

THE
WSFA JOURNAL

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Holiday Beatings

to

Harlan Ellison

Credit Where It's Due

The WSFA Journal would like to thank Matt Leger for our new cover design. It would have appeared sooner but our staff had to learn Freelance to do headlines worthy of the cover.

We would also like to thank Susan Cohen, Alexis Gilliland, Joe Mayhew, Lance Oszko and Tom Schaad for their many contributions to WSFA's newsletter.

What are rest of you waiting for?

WSFA MEETING MINUTES 12-7 (Mitsubishi Owner's Day), 1990

The First Friday in December, 1990 Washington Science Fiction Association meeting was held at the home of Peggy Rae and Eric Pavlat, neither being present. Dan Hoey manned the refreshments and otherwise hosted.

The meeting was called to order at 9:14 by Vice President Steve Smith. WSFA President Tom Schaad, like Peggy Rae Pavlat, was away at SMOFCON. Tom, at the request of absentee Secretary Lee Strong, asked Joe Mayhew, Official Subversive Figure and Former Contender, to take the minutes.

Covert Beach, Dan Burgess, Chris Callahan, Boots Coleman, Jim Edwards-Hewitt, Terilee Edwards-Hewitt, Steven Fetheroff, Alexis Gilliland, Carl Ginter, Eric Hamill, Dan Hoey, Bill Jensen, Irv Koch, Elspeth Kovar, Matt Lawrence, Matt Leger, Brian Lewis, Nancy Loomis, Nikki Lynch, Dick Lynch, Bob MacIntosh, Winton Matthews, Joe Mayhew, Walter Miles, Lee Morey, Heather Nachman, Barry Newton, Judy Newton, Bob Oliver, Michael Oliver, Lasce Oszko, Kathi Overton, Evan Phillips, John Pomeranz, John Randolph, Robyn Rissell, Dick Roepke, George Shaner, Vicky Smith, Steve Smith, Mike Stein, Jim Tracey, Erica Van Dommelen, Mike Walsh and others attended.

The minutes of the previous meeting were not available to be made light of. WSFA will doubtless treat them in Schaad fashion upon publication.

WSFA Treasurer Bob MacIntosh's report that the WSFA Treasury had a balance of \$8,022.99 was followed by the usual inanities.

The Spirit of Disclave-Present announced that there would be a gala affair at the bookstore in Bethesda (or Chevy Chase) where there was a similar signing by authors in conjunction with Disclave when Lucius Shepard was Guest of Honor. Covert Beach warned Disclave Figures that he would bloody well put out the flier with his own version of the facts unless they coughed up their True Facts plenty soon.

Alexis Gilliland had tickets to Edward Scissorhands at a Theatre in Virginia which he passed out in loco Entertainment Committee. He also announced that Doll had decided against trying to have a WSFA food fight at her house. That we'd have to settle for the "Pagan" tree trimming event in conjunction to the December 21st meeting to be held at their home.

There was no business conducted.

Lance Oszko gave me an announcement to pass on. I promptly lost it so, please ask him what it was. Alexis gave me something to put on the back of the minutes: THE WSFA KLEIN BOTTLE.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30.

"The beatings will continue until morale improves."

-- Tom Schaad

Minutes,
Third Friday in December

The regular Third Friday in December business beating convened at 9:19, 21

December. The President said "beating" so don't blame me.

Tom wished everyone a Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, and Good Solstice. He noted that we had cleverly arranged for the beating to be exactly on the Winter Solstice, 1991, which was brought to us by the Entertainment Committee.

Tom asked Secretary Lee Strong if he had minutes from the previous beating. Before Lee could answer, John Pomeranz moved that the club wave at the Secretary. The club did so, and Lee waved back.

Tom, however, noted that the question of minutes had not been answered, and insisted that Lee read something. Lee stumbled through the previous The WSFA Journal before George Shaner mercifully cut that off. Lee must be a fan since he's certainly not a reader.

Treasurer Bob MacIntosh reported \$7764.96 in the Treasury. A suggestion to have a party failed for lack of a second.

Bob announced that the Friends of H. P. Lovecraft had erected a plaque in honor of the Master's centennial. This was done through the generous financial support of WSFA. See report elsewhere in The WSFA Journal.

