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R. Thompson '88

Con†Stellation XIV

3-5 November 1995

Huntsville AL

Guest of Honor

Rick Shelley

Master of Ceremonies

Roland Castle

Artist Guest of Honor

Ruth Thompson

Fan Guest of Honor

Adrian Washburn



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Rick Shelley

by Stanley Schmidt

You folks at ConStellation XIV have a treat in store that I envy: you get to meet Rick Shelley. I've worked with him for more than a decade, and I've enjoyed his telephonic company on several occasions. But despite several attempts to entice him to a convention that I was attending, we've never quite managed to make our schedules mesh. So he's one of those people I've *known* for eons, but have never *met* face to face. I still plan to, at the earliest opportunity, but *you* have the opportunity right now.

Rick's first appearance in *Analog* was "The Singing of the Vestry, the Praying for the Sky," an eerily haunting tale of just how quiet and insidious a conquest can be. It was also a cautionary tale about where some trends in our culture of the mid-eighties might lead. As a historian, Rick is well equipped to issue such warnings, with a better-than-average awareness of human-

ity's past mistakes and an earnest determination to avoid repeating them.

Over the ensuing years, Rick wrote a good many stories for *Analog*. Most of them were novelettes, spanning a wide range of tone and subject matter — sometimes sad, sometimes funny, often sneaky (Is "Peace on Earth, Good Will to Men" a story of wish-fulfillment or horror?), always fun and displaying an offbeat imagination.

One of my personal favorites is "Because It's There," a novella coauthored with Lee Goodloe. Rick once approached me with an idea for a story about climbing a *huge* mountain on a distant planet. I cautioned him that I'd seen many attempts to tell such a story, but seldom, if ever, one that I found fully satisfying. My perennial complaint was that too many authors trying it *said* their mountain was Really Huge, but failed to make it *feel* that way — in large part simply

because they failed to work out (a) how such a mountain could exist, and (b) just how different it would really be as a result. So Rick found a planetologist to collaborate with, and together they did those things — produced the science fiction mountaineering story I'd been wanting to read for decades.

Another of my favorites was "The Sylph," which also had the distinction of being one of the most controversial stories we've ever published. Back when I was taking over the reins of *Analog*, my predecessor, Ben Bova, told me that you could often gauge the strength of a story by the polarization it produced among readers — a story that nobody hates, nobody loves, either. By that standard, "The Sylph" was a very strong story indeed. On balance, I judge it well worth the few subscriptions it cost us.

If you haven't read it, I highly recommend it, but with one warning. Understand before you start that in this story Rick has shown us a human culture, quite plausible and consistent within itself, but *very* different from our own. That's one of the things that really good science fiction *should* do, of course, but it always makes some readers acutely uncomfortable when they find themselves confronted with a real live example of it. Some found "The Sylph" infuriating; unable to accept, understand, and judge that culture on its own terms, they completely missed the story's real points and attacked the author for all manner of *imagined* unsavoriness. Fortunately, plenty of others *did* understand, and applauded "The Sylph" for what it was.

I do have one personal reservation about

"The Sylph," though. Its male protagonist, the character from a culture easiest for most of us to identify with, was a soldier; and "The Sylph" began a succession of military science fiction stories that has become perhaps Rick's best-known body of work. The "Lucky 13th" series of books has attracted favorable attention from readers, critics, and editors; the new "Second Commonwealth" series is eagerly awaited. Some of Rick's books have shown up on the *Locus* Bestsellers List, and his novelette "Eyewall" appeared in one of Gardner Dozois's *Year's Best Science Fiction* anthologies.

As you can see, Rick is a man increasingly In Demand. He's been able to quit professing and begin writing full time. He's branched out into new areas: in addition to the military books, he's done several successful fantasy novels. For Rick's sake, I'm very pleased about all this, and delighted that *Analog* was able to play some small role in getting it started.

So what's my gripe? The man's so busy writing books for other publishers that he seldom has time to write for *Analog* any more!

So do me a favor, will you? At ConStellation, get to know Rick. Buy him a beer. And if you see a place to slip it into the conversation, you might just mention that you really liked his shorter pieces in *Analog* and would really appreciate it if he could still try to work one into his schedule now and then.

Or, better yet, send him to a convention I'm going to be at. I'd *still* like to meet him personally, and then I can tell him all this myself.

I'll even buy the beer.

