

# Tropicon XVIII

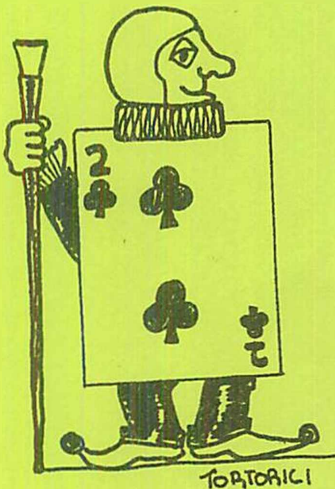




# Tropicon XVIII Program Book

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## Chairman's Letter

by George Peterson

Hello, and welcome to Tropicon 18!

It's a little strange to think that this is the seventh Tropicon I've worked on, and the second I've chaired. Like the others, it's been an interesting journey. Interesting in both the positive sense and the Chinese sense of the term.

Every convention starts out as a set of wishes and dreams. We brainstorm ideas, make plans and do the best we can to implement them. It seldom works out the way we think; usually surprises abound. An old friend can't make it one year, then, out of the blue, you hear from someone new, and it's an opportunity to make a new friend. Old ideas are retired, and we try new things. Sure, there are a few disappointments, but there are always possibilities.

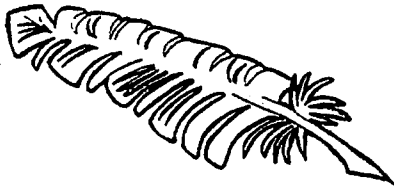
This year we have old friends as our Guests of Honor: Mike Resnick and Ron Walotsky. Not only are they both award-winning professionals, but they've been good friends to Florida Fandom. And speaking of new friends, join us in welcoming Mr. Joe Ellis, a.k.a. RoboFilker and Tropicon's media guest, Mr. Peter Woodward of **Crusade** fame.

And there are all of our other guests. Our good friends Hal, Adam, and Joe Green are here. Jack and Barbara are back with us after an absence of a couple of years. Rick and Charles are back this year, as well. Lynn, Holly, and Laurie, are gracing us with their presences. And there are newcomers. Welcome to Kathleen and Glenn. And Hershell Gordon Lewis is putting in an appearance.

And speaking of friends, welcome to all of you, our members. After all, none of this has much point if we have nobody to share it with. So enjoy, see the sights and, above all else, have fun!

### Tropicon Staff List:

Chairman:	George Peterson
Art Show:	Deanna Lyman Becky Peters
Badge Art:	Joe Mayhew
Blood Drive:	Dave Lyman
Bulk Mailing:	Cindy Warmuth Bill Wilson
Con Suite:	Carlos Perez
Dealers Room:	George Peterson
Filk Liaison:	Glen (Scruffy) Hammer
Gaming:	Dave Guillot
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Logistics:	Ned Bush
Program Book:	Shirlenc Rawlik
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Warbitch from Hell:	Christina Santiago
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Registration:	Edie Stern
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Sales to Members:	Mel Herz
Tee Shirts:	Judi Goodman
Treasurers:	Cindy Warmuth Edie Stern
Trivia Master:	Edie Stern
Velvet Comet:	Judi Goodman
Velvet Comet	
Keyboard:	Doyle Green
Video Archiving:	Alex Lyman
Video Room:	Joey Reynolds
Web Master:	Jack Weaver
WPBT2 Liaison:	Joey Reynolds
Other Helpful	
Person(s):	Tony Matranga Elizabeth Lyman Peter S. Rawlik, III



## On the Guest of Honor...

### Mike Resnick

by Kristine Kathryn Rusch

He calls my husband "the golf geek" and then promises to take me away to exotic places. First, an elephant-back safari in Africa, then a marvelous hut built on stilts over the ocean in Bora Bora. And then, of course, he reminds me that he must bring his wife, Carol.

He, of course, is Mike Resnick and beneath that teasing, flirtatious tone is one of the most intense men I've ever met. Mike started out as a science fiction fan, and has a great love for the genre, but that doesn't stop him from being one of the best businessmen I've ever known.

When I was editing *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*, he would occasionally call and say, "Beautiful," (writers can go far calling an editor beautiful) "I just finished an award-winning novella. If you'd like to see it, you got twenty-four hours to let me know if you're going to buy it."

Now, when most professional writers say a story is award-quality, they're fooling themselves. Very few professional writers are good judges of their own work. Mike is one of those few. Every single story he pitched to me as an award winner when I was his editor won an award. Every single one. No other writer ever achieved that. And because he knew the quality of his work, he knew its worth. I'm glad I no longer sit across the negotiating desk from Mr. Mike Resnick. I'm not that savvy an operator.

However, that doesn't stop me from taking lessons. Mike is free with advice to folks whom he believes will benefit from it. In fact, he's one of the most generous people I know. He gives out story ideas like they're candy, collaborates with everyone under the sun, and will recommend friends for projects if those friends happen to be perfect for the job.

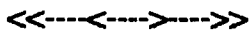
When he edited a series of anthologies a few years ago, he was, by far, the best editor in the business. He suggested stories to folks who couldn't think any up, and he had cogent comments for folks whose stories needed revision, and he discovered fine new writers like Nick DiChario. He never turned any good story away, and so some of those anthologies ballooned to twice their suggested size. Mike is the only person I know who has lost money editing because he believed the work was so important that he would pay for something out of his own pocket if the project was overbudget. Of course, every anthology had a Resnick story and there are some of those included in here. Some show Mike's terrific sense of humor (something that has served him well in Hollywood. Maybe someday he'll write those memoirs, and people will get to hear his tales of strangeness and woe from LaLa Land); others show why Mike often had the best story in his own anthology.

The award winners are well represented here too, including "Seven Views of Olduvai Gorge" which happens to be one of those stories that Mike gave me exactly 24 hours to declare acceptable which, of course, I did. There was no way I'd ever turn my back on a Resnick story, even if it wasn't a guaranteed award winner. Mike is one of our best writers, and the stories in this collection prove that.

So I let him make his empty promises and insult my husband with whom he always

plans silly & successful projects) and I tell him I'll go to Africa or Bora Bora with him and Carol as long as I can bring the golf geek.

Because being with Mike is like reading a Resnick story. You never know what's going to happen next.



## A Brief Guide To Getting Along With Mike Resnick

Provided for the Safety and Serenity of Tropicon 18 Attendees

by Laura Resnick

Don't wake him. Ever.

Don't forget the first guideline. Ever.

Always maintain maximum safe distance until coffee has been administered.

Be sure to mention what a charming and attractive woman his daughter is.

If you value your fingers and hands, keep them away from his plate.

Remove all "green food" (e.g. vegetables) from his presence.

In an emergency, administer Skippy Peanut Butter. The creamy variety.

Never be caught reading Connie Willis. If caught, pretend to be comparing her writing unfavorably with his own.

Hang breathlessly on every word of any tale he begins with the words, "One time when I was in Africa..."

It would be a mistake to be impolite to his wife, Carol, and suicidally foolhardy to flirt with her.



Mention how much better you like his books than Jack Chalker's, George Alec Effinger's, David Brin's, Lois McMaster Bujold's, Orson Scott Card's, and Maureen McHugh's books. Make it clear that you've only left out Connie Willis's books because they don't even deserve to be mentioned in the same breath with his.

If... When he brings up horse racing, pretend to be fascinated. If that effort is beyond you, pretend to have a severe bladder infection.

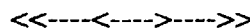
Praise the music of Stephen Sondheim and the song stylings of the Andrews Sisters. Condemn all popular music composed after 1953.

You can lend him money without worrying, but don't loan him toys if you want them back

~~If conversation lags....~~ If you can get a word in edgewise, feel free to ask about any of the following: his books, his short stories, his articles, his collaborations, his screenplays, his editing, his dog days, his safaris, his collections, Broadway musicals, old Warner Brothers movies, next year's Derby prospects, most major sports, and science fiction through the ages.

Be sure to mention what a brilliant writer his daughter is.

**If you observe this simple set of rules, you should get through Tropicon 18 without trauma. If you ignore them, however, the committee will not be held responsible.**



## A Writer of Rare Design

by George Peterson

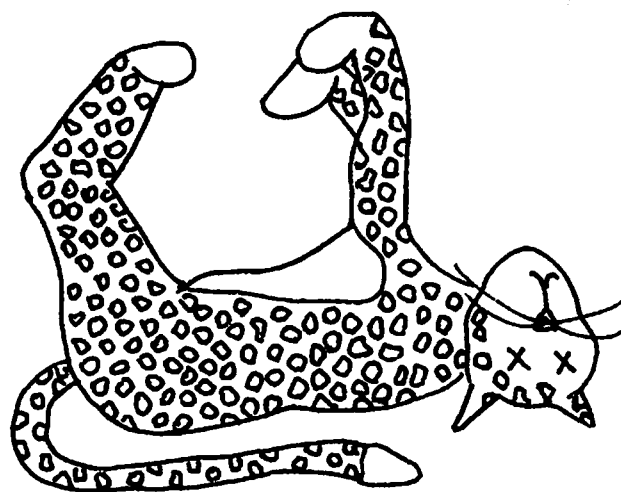
I first met Mike Resnick when he came to Tropicon 14 to be our Toastmaster.

My big coup that year, as director of programming, was tracking down Daniel Keyes, author of Flowers for Algernon and asking him to come to Tropicon. Keyes had been an active fan back in the Fifties but had gone on to other things and other subjects. This was his first convention in over 30 years. Keyes came that Friday evening to the first ever Velvet Comet Meet the Pros Party. His appearance was quite a success.

One of the moments I remember most was when Mike Resnick, resplendent in a bright Hawaiian shirt, shorts and sandals, walked up to Keyes, hand extended, voice a little choked up, to tell him how much he'd admired Keyes' writing. He looked like he was almost ready to drop to his knees, bow, and say, "Oh Great Master..." I immediately had flashback to a certain 18 year old neofan at the 1980 worldcon walking up to shake Isaac Asimov's hand. Mike Resnick has lots of Hugos and other awards, and his nominations seem nearly endless. But on meeting Dan Keyes, he was a fan through and through. I decided that I liked Mike Resnick.