Alexis Gilliland, Vice

President of the Entertainment Committee, announced that the traditional non-denominational Xmas Tree was up. "Well, it was up the last time I looked," allowed Alexis. Matt Leger expressed confidence that Alexis could keep it up. "WSFAns did it so it has to be good." The Tree Trim will happen later.

Alexis also gave a review of a strange evening trying to see Edward Scissorhands. The place was a new theater so the Fire Marshal released a smoke bomb to see if the air conditioning worked. The bomb did but the air conditioning didn't so it was filled with smoke. The party adjourned to another theater where the management bribed...er, compensated the party with free pop, free popcorn, free posters, free scissors, free tickets, and the strangest darn sweat shirt ever seen.

Terilee Edwards-Hewitt won a contest by answering the question of the evening: What were the last three movies made by Tim Burton? Answer: Batman, Beetlejuice, and Peewee Herman's Big Top Adventure.

The Spirit of Disclave Past, played by Eva Whitley, was done.

The Spirit of Disclave Present, played by Sir Not Appearing in This Film, did not appear.

The Spirit of Disclave Yet To Come, played by Steven Fetheroff, offered to make up a report on the sport (as he usually does). Letters to potential GOHs are going out.

The report of the Committee to Spend a Great Deal of Money on Something that Will Have To Be Returned The First Shopping Day After Xmas was interrupted by Terilee beating on John Pomeranz. Interestingly, John did not tell Terilee to stop. John stated that he would have to buy some pads.... "A pad in Paris?" asked someone.

The club chuckled. John said no, tho.

John then reported that the Committee was concerned because of the spread of sharp edged toys. Therefore, the Committee was buying Santa Claws a stealth sleigh to make his rounds in. More details would follow as soon as the Committee figured out how to get the eight tiny reindeer into their little stealth suits. Ninja reindeer?

Old Business: Dan Hoey inquired if progress had been made on clarifying the finances of WSFA Books? Tom related that we had the information from Disclave 89 but not that from Disclave 90 yet. Eva stated that she had gathered the information together but not sent it to Tom yet. She promised to do so.

New Business: George Shaner asked about New Year's Eve. Alexis announced, "Not here." Eva invited everyone over to her place. Bring a sleeping bag. "Is this an Official Party?" asked George. Quite firmly, I might add. Tom surveyed the room and announced that Eva's offer was as official as it was going to get.

New Tradition: Tom asked newcomers to WSFA to announce themselves. Gloria Manning and 2 Others appeared for the first time.

Gloria is the head of the local Science Fiction Channel fan club. She discovered WSFA when she saw our advertisement on cable TV. John Pomeranz had a heart attack at the thought of someone actually watching his ad. The club howled with laughter.

Gloria is also NASA's

Unsolicited Proposal Analyst. She's bound to get a few unsolicited proposals around here. She also brought the Official NASA Xmas Tree Ornament for the Tree Trim.

Someone asked if the Science Fiction Channel was channeling to/from L. Ron Hubbard? No, but after the beating, Gloria told the story of how a mysterious voice contacted her and ordered her to establish S.F.Channel fandom in the Washington area.

Fred Ator also appeared for the first time. He is President of the Harlan Ellison Protective Association of Greater North America. Steven Fetheroff faked being a first timer. However, no one really believes that Steven is a virgin.

There were no second time at WSFA attendees although Regina Cohen allowed that this was her second time since returning for Japan. There were no third timers, either.

Mike Walsh stated that this was his 235th WSFA beating. And stylish Jack Chalker allowed that he was 500 or more. Tom replied that Jack didn't look a day over 35-40.

Announcements

Dan Hoey announced that Confrancisco rates were going up. Buy now.

Lee Uba announced a rumor circulating in the Unitarian Church: that Rod Serling, himself a Unitarian, is being proposed for a postage stamp. If true, please contact Lee so that she can circulate petitions in her Unitarian Church.

(A Rod Serling postage stamp would be extremely appropriate since the U.S. Postal Offence has been a subdivision of The Twilight Zone for years.)

Hal Hoey announced the sale of

Balticon 25 T-shirts.

Matt Leger wished all a respective Happy Christmas/Hanukkah/Kwanza/Solstice/Yule/Vedra/Ramadan/Panathenias/Holiday Number Eleven.