Roland Castle: A Depreciation of the Man and Convention Mogul

or, For a good time,
call 706-549-1533

by Jay Johns

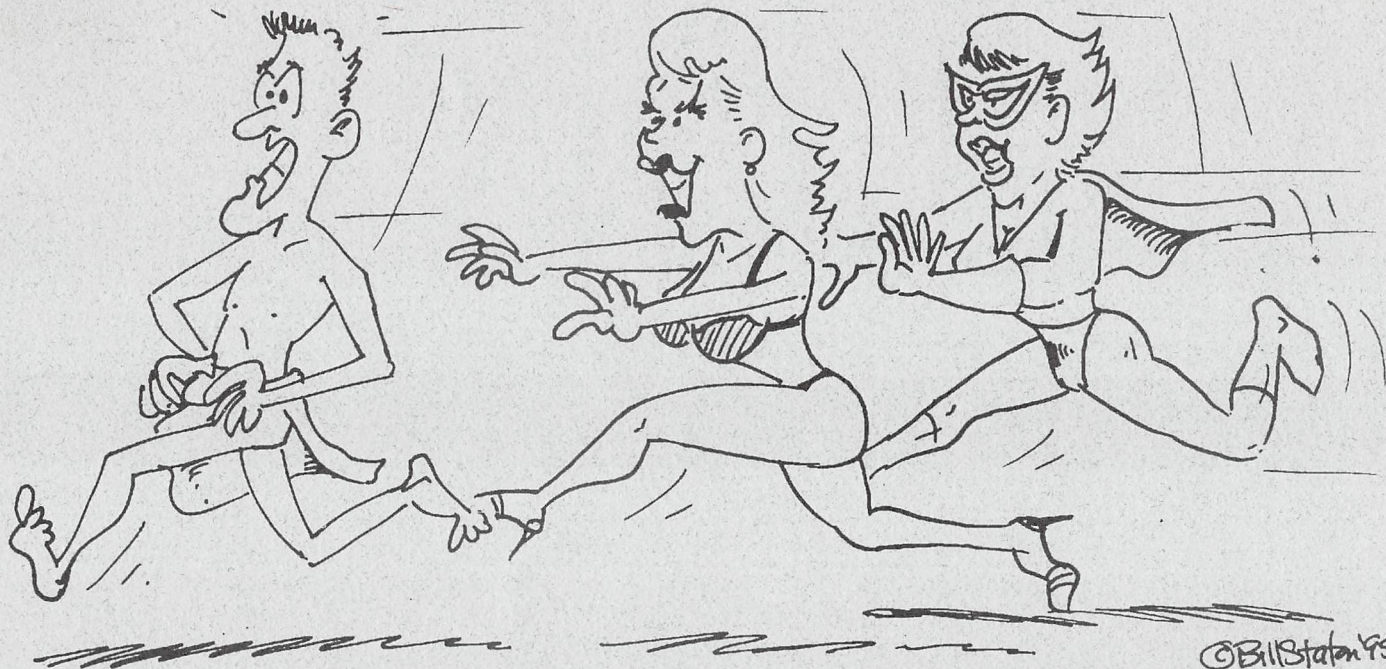
I call this a depreciation instead of an appreciation because your opinion of him may be lower when you read this than it was before.

Actually, I said that because anyone who knows me knows that I can't keep my sense of humor under control. Roland Castle is one of the nicest people you will have the pleasure to meet in Fandom. I met him 12 or

so years ago at ContStellation and after that he always remembered me and would speak. He always seems to have the time for a quick word or two no matter how busy he is. I don't think I'll ever understand why this man, after experiencing conventions as an attendee, decided to put himself through Hell and start his own convention. Ten years ago, in Macon, Georgia, Magnum-Opus-

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Con was born after no telling how many months of labor. He must be masochistic because, after surviving that child, he went on to have 9 more! I haven't heard anything about him stopping, either. Could someone give this man 50 cents and take him to the nearest gas station restroom? Seriously, the guest list for his first convention was very impressive as I recall. His love of Fandom has given Southern fen access to so me of our favorite celebrities from television, cinema, and literature, be it comics or novels, and a gathering that has grown to be one of the largest regional multi-media conventions. He has brought us *Doctor Who*, *Blake's Seven*, various *Star Trek* personalities, along with some of our favorite character actors from the movies. The professionals he brings us not-withstanding, the fannish entertainment is worth the price of admission itself! I have many fond memories of my experiences at the MOCs I have been able to attend.

I guess this is a good spot for the obligatory anecdote. Probably the best time I had with Roland I don't remember much of. It was at DeepSouthCon 25 in Huntsville and Roland and several of his entourage were seated out by the pool. I was feeling particularly magnanimous that day and despite Roland's protestations I bought him

a drink. Not believing his story about not being much of a drinker (Gee Whiz! he is a *fan* after all!), I got him one of my latest discoveries, a Newport Tea. Now those of you who know their alcohol understand how this might affect someone with low alcohol tolerance. For those who don't know, any version of alcoholic tea will have no less than 5 different liquors in them with a little cola or fruit juice for color. Well, Roland was right. He isn't much of a drinker. I don't remember if he even finished the first one because I had already gotten my third one down and was staggering to the bar for my fourth. Good tasting drinks are killers because you drink them too quick. Well, I passed out by the pool and Roland went to his room and quietly got ill. I begged his forgiveness the next time I saw him and never offered to buy him a drink again. He still talks to me when we happen upon each other so I guess I have been forgiven.

