Windycon 9

WINDYCON 9
with
FRED POHL
and
JACK WILLIAMSON
Guests of Honor

and

Bob Tucker
as the Toastmaster

Da Staff

Chairman	Dick Spelman
Art Show	Doug Price
	Leah Bestler
Art Show Security	Bill Krucek, Elizabeth Dugan
Art Auction	Bob Passavoy, Curt Clemmer
Hucksters Room	Paul Mikol
Hucksters Room Security	Bill Loeding
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Program Book Back Cover	Original by Margaret Middleton

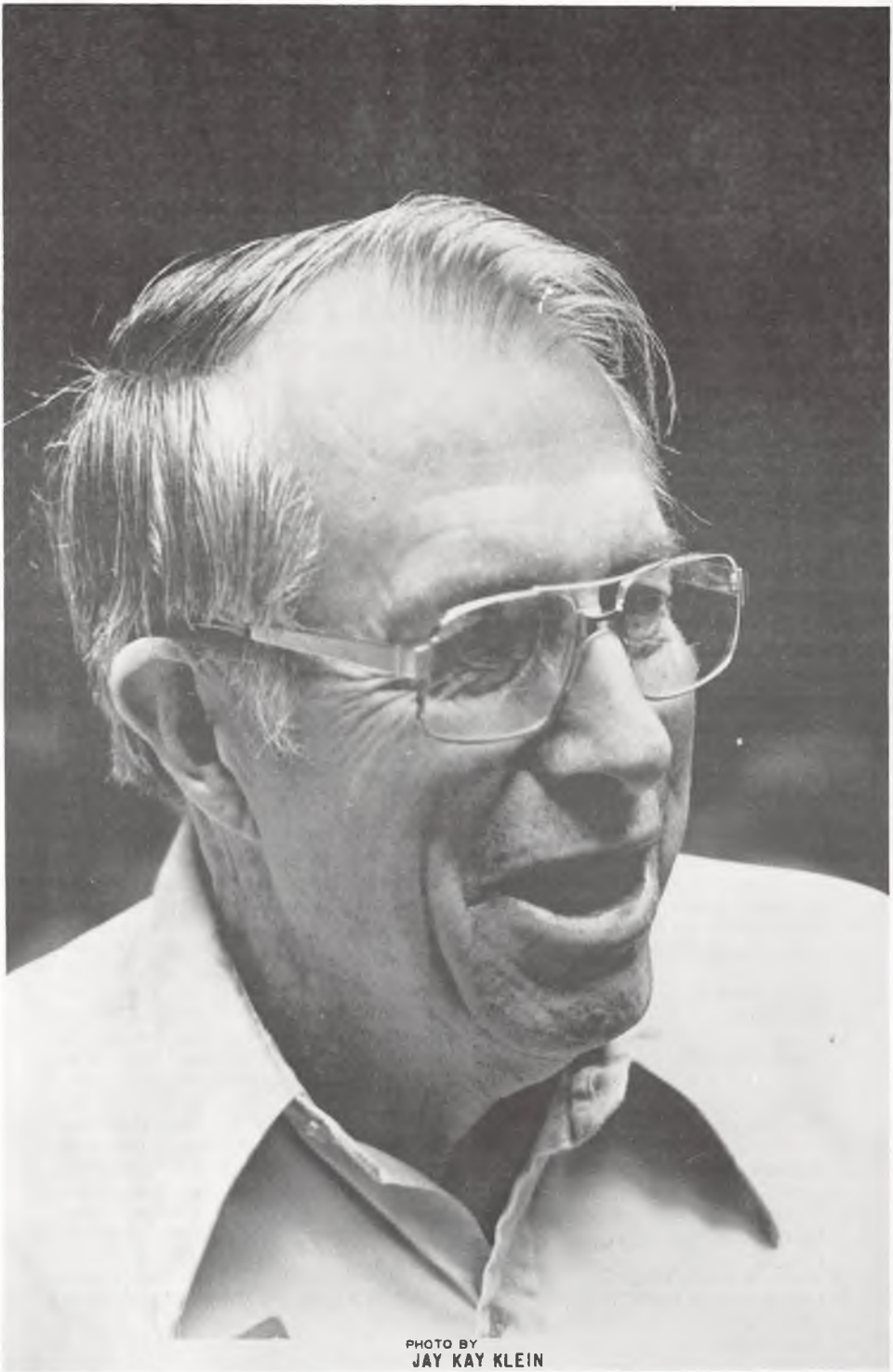


PHOTO BY
JAY KAY KLEIN

Jack Williamson

by Fred Pohl

When I first met Jack Williamson he was elderly, and I treated him with the gingerly respect due to a person well into his thirties. (I was nineteen.) That was quite a long time ago, and since then most of the rest of the world got older... but Jack has only got wiser, and, if anything, a lot more active.