Abner Mintz, WSFA's Ambassador to Pennsylvania, said "Hi!"

Susan Cohen would like to announce "The Little Con That Could, Too (Throw Susan From the Train!). This is a train-con to Chicon V for those who wish to arrive tired but happy. See Susan for details.

Jack Chalker appeared in new eye glasses. He explained that he had had eye surgery, which was not major in itself but which had affected his entire system. As a result, he is under doctor's orders not to lift anything heavier than 2 kilograms for several months, and not to have sex until 21 January. Jack did not specify which year.

Jack discussed The Harlan Ellison Hornbook now appearing at \$100 per shot in 750 numbered copies. Harlan's edition makes several references to a particular movie script which does not appear in the book. The club made several comments which are still being reviewed by the Generic Anti-Defamation League (G.A.D.L.)

Fred Ator asked if WSFA beat up on Harlan every day? No, Fred, just when he deserves it. Jack told his story about Harlan taking 20 years to deliver the Hornbook. (First reported in a previous issue of The WSFA Journal!) Three weeks after finally delivering the manuscript, Harlan called Jack to ask Why the book had not been published yet? The club made

several comments.

Jack also related that he had 1/3 of a book coming out in March or February from TOR. Effinger, Resnick and Chalker wrote alternating chapters of a hardcover epic The Red Tape Wars: Inter-galactic Bureaucrat I without any consultation.

Joe Mayhew recommended the first portion of a science fiction policy statement to the Library of Congress. Now, the Library wants a definition of "science fiction". The club made several comments. Joe is looking for the work that listed 27 pages of definitions. He plans to say offer the list to the Library.

(It would be hard to beat the definition offered by a former Fairfax County librarian who stated that "Science fiction is books with weird covers." Simple and to the point. Why does the Library of Congress have so much trouble?)

Mike Walsh brought no books. The club fainted. However, he, like Jack, had eye trouble, specifically a corneal infection. However, he was living better thru chemistry.

Covert Beach announced that he would not have his new party game "Pick Apart Covert's Disclave Flyer" due to a bunch of deadbeats not submitting adequately to him. If people don't submit voluntarily, he will write his own material with your name on it! Heh, heh, heh.

Covert further announced that he was taking.... "Drugs?" asked a rowdie. John Pomeranz noted a consistent theme here. "No," rebutted Covert, "I'm taking classes." He went on to expound a theory that The Forces of the Universe were attempting to prevent his academic success. Someone broke into his car but all that they stole was a little Xmas tree ornament. John accused Evan Philips of being the ornament thief. However, Tom

quickly pointed up that Evan would have put more stuff onto the car. One suspect cleared.

● If you wish your announcements to appear in The WSFA Journal as you wish them to rather than as the Secretary might record them, please submit them in writing to the Secretary after the business beating.

● [Inserted] Recently passed Federal ethics legislation should not affect Federal employees who write science fiction in their spare time. The legislation seemed to forbid any Federal employee from accepting money for any material produced, regardless of genre. However, Department of Defense lawyers advise that the implementing regulations will exclude fiction.

● Susan Cohen noted that no gloves were worn while the Publications Report was being given. The same procedure had best be carried out during any future bent reports, or the Secretary faces censure from the G.A.D.L.

● Susan would also like to state emphatically that there were no petite lasses on the Disclave 90 Politeness Patrol. The one female on the Patrol was a full grown woman, who was not at fault if most of the men on the Patrol were larger than she. In closing, however, we ticked off the right people.

● John Pomeranz did NOT change his name during the business beating.

● Two people submitted to the Secretary after the beating, and one paid for the privilege.

Alexis moved to adjourn and the business beating adjourned unanimously at 9:47. □

Edward Scissorhands

A very uneven film, but one that ultimately works.

The Frankenstein comparison is inevitable. A strange inventor's humanoid creation comes to a relentlessly "normal" town to mix with humanity. The normals receive him with the usual mixture of humanity and inhumanity.

The film started slow and took a long time to gain any emotional altitude. The monochromatic retro-Fifties town of Tinsmith Circle struck me as silly rather than pointed. And, it seemed to me that they missed a number of jokes no worse than those that they used. You start to wonder about the author and director rather than sympathizing with the characters.

But, eventually things got going. Edward's bizarre handicap turns out to have great potential for commercial success. Just when it looks like a career is opening up for him, things turn sour, tho.