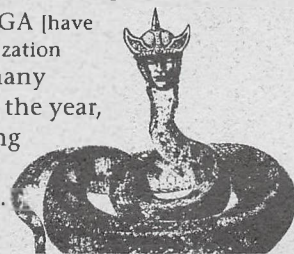
If you are a true conventioneer, then you should have MOC on your list of must-attend. Roland will be happy to provide you with flyers, directions, doctors excuses, anything you need to get away from the mundane world and into the wonderful realm we all know as Fandom.

Talk to this man. He's a nice guy.

North Alabama Gaming Association



We've changed our name again (from HOGS to NAGA [have you ever tried to reserve a public meeting place for an organization named HOGS?]), but we still try to get together as many gamers as possible. Want to game for the rest of the year, instead of just at cons? Come to our next gaming event, **November 12, 1:00** at the Madison Municipal Complex. Questions? Call 461-8827.



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Stuff You Need to Know

WEAPONS POLICY

ConStellation XIV has a strict no weapons policy, with two exceptions. First, dealers may sell legal weapons, but they must be securely wrapped before leaving the Dealers Room and not opened in any public area of the hotel. Second, legal weapons may be used in the Masquerade, if approved *in advance* by the Masquerade staff. Violation of this policy will result in confiscation of the weapon *or* ejection from the convention, at the sole discretion of the committee. If it looks like a weapon, or is intended to suggest a weapon, this policy covers it.

SMOKING

A smoking area will be provided in the downstairs lounge (aka the Con Suite annex); all other function rooms and the main Con Suite are no-smoking areas.

DRINKING AGE

Alabama's drinking age is 21. Our badges do not differentiate by age, therefore those sponsoring room parties are strongly encouraged to card everyone before serving alcohol. Which brings us to: **DO NOT DRINK AND DRIVE!** ConStellation would not exist without your attendance, and we want you back next year.

NOW THE FUN PART

Having said all the stuff above you didn't want to hear, let's get on to the fun stuff.

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMING

The schedule appears in the program book but please check at Children's Programming (Room 289, on the back hallway) for additional events or changes.

MASQUERADE

Check in the area near Convention Registration for the entry deadline, rules, and entry forms. Don't forget the \$100 cash prize!

TOURNAMENT GAMING

Game sign-up will be in the second floor lounge, outside Room 268 Check there for game schedules.

SPADES TOURNAMENT

Look for sign-up sheets for the Killer-Cutthroat Spades Tournaments outside the door of the Spades Room (262). Could you be the Spades Champion of the Lesser-Known Universe?

LIVE-ACTION ROLE PLAYING

Pat McAdams is running NEXUS LARP at ConStellation — look for the headquarters in Room 200 (near the Con Suite) and be sure to attend the organizational meeting Friday at 9:00P in Alternate Programming (Room 284).

ART SHOW AND AUCTION

Please help us protect the artwork by leaving food, drinks, cameras, purses, and bags at the check-in table in the Art Show (Room 275). Remember that if yours is the only bid made on the bid sheet, you must buy the item at that price. If there are two or more bids, the item goes to the Art Auction at 8:00P Saturday in the Art Show.

VIDEO ROOM

If you lose your copy, check outside the Video Room (Room 362) for the video schedule — rumored to be an international pot-pourri of ultra-cool film faves.

AUTOGRAPHS

There is a formal signing session at 3:00P Saturday for both Rick Shelley and Ruth Thompson in the lounge area outside the function rooms on the second floor. Please be considerate in limiting the number of items (books, Magic™ cards, prints) in one request to give everyone a chance.

CON†STELLOUNGE

The Con Suite, the Con†Stellounge, will be located in and around Room 229. Portions of the Con†Stellounge may be closed (e.g., in the wee hours), but *some* part of the Con†Stellounge will always be open.

ABOUT NEXT YEAR

Pre-register to attend Con†Stellation XV:Aquila Sunday in the Con†Stellounge.

DANCE

The Con†Stellation XIV dances will be Friday at 10:00P and Saturday at 11:00P. Both will be held off the hotel lobby — follow the music. We are happy to have last year's DJ, Ted Cannon, back with us again.

FILKING

Alternate Programming (Room 284) will be Filking Central both Friday and Saturday nights after other scheduled programming.

AREA GUIDE

A guide to local restaurants, grocery stores, pharmacies, other area businesses, and sites of interest is included with your Pocket Program. If you need directions or recommendations, ask any member of the con staff or inquire at the hotel desk.

Con†Stellation XIV Committee

Co-ChairsSam Smith,
Randy Cleary
TreasurerRay Pietruszka
Art ShowRhett Mitchell
Con SuiteMike Ray, Gary Herring
Dealers RoomNancy Adams
Game RoomMike Ray, Rich Garber
Hotel LiaisonRobin Ray
Guest LiaisonMike Cothran,
Marie McCormack
MasqueradeSue Thorn
OperationsBob Buelow, Dallas Vinson

Programming ...Sam Smith, Randy Cleary,
Mike Kennedy
Children's ProgrammingDebbie
Mitchell
Science Programming....Ronnie Lajoie,
Jim Woosley
PublicationsMike Kennedy
PublicityRonnie Lajoie
RegistrationNaomi Fisher,
Debbie Mitchell
T-Shirt DesignDavid O. Miller
Video RoomWalt Guthrie

Significant others include the crew of the Starship Wernher von Braun, Jann Melton, Uncle Timmy, Pat McAdams, Chloie Aioldi, Jeanna Woosley, Nelda Kennedy, Doug Lampert, G. Patrick Molloy, Nancy Cucci, T. Conley Powell, The Science Fiction Writers Group and Cake Appreciation Society, NAGA (née HOGS), Steve Cook, HAL5, Jeff Freeman, and The Artemis Project.