Back in those early days Jack confined his roaming to North America—crisscrossing the continent, traveling down the Mississippi by boat with Edmond Hamilton—but now he's as likely to be in China or Africa as his home in New Mexico. I don't know what sort of pink pills or gland extracts he takes to thus defy the common lot of mankind, but if he could sell it he could make a fortune.

What I mean when I say I "met" Jack Williamson is that we were together in the same place at the same time, and that happened in 1939 in New York. But I knew him well before then. I knew him from his stories, which decorated all the science-fiction magazines there were from the time when I first began to read the stuff.

In fact, I have to hold Jack responsible for a significant change in my reading habits. For the first few years of my lifelong affair with SF I fed my appetite only at the cut-rate counters of second-hand magazine stores, because I was only ten or eleven years old and didn't easily come by the newsstand price of a magazine.

It was the Depression time—not this depression, that other one that you've read about in history books. I might have kept up that practice forever, but for Jack. Through pure luck my favorite second-hand store had a nearly current copy of *Amazing Stories* containing, among other things, the first installment of Jack's novel **The Stone from the Green Star**. I took it home and read it at once—and then I was up against it. Part Two, the conclusion of the serial, was on the newsstand even then. I could not wait. I went out that very night and plunked down my quarter, because I couldn't wait.

Well, that was long ago, and since then a lot of words have poured out of Jack's typewriter (actually, these days, his word-processor). I've enjoyed them all. I not only enjoy reading Jack's science-fiction, I enjoy, or almost enjoy—as much as hard work can ever be enjoyed—writing science fiction with him. So far it's been seven books we've published together, with an eighth—**Wall Around a Star**—coming out next month. I don't think that's the end, though.

As a matter of fact, we've been exchanging letters about a new one. Since I live in New York City, where God intended writers to live, and Jack has this curious trait of calling the Southwest his home, we exchange a lot of letters.

PHOTO BY:
JAY KAY KLEIN

Fred Pohl
by Jack Williamson

I first met Fred at Nycon, the first World Convention, in 1939. Sam Moskowitz was chairman, the GoH Frank R. Paul. Not yet a pro, Fred was a Futurian. The Futurians were a group of such bright young fans as Wolheim and Asimov and Kornbluth and Doc Lowndes and Damon Knight, not yet famous but living in a pioneer commune, fond of controversy, and already making waves.

Except for Issac, they were locked out of the convention, and I spent the morning with a group of them in an Automat across the street, getting to know and admire them. (I've recently turned up my first letter from Fred, written a few weeks later, informing me that I'd been made an honorary Futurian.)

In the four decades and more since then, Fred has done almost everything there is to do in science fiction, done it commonly better than anybody else. With no time for college, he became an editor before he was 20 and went on to win Hugos as editor of *Galaxy*.

Writing—at first in collaboration with his fellow Futurians under a good many names, later and more memorably with Cyril Kornbluth—he has never stopped growing. His early work was mostly short and mostly satiric: *The Midas Plague*, is a fine example. Still later, adding notable new dimensions to the satire, he began turning out such award-winning novels as **Man Plus** and **Gateway**.

He has been an Army weather man and a busy anthologist—breaking new ground with **Star Science Fiction**, the first series devoted to original stories. As literary agent, he once had a near-monopoly of our leading writers. He has been president of Science Fiction Writers of America and of World Science Fiction. He has lectured scientists on the non-fictional future of science and travelled nearly everywhere, sometimes sponsored by the State Department, as our ambassador to the world. We couldn't find a better one.

He lives now in New York when he's at home, but you're more likely to see him anywhere else. I don't quite know how, he's able to write wherever he is, turning out his daily four-page stint in a hotel room or an airline waiting room or the back seat of a car.

We've been doing things together now and then for a good many years. The most recent, **Wall Around a Star**, took too many years to finish, perhaps because we had trouble inventing characters and events on the grand scale of the setting, which is a Dyson sphere—a hollow world hundreds of millions of miles around, warmed and powered by a sun at the center. It's coming at last from Del Rey in February.

We're talking about another book, which I hope we get finished by 1990.

Just when you thought it was safe to make plans for Columbus Day weekend . . .

WINDYCON X

October 7-9, 1983
Arlington Park Hilton
Arlington Hts. IL.

