

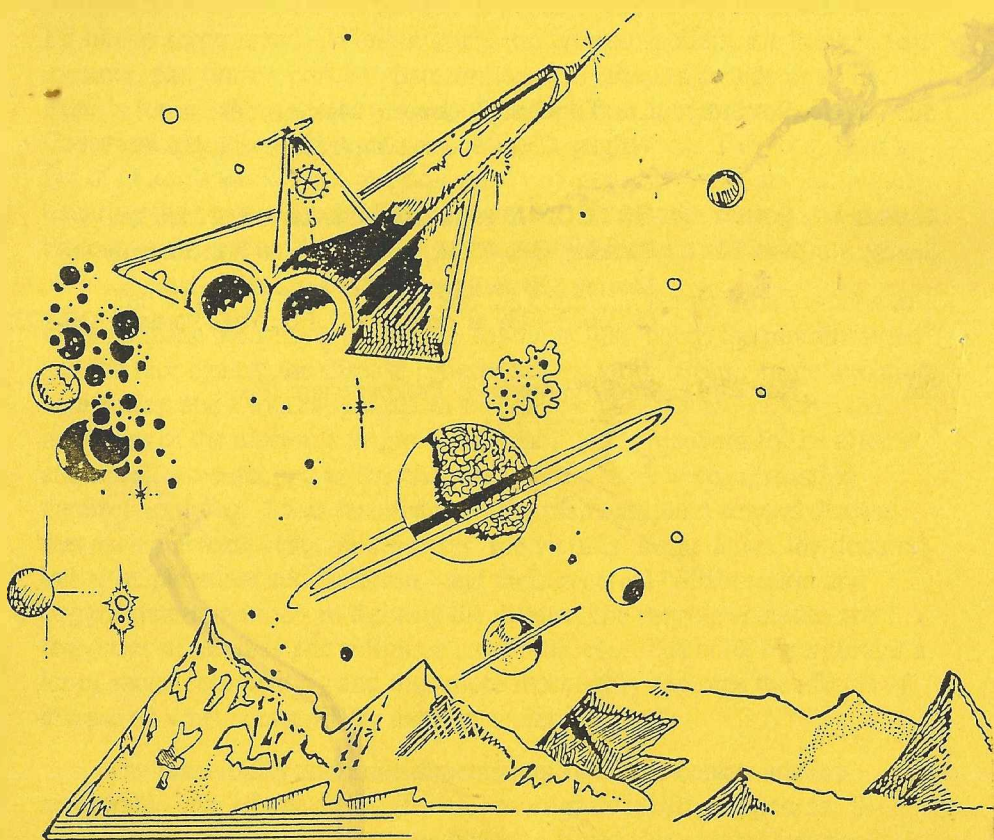
PULSAR

The newsletter of the Portland Science Fiction Society

November 1991

Number 157

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FLETCHER
-1990-

**Portland Science Fiction Society
P.O. Box 4602
Portland, OR 97208 USA, EARTH**

PULSAR is the monthly newsletter of the Portland Science Fiction Society (PorSFis). Opinions expressed herein are solely those of the writers, who retain all rights to the material. Pulsar has a rotating editorship, open to all PorSFis members. This month's editor is Arlene Hills-Peterson. Next month's editor is Page Fuller.

Issues of Pulsar are available: free with PorSFis membership (\$15 per year), by trade with other newsletters, or for 60¢ per copy at Portland area bookstores. Contributions are always gratefully accepted, and may be sent to the PorSFis P.O. Box above. Deadline for contributions is generally the 20th of each month.

PorSFis meets on alternate Saturdays at 2:00pm. Check the Timeline in this issue for meeting times and places. Meetings are open to everyone.