Special thanks to Paul Stephanouk and interQuest, the U. S. Space and Rocket Center, Ral Partha, Bill Payne, and Kerry Gilley.

Schedule of Events

Friday

12:00N	Registration opens	Lobby
	Operations opens	Room 261
1:00P	Con Suite opens	Rooms 229/231
3:00P	Art Show open for artist check-in	Room 275
4:00P	Art Show opens	Room 275
	Dealers Room open for dealer set-up	Room 267
	Video Room opens	Room 362
6:00P	Children's Programming: "Kidzilla 4 Ever" — Once again Tokyo is leveled	Room 289
	Dealers Room opens	Room 267
6:30P	Opening Ceremonies	Room 280
6:45P	Children's Programming: "Artfully Yours"	Room 289
	Sculpture, Sand Painting, and More (until 8:00P)	
7:00P	Visit with the Huntsville Science Fiction Writers Group	Room 280
	and Cake Appreciation Society (2 hours)	
	Nick Farrell and Chris Clark present their award-winning	Room 284
	short film <i>Killer Chia Pets from Outer Space</i>	
8:00P	"The UFO Report" presented by T. Conley Powell	Room 284
9:00P	"Local Talk" — Huntsville-area clubs talk about their fannish interests	Room 280
	NEXUS Briefing	Room 284
	Dealers Room closes	
10:00P	Come Mingle and Meet the Guests	Con Suite
	Dance, Dance, Dance (3 hours)	Lobby Restaurant Area
	(Open Gaming is closed during the Dance)	
	Filking — sing until dawn	Room 284
	Registration moves to Operations	Room 261
	Art Show closes	

Saturday

4:00A	Video Room closes	
8:00A	Children's Programming: "Cartoons, Crayons, and Games" (until 10:00A)	Room 289
9:00A	Registration opens	Lobby
	NEXUS Briefing	Room 284
	Art Show opens for artist setup	Room 275
	Dealers Room opens for dealer setup	Room 267
	Video Room opens	Room 362
10:00A	Art Show opens	Room 275
	Dealers Room opens	Room 267

11:00A	Brush up on fan history: "Adrian & Roland: The Early Years"	Room 280
	Sue Thorn's "Make It and Take It: The Holiday Edition" (3 hours)	Room 284
	Children's Programming: "DragonStrike Game"	Room 289
	(until 1:00P — Ages 7 and up only for this game)	
12:00N	Ruth Thompson: "How to Break into the Business"	Room 280
1:00P	"Project HALO: The HAL5 Rocket" with Greg Allison	Room 280
1:30P	Children's Programming: "Videos and Games" (until 3:30P)	Room 289
2:00P	Rick Shelley Reading	Room 280
3:00P	"Reusable Launch Vehicle Program: X33" with Steve Cook	Room 280
	James P. Hogan "The New Dark Ages: What's Happening to Science"	Room 284
	Rick Shelley and Ruth Thompson Autograph Session	2nd Floor Lounge
	Registration moves to Operations	Room 261
4:00P	"Children and Conventions: Do they mix?" with Nancy Cucci et. al.	Room 280
	The Society for Creative Anachronism struts their stuff	Room 284
5:00P	"Return to the Moon: The Artemis Project" with Boise Pearson	Room 280
6:00P	NEXUS Briefing	Room 284
	Art Show and Dealers Room close	
7:00P	Guest of Honor Speeches	Room 280
8:00P	Art Auction (in the Art Show)	Room 275
8:30P	Masquerade Pre-judging	Room 280
9:30P	Masquerade	Room 280
11:00P	Dance 'til you drop (or 3 hours, whichever comes first)	Lobby Restaurant Area
	(Open Gaming is closed during the Dance)	
	Filking redux	Room 284

Sunday

4:00A	Video Room closes	
9:00A	Children's Programming: Let those silly adults be Dead Dogs,	Room 289
	the smart kids will be at the "Lazy Puppy Party" (until noon)	
	Art Show opens for artist setup	Room 275
	Dealers Room opens for dealer setup	Room 267
	Video Room opens	Room 362
10:00A	Art Show opens	Room 275
	Dealers Room opens	Room 267
11:00A	Join all our guests in a Round Table Discussion:	Room 280
	"Scientifically Challenged Fiction" (2 hours)	
1:00P	Art Show closes, artist checkout begins	
	NEXUS Final Briefing	Room 284
2:00P	U. S. S. Wernher von Braun (Starfleet) meeting	Room 284
3:00P	Dealers Room closes, dealers checkout begins	
4:00P	Con Suite closes to prepare for Dead Dog; Video Room closes	
5:00P	Dead Dog begins	Con Suite



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History of a Blonde Dragon: Ruth Thompson

by David Griffin

Writing about a friend can be a difficult experience at best. Writing all the things that make that person one of your best friends may be one of the most cathartic experiences in your friendship. Try it sometime. When Marie and Mike contacted me about doing this, I was honored that Ruth had chosen me, but I had some trepidation that I might not write well enough to do Ruth justice. I hope this will help you appreciate this wonderful, young woman a fraction as much as I do.