- **Watch for our fliers and progress report for further details.**

- **Early membership special rate— $10.00 before December 31, 1982**

WINDYCON
P.O. Box 432
Chicago, IL.
60690

Programming

Friday

4:00pm	Huckster Room Opens (**Lincolnwood Room**)
6:00 pm	Art Show opens (**Board** and **Council Rooms**)
7:00pm	Huckster Room closes
8:00pm	Opening Ceremonies: **Executive Room:** *Toastmaster Bob Tucker smoooooothly introduces our guests of honor and then all will retire to the Hospitality Suite for some serious relaxing.*
	Hospitality Suite Opens
9:00 pm	Art Show closes

Saturday

10:00 am	Registration opens
10:00am	Huckster Room Opens (**Lincolnwood Room**)
10:00am	Art Show Opens (**Board** and **Council Rooms**)
1:00pm	**Lucas, Spielberg, Henson: Are Not Here, But...** **Executive Room:** *Phyllis Eisenstein. Roland Green, and Robert Asprin talk about the idiocies of Hollywood filmmakers. All panelists will be available for an autograph session in the Huckster room at the conclusion of the talk.*
2:00pm	**I Don't Know from Art, But I Know What I Like.** **Executive Room:** *Has science fiction been harmed by*

literary pretensions? Fred Pohl, A.J. Budrys, Robert Asprin, and Gene Wolfe discuss the limitations of the genre as an integration of Art and entertainment. Afterwards, all panelists will be available for an autograph session in the Huckster room

3:00pm **Social Technology**

Executive Room: *An hour long session with our guests of honor. Once again all panelists will be available for an autograph session in the Huckster room.*

4:00pm **Pot Luck Panel**

Executive Room: *This panel for rent.*

5:00pm Huckster Room Closes

7:00pm Art Show Closes

8:00 pm Guest of Honor Speeches (**Superior Room**) *'Nuff Said.*

10:30pm Art Auction (**Superior Room**)

Note: Hospitality Suite is open all day. Registration will move to H.S. after 6pm.

Sunday

10:00pm Huckster Room Opens

12:00pm Hospitality Suite Opens

2:00pm Huckster Room Closes

This listing is subject to change at the convention's or the guests' whims.

Typesetting Facilities made available by JDA Enterprises.

1983 March 4-6
Inn on the Park
in downtown Madison

Featuring: "Uppity Women", "Brass Brassieres & Fur Bikinis", "Wisconsin Writers", Suzette Haden Elgin, & Karl Schmidt (producer of NPR's "A Canticle for Liebowitz" radio drama)

WISCON 7

Come to WisCon! There'll be lots of programming, an art show & auction, dealers' room, movies (*Dragonslayer*) & an open programming space for your ideas!

GoH's:

Lee Killough
author

Marta Randall
editor, author,
SFWA president

To register, or for more info. (including hotel) write to SF³

SF³ Box 1624 Madison, WI 53701-1624

WisCon Registration Form

Name _____

Name for tag (if different)_____

Address_____

City_____ State _____ Zip _____

Membership

☐ Attending for ___ person(s) @$10.00

☐ Supporting for ___ person(s) @$5.00

Buffet and Guest of Honor Reception

☐ Provisions for ___ person(s) @$12.00

Total Enclosed (payable to WisCon) _____

Please send me more information on...