PorSFis OFFICERS:

President: Eric Simonson (232-5876)

President of Vice: Barbara Oldham

Secretary: John Andrews

Treasurer: John R. Lorentz (283-0802)

PorSFis TIMELINE
Compiled by John Lorentz

Note: Unless otherwise noted, Saturday PorSFis meetings are at the Northwest Service Center, 1819 NW Everett, at 2PM. We adjourn to the Ram's Head, NW 23rd and Hoyt, after the meetings, and some people gather for dinner at the listed restaurants, usually around 5:00-5:30. Non-members are always welcome.

- | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|---|
| Sun | Nov 3rd | Last OryCon 13 General Meeting, 5PM at Wrigley-Cross Books, 8001A SE Powell, 775-4943 |
| Thursday
Sunday | Nov 7 -
Nov 10 | ORYCON 13 at the Columbia River Red Lion Inn, Portland, OR. GoH: Emma Bull and Will Shetterly. Memb.: \$20 until Oct 31, \$25 at the door. Info: (503)693-1739 or write to P.O. Box 5703, Portland, OR 97228. |
| Sat | Nov 23rd | PorSFis meeting. Programming: TBA.
Restaurant: TBA |

BOOK REVIEW: *Taji's Syndrome*, by Chelsea Quinn Yarbro
Arlene Hills-Peterson

I've been doing a lot of reading lately, but most of it hasn't been fantasy or SF. However, *Taji's Syndrome*, by the author of the popular vampire St. Germain horror novels, has been a noteworthy diversion which I'd like to recommend. Without going too far into spoilers, the book is part mystery, part horror, part SF, part thriller, set perhaps a decade or so in Earth's future, about a deadly epidemic which first appears on the West Coast and spreads swiftly and devastatingly, worldwide. I've long been a fan of Quinn's work, but this book was even more involving and ultimately haunting than any of the St. Germain stories. Its modern setting and basis in biotechnology are two of the key reasons why I found it so absorbing.

The large cast of characters and the continual jumps from vignette to vignette made the story a bit hard to follow at first, but as the plot unfolded and the race against the disease progressed, the story became more and more compelling and I was caught up on several levels. I wanted to solve the mysteries of the disease's origin and spread, find a treatment for its effects and develop a cure, just as the characters in the book were exhausting themselves doing. I was fascinated by the many attitudes toward disease that such a diverse cast could portray: the victims' desperation, the doctors' initial helplessness and isolation - and their eventual collaboration and dogged determination - in fighting the disease, the varying attitudes and responses of families and religious communities... The book incorporates a lot of social commentary and thus more thoroughly explores the effects of disease on what is essentially modern society.

The plausibility and multidimensionality of this book made it a memorable gem of one of the (for me) more truly horrifying genres: "It Could Happen" (a.k.a. speculative fiction). If you like a tight, fast-paced story that keeps you slightly off-balance, and can handle a less than happy ending, you'll probably find this book a good, long, thought-provoking read.

CONVENTION CALENDAR**Compiled by John R. Lorentz**

(Unless otherwise stated, all amounts are in US funds)

Dreamcon 6, November 2 & 3, 1991, at Quality Inn & Conference Center, Everett, Washington [(206) 745-2555 or (800) 221-9839]. \$30 at the door. **GOH:** Mercedes Lackey. **AGOH:** Larry Dixon. **VGOH:** Scott Wining. Dreamcon 6, 10121 Evergreen Way Suite 103, Everett WA 98204.

VegasCon, November 1-3, 1991 at Palace Station Hotel/Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada. "This is the ONLY Fan Run Science Fiction, Comic & Gaming Con in Las Vegas." \$25 at the door. Hotel rooms are \$45 and \$55. VegasCon, 1186 Maryland Circle, Las Vegas NV 89119-7516 (702) 733-7470

OryCon 13, November 8-10 at Red Lion/Columbia River in Portland. \$25 at the door. One day memberships: \$12 Friday, \$18 Saturday, \$10 Sunday. Children 5 and under: free; 6-12: half-price. **GOH:** Emma Bull and Will Shetterly. Rooms are \$61 for single through quad. No weapons. OryCon, Box 5703, Portland, Oregon 97228 (503) 693-1739.