I first met Ruth at Abercrombie dorm on the University of Alabama (Tuscaloosa) campus. I challenge you to find it on a campus map today. "The powers that be" tore it down in the summer of '89, a traumatic experience for many of us. This was the place where it all began. I managed to worm my way into the Dungeons and Dragons group she played with after taking an

interest in Ruth's younger sister. What kept me in "The Group" was the friendship of Ruth and Todd (the guy who is now Ruth's husband and my "Best Man").

Ruth was a biology major at the time. She definitely has the intelligence required for a career in biology, but something just was not right about it. She eventually entered a graphic design major and let the artist out of the closet. Ruth had been doing character sketches occasionally for group members, but this seemed to dry up when she started her "serious" pieces. She had done a few of these when all of us ganged up on her and convinced her to display a few at a convention in Birmingham in '88. None of us thought she would survive until the show. Ruth was certain she would be scoffed at. Some of her professors and fellow students of "pure art" regarded her realism and use of the human form as pedestrian. We,

however, had difficulty understanding her apprehension. Ruth could sit down in an evening and sketch out figures that were more riveting than many of the pieces we saw in published material. Often these labors of fantasy would end up in the garbage. Ruth declared them as "stupid @#*&! attempts." Lord knows how many of those forms have been taken in the prime of life only to be resurrected again and again. I understood little, if anything, about artists and wondered at the behavior. Eventually, I settled for "It must be an artist thing."

After all of the prodding, Ruth did enter her artwork at a show. To her surprise, she sold a few pieces. Once again, it was not a surprise to us. Ruth, however, was skeptical. She kept debating if her art only appealed to the "con crowd," or if those who loved fantasy art — or art in general — would have any interest in her work. Ruth kept working despite her malingering doubts and kept adding detail to her work. She got a good set of Rapidograph pens

(fancy writin' pens to us) and added "starry backgrounds" to several pieces. For Ruth to learn more creative styles of artwork, "The Group" endured, and soon learned to love, many Bob Ross, "Joy of Painting" episodes on PBS. Now that I think about it, maybe she got us to watch these to distract us from asking so many questions about what she was doing at the time. After all, I have never heard Ruth refer to "happy trees" in any of her pieces.

We then attended a con in Mississippi. Once again, Ruth sold some pieces and met a few contacts. This convention thing turned out to be much bigger than any of us thought. There were conventions everywhere and even one in Wisconsin that was tantamount to a trip to Mecca for the faithful. Ruth would not consider making such a trip. One has to pay much penance before making such a pilgrimage.

The details from this point are foggy. Ruth kept doing local shows and started shipping work to out-of-state conventions. Soon she got the deserved recognition from gaming companies and did contract work like a woman gone mad. Convention organizers nationwide asked about her interest in attendance. Ruth got awards at several conventions as a fan favorite and got published in a few artists' appreciation books. Ruth also got to socialize with pro artists, which made us extremely jealous. But how could we deny her such pleasure. She really made it big. Then she graduated from college and got a job in Texas. I began to fear I would lose touch with Ruth and Todd forever. Thankfully, this isolation did not last long. Ruth needed to do her own work, and they moved back to Alabama. I almost had



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them convinced to move to Huntsville, but the lure of family in Mississippi (and finally Ohio) was too great. Now it looks like Ohio is where they will stay, settled in the beautiful old house bought with the labor of love of several years.

Ruth has run the gamut of pen and ink, water color, and now, oils. Ruth's former fear of "the demon oil paint" now seems to be tamed. She has excelled in each medium, as her work illustrates. I thank Ruth for all I know about art. My knowledge is not great, but would be pitifully little without her. I suppose I could have learned what I know through a friendship with any artist, but I do not think many would have been willing to share the way Ruth has. She does not seem to have any closely guarded "artist secrets" or "magical techniques" that cannot be revealed. It is just her personal touch