The characters fit the plot and theme well. Several of them are more finely drawn than one would first think. Edward, of course, is the star, but he is admirably supported by girlfriend Kim, neighborhood hotpants/gossip Joyce, and police officer Straight Arrow. And, did anyone notice what the pseudo-Christian did not do?

Danny Elfman's music is a real strong point: light without being too sweet. It splendidly conveys the idea of a fairy tale with a rather dark side to it.

I rate Edward Scissorhands Fair.

--LS

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Publisher.....Tom Schaad
Editor-in-Chief.....Lee Strong
Violator-in-Chief.....D. B. Mungo

Nightfall

by Isaac Asimov
and Robert Silverberg

Sequels are seldom as good as the original stories. This joint effort by two Grand Masters of the trade unfortunately proves that rule.

The story here would make a good 37 page short story. And, of course, it did. Unfortunately, here, the same story is stretched out to 339 pages without getting any better.

If you've read the classic story story, you know all of the characters and almost all of the plot. Each paragraph in the original expands to become a chapter or so in the first third of the novel. There's more detail, but, somehow, nothing gets added except bulk. And price.

As with most Asimov novels, people don't do things; they talk doing them.

What is particularly disappointing, tho, is the apparent error in astronomy which invalidates the entire plot. The astronomer characters specifically state that Nightfall comes to Kalgash -- Lugash in the original -- when five of the planet's six suns bunch up on one side of the planet. (From the characters' viewpoint.) A previously unknown satellite then puts the remaining sun into total eclipse for a prolonged period, which causes Darkness and a rare glimpse of the other 36,000 Stars in Kalgash's universe. This results in all of the characters and most of Kalgash's civilization suffering madness.

This is fine as long as the

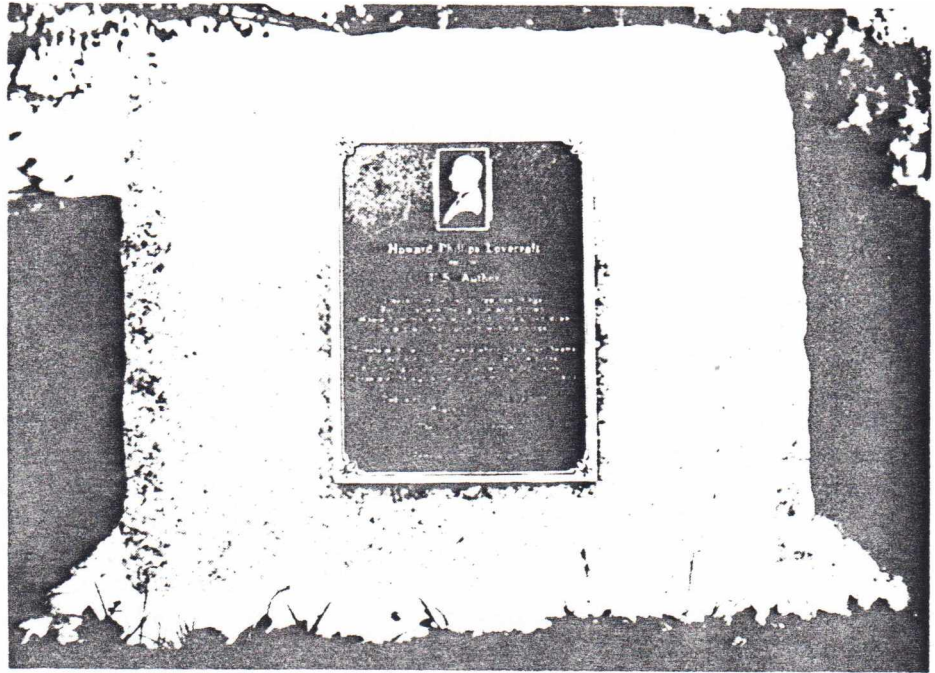
Republic of Saro is the entire universe. However, what happens to Kalgash's other hemisphere where five suns are pouring down light? The authors state that the Darkness is planetwide, affecting multiple continents. In the Kalgashian universe, Darkness is apparently a positive force which, once established, flows around a planet like ink blotting out sunlight. Truly bad science.