As an SF writer, Mike falls into the category of telling modern myths and fables. His work is less about the cutting edge of scientific and sociological speculations, than it is explorations of the human desire to tame the world, to create utopia in our own images, and the consequences of those actions on others. When reading his books and stories, there are no ringworlds, no oddly-shaped planets, no super science. Instead we have Koriba sitting outside his boma, telling his stories and valiantly, vainly trying to fashion and maintain his utopia in the Kirinyaga series. And we have Xavier Lennox of A Miracle of Rare Design being surgically transformed into one alien form after another, slowly losing his humanity in the process. Or Hermes the tour guide of "The 43 Antarean Dynasties" remembering past glories. Or Barnaby, a "literate" chimpanzee, lost in the African forests. Or "The Pale Thin God" being judged by the other gods. So many stories of tragedy, of loss, but also of hope, dreams of the future.

(continued on page 19)



## ...on Mike Resnick

by Esther Friesner

Mount Kilimanjaro is big. Really, really big. Almost as big as Mike Resnick's career. Somewhere up there where there's snow all over the place is the dead body of a leopard. No one knows why the leopard went all the way up to the top of Mount Kilimanjaro. There is no game up there. Probably the leopard was very, very stupid. Stupid or not, that leopard messed up a nifty metaphor, because Mike Resnick's career does not have any dead cats lying around. It is far too cool for that. If the man wins any more Hugos he's going to have to build a missile silo to keep them in. Yet, for a wonder, in addition to his remarkable talent as writer, he has managed to carve out a second career as a free-ranging Babe Magnet. If you don't believe me, just ask him. (Seriously, though, he has been married to the lovely and charming Carol for oodles of ages and once told me his only regret is that he didn't meet her sooner. Good man, Mike. Smart man, Mike.)

None of which has a whole lot to do with Mount Kilimanjaro, but that is probably just as well, since the sound of whirring coming from the direction of Mr. Ernest Hemingway's grave as I write this is proving most distracting. So fahgeddabout Mount Kilimanjaro and start paying attention to Mike. You'll have a much more entertaining time.

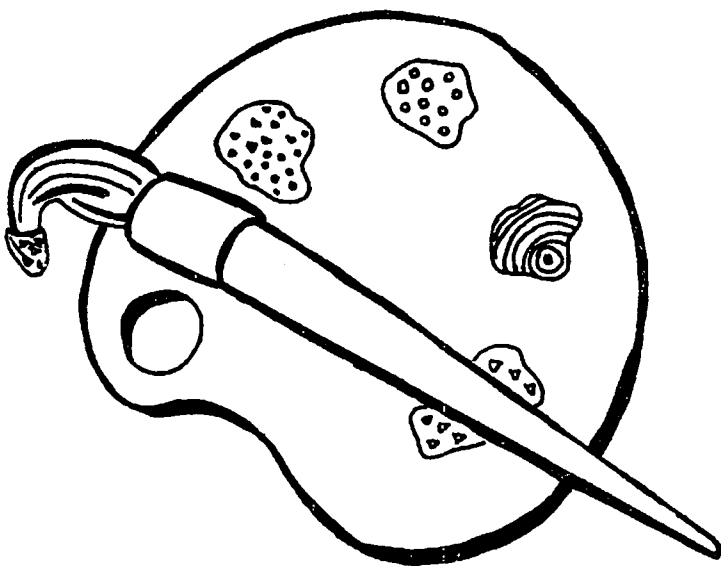
**On the  
Artist Guest of Honor...  
Ron Walotsky  
by Vincent Di Fate**

The art of Ron Walotsky is surrealistic in tone and is further distinguished by a unique sense of color, making him one of the top talents in SF these days. Born in Brooklyn, Ron graduated from the School of Visual Arts in 1966 and by 1967 did his first commission in the genre, a cover painting for *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*. His long-standing relationship with *F&SF* has resulted in his producing more than forty covers for the magazine over the last three decades. A prolific illustrator, Ron Walotsky does far more than SF illustration and is also active in the gallery market, where he does some three-dimensional art as well as painting.

The genre authors with whom his art is most closely associated are Robert Silverberg, Piers Anthony, Roger Zelazny, and in recent years Stephen King, Anne Rice, and Tom Clancy. Ron is also a frequent Chesley Award nominee and has also been nominated for the Hugo Award. He holds a Frank R. Paul Award for Outstanding Achievement in Science Fiction Illustration and was a Guest of Honor at the 1996 World Fantasy Convention in Chicago.

-- Vincent Di Fate from

*Infinite Worlds: The Fantastic Visions of Science Fiction Art* (Penguin Studio, NY 1997)



Science fiction has always been at the cutting edge. One could complain of its meager track record for successful prediction (knowing full well that prediction is not what it's about, anyway), and the complaint would be justified. But when the literature has proven accurate in such matters, it has yielded quite a few corkers: mechanized weapons, poison gas, germ warfare, flying machines, guided missiles, interplanetary rockets, satellites, nuclear power, atomic bombs, computers, lasers, robots, artificial body parts, organ transplants, genetic engineering, space stations - and the list goes on. Who could deny that the atomic bomb, for instance (an idea now officially attributed to H. G. Wells), altered the sociopolitical landscape of the mid to late 20th Century? It touched all our lives through the fearsome vehicle of the Cold War and caused us to consider the unthinkable. It may also have brought an end to global war forever. You know all this, of course, or you wouldn't be here at the Tropicon celebrating the power of this imaginative artform.

Your Artist Guest of Honor, the venerable and wizened (that means old and shriveled, in case these euphemisms are lost on you) and monumentally gifted Ron Walotsky casts a giant shadow on the landscape of fantastic art -- and let me tell you why. Ron is, for the most part, a serious surrealistic painter. His art is not the ephemeral stuff of pulp fluff, but is instead an attempt to move beyond the expected by the careful selection and juxtaposition of pictorial elements. This added level of meaning gives his art durability, as compared to the more "traditional" and straightforwardly narrative images one is likely to see on the SF book racks these days. Furthermore, Ron was one of an intrepid handful of uniquely talented artists who introduced surrealism full blown into the genre in the 1960s. The real pioneers of SF surrealism were Hannes Bok and Richard Powers who used this type of imagery in the publishing field as early as the 1940s. But it took mammoth talents like Ron Walotsky, Leo and Diane Dillon, Don Ivan Punchatz and a handful of others to make it a fixture in fantastic literature during one of its more fertile and volatile periods, the era of SF's "New Wave." And again at the vanguard of a trend, SF was the means by which this kind of art was first accepted by the commercial art world. It grew in popularity in our culture during the '60s and

**Tropicon XVIII: The Program Book**

eventually took over the very mainstream of American illustration in the 1970s and '80s.

Surrealism, for the handful of Philistines out there who may not be familiar with the term, is a movement in the arts that grew out of Dadaism in the early decades of the 20th Century. The catalyst, however, was the groundbreaking work of Sigmund Freud and, most especially his psychoanalytic method. Freud believed that dreams were actually a kind of metaphoric communication between the mind's levels of consciousness. His theories were once universally accepted, but some scientists maintain that dreaming is merely an electrochemical process that occurs during REM sleep and functions only to discharge unused electrical energy in the body's neurological system. Whether or not Freud's ideas still have validity is immaterial from the standpoint of making pictures, for the fact remains that these are still fascinating notions and the cryptic nature of surrealist art is startling to behold. Stopping people in their tracks is what good art is suppose to do, and for commercial art, it's a must. If the image causes us to pause and think, all the better, for after all, that's what SF is -- or is suppose to be -- a literature of ideas.

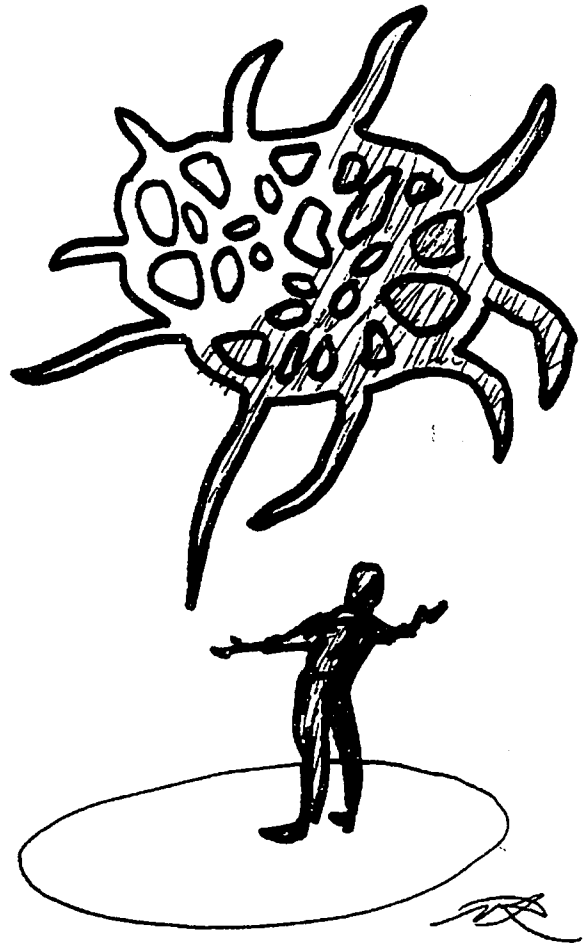
Of course, when one attempts to find the roots of surrealism it becomes evident that these images have been with us throughout the entire human experience. They appear in countless cave paintings and on the walls of tombs and temples of long gone civilizations in the form of an endless procession of deities, monsters and sub-creatures. The renaissance painting masters Hieronymus Bosch and Pieter Brueghel employed these fearsome images some five hundred years ago, long before the time when the "interior landscape" was known. These men are thought by many art historians to have been the forerunners of surrealism, but they no doubt conjured their visions from the same place that artists have before and since - from their dreams and their imaginations. If the truth were known, this kind of art shares more than a casual affinity with all realms of fantastic vision and is part of the same vast tapestry. Surrealism, as it turns out, is also the only art movement to have been inspired by a field of scientific study.

What Ron Walotsky brings to the mix to further distinguish himself is a uniquely individual sense of color. His art disarms and electrifies;

freezes you in your tracks and makes you ask the question, "what goes on here?" Yes, what goes on here. What indeed!

In addition to being immensely talented, the esteemed and sage (again, that really means old -- after all, he's even older than I am!) Mr. Walotsky is one hell of a nice guy. This Brooklyn born artist is like the living personification of a great "New York moment:" part fire, part ice, all heart. And did I mention that he was old? Well, the grizzled old goat's damned charming, too. Boy it hurts my whole face to admit it!

Good luck, Ron old buddy. You truly deserve this.





## On our Filk Guest...

### Joe Ellis, aka RoboFilker

by Glen "Scruffy" Hammer

I first encountered Joe Ellis at Ohio Valley Filk Fest (OVFF) 7. All the other filkers there played guitar but Joe was playing his keyboard and, of course, was playing it very well. (Okay I'm lying, there was one autoharp player there as well but that's kind of like a push-button guitar.) This was soon after Joe had finished his first tape, Robofilker, and we were treated a rousing rendition of that song as well as many others over the course of the weekend. I was new to "big time" filking at this point, and had not yet been introduced to the concept of "filkish purity." This is the rather quaint, and in my opinion misguided, notion that if you have to plug it in, it isn't filk. I'm happy to say that since I was introduced to Joe's music prior to my meeting up with this particular sentiment, I have never put any credence in the idea. Joe does all the things that particular brand of filk nazi dislikes, he plays an electronic instrument, he (gasp!) pre-programs his songs, he writes and arranges pieces for multiple voices and instruments, and worst of all he does so completely unashamedly. Of course, if you don't believe in that particular notion about filk, you will probably enjoy what he does very much.

#### from the Tropicon 18 website:

Joe Ellis (aka RoboFilker) hails from the Orlando area and is best known for his songs about the space program. He has a couple of CDs out, The Dream is Alive - Music Of The Space Shuttles, and The Synthetic Filker, which sport songs such as: "Enterprise", "Columbia's Children", "On The Middeck", "No Strings Attached", "The Challenge of Space", "Dawn of Discovery", "Atlantis Rising", "A Vision of Tomorrow", "Endeavour: Dreamlifter", "RoboFilker", "Vanguard, Harbors". He has also written "The Dream is Alive", which is a 4 movement instrumental suite based on a typical space shuttle mission.

## On our Media Guest...

### Peter Woodward

Peter Woodward has been in "the Industry" since the 1970s. Under the heading of "Notable TV Appearances", the Internet Movie Database lists his performance in an episode of the television series "The Professionals" in 1977.

He has done work both behind and in front of the camera. In his "behind the scenes" jobs he has been a fight arranger and a fight director. More recently, he has written and produced and acted in *The House of Angelo* (1997), with his father, Edward Woodward.

With regards to his work in front of the camera, fans of **Babylon 5** will recognize him as Galen, the Technomage who made his first appearance in the TV movie *Babylon 5: A Call to Arms*. His character later appears in the sequel series, **Crusade**.

Currently, Peter is working on a new film, *Patriot*, that should be coming out in 2000.

It will be interesting to hear his views on the film industry and where the future of science fiction television might be heading.

<<----->----->>

## A Visit from the Technomage

by George Peterson

Once upon a midnight dreary, as I pondered, weak and weary, over many a game of FreeCell. As I nodded, nearly napping, there came a tapping at my chamber door, as of someone gently rapping at my chamber door.

I checked but it was just that damn bird again. Why it likes sitting on that bust of Pallas, I don't know. So I shooed it away, and as I drew in my head and turned around there came a gust of wind. You know, the kind of strange and mysterious wind from out of nowhere, where it shouldn't be, that signifies something potentious.

(continued on page 10)

(continued from page 9)

I completed my turn around, and there, on the other side of the room, was a figure, tall, dark, and cloaked. The shadows seemed to flow out of him and I could see very little detail save a set of very intense eyes looking out at me. He held a long staff with a clear crystal sphere on one end.

This was obviously not a typical evening in the Peterson residence.

"Who are you," I asked. "What do you want? Why are you here?"

"Hmm," the figure said, his voice deep, resonant and British. "Those are usually my questions to ask. I am known to your world as Peter Woodward. Rest assured, the answers to the other questions will come in the fullness of time..." He paused.

"Yes, I said, I've seen **Crusade**."

"Tropicon," he said, uttering the name as if it were that of a demon. "You have a gathering being held soon, in November, do you not?"

I sighed. Such are the trials of being a Con Chair.

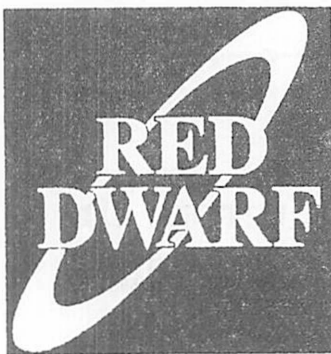
"Yes, Tropicon 18, November nineteenth to the twenty-first; Mike Resnick and Ron Walotsky are our guests of honor..."

"I will be there," his voice commanding, as if uttering an incantation. "I have much to do in the interregnum, but I will be there. You will make a place ready."

I found myself trembling. But, with a great effort of will, I pulled my wits about myself, and summoned all my eloquence and replied, "Cool."

"Expect me when you see me," he announced, and with a gesture of his staff, he vanished in a gust wind.

I paused in the suddenly empty room, then said, "You could have just phoned."



If you are a fan of great science fiction comedy

Red Dwarf is truly **MUST SEE TV!**

So watch weeknights at midnight on



**Channel 2 weeknights at 12 midnight.**

And by the way, keep watching, because we hope to have some exciting news very soon regarding **Red Dwarf** in March of 2000!

## On our Other Guests...

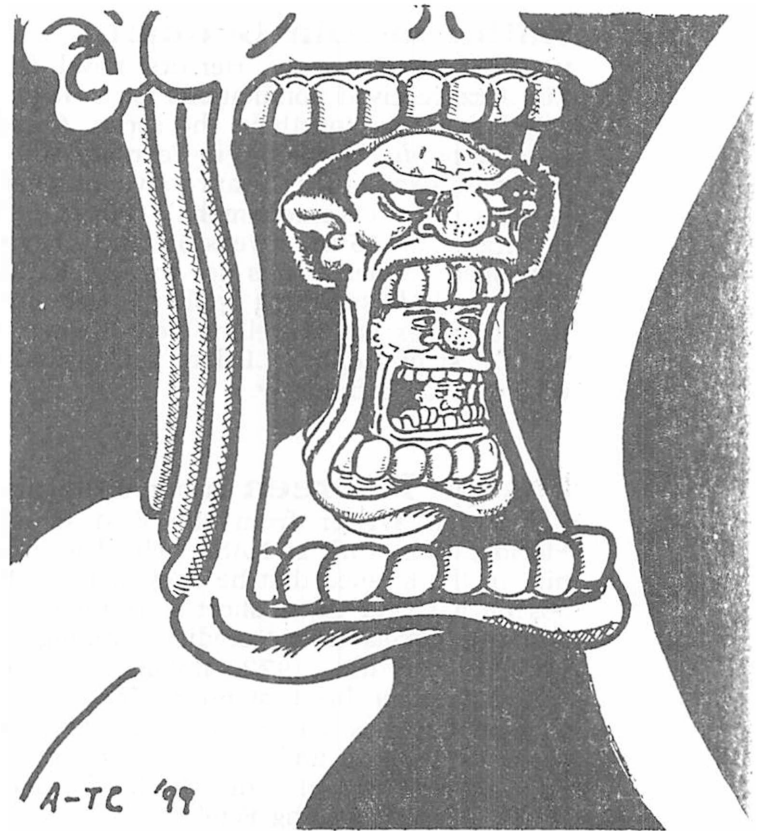
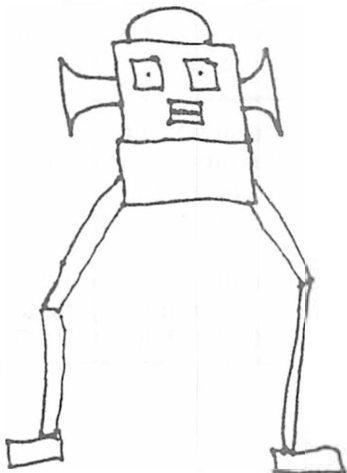
by Shirlene Rawlik

(with abundant help from a variety of sources!)

**Lynn Abbey** was our Guest of Honor for Tropicon VIII. Her work on the Thieves' World<sup>tm</sup> series helped to shape an entire decade of fantasy and her first novel *Daughter of the Bright Moon* is considered to be a classic of the genre. Lynn's work for TSR in both the Dark Sun and Forgotten Realms settings has thrilled fans. Her latest novels include, *Siege of Shadows*, *The Simbul's Gift*, *Planeswalker*, and *Jerlayne*.

**Adam-Troy Castro** is SFSFS's resident "king of short fiction". His novel masquerading as a novelette, "The Funeral March of the Marionettes", was nominated for both a Hugo and a Nebula in 1998. He also garnered a Stoker nomination for "Neither Rain Nor Sleet". When not working on the latest installment in his ongoing Vossoff and Nimmitz short story series (or the novels about a webslinging, highly copyrighted superhero who must not be named here), Adam willingly co-habitates with 2 neurotic cats in northern Broward County.

**Hal Clement** (Harry Clement Stubbs) was named SFWA's Grand Master for 1998! Known for his classic *Mission of Gravity*, Hal is also a master of the science behind the fiction that has thrilled fans and pros alike. NESFA Press in the midst of publishing a three volume set called *The Essential Hal Clement*. Volume I was published in March of this year and is called *Trio for Slide Rule and Typewriter*. Additionally, Hal's newest novel, *Half Life*, was published by Tor in September of this year.



**Barbara Delaplace** is a writer of short science fiction and a collector of fountain pens. She's also a Canadian who relocated to the wilds of Florida for love's sake. Her short story, "Black Ice", garnered her a HOMer Award (given out by the Compuserve Science Fiction & Fantasy Forum) in 1992. Other by Barbara include: "Modern Mansions"; "The Lost and Found Shop"; and "Home Key". Barbara's first writing collaboration with her husband appeared in *Alternate Tyrants*, edited by our Guest of Honor. The short story is "That'll be the Day" and her husband -- a.k.a. her stud muffin -- is Jack C. Haldeman, II.

**Charles L. Fontenay** is our distinguished Gentleman Writer from the West Coast of Florida. He has been publishing science fiction since the 50's, with works like *Rebels of the Red Planet*, "Disqualified", and "The Hole in the Air". His ongoing Kipton adventure series for young readers is firmly rooted in the Heinlein tradition. And, unlike teenaged protagonists of young adult series, Charles is actually letting Kipton grow up! He was the Guest of Honor for SFSFS' Travelling Fete 3.

**Kathleen Ann Goonan** is a first time guest to Tropicon. Her first novel, *Queen City Jazz*, received nominations for a Hugo and a Nebula. Her fourth in the series, *Crescent City Rhapsody*, is due out in February of 2000. She has also had an impressive number of short stories ("Kamehameha's Bones", "The String", "Sunflowers") and reviews published. When she is not writing, Kathleen makes truly lipsmacking apple pie, ask any of the attendees to Travelling Fete 6 (where she was Guest of Honor) ...I dare you to find one who can say differently.

**Joseph L. Green** is our distinguished Gentleman Writer from the East Coast of Florida. His work at NASA helped to ground him in the science that he uses in his fiction. Joseph has over thirty short story publications and five novels to his credit. Although best known for his 1972 novel, *Conscience Interplanetary*, his first novel, *The Loafers of Refuge* (1965) is a fabulous cautionary tale of space exploration and the wonders that await us. Joseph was also the Guest of Honor at SFSFS' first Travelling Fete!

**Jack C. Haldeman, II** is a really busy guy! When he is not consumed with the demands of his "real job" -- something to do with a CD-Rom, 4,000 documents and agriculture in Florida -- he's writing short stories...lots of them, like: "Garden of Eden"; "Songs of Dying Swans"; "We, the People"; "The Rosy-Cheeked Girl Who Danced on the Deck of the Titanic"; and "Enemy of the State". He is obviously not satisfied with the eight published novels -- like *High Steel*, *The Fall of Winter*, *Vector Analysis* -- he has to his name and is working on a ninth with Jack Dann (current title is *Ghost Dance*).

**Hershell Gordon Lewis** is the "Godfather of Gore". His work, *Blood Feast*, is acknowledged by many to be the first gore movie ever made. From there, he continued to make more than two dozen films (*She-Devils on Wheels*, *The Wizard of Gore*, *The Gore Gore Girls*) that highlighted the many bloody ways an individual can brought to a premature expiration date...with eyes open and blood seeping from gaping wounds. Mr. Lewis lives in Florida.

**Holly Lisle** is living the dream of most writers today. She works at home. Holly won the Philip K. Dick Award in 1992 and the Compton Crook Award (given out by the Baltimore Science Fiction Society) in 1993 for *Fire in the Mist*, her first solo novel. Since then, she has published nineteen novels. Holly is currently putting the finishing touches on the *Courage of Falcons*, the third book in her Sacred Texts series. She lives in the wilds of western Broward County with her husband, three kids and assorted felines.

**Glenn Meganck** leads a double life! On one hand there is Glenn, the author of several young adult science fiction novels about the adventures of Jimmy Deal and his friend, the alien from Ritar, Eon (*Big Deal, Big Deal at the Center of the Earth, No Big Deal*). On the other hand, there is Glenn publishing under the pseudonym of J.R. Ripley, author of several mysteries, *Stiff in the Freezer and Skulls of Sedona*. Whomever he decides to be at the moment, we welcome Glenn to his first Tropicon and hope that he enjoys himself!

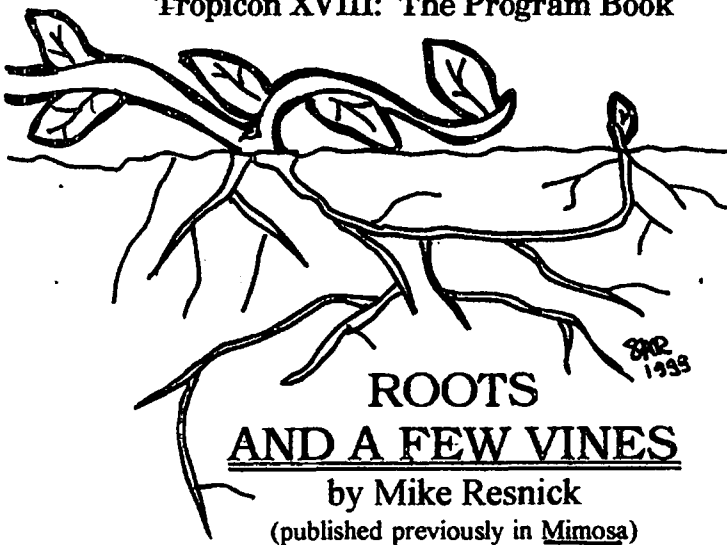
**Laurie S. Sutton** is a former editor of DC Comics, Marvel/Epic Comics, Tekno Comics, and Donning/Starblaze. She has written for a number of comics, including Marvel's *Star Trek: Voyager*, Malibu's *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*, and *Witch Hunter*.

**Rick Wilber** -- to the casual observer -- seems to aspire to Asimovian heights when it comes to prolific publishing. He has more than a thousand published works to his credit and has yet to hit his midway point. Oh, and Rick also is, to put it lightly, a great fan of the Game...y'know, baseball. *Where Garagiola Waits, and Other Short Stories* (1999) is a collection of his previously published essays and short stories all about the Game. Rick's first adult novel, *Ice Covers the Hole*, is due out from Tor sometime in the near future.

James White, author  
Hospital Station series  
b. April 7, 1928  
d. August 23, 1999

Walt Willis, fanzine publisher  
*Slant and Hyphen*  
d. October 20, 1999





## ROOTS AND A FEW VINES

by Mike Resnick

(published previously in *Mimosia*)

So I'm sitting there in Winnipeg, resplendent in my tuxedo, and morbidly wondering how many fans have called me "Mr. Resnick" instead of "Mike" since the worldcon began three days ago.

I don't feel like a Mister. I feel like a fan who is cheating by sitting here with all the pros, waiting for Bob Silverberg to announce the winner of the Best Editor Hugo. He goes through the names: Datlow, Dozois, Resnick, Rusch, Schmidt.

He opens the envelope and reads off Kris Rusch's name, and suddenly I am walking up to the stage. Bob is sure I thought he called out my name, and looks like he is considering clutching the Hugo to his breast and running off with it (although that is actually a response common to all pros when they are in proximity to a Hugo), but finally he sighs and hands it over to me, and I start thanking Ed Ferman and all the voters.

What am I doing here, I wonder, picking up a Hugo for a lady who is half my age and has twice my talent and is drop-dead gorgeous to boot? How in blazes did I ever get to be an Elder Statesman?

\* \* \*

Well, it began in 1962, which, oddly enough, was not just last year, no matter how it feels. Carol and I had met at the University of Chicago in 1960. We'd gone to the theater on our first date, and wound up in the Morrison Hotel's coffee shop, where we talked science fiction until they threw us out at 5 in the morning. It was the first time either of us realized that someone else out there read that crazy Buck Rogers stuff (though we might have guessed, since they continued to print it month after month, and two sales per title would hardly seem enough to keep the publishers in business.)

Well, 1962 rolls around, and so does a future Campbell winner named Laura...but the second biggest event of the year comes when Ace Books, under the editorship of Don Wollheim, starts pirating a bunch of Edgar Rice Burroughs novels, and a whole generation gets to learn about Tarzan and Frank Frazetta and John Carter and Roy Krenkel and David Innes all at once.

But the important thing, the thing that unquestionably shaped my adult life, was that one of the books had a little blurb on the inside front cover extolling ERB's virtues, and it was signed "Camille Cazedessus, Editor of *ERB-dom*". Well, you didn't have to be a genius to figure out that *ERB-dom*, at least in that context, was an obvious reference to Edgar Rice Burroughs.

A whole magazine devoted to one of my favorite writers? I could barely wait until the next morning, when I took the subway downtown and entered the Post Office News, Chicago's largest magazine store. I looked for *ERB-dom* next to *Time*, *Life*, *Look*, *Newsweek*, and *Playboy*. Wasn't there. I looked for it next to *Analog*, *Galaxy*, and *F&SF*. No dice. Wasn't anywhere near *Forbes* or *Fortune* or *Business Week* either.

So I go up to the manager and tell him I'm looking for *ERB-dom*, and he checks his catalogs and tells me there ain't no such animal.

I grab him by the arm, drag him over to the paperbacks, pull out the operative Burroughs title, turn to the inside front cover, and smite him with a mighty "Aha!"

So he promises to get cracking and find out who publishes this magazine and start stocking it, and I return to our subterranean penthouse (i.e., basement apartment) to await the Good News.

Which doesn't come.

I nag Post Office News incessantly. I nag my local bookstore. I nag the public library. I even nag my mother. (This seems counter-productive, but she has been nagging me for 20 years and fair is fair.)

Finally, I look at my watch and it is half-past 1962 and there is still no sign of *ERB-dom*, so I write to the editor, Miss Cazedessus (so okay, until then I'd never heard of a guy named Camille), in care of Ace Books, and a month later the first five issues of *ERB-dom* arrive in the mail, the very first fanzines I have ever seen, along with a long, friendly letter that constantly uses the arcane word "worldcon".

Within two months I have written three long articles for *ERB-dom* #6 and have become its associate editor. There is a worldcon in Chicago that summer, not a 20-minute subway ride from where we live, but the future Campbell winner chooses August 17 to get herself born, and we do not go to the worldcon. When she is 8 days old I decide to forgive her and lovingly show her off to her grandparents, and she vomits down the back of my Hawaiian shirt (which, in retrospect, could well have been an editorial comment), and it is 27 years before I willingly touch her again, but that is another story.

There is one other thing that happens in 1962. We are living at the corner of North Shore and Greenview in the Rogers Park area of Chicago, and right across street of us is this old apartment building, and on the third Saturday of every month strange-looking men and women congregate there. They have long hair, and most of them are either 90 pounds overweight or 50 pounds underweight, and often they are carrying books under their arms. We decide they are members of SNCC or

CORE, which are pretty popular organizations at the time, and that they are meeting there to figure out how to dodge the draft, and that the books they carry are either pacifist tracts or ledgers with the names and addresses of all the left-wing groups that have contributed money to them.

We have to go all the way to Washington D.C. a year later and attend Discon I to find out that they are not draft dodgers (well, not primarily, anyway) but rather Chicago fandom, and that they have been meeting 80 feet from our front door for 2 years.

\* \* \*

So I wend my way back through the audience, and I find my seat, and I hand Kris Rusch's Hugo to Carol, because I am also up for Best Short Story, and I think I've got a better chance at this, and when I run up to accept the award it will look tacky to already be carrying a Hugo. Besides, Charles Sheffield is sitting right next to us, and he is up for Best Novelette, and he is getting very nervous, and wants to stroke the Hugo for luck, or maybe is considering just walking out with it and changing the name plates at a future date. (In fact, I am convinced that if he does not win his own, neither Kris nor I will ever see her Hugo again. Charles will probably deny this, but never forget that Charles gets paid an inordinate amount of money to tell lies to the public at large.)

So Guy Gavriel Kay begins reading off the nominees, and suddenly I realize that I am not nervous at all, that this is becoming very old hat to me. I have been nominated for nine Hugos in the past six years. I have actually won a pair. Worldcons are very orderly things: you show up, you sign a million autographs, you eat each meal with a different editor and line up your next year's worth of work, and then you climb into your tux and see if you won another Hugo.

It's gotten to be such a regular annual routine, you sometimes find yourself idly wondering: was it always like this?

Then you think back to your first worldcon, and you realize that no, it was not always like this...

\* \* \*

Right off the bat, we were the victims of false doctrine. Everyone we knew in fandom -- all six or seven of them -- told us the worldcon was held over Labor Day weekend. So we took them at their word.

The problem, of course, was the definition of "weekend". We took a train that pulled out of Chicago on Friday morning, and dumped us in the basement of our Washington D.C. hotel at 9:00 Saturday morning. At which time we found out that the convention was already half over.

(Things were different then. There were no times in the convention listings. In fact, there were no convention listings. Not in *Analog*, not anywhere. If you knew that worldcons even existed, you were already halfway to being a trufan.)

Caz (right: he wasn't a Miss at all) met us and showed us around. Like myself, he was dressed in a suit and tie; it was a few more worldcons before men wore shirts without jackets or ties, even during the afternoons, and every woman -- they formed, at most, 10% of the attendees, and over half were writers' wives -- wore a skirt. If you saw someone with a beard -- a relatively rare occurrence -- you knew he was either a pro writer or Bruce Pelz.

When we got to the huckster room -- 20-plus dealers (and selling only books, magazines, and fanzines; none of the junk that dominates the tables today), I thought I had died and gone to heaven. The art show had work by Finlay and Freas and Emsh and even Margaret Brundage; only J. Allen St. John was missing from among the handful of artists whose work I knew and admired.

They had an auction. It even had a little booklet telling you what items would be auctioned when, so you knew which session to attend to get what you wanted. Stan Vinson, a famous Burroughs collector who had been corresponding with me for a year, bought a Frazetta cover painting for \$70. Friends told him he was crazy; paintings were supposed to appreciate, and no one would ever pay that much for a Frazetta again. I bought a Finlay sketch for \$2.00, and an autographed Sturgeon manuscript for \$3.50.

In the afternoon we decide to go to the panels. I do not know from panels; like any neo, I take along a pencil and a notebook. The panels are not what we have these days, or at least they did not seem so to my untrained and wondrous eyes and ears.

For example, there is a panel with Willy Ley and Isaac Asimov and Fritz Leiber and L. Sprague de Camp and Ed Emsh and Leigh Brackett, and the topic is "What Should a BEM Look Like?". (I have a copy of the *Discon Proceedings*, a transcript of the entire convention published by Advent, and to this day when I need a new alien race I re-read that panel and invariably I come up with one.)

There was a panel with Fred Pohl and a tyro named Budrys and a gorgeous editor (though not as gorgeous as the one I accepted a Hugo for) named Cele Goldsmith and even \*\*\*John Campbell Himself\*\*\*, on how to write stories around cover paintings, which was a common practice back then, and which remains fascinating reading today.

There was a sweet old guy in a white suit who saw that we were new to all this, and moseyed over and spent half an hour with us, making us feel at home and telling us about how we were all one big family and inviting us to come to all the parties at night. Then he wandered off to accept the first-ever Hall of Fame Award from First Fandom. When they asked if he was working on anything at present, he replied that he had just delivered the manuscript to *Skylark DuQuesne*, and received the second-biggest ovation I have ever heard at a worldcon. (The biggest came 30 years later, when Andy Porter broke a 12-year losing streak and won the semi-prozine Hugo in 1993.) (continued on page 15)

Since we didn't know anyone, and were really rather shy (over the years, I have learned to over-compensate for this tendency, as almost anyone will tell you, bitterly and at length,) we ate dinner alone, then watched the masquerade, which in those days was truly a masquerade ball and not a competition. There was a band, and everyone danced, and a few people showed up in costume, and every now and then one of them would march across the stage, and at the end of the ball they announced the winners.

Then there was the Bheer Blast. In those bygone days, they didn't show movies. (I think movies turned up in 1969, not to display the Hugo nominees or give pleasure to the cinema buffs, but to give the kids a place to sleep so they'd stop cluttering up the lobby.) They didn't give out the Hugos at night, either. (An evening banquet might run \$5.00 a head, and the concom got enough grief for charging \$3.00 a head for rubber chicken served at 1:00 PM rather than six hours later.) They didn't have more than one track of programming. (Multiple tracks came along 8 years later, and evening programs even later than that.)

Well, with all the things they didn't have, they needed a way to amuse the congoers in the evening, so what happened was this: every bid committee (and they only bid a year in advance back then) treated the entire convention to a beer party on a different night. We could all fit in one room -- I know the official tally for Discon I was 600, but I was there and I'll swear that there were no more than 400 or so in attendance; the other 200 must have been no-shows, or waiters, or bellboys -- and the bidding committee would treat us to a small lakeful of beer, with or without pretzels, and then the next night a rival bid would do the same thing. (You voted -- if you could drag yourself out of bed -- on Sunday morning at the business meeting. A fan would speak for each bid, telling you how wonderful his committee was. Then a pro would speak for each bid, telling you about the quality of restaurants you would encounter. The better restaurants invariably carried the day.)

After the beer blast was over, everyone vanished. The Burroughs people, all of them straighter than Tarzan's arrows, went to bed. We remembered that Doc Smith had mentioned parties, so we began wandering down the empty, foreboding corridors of the hotel, wondering if the parties really did exist, and how to find them.

We walked all the way down one floor, took the stairs up a flight, repeated the procedure, then did it again. We were about to quit when a door opened, and a little bearded man and a thin balding man, both with thick glasses, spotted our name badges and asked if we'd like to come in for a drink. We didn't know who the hell they were, but they had badges too, so we knew they were with the con and probably not about to mug a couple of innocents from Chicago, and we decided to join them.

Turns out they were standing in the doorway to a huge suite, and that their names were del Rey and Blish. Inside, wearing a bowtie and looking not unlike a penguin in his black suit, was Isaac Asimov. Randy Garrett was dressed in something all-satin and not of this century. Bob Silverberg looked young and incredibly dapper. Sam Moskowitz was speaking to Ed Hamilton and Leigh Brackett in a corner; this was many years before his throat surgery, and it was entirely possible, though unlikely, that no one in the basement could hear him.

And every last one of them went out of their way to talk to us and make us feel at home.

Later another young fan wandered in. Much younger than me. I was 21; Jack Chalker was only 19. We sat around, and discussed various things, and then something strange happened, something totally alien to my experience.

Someone asked Jack and I what we wanted to do with our lives. (No, that's not the strange part; people were always asking that.)

We each answered that we wanted to write science fiction.

And you know what? For the first time in my life, nobody laughed.

That's when I knew I was going to come back to worldcons for the rest of my life.

\* \* \*

So Guy Gavriel Kay reads off the list of nominees, and then he opens the envelope, and the winner is Connie Willis, and I am second to her again for the 83rd time (yeah, I know, I've only lost 76 Hugos and Nebulas to her, but it feels like 83), and everyone tells me I've won a moral victory because I have beat all the short stories and Connie's winner is a novelette that David Bratman, in his infinite wisdom, decided to move to the short story category, and I keep thinking that moral victories and 60 cents will get you a cup of coffee anywhere west of New York and east of California, and that I wish I didn't like Connie so much so that I could hate her just a little on Labor Day weekends, and my brain is making up slogans, modified slightly from my youth, slogans like Break Up Connie Willis, which is certainly easier than breaking up the Yankees, and I am wondering if Tanya Harding will loan me her bodyguard for a few days, and then I am at the Hugo Losers Party, and suddenly it doesn't matter that I've lost a Hugo, because it is now 31 years since that first worldcon I went to, and it is my annual family reunion, and I am visiting with friends that I see once or twice or, on good years, five times per year, and we have a sense of continuity and community that goes back for almost two-thirds of my life. Hugos are very nice, and I am proud of the ones I've won, and I am even proud of the ones I've lost, but when all is said and done, they are metal objects and my friends are people, and people are what life is all about.

And I find, to my surprise, that almost everyone I am talking to, almost all the old friends I am hugging and already planning to see again at the next worldcon, are fans. Some, like me, write for a living; a few paint; most do other things. But we share a common fannish history, and a common fannish language, and common fannish interests, and I realize that I even enjoyed the business meeting this year, and you have to be pretty far gone into fandom to enjoy Ben Yalow making a point of order.

\* \* \*

A lot of pros don't go to worldcon anymore. They prefer World Fantasy Con. It's smaller, more intimate, and it's limited to 750 members -- and while this is not official, there is nonetheless a "Fans Not Wanted" sign on the door.

That's probably why I don't go. It's true that worldcons have changed, that people who read and write science fiction are probably a minority special interest group these days, that bad movies will outdraw the Hugo ceremony...but the trufans are there. It just means you have to work a little harder to hunt them up.

One of the things I have tried to do with the new writers I have helped to bring into this field, the coming superstars like Nick DiChario and Barb Delaplace and Michelle Sagara and Jack Nimersheim and all the many others, is to not only show them how to make a good story better, or to get an editor to pick up the check for meals, but also to understand the complex and symbiotic relationship between fandom and prodom.

Some of them, like Nick, luck out and find it right away. Some, like Barb, wander into a bunch of Trekkies or Wookies or Beasties who won't read anything except novelizations, who are watchers rather than readers, whose only literary goal is to tell second-hand stories in a third-hand universe, and she wonders what the hell I'm talking about. Then I drag her to a CFG suite or a NESFA party and she meets the fandom I know, and suddenly she understands why we keep coming back.

\* \* \*

So I'm sitting in the airport, waiting to board the plane from Winnipeg to Minnesota. I think there are three mundanes on the flight; everyone else is coming from worldcon. Larry Niven's there, and Connie Willis, and maybe a dozen other pros, and one of the topics of conversation as we await the plane is whose names will make the cover of *Locus* if the plane crashes, and whose names will be in small print on page 37, and how many obituary issues Charlie Brown can get out of it. Then the topic turns to who you would rescue if the plane crashed: Connie and Larry and me, because you wanted more of our stories, or Scott Edelman and me, because you wanted us to be so grateful to you that we'd buy your next twenty stories. (That goes to show you the advantages of being able to do more than one thing well.)

Now, in any other group, that would be a hell of a morbid discussion, but because they were fans, and almost by definition bright and witty, it was the most delightful conversation I'd heard all weekend, and once again I found myself wondering what my life would have been like if Ace had not forwarded that letter to Caz 32 years ago.

And then I thought back to another convention, the 1967 worldcon. I was still very young, and too cynical by half, and when Lester del Rey got up to give his Guest of Honor speech, he looked out at the tables -- every worldcon until 1976 presented the GOH speech and the Hugo Awards at a banquet -- and said, "Every person in the world that I care for is here tonight."

And I thought: what a feeble thing to say. What a narrow, narrow life this man has lived. What a tiny circle of friends he has.

Well, I've sold 72 books of science fiction -- novels, collections, anthologies -- and I've won some awards, and I've paid some dues, and I don't think it's totally unrealistic to assume that sometime before I die I will be the Guest of Honor at a worldcon.

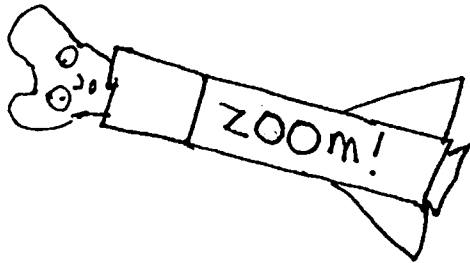
I've done a lot with my life (all with Carol's help, to be sure). I've taken several trips to Africa. I've bred 27 champion collies. I've owned and run the second-biggest boarding kennel in the country. I've sired a daughter than any father would be proud to call his own. I've been a lot of places, done a lot of things. I don't think I've led a narrow life at all.

But when I get up to make my Guest of Honor speech, I'll look around the room just the way Lester did, and, because I'm a reasonably honest man, I won't say what he said.

But I will say, "With three or four exceptions, every person in the world that I care for is here tonight."







## Programming

by Edie Stern and Joe Siclari

[Scheduling has not been set in stone; but, descriptions are here for your enlightenment. --Shirlene]

### Art Auction

[go to the Art Show Room for rules, details, stuff to bid on!]

### Banquet

[Saturday night, will be buffet, check at Registration for tickets, there is a post-meal surprise promised for all participants!]

### "The Body Alien"

Creating reasonable alien creatures. How do you use the physical aspects of the alien in the story? What do you consider when you're creating an alien mind vs a human mind? What aliens have worked the best? Which are the most memorable? What aliens have worked the worst? Have you come across fictional aliens that just don't ring true? Why? Is it the physiology or the mental aspects? What humans are the most alien? James White created a classification system for aliens. Is it workable? Can you create an alien classification system without aliens to base it on?

### "Buffy the Archetype"

What's going on with television? Where have all the fantasies come from? Is SF losing its popularity to TV fantasy? *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* has reached large popularity. What does it say to teenagers, and to adults? Buffy is not a shrinking violet, and neither is Seven of Nine, Xena, or other TV fantasy females. Do men find this threatening or interesting? Is the emphasis on fantasy detrimental to the desire of the young to aspire to scientific and technological careers? Are these heroines still bimbos?

### Charity Auction

[proceeds from auction to benefit both the SFSFS Building Fund and The Friends of Literacy...in other words, bid your tushie off!]

### Closing Ceremonies with Peterson, Siclari, and Warmuth

Handing over of the baton. Next year's location and guests. Fanhistoricon. Fan Fund. And have you heard about SMOFCon?

### Robofilker Concert by Joe Ellis

[He sings lustily, you listen appreciatively. That's how it works...trust me]

### "End of the World Prophecy - Milleniumism"

The Past, the Present, the Future. It's already so late, you better be right or people will remember you're wrong. Earthquakes in Turkey, mud in Mexico, nuclear accidents in Japan. What can you do for the end of the world in 41 days? What were the prophecies of the past and have they come true? What do the mystics or new age people say now? What do our sage SF forecasters say about the future?

### "Facts to Fiction: the newspaper biz and SF"

Newspaper writing sometimes leads to science fiction, with authors such as Cliff Simak having an illustrious newspaper and SF career. Does it prepare one for the craft? Do you have habits to learn and unlearn? What's different? What's the same? Does fanzine writing and editing teach you some of the same crafts? Does newspaper assignment writing prepare you to write things you really don't like in exchange for money?

### Guest of Honor Speeches

[see Robofilker Concert above. Same idea... without music... probably better that way...]

### "How Did We Get Here? An alternate approach to alternate history"

Alternate histories are certainly a popular form of SF. Why are we drawn to Alternate history? Does it fulfill a different need than other forms of SF or fantasy? Watching the pivot points unfold and the shape of the history make itself clear is a large part of the fun, and often taxing to the imagination. This panel is part challenge round. We'll give you five scenarios at the start of the panel, and ask you to brainstorm how you would shape an alternate history to achieve these moments. Example: Amerindian nation lands on the moon on 1945.

### “Indigenous Peoples”

Recent SF has used various indigenous cultures as the base for development of alien species and cultures. Fantasy has mined the mythology and history of nearly every group from Australian aborigines (Roessner) to Celtic (everybody) to Hawaiian and American Indian and African. Has SF been politically correct? Why is this a good springboard for fantasy and SF. Is SF sucking the soul out of indigenous cultures? Is this analogous to earlier economic imperialism? Have any cultures escaped and why?

### “Infamous Women”

Women you've known & loved in SF. What makes them interesting? Characters, characters based on real people, real people who should be SF characters. Are current female creations significantly different than Helen O'Loy? Do women write better women characters? Do men write women as men with breasts? What character is the best realized of SF women characters? What character is the worst? Why do readers sometimes think that women can write male characters, but that men can't write female characters?

### “Jacuzzi Horror Stories”

Have a taste for the *outré*? Join our resident horror mongers in or around the jacuzzi to hear tales you never heard around the campfire. If you've a delectable, despicable, disquieting few words to add, they will be most welcome.

### “Not Your Grandma's SF”

SF was once the province of lurid magazines, and the occasional comic strip. These days we also have graphic novels, cards, spinoffs, toys, games, too much television, movies (both grand and cheesy), etc. What's going on? Do these things challenge the imagination or stifle it? What's hot and what's not. What's interesting to work on? What's tiresome or repetitive? Who do you like to work with? What do you do to make the tedious worthwhile besides think of the paycheck? We're always talking about print and film. What's different about working in these industries?

### Open Filking

Bring a song on your lips, a guitar or bodhran if you play one (or whatever instrument you do play) and join the musically desirous as we sing of things that will be, and a few that never were.

### Opening Ceremonies:

[Where we welcome you to Tropicon 18 and point out the guests you should be aware of and the concom you should thank afterwards]

### Peter Woodward - Performing, Writing & Producing:

A Peter Woodward showcase of upcoming media events he is involved in.

Interview by George Peterson.

### Readings:

[Whereby the guests all get to give fans an earful on works in progress. Very similar to the Robofilker Concert. They speak, you listen.]

### “Righting for pleasure, righting for fun - Heroism in SF”

Heroes, anti-heroes, and the rest of us. Morality in SF and Fantasy. Are virtue and righteousness victims of modernity? Have cynics made it unfashionable to have heroes? What's the difference between the protagonist and the hero? Why is it sometimes easier in modern fiction to identify with the antagonist? Have we settled for mundane characters, that sometimes act heroically instead of heroic role models? Is that good? Is it realistic? As we discovering feet of clay on our national figures, have we lost our heroic goals? Who are your heroes in fact or fiction? Who would you like to be?

### “SF & Fannish Web Sites”

Favorite search arguments. Egoscanning the web. How to find what you're looking for, or at least a pointer to a pointer to a pointer to what you're looking for. Sites, pictures, stories, mythology, fannish intercourse. Come and find out the web sites that will keep you fascinated until the next Tropicon.

### “The SF Roadshow”

SF Roadshow; bring your SF collectibles and have the experts tell you about it, appraise it, and maybe tell you where to find more like it. Find out about your treasures and your white elephants.

### “SF Lists - Part 1”

Fun with your new/old century. Listen as our experts' list the best of the century in books, magazines, movies, television, radio, writers, artists, artists' models, and conventions and fanzines and filksongs and games and ... Join us and find out what you've missed, and what

you can still go back and find. The profundity of our experts is unmatched in SF circles. Maybe their rotundity too.

#### "Technology Today"

A sample of what's available thanks to the benefits of modern technology. Have you heard about what's coming in pervasive computing? Supercomputers out of PCs? Have you heard about digital VCR technology such as TiVO and Replay? Everyone knows about on line trading, but what about the Nokia 9000? Everyone is getting into the media business - and technologies include scene detection, face detection, voice recognition, speaker identification. What's new with rocket science? What's available in agricultural techniques? What's new in fertilizers? What genetically engineered crops are enraging European housewives? How is patent law aiding and abetting the new technologies? Rocket and e-books?

"Things you can't get away with anymore in hard SF, and how to get away with them anyway" with Hal Clement (slide show)

Tenderfoot on Venus seem a little out of date? Hard to imagine yourself fighting Lunar denizens (or Lunarians) with umbrellas? Let Hal Clement clue you in on those "Things you can't get away with anymore in hard SF, and how to get away with them anyway".

#### Trivia Free-for-All

Learn and earn tokens to spend in the dealers' room. Everyone can play. The first person with the correct answer earns a wooden nickel worth a dime (inflation you know) which can be spent with the Tropicon dealers. Questions on SF, Fantasy, Fandom, Science, Space, and Tropicon.

#### Trivia Master Competition

The top leaders of the Trivia Free-For-All will be asked back to participate for the Trivia Master title.

#### "TV Fantasy & Science Fiction in 1999 - 2000"

There is so much SF&F on TV now. Our experts give you a considered view on what will be worth wasting your time on for the rest of 1999 and the new millennium.

The Velvet Comet Meet the VIPs Party  
Meet the VIPs, and be one yourself. The Velvet Comet welcomes all our guests, attendees, and high rollers. Try our chancy games, and enjoy the ambience patterned on the immor(t)al venue of some of Mike Resnick's finest tales.

#### "Whether Harry Potter, Alice and Dorothy: Children's Fantasy & SF"

Harry Potter is redefining children's literature. What are the differences between children's literature these days and in the days of Heinlein and Norton's juveniles. How sophisticated are these kids? With SF taking over the mainstream, is SF and fantasy also taking over the children's books? Is fantasy or SF easier to sell? At what age does sex come into it?

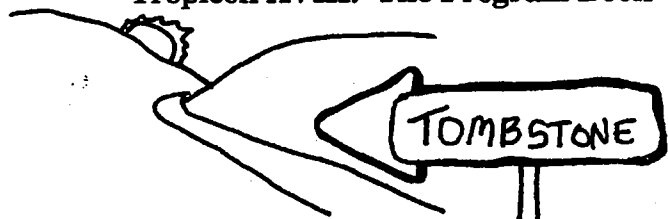
#### The Work of Ron Walotsky

Tropicon 18 Artist Guest of Honor, Ron Walotsky presents a narrated slide show of his art.

(continued from page 6)

Mike has won many awards, his nominations are even more numerous, an author who merits the Guest of Honor slot at any convention. However, he is also a *TruFan*. For many years he and his wife, Carol, were very much into ~~costuming and convention masquerades~~. They continue to attend many conventions every year, hanging out with fans, as well as with his professional colleagues. Mike has been a good friend to Florida Fandom, attending Tropicon and other conventions, supporting FANAC's Fan History Project, and helping with programming.

When I took over as Chairman of Tropicon, I receive lots of suggestions as to who I should invite to be guest of honor. Suggestions ranging from the grandiose to the obscure. In thinking it over, I decided that I didn't want only to invite someone I admire, but also to invite someone who's been there for us. There are certain rules one should follow in this world: don't spit into the wind, don't cheat on your spouse, don't ask Harlan about Last Dangerous Visions, and always take care of your friends.



## The Caretaker (a Mike Resnick Pastiche)

by Pete Rawlik

While Merchants, Politicians, Diplomats and their ilk all fought to expand and control the dominion of Man, it fell to the Caretakers to preserve the history, culture and arts of the aliens assimilated in the process. Foremost among these was Robur Collins of the Museum of Galactic History, who is perhaps best remembered for his hand in . . .

- from *Man: Twelve Millennia of Achievement*

. . . the destruction of countless cultures throughout the galaxy -- their native arts turned into mere geegaws -- can be blamed entirely on the efforts of the Museum of Galactic History. Robur Collins, its most influential director, is credited with one of the most repugnantly anthropocentric views of both alien cultures and galactic history.

- from *Origin and History of the Sentient Races*, Vol. 8

As the shuttlecraft door opened, its occupant could hear the lone figure running toward him yelling, "Dr. Collins, what are you doing here?"

The man identified as Collins stepped out of the transport and onto the hard sandy ground of the desert. The heat was dry and oppressive. The wind, blowing dust and sand only made things worse. He snatched a pair of goggles up to his face. "The question, young man, is what are you doing here?"

The young man held his head in false shame. "That's a good question, I guess. I mean, as far as the Museum of Galactic History is concerned Gordon Boughmon was assigned to the Albion Cluster. I shouldn't have left that post, sir, I know that, but what I have found here is important to ignore."

Collins snorted, "I'll be the judge of that."

"Of course, but I'm sure you'll agree. If you'll follow me, I'll fill you in on the details as we walk toward the dig."

Collins fell in behind his young colleague. "You are alone here?"

"Yes, I had hoped to hire some locals to help but there aren't any. This planet is listed by Cartography as being a chunk of methane ice, so no one has colonized it. There are remnants of an alien military base but it looks like they were wiped out millennia ago by some form of chemical warfare."

Collins nodded. "What brought you here then?"

"Well, as I said, I was in the Albion Cluster, studying a particularly violent race called the Darbeenans. I found them to be truly repugnant little people. Anyway, my mother sends me a holouround, the one the writer won a Bard for, "The Ballad of Billybuck Dancer". Anyway, one day my local boy storms into my quarters and throws the round at me, all the time cursing a blue-streak. Turns out that the Darbeenans not only knew who Billybuck Dancer was, but they revere him as some sort of legendary hero. The Darbeenans have over thirty separate myths about this guy; including, get this, a gunfight with Doc Holliday on a planet called Tombstone. It took me a while, but I finally found an alien star chart that listed Tombstone. So I bartered some of my equipment for a short range craft and within a month I'm here!"

"What have you found?" Collins asked.

"Well, see for your self."

Collins stepped up a small rocky dune and gazed down into the valley below. There was a small dusty road running through the valley. In the center it bisected what -- for all intents -- appeared to be a human town straight out of mid-nineteenth century Western North America. Beyond the town a small hill rose. Collins could see that it was spotted with dozens of graves.

Boughmon broke the silence. "It is not what it appears. The wooden structures are made out of plastic. The glass too. Even the tumbleweeds are fake."

"Do you know who built this?"

"I found a control room hidden underneath the town. Come on I'll show you." Boughmon stepped lively down the road. "There was an alien memory crystal. From what I've been able to decipher, more than two and a half millennia ago aliens visited Earth and picked up around ten humans to create The Ahasuerus and Flint Traveling Carnival and Sideshow. It was a circus composed of both men and aliens. Anyway, one of the entertainers was Billybuck Dancer, a sharpshooter, who was so good that they built a robot of Doc Holliday for him to fight. Took place right here on this street. The notes say that Dancer died right over there." Boughmon pointed to a completely nondescript portion of the road. "The entrance to the control room is down here, I've been using it as my quarters."

Collins continued to follow his subordinate down a flight of ersatz wooden stairs. "Can you prove any of this?"

Boughmon nodded. "The graveyard has about seventy-five stones in it. Most have alien inscriptions but six are in the old Terran language of English. Five of these are dated circa 2000 using the old Terran Calendar. The earliest is for Dancer and dated 1987, the latest being for Butterfly Delight and dated 2019."

"Those could be faked," Collins argued.

"I thought so too. So I excavated all five of them. The grave of Billybuck Dancer and Jupiter Monk contained the remains of middle-aged male humans.



Dancer's sternum showed an entry wound consistent with the projectile weapon described as being used by Doc Holliday. Monk's skeleton showed numerous healed fractures in nearly every bone of his body, yet none of these appeared to be fatal. The grave of Stogie contained the remains of an elderly human who appeared to die of natural causes. Surprisingly, the grave of Schnozzle contained the bones of a dog, also apparently dead of natural causes. More interestingly, the spot marked for Butterfly Delight contained what appeared to be the remains of a tripod Hesperitan. However, genetic analysis revealed extensive modification and the base material appears to be human."

"What about the sixth grave?"

"My scans revealed that one, marked Jiminy Cricket, to be empty. The notes say he was a Jimorian, a being able to alter his physical appearance into that most desired by the viewer. I would have liked to have seen those remains. Not that it mattered. I have more than enough evidence to support my conclusions."

"Which are?" demanded Collins.

Boughmon flipped a switch, revealing the ancient control room. Collins had set up a small portable desk, two folding chairs, a collapsing book case, a workbench covered with equipment, a small computer and a large, upright crate. "I believe I can prove that aliens took man to the stars more than 700 years before the first recorded interstellar flight. It will be the equivalent of proving that Julius Caesar discovered America."

Collins shook his head. "What's the point?"

Boughmon stood shocked. "The point is history. There's a secret history here that people want to know about. Not to mention that my career will be made. I'll be famous. I'll write a book on pre-expansion Man amongst the alien ruled galaxy. Universities will beg me to lecture."

"If you're not hanged first," chuckled Collins.

"Hanged," stammered Boughmon. "What are you talking about?"

"You really don't have any clue do you? Man's current position in the galaxy is believed to be the product of one fundamental truth, that Man is better than all the other sapient things in the rest of the galaxy. That was the belief of the Olympian movement and it is held by the majority of Men now. As an underlying support of that belief is the fact that Men developed a drive capable of going faster than light, independently. It was this drive that has allowed Men to control the good percentage of the galaxy that we do. It is one of Man's shining moments, his finest hour, one of his greatest achievements. He is not going to share it willingly with any other race in the galaxy. What you have here could suggest that aliens were in a position to influence the development of the drive."

"But there isn't any evidence that the Ahasuerus and Flint Traveling Carnival and Sideshow influenced the development of the drive!"

"Which is even worse! Now your suggesting that the aliens were ferrying humans around the galaxy but refusing them access to the technology itself. It's like riding in the back of the bus."

"What about truth? Surely we have some responsibility to the truth." Proclaimed Boughmon.

Collins smiled a knowing little smile. "Truth is like plastic. Normally its brittle. But, given enough heat and pressure you can bend it enough to fit any mold."

"So what do we do now?"

"We do nothing. You've done enough damage, it's best you not be around when the clean-up crew arrives. Get in your shuttle and head on back to the Albion Cluster. Tell no one what you found here. Don't even mention it to me ever again. If word of what was here ever got out hysteria could sweep through our entire species. You wouldn't want that to happen would you?"

It took Boughmon just fifteen minutes to gather his personal items. In the meanwhile, Collins was busy purging the equipment of any trace or reference to the secrets of Tombstone. Less than an hour later, Boughmon's ship was moving off into the outer atmosphere.

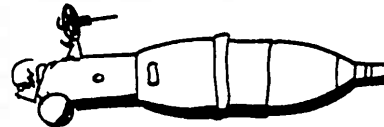
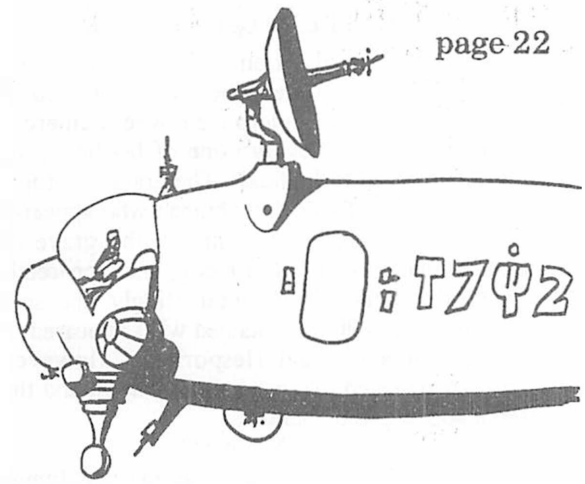
On the ground the man called Collins watched as the ship became smaller and smaller, until eventually it became nothing more than a pinprick of light in the evening sky, no brighter than an average star. Collins smiled and his whole body seemed to smile with him. He seemed to grow fuzzy, light bent oddly around his form and there was a flash of gray light like visual static. Collins vanished only to be replaced by what could best be described as a large green and gray ape with both fur and scales.

"That was close," the thing said as he wandered back down the road toward a town called Tombstone. The wind blew tumbleweeds and dust devils in his path but the creature paid them no heed. Instead it sang to itself. It was an old song, taught to it by an old friend.

*"When you wish upon a star,  
makes no difference who you are.  
When you wish upon a star,  
your dreams come true."*



A LIMERICK  
HISTORY OF  
SCIENCE FICTION  
by Mike "Wadsworth" Resnick



*Wadsworth*

1926

At the start, Hugo brought out Amazing,  
In spite of some serious hazing  
From lawyers and writers.  
(It seems that the blighters  
Sought cash for their written star-gazing).

1939

John Campbell then surveyed the field,  
And said, "Now this drivel must yield.  
I shall draw a fine line  
With writers like Heinlein,  
And think of the power I'll wield!"

1949

Tony Boucher at once saw the light,  
And he said (sounding quite erudite):  
"I don't give a fig  
If the concept is big --  
My authors must know how to write!"

1950

Then Horace Gold quickly appeared,  
And he wasn't the failure we'd feared,  
Galaxy was afire  
With wit and satire --  
And the poorer stuff all disappeared.

1964

Then along came Mike Moorcock, who said:  
"SF is most certainly dead.  
Who wants to re-hash  
Even more of this trash?  
I'll give them the New Wave instead."

1978

Judy-Lynn del Rey said, "Lester,  
Our readers will never dig Bester,  
But with cute fuzzy robots  
There's no ifs and no buts,  
You'll be a most happy investor."

1984

A mirrorshade crowd made the scene,  
And said, looking hungry and lean,  
"With punks made of cyber,  
And no moral fiber,  
We'll sweep the bestseller list clean."

1996

When Lucas from college departed,  
His vision to film was imparted;  
The books have been pleasant,  
But quite adolescent --  
And now we're right back where we started.

## Tropicon History

- Tropicon I (Boca Raton, 1982)  
GoH: Lee Hoffman  
Chair: Joe Siclari
- Tropicon II (Fort Lauderdale, 1983)  
GoH: Marion Zimmer Bradley  
Chair: Joe Siclari
- Tropicon III (Fort Lauderdale, 1984)  
GoH: Forest J. Ackerman  
AGoH: Vincent Di Fate  
Chair: Joe Siclari
- Tropicon IV (Fort Lauderdale, 1985)  
GoH: Robert Bloch  
Chair: Joe Siclari
- Tropicon V (Deerfield Beach, 1986)  
GoH: Gardner Dozois  
Chair: Nancy Atherton
- Tropicon VI (Fort Lauderdale, 1987)  
GoH: George R. R. Martin  
AGoH: Kelly Freas  
TM: Jack L. Chalker  
Chair: Gail Bennett
- Tropicon VII (Fort Lauderdale, 1988)  
GoH: Poul Anderson  
FGoH: Walt Willis  
Chair: Edie Stern
- Tropicon VIII (Dania, 1989)  
GoH: Lynn Abbey  
FGoH: Leslie Turek  
TM: C. J. Cherryh  
Chairs: Judy Bemis & Tony Parker
- Tropicon IX (Dania, 1990)  
GoH: Hal Clement  
FGoH: Bruce Pelz  
Chairs: Judy Bemis & Tony Parker
- Tropicon X (Dania, 1991)  
GoH: Andre Norton  
Chairs: Joe Siclari & Gerry Adair
- No Tropicon was held in 1992 so as to help the  
"war effort" (a/k/a Magicon/Worldcon 50!)
- Tropicon XI (West Palm Beach, 1993)  
GoH: Ramsey Campbell  
Chair: Gerry Adair
- Tropicon XII (West Palm Beach, 1994)  
GoH: Judith Tarr  
FGoH: Gail Bennett  
Chair: Fran Mullen
- Tropicon XIII (West Palm Beach, 1995)  
GoH: Kristine Kathryn Rusch  
AGoH: Jael  
TM: Ben Bova  
Chair: Steve Gold
- Tropicon XIV (Fort Lauderdale, Jan, 1996)  
GoH: James P. Hogan  
TM: Mike Resnick  
Chairs: Joe Siclari & Fran Mullen
- Tropicon XV (Fort Lauderdale, Nov, 1996)  
GoH: David Gerrold  
TM: Peter David  
Chair: George Peterson
- Tropicon XVI (Fort Lauderdale, 1997)  
GoH: Esther Friesner  
TM: Josepha Sherman  
Chair: Judi Goodman
- Tropicon XVII (Fort Lauderdale, 1998)  
GoH: Neil Gaiman  
AGoH: Charles Vess  
Chairs: Pete and Shirlene Rawlik

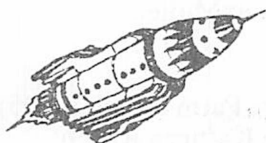
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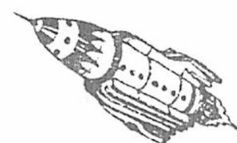
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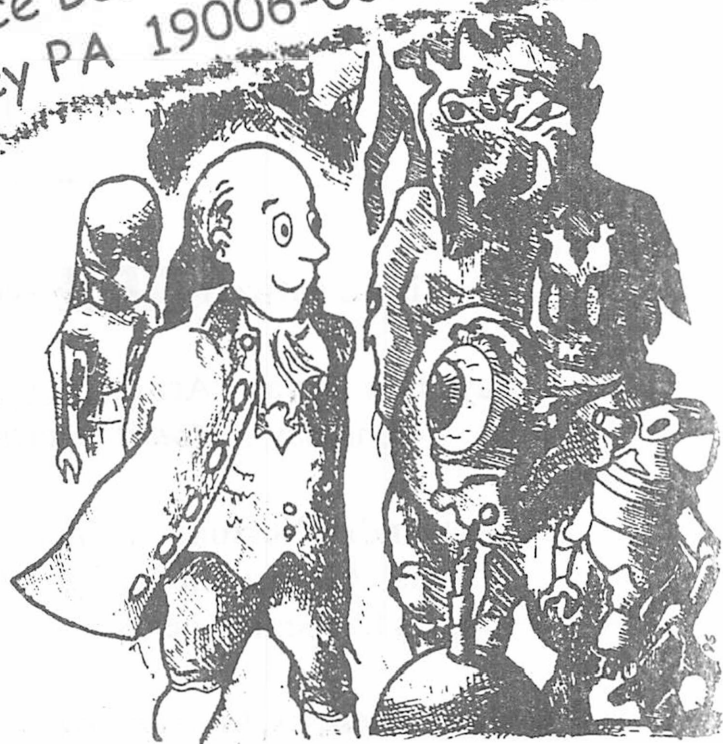
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