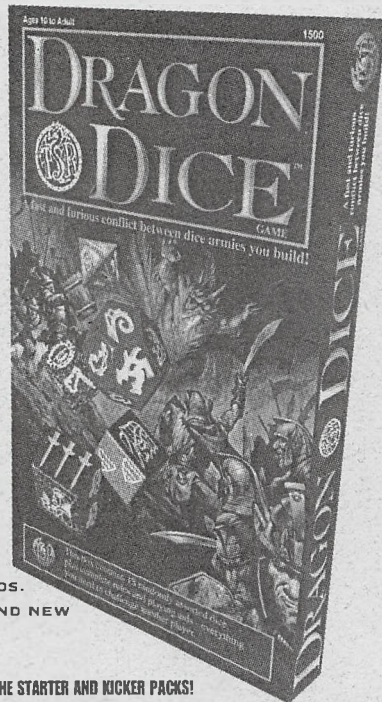
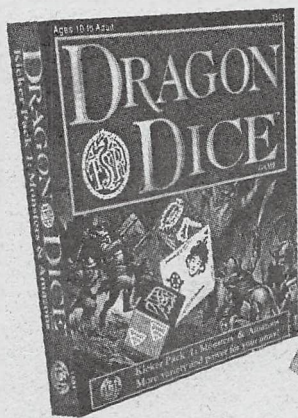
that makes her artwork so special. Her talent seems to flow from her ability to translate what she envisions in her mind into something we can see. Maybe a lot of artists do this, but Ruth's way seems to be more natural at it, and much more personal.

There is much more I could write about Ruth, but it seems I may have revealed enough already. I hope that you will talk with Ruth at the convention and get to know her better. You will meet a young woman with a fire for her work that few people have. You will also meet someone with true humility, a quality quite rare. Purchase some of her artwork being displayed, or make bids at the auction. They are truly well worth the investment and the comments you get on your "interesting" taste in art might boost your approval rating in the fantasy community.

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"DEATH, NATURE'S NEMESIS, CREATED HIS OWN RACES TO WREST CONTROL OF THE ELEMENTAL POWERS. THE MOREHL, OR LAVA ELVES, WORSHIPED FIRE AND DESTRUCTION. THE TROGS, A GOBLIN RACE, SPANG FROM EARTH AND CORRUPTION. FROM THE INSTANT OF THEIR CREATION, FIERCE CONFLICT ENVELOPED THE WORLD. HORDES OF SELUMARI, VAGHA, MOREHL, AND TROGS SWEEP ACROSS THE LAND IN ENDLESS BATTLE, USING THEIR ELEMENTAL MAGIC TO WREAK HAVOC AND SUMMONING DRAGONS TO TURN THE TIDES OF WAR."



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Adrian Washburn: Trufan

by Sue Thorn, Sam Smith,
and Nancy Adams

This is Sue speaking. My first memory of Adrian is from my second convention, the 1981 B'hamacon where he took me to his room and took care of my needs — I had a terrible headache and he gave me aspirin. He is still taking care of my needs, as well as those of many other fen, in a variety of ways: giving room parties, running con suites, DJ'ing dances, giving out super hugs, providing Pringles, dancing with the girls all night, sharing crash space, befriending everyone, and spreading wit and wisdom throughout Southern fandom.

If you don't know Adrian, introduce yourself. He is someone you should get to know. I've often said I didn't know anyone who had met Adrian who didn't like him.

Maybe that's because he likes everybody. Take it Sam.

I first met Adrian several years ago when Nancy Adams and I decided to travel to Birmingham to attend a BSFC meeting. We got to Birmingham and went to the appointed place at the appointed time but — no meeting! So she called Adrian. The BSFC meeting had changed nights, but there was a new science fiction club in town called the Renaissance Science Fiction League that was meeting on BSFC's old night, and we could go to that meeting instead. He told us when and where and promised to meet us there.

When we got there, Nancy introduced me to the strangest little elfin man with the merriest eyes — "Sam, this is Adrian. He's

one of the Good Guys.”

She’s Right, you know.

Working the hat in is difficult. Adrian has this hat, you see (and you will, he’s never without it). It was a nice hat at one time, and Adrian says that he and I are (probably the only) two members of the “Checkered Cap Gang.” It is a “black-and-white-checked-Irish-thug-cap-like-James-Cagney-used-to-wear-in-the-movies, men’s small size, no snap on the brim.” Adrian needs a new hat — desperately needs one — but it must be this exact hat and no other or he won’t wear it. Please, please, please, if you ever find a hat like this, buy it and send it to Adrian, so he will have a new hat and make all of his friends happy.

Thank You.

OK, Nancy, it’s your turn now.

I seem to remember my first encounter with Adrian being long, long ago when I was in high school and attending my first Chattacon. If asked to put a date to it, I’d guess it was around 1982. I somehow ended up standing in the hallway chatting with a pretty tipsy Adrian and his even more tipsy buddy, John Headstrom. They talked me into attending the first DruidCon (the fore-runner of Tuscaloosa’s Bamacon) and Adrian and I have been friends ever since. We have gone through many changes together and when thinking of Adrian stories I suppose there is one that springs to mind.

Way back, around mid-1983, I discovered that I didn’t really enjoy NASFA due to certain personality conflicts so I decided to look elsewhere for friends in fandom. I found them in Birmingham. Adrian invited me to attend the BSFC, Birmingham Science Fiction Club, meeting at the Homewood

Library. I enjoyed the meetings and attended pretty regularly for awhile. Then came the notorious BSFC meeting when some of the membership voted to become a closed club and expelled several members including, I suppose, me. I’m still not sure what the entire basis of the incident was. Of all the people involved, only Adrian remained unruffled.

In a brave display of all that is fannish, Adrian managed to remain friends with both the folks from BSFC and with those of us who were ousted. Adrian was also key in creating another open membership club in Birmingham — the Renaissance Science Fiction League. This relatively short-lived club was a great thing — bringing together and uniting fandom in the greater Birmingham area, with Adrian serving as club president one year. I remember attending several club parties including a spaghetti party that Adrian hosted in his home.

Now, many years later, I have to look back and laugh. I now find myself, once again, a member of NASFA. (I even served as president last year.) I recently chatted at MidSouthCon with the current president of BSFC and re-discovered that Adrian is still a member. If the circumstances were right, I could even envision rejoining BSFC. After all, if Adrian is a member then it must be fannish.

I guess my highest tribute to Adrian is to call him a true fan. He is non-judgmental, both accepting everyone for their gifts and forgiving them their faults. He is a leader and light-years ahead of his time. So when you meet this shy, hyper-active, unassuming man please remember you are really meeting one of fandom’s greats.

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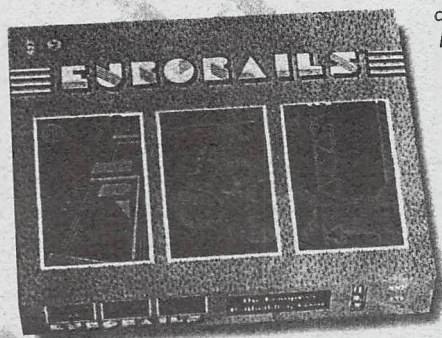
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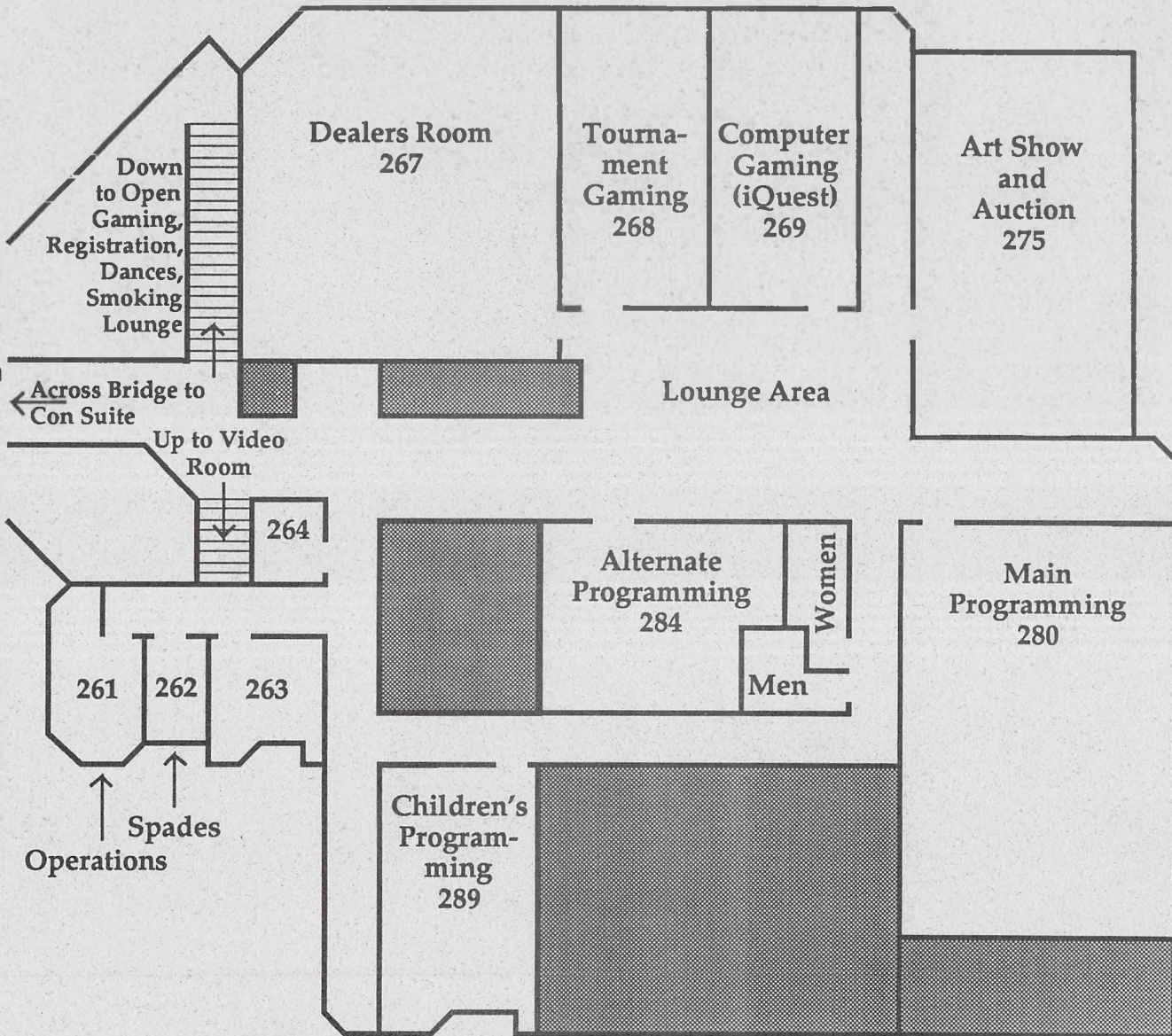
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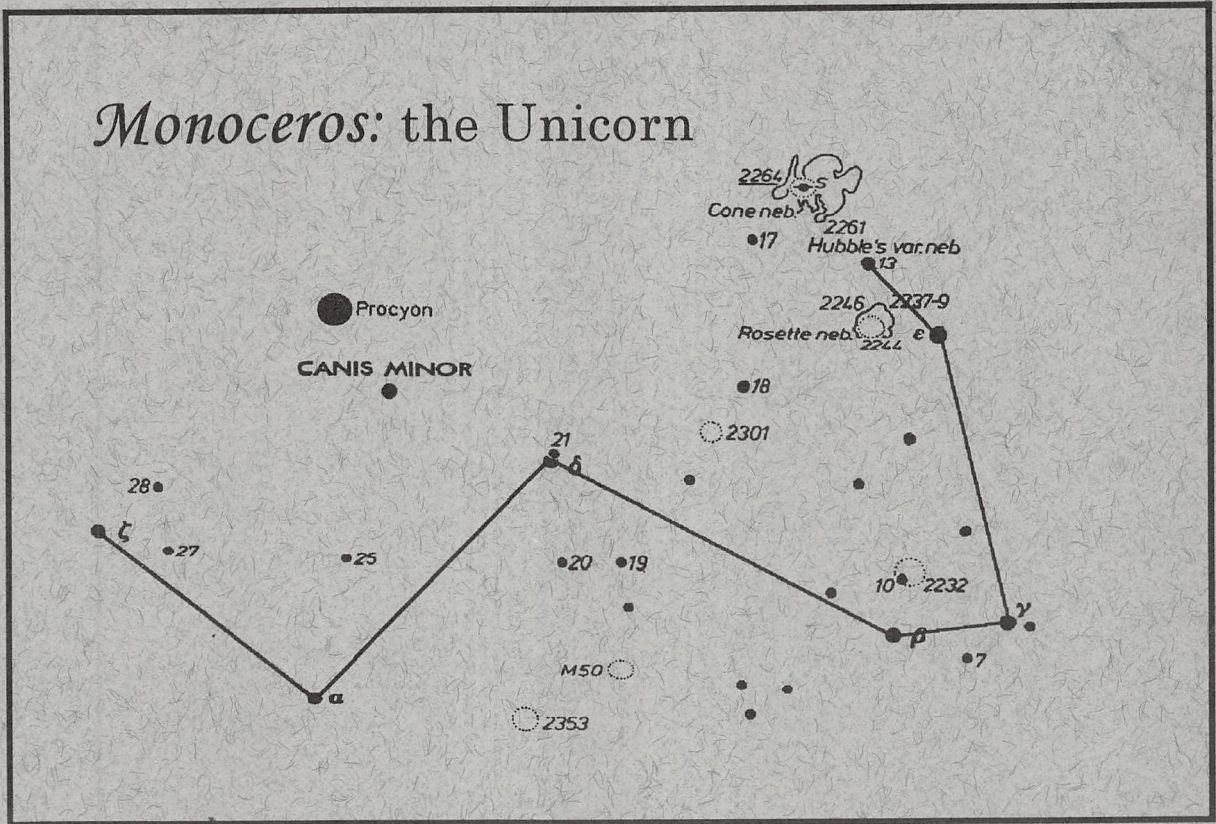
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Hotel Layout



Monoceros: the Unicorn



The large but dim constellation Monoceros, the Unicorn, lies between Orion and Hydra. Orion's dogs, Canis Minor and Canis Major, cavort above and below the Unicorn. Monoceros was originally named by the Dutch theologian and cartographer Petrus Plancius from faint stars uncharted by Ptolemy, and first appears on Plancius' globe of 1613. The name was brought into general use in 1624 with its inclusion in Johannes Kepler's star charts.

The faintness of this constellation in the sky is appropriate for the nature of its elusive, mythical namesake. The unicorn is a beast of mystery and magical powers, believed to live in remote and lonely areas. It has the tail of a lion, the legs of a deer, the head of a horse, and, sprouting from its head, a single whorled horn. This horn, when ground up and used in medicines, would protect the user from evil.

The arrangement of the constellations points to the elusiveness and mystery of the unicorn. In the heavens, Monoceros is speeding toward Orion from behind, but Orion, locked in combat with Taurus, has heard no sound of the beast's approach.