LosCon 18, Nov 29-Dec 1, 1991 in Los Angeles. Info: LASFS, 11513 Burbank Boulevard, N. Hollywood, CA 91601 (818) 760-9234.

Silicon '91, Nov 29-Dec 1, 1991 at Red Lion/San Jose. \$35 until 11/1, \$40 at the door. **GOH:** Steven Brust. **AGOH:** Darrell Sweet. **TM:** Will Shetterly. Rooms are \$60/\$69/\$75/\$81. Silicon '91, Box 8029, San Jose, CA 95155-8029. (408) 977-0562.

Smofcon 8, December 13-15 at the Shilo Inn/Portland Airport. \$40 until 11/30/91. Hotel (all suites) \$83 a night for up to four people. This small (100 person) gathering of convention-runners moves to the Pacific Northwest for the first time. Smofcon, Box 5703, Portland OR 97228 (503) 283-0802 or (503) 774-7592.

Rustycon 9, January 17-19, 1992 at SeaTac Airport Hilton, WA. \$28 until 12/31/91, \$30 at the door. **GOH:** Spider & Jeanne Robinson. **AGOH:** Mark Ferrari. **FGOH:** Dragon. Rustycon, PO Box 84291, Seattle, Washington 98124-5591.

For anyone who missed them, here were the Viewers' Choice Top Ten Star Trek (original series) episodes, which aired in the marathon on Sept. 28. [*I happen to have taped all except "Menagerie" if anyone's interested. Ed.*]

#10 - Balance of Power

The Enterprise's first encounter with the Romulans. Mark Lenard (better known as Sarek) plays the commander of the Romulan ship.

#9 - A Piece of the Action

Kirk and Spock evade hot pursuit by gangland bosses when they beam down to a planet influenced by previous Federation contact, whose civilization is modelled after 1920's Chicago.

#8, #7 - Parts 1 and 2 of "The Menagerie"

Spock "hijacks" the Enterprise to carry his former Captain - Christopher Pike - back to a forbidden planet. He gives himself up and goes on trial using scenes from 20 years earlier as his defense.

#6 - Amok Time

Spock returns to Vulcan to "marry". His bride challenges and he ends up fighting Kirk "to the death". Spock wins, and later shows emotion when he learns Kirk is alive (due to Bones' "medical intervention").

#5 - The Space Seed

First encounter with Khan. Kirk banishes Khan and his people to a savage planet after their attempt to take over the Enterprise.

#4 - The Doomsday Machine

Encounter with a doomsday machine shaped like a giant horizontal tornado, its apparent "mission" being to "eat" anything in its path, planets, ships, etc...

#3 - Mirror, Mirror

Due to a freak transporter accident, Kirk, McCoy, Uhura, and Scotty switch places with barbarian counterparts from a parallel dimension in which the Federation is an evil empire.

#2 - City on the Edge of Forever

McCoy jumps through a time gateway and returns to 1930's Earth, where he somehow alters history. In this new history, the Enterprise doesn't exist. Spock and Kirk travel back in time to try to prevent McCoy from unravelling their future.

#1 - The Trouble With Tribbles

The Enterprise encounters an affectionate, incredibly prolific life form during its performance of a "routine" milk-run mission.

Now for something completely different... Those of you who know what Usenet is know it's chock full of interesting things, including lists of almost everything one can think of listing. Here's excerpts from a couple of favorites:

Star Trek: The Next Generation -**Alternative Episode Titles**

Hide and Q = The Man Who Would Be Q
 The Big Goodbye = Tron Trek
 Coming of Age = Wesley Crusher, Space Cadet
 Skin of Evil = The Tar Baby: Yar's Song of the South
 We'll Always Have Paris = Let's Do The Time Warp...Again
 The Neutral Zone = Real Romulans Don't Eat Quiche
 Elementary, Dear Data = Moriarty Headroom
 The Schizoid Man = Splitzoid Schizoid Android
 Unnatural Selection = Rip Van Pulaski
 The Dauphin = Sex And The Single Ensign
 Time Squared = Hoist By His Own Picard
 Evolution = Nanites and the Professor
 The Hunted = GI Joe's Excellent Adventure
 A Matter of Perspective = Sunday In The Holodeck With Riker
 The Offspring = A Microchip Off The Old Block
 The Most Toys = How Much For That Data In The Window?
 Sarek = A Mind-Meld Is A Terrible Thing To Waste
 Reunion = A Connecticut Klingon in K'mpec's Court
 The Loss = I Lost My Powers And I Can't Get Up
 Clues = Commander Data, In The Holodeck, With A Microchip
 First Contact = Earthmen Are Easy

**Sequels: Interesting Combinations
of Popular Movie Titles**

2001 Dalmatians
 About last night of the Living Dead
 Animal House Party
 Any Which Way but Loose Change
 Couch Trip to Bountiful
 Dirty Dances With Wolves
 Earth Girls are Easy Money
 Godzilla Must Be Crazy!
 Lambda: The Forbidden Planet
 License To Kill A Mockingbird
 Mo' Better Blues Brothers
 Naked Gun(s) of Navarone
 Peggy Sue Got Married To The Mob
 Room with a View to a Kill
 Smokey And The Time Bandits
 Terminators Of Endearment
 The Grateful Dead Poet Society Movie
 The Magnificent Seven Year Itch
 The Year Of Johnny Dangerously
 When Dirty Harry Met Sally...
 Zorro, The Gay Blade Runner

Editorial Musings, or *How NOT to Edit a Pulsar* by Arlene Hills-Peterson

Every once in a while, some crazy sense of obligation or insanity overtakes me, and I agree to do yet another issue of Pulsar. Over the years that I've done this, I have at least learned that saving the past work I've done on the computer is a Good Thing, and very helpful when it comes time to embark on the next issue. As most experienced editors and writers can verify, it is much easier to revise than to create. So I had page-frame templates and front and back cover "roughs" handy; still, this issue was a challenge.

It would help, of course, if I weren't such a perfectionist, and compelled to try my best to make "my" Pulsar look just like the exemplary issue included in the editor's packet. It would also help if all the copy I received were in either camera-ready form or better yet, electronic form, so that I could beam all the bits to one computer and more easily achieve a uniform look for the whole issue. As an alternative, there's always typing (almost) everything in by hand, which is what I did for all but three pages of this issue. I'm a fast typist and this isn't too much of a problem, but it does consume three or four hours. Oh yeah - those three pages. *They* were submitted electronically, and all I had to do was minimal formatting, and a bit of play with font sizes and page-lengths to make things "come out right".

Probably the most helpful thing though, would be if I'd finally modernize and learn to do this all on the Mac, or *any* computer with more current technology like WYSIWYG editors, instead of the antediluvian Unix™ tools of "troff" and "tbl". Still, the more I use them, both for the things I'm *supposed* to be doing at work and these experiments with Pulsar, the more "fluent" I become. Why, just this issue I discovered the blindingly simple macro (.2C) for printing pages in "two column" mode, which seems to be the preferred format of certain august founding members.

The final pitfall to avoid is starting the job the day before the results are due. I managed to beat my usual procrastinating habit and do that, so I've been working on this on and off for a week, which is why I'm merely tired and not totally frazzled by the effort.

Future editors, I wish you luck. If you should happen to discover some technologically advanced way, or set of ways, to upload electronic data in multiple formats (since so few of us have electronic mail, an excellent means of article submission, *if* the people on each end have some reliable and not-too-torturous path to reach one another...) anyway, if you do solve this problem, please let fellow editors (future and former) know. After all, if the process gets simpler or I'm taken by another of those "fits", I may do this again sometime.

Conventional Musings by Page Fuller

OryCon 13 is almost here. This will be my seventh SF con in the five years I have been attending conventions. (Does that take me out of the neophyte stage, now that I have attended more cons than the number of years I have been going to them?) The reason I started going to cons so late is because I have spent almost half my life living in Alaska - making it a *long* commute to most conventions!

I spent the first half of my life growing up in farming country, south of Cleveland. I had the typical SF childhood of the time. (You read it secretly; only your librarian and a couple of select friends knew. They thought it strange but tolerated the aberrant behavior.) It was my mother who got me started. First it was fairy tales and other fantasy. Then it was on to horror, which was her favorite, and finally to science fiction. My favorite family story of the "young reader as a budding fan" was when Mom gave me what she thought was a fantasy children's book for my ninth birthday. It was *The Animal Farm*, by George Orwell. I remember being impressed at the time that this was one "children's book" that did not

talk down to me. I eventually found out that it was considered an adult classic. My mother has been embarrassed over the "cute children's book" ever since. Next I read a Bradbury short story, and then a Heinlein juvenile and I was a fan.

I was in college when I learned there were such things as SF conventions, but I had no idea how to find one. (One painful discovery was to find out that in 1966, Cleveland held the WorldCon, and both Asimov and Ellison were there. I was 16 and only 25 miles away. If I had only known... sigh.) It wasn't until ten years later, in 1978, that I ever saw a list of coming conventions. I was living way up north in Alaska. I began planning, plotting and saving.

The moment came! I had decided that if I was paying the money to fly to the Lower 48, I would aim for a worldcon. In 1984 it all came together. (Well, it would be an auspicious year to attend my first SF convention, wouldn't it?) My finances and available job vacation convinced me I could go to LA for the WorldCon. But, a month before I was

supposed to go, my husband (and he assures me it *wasn't* on purpose) had a heart attack. (It was scary, but he recovered just fine.) That was the end of my convention plans for that year.

In 1986, it finally happened - by accident. I was in Ohio visiting my family. My mother ran across a tiny notice in the newspaper about Earthcon VII, Cleveland's annual convention. (I had been boring my family for years with my angst concerning ever attending a con.) I was thrilled; my mother was relieved.

I was at the con the moment it opened. It was a small con, about 300 people. I loved it. At last I knew I was not alone! I talked to everyone I could. I went to panels and I talked to writers. I found out that Starships existed and the crews were running around conventions in full Star Trek uniforms. There was an interesting troupe that all seemed to be dressed in long coats and longer scarves. (Who's [a Doctor] Who? I had never heard of him.) And there were the delightfully bizarre Buckaroo Banzai who provided convention security. I thought it wonderfully imaginative. It was another year before I found out that they came from a movie. I even joined in a role playing game. I learned from the beginning that things can go wrong at con-

ventions. Small things like both guests-of-honor cancelling at the last minute due to illness. I learned that if you want to know what's going on, keep asking questions. I asked a *lot* of questions. I must have overdone it, because they decided to put me to work. I was asked to be one of the judges for the costume contest. I remember the event fondly. It was the best seat I've ever had at a costume contest. After being a judge, I had a recognition factor going for me. Among other things, I was invited to go out to eat with the guest authors. (Yes, substitutes had been found.) I had a great time talking with them. Reading and writing are my main areas of interest in the expanded community of SF activities. I was on an energy high for a week after the con ended. I couldn't wait to go to another one.

I'm now looking forward to not only attending my seventh convention at OryCon 13, but to *volunteering* for the first time to help at a convention. (Yes, conventioners, you can take that sentence as an unabashed plug for your volunteer help.) I am hooked and I love it! I'm still looking forward to (someday) attending a WorldCon. Maybe San Francisco in 1993 will be the one...

PorSFis MINUTES
Submitted by John Andrews

Minutes for August 3, 1991

The meeting was called to order at 2:11 PM with 15 people in attendance.

Announcements:

- Wrigley-Cross Books is having a sale this weekend.
- Powell's is having a book sale today and tomorrow at Pioneer Courthouse Square.
- The meeting in two weeks will be the PorSFis Picnic. No regular meeting will be held. The picnic will be the (Sept) Pulsar deadline also.
- Phone calls to Sue Renhard would be welcome.
- Space Report: A shuttle was successfully launched again. It will be putting into orbit a TDRS shuttle relay satellite among other things.

Business: No old or new business.

Mail Call:

Mimosa

BCSFazine

Neology

Westwind

Progress Report #2 from *Mile Hi Con*

The meeting was adjourned at 2:25 PM.

Programming: Neglected Authors

Restaurant: Shalimar

This Just in!

Requiem in pacem, Gene Roddenberry... Yes, folks, I have the sad but exciting duty of putting this late-breaking copy in Pulsar. The Great Bird of the Galaxy died today, October 24, 1991, of a heart attack. He was 70 years old. Fond farewells, Gene, and thanks for all the fish.

Minutes for September 14, 1991

The meeting was called to order at 2:10 PM with 25 people in attendance.

Announcements:

- In something of an upset, Winnipeg won the bid for the 1994 WorldCon in the voting at Chicon V. Over 2000 votes were cast in all, which is over 200 more votes this year than ever before.
- Space Report: A shuttle is up again. This time a satellite to study the ozone layer will be released.
- A TV show called *Eerie, Indiana* has premiered. It is a sitcom with the premise that the title town is the center of all weirdness in the whole country.
- Eric Simonson is the *Pulsar* editor this month (Oct). Deadline is the 20th.
- Pat Steed has the PorSFis picnic lost and found.
- Saturday, Sept. 28th, Channel 12 is showing a *Star Trek* marathon, starting at 9AM showing the most popular episodes of the original series, followed by the season premier of *ST:TNG* at 7PM and a two hour special about the Star Trek phenomenon at 8PM.
- Nick at Night is now showing episodes of the old Superman TV series.
- *Pulphouse Weekly* will be bi-weekly rather than weekly due to distributor problems.
- The 1992 WorldCon will be Magicon in Orlando, Florida. The 1993 WorldCon will be Confrancisco in San Francisco. Some bids for future WorldCons include: Atlanta and Glasgow, Scotland in '95; LA in '96; San Antonio (the weekend *before* Labor Day) in '97; and Baltimore in '98 (hopefully a more financially responsible group).
- Jon Singer has moved to Seattle.

Business: No old or new business.

(continued on next page)

New People:

Sonia Orin Lyris
Devin Ben-Hur
Tom Cox
Stuart Saxonberg

Mail Call:

Event Horizon
Catalog of Video Tapes.
Fanzine with lists of con program items.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 PM.

Programming: WorldCon reports.

Restaurant: India House.

PorSFIS Discounts

Future Dreams

1800 East Burnside and 10508 NE Halsey (10%)

Great Northwest Bookstore

1234 SW Stark (10%)

Wrigley-Cross Books

8001A SE Powell (Powell Street Station) (10%)

Minutes for September 28, 1991

The meeting was called to order at 2:10 PM with 20 people in attendance.

Announcements:

- There will be an SF movie filmed at the Callahan center next month.
- There is a new film showing at Cinema 21: *Sex, Drugs and Rock & Roll*.
- OryCon memberships are being sold for \$20 until the end of October.
- Keith Lofstrom will be having a moving party October 6.
New address: 5290 SW Elm, Beaverton OR 97005.
Phone: (503)520-1993.
- Keith also suggests a movie party for *The Fisher King* tonight.
- Repeat of the Star Trek marathon announcement from last meeting.
- There is an OryCon 13 general meeting tomorrow at 5PM at Wrigley-Cross Books. The first OryCon 14 meeting will be January 24, 1992 also at Wrigley-Cross Books at 5PM.
- Wrigley-Cross Books is having a variety of activities for "Banned Book Week" during this week.
- Space Report: The shuttle has landed safely.

Business: PorSFis will run an ad in the OryCon program book.