☐ Entering my art in the art show

☐ Being a WisCon gopher

☐ Selling in the dealer's room

☐ Fiction and criticism writing contest

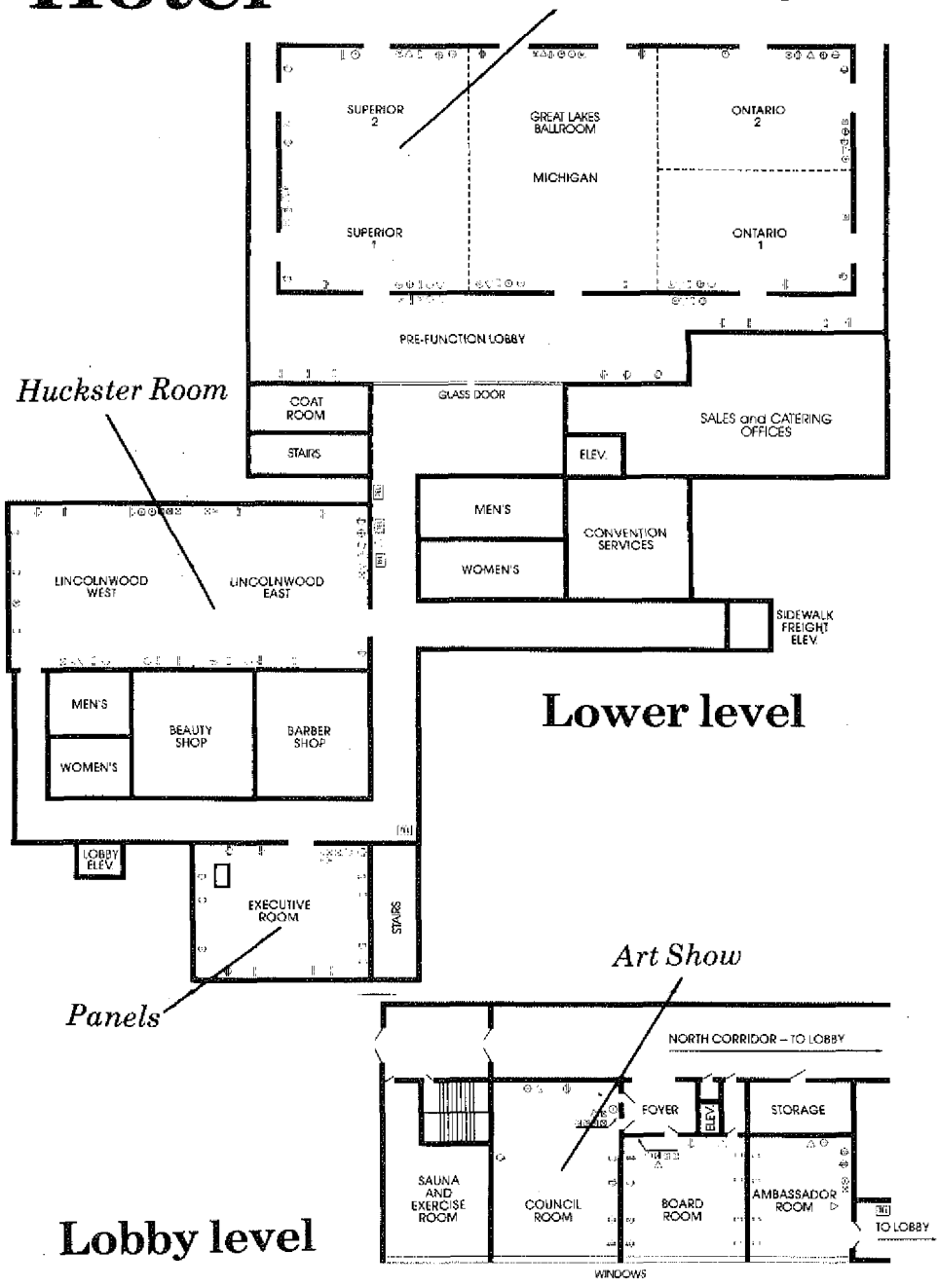
Special Services

☐ I need special handicapped services, as described on reverse of this form.

☐ I am interested in sharing child-care responsibilities with other parents.

Hotel

Art Auction and Guest of Honor speeches



A Note from The Convention Staff

Welcome to Windycon 9;

We hope you have a wonderful weekend. *This* year, *this* con is being run as a relaxicon: A time to sit down and get away from all that crazy activity you usually find at these sort of things. It's a con encouraging conversation, (an art sadly in danger of becoming extinct).

That's why the Hospitality Suite is the centerpiece of this con. How many conventions have you attended that you didn't even know who the Guest of Honor was? Or talked to him/her only at the autograph table after shoving thirty books in his/her face? This convention is different. This year you can lounge around, have a few beers, and maybe grab a few minutes of time from the people who have been entertaining you over the past years. Who knows? You might even find them interesting outside of the pages of a book. (For a good example, spend five minutes of this con reading the excerpt from Jack Williamson's autobiography stuffed in the back of this program book. It's worth your time.)

The guests are here to talk with you, but we ask you to remember a few things. You are not the only member of this convention. Others would like to meet the guests. Please, be courteous. Especially to the authors.

No one likes to be met with: "My God, Your last book stunk!"

This is not the way to win friends and influence people.

Please remember that the time to get autographs is at the autograph session, and not in a hallway, the dining room, or the Executive Room.

Enough finger waving, most of you have the common sense not to try this stuff. Relax, and have a good time.

Our Guests

Author	*Works*
Phyllis Eisenstein	In the Hands of Glory
A.J. Budrys	Michaelmas
Gene Wolfe	*The Book of The New Sun* Series
Robert Asprin	Myth Directions, Storm Season
Lynn Abbey	The Guardians, The Black Flame
Wilson Tucker	Resurrection Days
Roland Green	Wandor's Flight, Wandor's Journey
Glen Cook	The *Starfishers* Trilogy

"Now A Few Words From . . ."

Frederik Pohl and Jack Williamson

(Excerpts from their most recent work.)

The Pulps: 1939-1943

by Frederik Pohl

Below is an excerpt from Frederik Pohl's latest anthology: *Yesterday's Tomorrows: Favorite Stories from Forty Years as a Science Fiction Editor published by Berkley Books for $9.95.*

Ed. Note: At the age of nineteen Fred Pohl was hired as the editor of **Astonishing Stories** *and* **Super Science Stories.** *The salary? