grin then, and when i read the issue before last of

file 770, and the issue in which his death was announced, and i hope a few issues to come, they made me grin again.

i can't really offer thanks for bill rotsler the man, since i never really knew him; i can testify to the fact thst even for a gafian like me, he provided a sublime continuity to my respect for fandom and the women and men who create it, and i honor him for his work. comparisons are vapid, but here's mine anyway: he was our jules feiffer, only nicer and smarter and wiser and sharper.

reading of his death was both sad and strengthening: i'll miss his loving trenchant observations on the fannish life, and i'll remember with gratitude the smiles his wry take on a unique and special subculture brought to me.

Roy Tackett

Thanks much for sending along the last couple of issues of *File 770*. The first one caused Eleen much glee for you quoted her in it and that made her day.

The second was a bit grimmer with its news of Rotsler's death. There will not be another one like him. I remember ytears ago when he happened to be in Albuquerque at the time of Bubonicon and we made him guest of honor. Bill seemed really surprised at the money we gave him.

As for the Tackettes, well, we struggle along. As you know, I had a stroke in March of last year and I'm getting awfully tired of being in this wheelchair. Eleen was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in June of last year and given six months to live. She has lived a lot longer than that for which I am quite thankful.

Marianne Turlington

I'm terribly saddened to hear that Bill Rotsler has passed away. This is the first time I've cried at someone passing since my husband died seven years ago.

I loved his artwork and was so glad to start seeing it again. I'd like a whole booklet of his art. Hope you will continue to use his art.

[[Not only will I continue to use his art -- I inherited a large envelope of illos

Bill was holding in an envelope marked to go to File 770.]]

Lloyd G. Daub

Thank you for sending *File 770* to us at MSFS and *MSFire Magazine*. Ordinarily it is a great pleasure to hear from you and read your news on the fan front. But your issue 121 had news that really hurt.

We only just heard of the death of Bill Rotsler on November 14. It was literally unbelievable. The last we'd heard was that he'd been recovering well. Sheryl Birkhead among others had convinced me to ask him for more art -- I hadn't wanted to bother him during his recovery. I spent the time until I read your obituary the next day talking myself into deciding it had all been a mistake. Now I had confirmation.

I never met Bill Rotsler. There is no amusing or sweet story to relate. But I got to hold his art in my hand. It was a direct connection between us -- his hand to mine, no matter how many people came between us before I put his work in the zine. His humor resonated on the exact frequency used by my funnybone. I looked at his heads and figures and landscapes and never failed to see the story that could be behind the scene. He fit my imagination so well. So I take his passing personally, as if we were friends. His death is a great loss.

I have to take this opportunity, then. Thank you, Bill Rotsler, too-latedly. Thank you Sheryl Birkhead -- perhaps your logical successor. Thank you Taral, and Teddy Harvia. Thank you Georgie Schnobrich and David Edward Martin and Margaret B. Simon. And all the others whose art I have so much enjoyed since taking over at *MSFire*. I hope to see much more of your work.

Trying to get back to normal, or what passes for normal in the realm of SF, I also appreciated C.M. Barkley's memoir. He and I are of an age, and the events and feelings and dreams he shared with the reader were and are very much a part of my life, too. I drifted into the sciences instead of actively pursuing a life in and near SF, but the two fields to me have always had a greater overlap than I could

ever convince anyone nearby. Mr. Barkley was blessed more than perhaps he realized by having a close friend to share his obsessions and dreams and encourage his participation. Like my return to SF, that had only been a product of my recent life and times, and I have missed much.

Here's to the past and to the future -- Skoal!

Harry Warner Jr.

The news about Bill Rotsler's passing hit me hard. I hadn't heard about it until I got to the fifth page of this latest issue. I always thought Bill was one of perhaps a half-dozen fans who had the potential to become a world figure as a writer or an artist. If he'd channeled his talents in a different directions or had known more influential people or something else had happened, I believe he could have been right up with Dali and Picasso. (The others? Certainly Walt Willis and Bob Tucker; the latter had fine successes writing science fiction and detective fiction, but he apparently never tried to create the Great American Novel and he might have succeeded at it. I'd better not mention anyone else so nobody can be sure whom I'm excluding from this alternative universe celebrity.)

Bill must have published at least 50 cartoons about me loc addiction. And not one blessed one of them hurt me or angered me or struck me as being in bad taste. I can't speak for anyone else implied or caricatured in his drawings but as an onlooker I can't image any other subject reacting differently from the way I did. That's what I'll treasure about the memory of his humor: it wasn't malicious or mean or unsuitable for public dissemination.

It runs in my mind that I used to achieve 50 copies when I hektographed *Horizons'* first few issues. This total must have been fairly within reach of most fans' capability with the gelatin tray, because FAPA had a membership limit of 50 during its first years when some members were using hekto to reproduce their apazines.

C.M. Barkley's long article is wonderful. He has caught so well the nature

of one's first years of addiction to science fiction, even thought he did it mostly with comic books and I concentrated on pro-zines. He and I differed from most fans by having good parents who didn't try to prevent their offspring from touching that crazy Buck Rogers stuff. I even had an experience similar to the theft of his treasured comic book, although in my case it involved another avocation, phonograph records. I went to a public auction where several hundred old acoustic records, mostly Victor Red Seals, of great singers and famous pianists were among the offerings. My aunt arrived as I waited for those record albums to come under the hammer. It was only perhaps an hour until I would need to leave for work. She told me not to worry: she would bid for me and she had much more experience at public sales than I did because she collected antiques. I left, she placed the highest bid, and when she brought the records to my home she refused to take a cent for them, because they hadn't cost much and she wanted to do me a favor. That was fine until I realized that she gave me only about half of the collection. She took the remainder home with her and stored it in the garage. She didn't have a record player, she wasn't interested in record collecting or in classical music, and when she died years later I still hadn't figured out why she did this. My father was executor of her estate. When he was preparing her possessions for auction, he found the records still in that garage and brought them home to me. I couldn't find much enjoyment in them because they seemed sullied and the experience had caused me to lose a lot of the faith I'd previously possessed in the goodness of humanity.

In your 120th issue, I reveled in your long Worldcon report, which contains much information about happenings that I haven't read elsewhere. I do believe the 1997 event won't provide much wordage in conreports, for whatever reason, maybe because nothing terribly controversial or sensational seems to have happened in San Antonio. Everyone seems agreed that the toastmastering wasn't satisfactory, and almost everyone appears to have left the convention long enough to take that stroll

along the river. One minor matter I haven't seen mentioned: Won't the designation of the event as LoneStarCon 2 confuse future historians who will search and won't find any previous Worldcon called LoneStarCon 1? I don't think any other Worldcon's name and numerical designation involved a regional event.

[[At least the first LoneStarCon was a NASFiC, a WSFS event like the Worldcon. The 1978 Worldcon, Iguanacon 2, adopted its name from a one-shot local convention the group had held in Phoenix.]]

I'm glad that some bad news about ill fans is countered with good news about others who are convalescing. Several of those in both categories have bravery and cheerfulness about their problems that I would never be able to match in similar circumstances.

It's too bad Illusion, Inc. decided to create a simulation of race car driving. I think it would have been much more exciting if the firm's science and know-how had been directed toward a recreation of the excitement of publishing a fanzine in the old days with spilled corflu, ink-spewing mimograph, tearing stencils and all the other things that could go wrong.

I believe it was Roger Reynolds who made such a titanic effort to persuade me to attend a regional convention somewhere in Ohio some years ago. It was irresistible force against immovable hermithood. I won but it was a struggle. He accepted defeat graciously, but that was my last contact with him.

If convention badges are to be changed, the obvious place to place them is on the forehead, right smack between the eyes. This would end the embarrassment when one fan encounters another fans and can't recognize him or remember his name without a telltale motion of the eyes down to his chest or wherever he's wearing the badge. In the new position, the fan could look the other straight in the eyes without evasion and ascertain the other's identity without betraying uncertainty or forgetfulness.

You fooled me with that Terry Frost portrait. I know something was wrong when I first glanced at the famous Oprah

head on somebody else's body on the *TV Guide* cover several years ago. Now that I look closely at *Mimezine Flashback*, I see one clue I overlooked: the fingernails are a bit more prominent than a man's would be.

Buck Coulson

Regarding Evelyn Leeper's letter, I'm not surprised by the antics of "DG." At one small Indiana con, Juanita and I, a committee member, and Nancy Springer became fast friends while discussing DG's antics at that con. Not an ideal guest, one might say, though he does give people something to talk about.

Sorry to hear about Paul Edwin Zimmer. He was at our house only once, with Marion, but we saw him occasionally at cons.

Interesting biography by C.M. Barkley. I'm sure I've seen him at cons, but never talked to him. Wouldn't have a lot in common if I did; I was never interested in comic books and I was never driven to write. I have written, and sold and been published, but it was just something nice to have done, and it brought in some extra money, but that's all. Reviewing, fan and pro, I rather enjoyed, as I did reading manuscripts for a publisher, but I'm not desperate to do either one all the time.

Nope, Sheryl, none of the hospital staff showed any interest in the Sector General book, though some of them looked at it. One night nurse, coming in to take a blood sample at 1:00 a.m. or thereabouts, did announce, "I am the beautiful Queen of the Night, come to suck your blood," which I appreciated, but I only saw her that one time.

For Allan Burrows: Nobody that I know ever *professed* that they were visionaries, which doesn't mean that I don't know some who are. Surely you don't take seriously what fans profess, do you Allan?

In my personal life, I seem to be due for an operation in the indefinite future. Seems the specialists have desecrated a deceased tendon in the hole in my left ankle and are eager to remove or replace it, I'm not sure which. (No arcane tests:

it's visible to naked-eye observation.) No specific date for the surgery, but probably after Windycon this coming weekend. I can't see the tendon in question because I'm not a contortionist, but one of the doctors pointed it out to Juanita. ("See that black thing in there?") Otherwise, the ankle seems to be as usual; the ankle has a fair-sized by shallow hole in it, which isn't getting any worse but doesn't seem to be improving, either. Ways of increasing circulation are being debated. Loss of the left foot is possible, though personally I don't think it will happen. Medication has recently been changed; no time to show any results yet. I finally started taking blood-sugar tests; doctors assumed my sugar was high, but actually it's low. Anyway, the diabetes has become more of a nuisance lately. Circulation is poor in the extremities.

Henry Welch

Thanks for *File 770:120*. I suppose that I could call this the "Cancer" issue since cancer reports seem to dominate people news. I suppose this reflects the younger generation of fandom which is just getting ill rather than dying. Either way it is still depressing.

Your LoneStarCon report was very good. I would have to agree with you that in spite of all the rumors of personnel problems and last-minute saves I don't think this was visible to the majority of fans and I wouldn't label the convention a disaster anywhere near the proportions of New Orleans, San Francisco, or the last Baltimore.

[[Once I got through registration, the rest of ConFrancisco seemed pretty successful to me, nothing like a "disaster." And the Baltimore Worldcon of 1983 was a very good con -- the financial meltdown had no impact on fans' experience there, except (as the oft-repeated joke goes) that they got more Worldcon than they paid for. As for LSC2, I think it's necessary to



distinguish between the experiences of the people running it and the people just attending it. What is it that makes you think of LSC2 as any degree of "disaster"?]]

Teddy Harvia

How many times have you been to Texas and you still misidentified the beast at the piano at the Marriott Rivercenter as an aardvark instead of an armadillo? Aardvarks do not have shells, armadillos do. Aardvarks live in Africa, armadillos Texas. We'll have to revoke your honorary Texas citizenship.

I found your all-or-nothing attitude towards bios in the LoneStarCon 2 program book strange, like that of a fan at a convention saying, "If I can't meet everyone, I don't want to meet anyone." Yes, the feature was a victim of programming placing individuals on panels at the last minute without informing them. But saying our effort was meaningless because of its lack of completeness denigrates those who did get us bios, many of which were both entertaining and informative. Missing fan bios represented only part of the omissions. Being the first Worldcon to ask for bios, we apparently caught numerous program participants unawares and unprepared. But publishing even a partial list of bios was, we felt, a worthwhile step in introducing fans, both new and old, to the ever-expanding list of notables in the genre.

[[What a tacky mistake I made, con-

fusing armadillos with aardvarks: my honorary Texan status should be revoked! (Does this mean I can stop carrying a gun, now?)

[[Since two-thirds of the LSC2 program participants didn't have bios in the Souvenir Book, the odds were against fans learning anything from it about any given person they saw on a panel. I believe that if a committee wants to present panelist bios in a who's who format, they're obligated to try and provide a bio for everyone. As you know, many panelists won't submit bios when asked. I believe a committee should be prepared to fill in the missing bios, otherwise they're giving convention members a tool that can't do its job of introducing unfamiliar panelists.]]

Peggy Kennedy

Thanks for the issue of *File 770*, and for the nice things you said about the LSC2 Masquerade. I shall pass on what you said to my staff, especially Sue de Guardiola. I thought she did a great job, as did all my Staff.

Since some people think the Masquerade is too expensive, there is one thing which needs to be corrected now, and I would appreciate your doing it ASAP.

You quoted a "knowledgeable" committee member as saying that the Masquerade cost about \$60,000. Plainly, this person is as about as knowledgeable as the rest of the committee. The first budget I submitted was for \$7,450. I actually spent \$2,075, plus whatever the ribbons cost -- probably about \$300.

The initial Tech budget (I don't know the final one) was for \$54,350, of which no more than one-quarter should be assigned to the Masquerade, since it also covered Opening Ceremonies, the Hugos, Straczynski, Dances, etc. This brings the total for the Masquerade to \$15,950, of which about 85% was for Tech. However, Tech would have cost the same whether or not there had been a Masquerade.

Of course, if I had been paid at a competitive rate for all the work I did, the \$60,000 total would have been about right.

Joseph T. Major

Nice "Asterix and the Furrries" cover.

On *How SF Ruined My Life* by C.M. Barkley: I remember Channel 5 and Channel 9 and Channel 19 in Cincinnati, but not Channel 48. In Frankfort, we could pick up on cable the Cincinnati, Louisville and Lexington stations. You never had to worry about a local pre-emption. Channel 19 was one of the few self-referential stations: its call letters were WXIX.

Myself, I liked the Green Arrow best of all the DC heroes. (The Marvel ones were too psychologically tumultuous; I read to *escape*!) Like Batman, he was a human being (Superman, Hawkman and the Martian Manhunter were aliens, Green Lantern worked for aliens, Flash and the Atom had chemical accidents, Wonder Woman was mythological, etc.) and *unlike* Batman he was mentally stable.

The Danny Dunn book I remember was the one where the Professor bought a computer and Danny, Joe and Irene had this neat idea. They would get the computer to do their homework, see, and be able to get through school without working. In the end they found out that not only did they have to learn everything themselves in the first place, but they also had taught themselves computer programming. Far from having it easy, they had worked themselves twice as hard.

However, *The Fabulous Trip to the Mushroom Planet* was less fun once I learned about gravitational wobbles. Not to mention that the Mushroom Planet reflects in infragreen, which was used by Fu Manchu to become invisible. Nice sinister connection there....

Robert Whitaker Sirignano

I have to ask about a letter from Charles Platt a few issues ago. Are you sure that was Platt who wrote that letter complaining of the Hogu Awards? The formerly pseudonymous Gabby Snitch complaining

about heavy-handed satire? Has Platt really gotten wisdom that comes with maturity or is it just sour grapes. I have a bit of curiosity here.

[[It was authentic Charles Platt. And besides, the grapes were sour.]]

File 770:121 is a sad issue to read, though it was balanced out with a bit of lively sparkle from C.M. Barkley. Memoirs from fans are usually fun and a quick ease with "identifying" with the man "How I got that way"

Lloyd Penney

Once again *[[in File 770:119]]* John Hertz writes a vivid example of a trip report, full of names of people I know, but haven't seen in years. I hope to be at BucConeer, my first Worldcon since Winnipeg.

One unfortunate feature of *Locus*, before they went to a more traditional photograph cover, was a black banner bemoaning yet another passing in the SF community. There may be complaints that is happening in the *File*, but this is news, the news we expect to find here. Report as you will and inform us, and give us further details in the appreciations. I hope that there shall be a fanzine ready to print an appreciation or two for me when I pass on. Perhaps I kvetched a little bit over Roger Reynolds' obit; I certainly didn't mean to aim that at you. I guess I was surprised at the lack of reaction to that happening by the readership. Is the fanzine being taken over by obits? No, it's just that too many legendary figures in our field are at that age, and our sedentary lifestyle may accelerate that a bit. Please, deaths are news fandom needs to know about, so keep reporting them.

Births and recoveries are important to read about, too. My best goes to Gary Anderson, Marjii Ellers, Bill Rotsler *[[this loc was written in October]]* and Ian Gunn. When I read about fandom and cancer, my thoughts go back to my sweet friend Marisa Golini, who died in 1996. (Once again, my thanks to you, Mike, for running her obituary in the *File* and for making sure she was listed in the L.A. con III Souvenir Book. Her friends in Ottawa were touched by that.)

Many thanks for reviving Bids-at-a-Glance. With your permission, Yvonne's already photocopied this section, and distributed it to the bidcom, at a meeting we had this very day. It was the best way for me to determine which bids there were, bids which often didn't get out my way, and didn't come to my attention. I hope you'll be updating this feature from time to time.

We Also Heard From

Ken Keller: Here's \$15 for 10 more issues: At your current high turnout rate, this will only last me until summer! But I'm not complaining. I always need *something* to hurl at the wall when angry (ha!) Love *File 770*!

Martin Deutsch (BSFS President): In your editorial comments on the LOC from Sheryl Birkhead on page 21 of *File 770:121*, you mentioned the Compton Crook Award. It is awarded by BSFS, not BSFA.

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