Mail Call:

Lunacon (NYC) Press Release
Flyer for Shearson-Lehman seminar "Socially Responsible Investments" (minimum \$100,000.00)
SF Shop NY Catalog
DeProfundis
BCSFazine
Writers NW newsletter
Email letter from Chicon V artists explaining delay in forwarding Art Show proceeds.

New Person: Jana Ford

The meeting was adjourned at 2:25 PM.

Programming: Turkey Readings.

Restaurant: DeNicola's.

PORTRAIT OF THE WRITER AS A YOUNG FAN**by John Raymond Lorentz**

I have chaired several OryCons and a Westercon. I've run Registration at several conventions, including the Westercon I also chaired, and at a Worldcon. They've all been a piece of cake, compared to planning a wedding long-distance.

Years ago, I had rotten hotel karma. Hotels would lose my reservation request, or just lose the room after I've made a reservation. This isn't true anymore. Now I have rotten airplane karma. This was pointed out to me once again during my trip east last month. Starting out, the 9:30AM flight to Chicago was delayed about 30 minutes, because the plane couldn't get out of Eugene. Normally, this wouldn't be too bad, but this time (thanks to schedule changes) I only had a 27-minute layover scheduled for Chicago! Once I got to O'Hare, I ran to the other gate (luckily not very far away) and was literally the last person they let on the plane. Amazing, my bag also made the change, so I didn't have to wait

another hour for the next Chicago-NYC flight to get my luggage.

As nerve-wracking as this was, it pales in comparison to the trip home, which started when I left Brooklyn a little after 2PM for a 4PM flight. During the week in New York, I had made the trip between Brooklyn and LaGuardia several times. My best time was 20 minutes, the worst was 45. This time, it took 75 minutes! I arrived at the rental car office with 40 minutes to catch my flight. "No problem", they said, "our shuttle will leave in a couple of minutes." Twenty minutes later, I'm still waiting. We finally left. The driver says "I've got drop this fellow off at the Marriott." I said, "I've got to catch a plane in 20 minutes!" The Marriott-bound fellow graciously said they could drop me off first. (It would only add 5-10 minutes to his trip.) We left, heading for the airport across the freeway. (Sorry, "expressway" -- they don't have "freeways" in New

York.) Halfway there, we plowed into a car which turned left in front of us! No one was hurt, but the cars were obviously DOA. I grabbed the bags out of the van, and walked very fast (the bags were too heavy to run with) the rest of the way to the airport. I arrived covered with sweat, and soaked from the rain, and checked in at 3:54 for the 4PM flight. This time, I was not quite the last person let on the plane--but it was close. (And, amazingly, the bag also made it on this flight, too!)

The week in New York was both interesting and fun. It's the longest time I've been in the City, and I think I started to acclimate too much. I'm still finding that I have to remind myself that I can, once again, turn right on a red light (a "no-no" in New York), and that it's not necessary to make sure I'm at the front of the light-rail trains to be safe. It was fun taking my folks around Greenwich Village and some of the posher Upper East Side, areas they hadn't seen before. It was nice to finally get out to Staten Island, the only borough I'd never visited before. It was enjoyable getting to "Grand Hotel" on

Broadway. (The tickets were half-price--"only" \$32 a person!).

And, of course, there was the wedding itself. By the time you read this, Ruth and her mother (and, with luck, their furniture) will be out in Oregon, and it will sink in that we're married. But, right now, it seems like a dream. We got three days of sun (bracketed by rain), so the weather was great. With all our worries, the caterers, musicians, florists and everyone else did a good job. And Ruth looked wonderful. I think everyone had a good time--I was in too much of a daze to really know what was happening. (Especially when they started dancing, and picked Ruth and I up in chairs!) And the day ended nicely when the Warwick hotel had an extra suite, and allowed us to upgrade at no cost.

It was a great time. It was a lot of hard work. I am NEVER doing it again!

And next month is OryCon, where we can answer the question of "If John is running Dealers this year to relax, why is it so much work?"