And what is supposed to be so terrifying about Stars, even hordes of them? If the Kalgashians are deathly afraid of Darkness, they would be profoundly grateful to the Stars for lighting up the "night" sky. Many times in literature, suggesting a thing is more effective than actually describing it. This is one of those times. The short story achieved punch by suggestion; the novel falls flat from description.

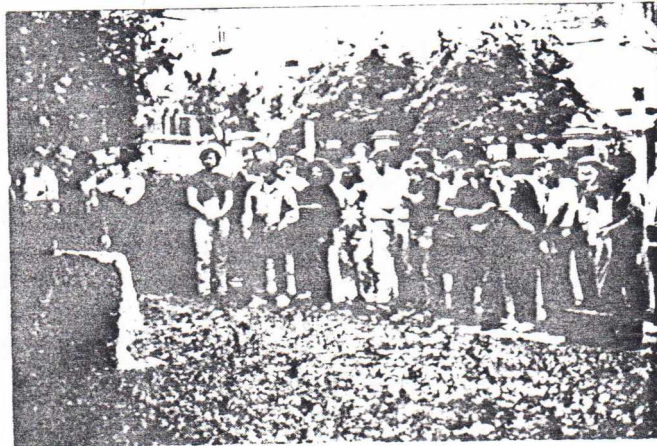
The final portion of the book is ho-hum post-apocalyptic survivalism which has been done a dozen times before. Lucifer's Hammer comes to mind as an example of how to write this stuff. Asimov and Silverberg have come up with a pale, overly intellectualized version. The Apostles of the Flame -- "Cultists" in the original -- turn out to be neo-scientists themselves and plan to rebuild civilization more-or-less as the orthodox scientists do. It's more than a little reminiscent of Leiber's Gather, Darkness. Very unsatisfying.

I can understand the desire to revisit and expand a classic. Silverberg did it with his recent short story-become-novel Mutant Season. However, what the authors have done here is actually weakened the original by exposing its flaws.

The two Grand Masters have collaborated in producing a dud. I rate Nightfall the Novel as Disappointing.



The Friends of H. P. Lovecraft



A crowd looks on at the unveiling ceremony



Jennifer B. Lee of Brown University, S. T. Joshi, unidentified, and Robert M. Price

Contributors

S = Supporters (up to \$25)

P = Patrons (\$26-\$99)

F = Friends (\$100 or more)

Joseph E. Smith (S)
Winston-Salem, North Carolina

Steven Solotar (S)
River Vale, New Jersey

Peter Straub (F)
New York, New York

Roy Thomas (S)
San Pedro, California

William James Thompson (F)
Augusta, Georgia

Richard L. Tierney (S)
Mason City, Iowa

TOR Books (P)
New York, New York

Kenneth Turan (S)
Pacific Palisades, California

James Turner (S)
Collinsville, Illinois

Holly Van Wye (S)
Clayville, Rhode Island

L. Sprague de Camp (P)
Plano, Texas

Brian Lumley (P)
Devon, England

Sam Moskowitz (S)
Newark, New Jersey

Washington Science Fiction
Association, Inc. (S)
Annandale, Virginia

Graham K. Watkins (S)
Durham, North Carolina

Lawrence Watt-Evans (S)
Gaithersburg, Maryland

Robert H. Waugh (P)
New Paltz, New York

Dennis E. Weiler, M.D. (S)
Nampa, Idaho

Robert Weinberg (F)
Oak Forest, Illinois

Chet Williamson (F)
Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania

Douglas E. Winter (S)
Alexandria, Virginia

World Fantasy Convention 1990 (F)
Schaumburg, Illinois

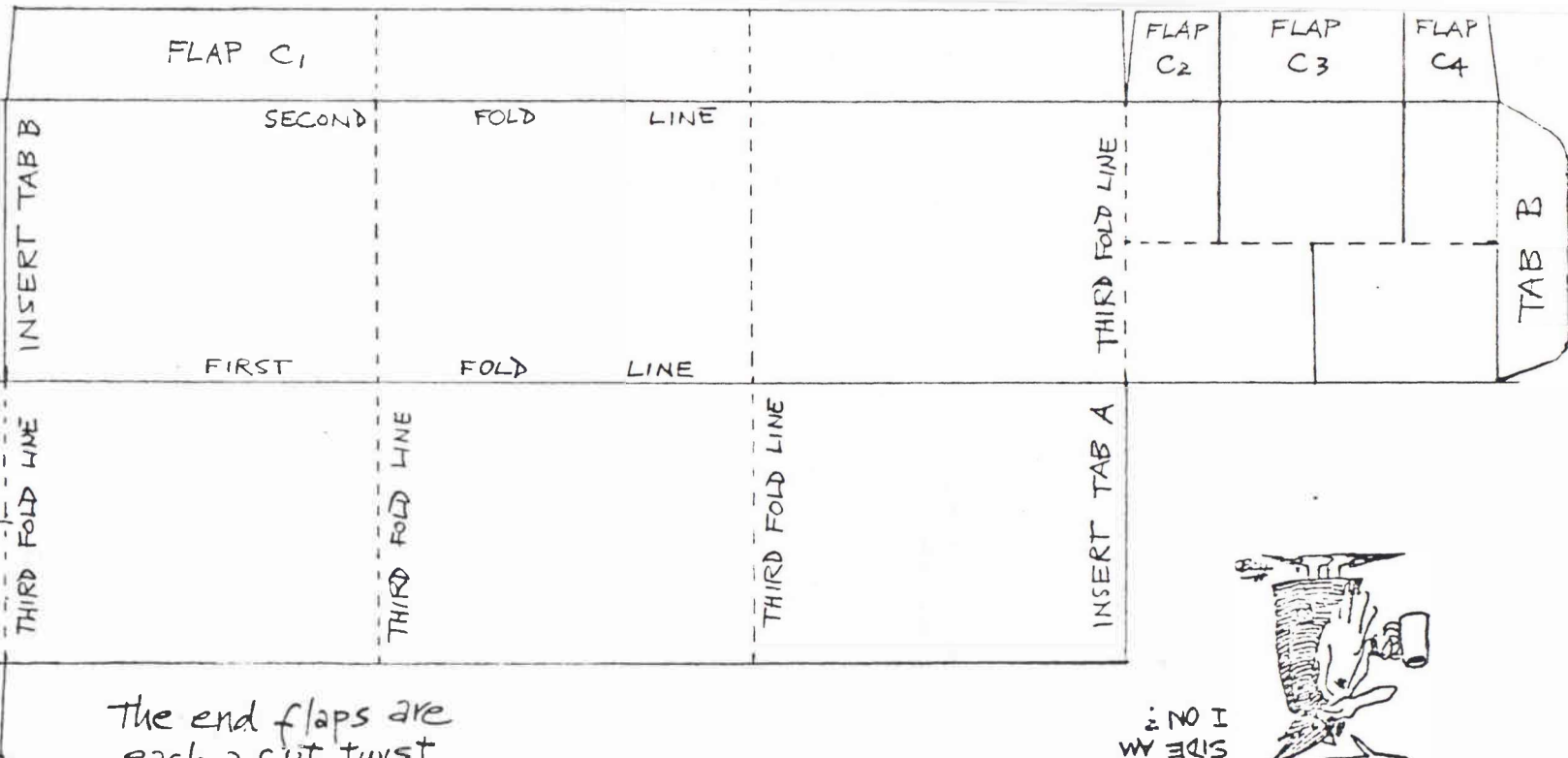
Jerry Worthington (S)
Austin, Texas

Mark Owings (P)
Baltimore, Maryland

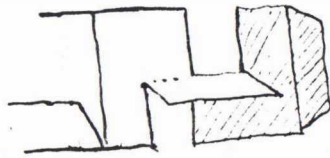
Darrell Schweitzer (S)
Strafford, Pennsylvania

THE WSFA KLEIN BOTTLE

At last! Something to put the WSFA minutes (on the other side of the page) in!

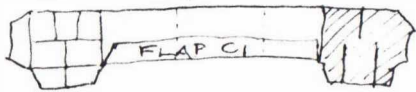


The end flaps are each a cut twist. When done they look like this:



Step 2. Cut and twist the end flaps.

Step 1. Cut out and fold on first & second fold lines. Secure FLAP C1 with blue or tape.



Alex A. Hilliland
Dec 6, 1990

Step 3. Neatly fold the third fold lines, and tuck in tab A and B. Secure the outer TAB.

If you did it right, it looks like this:

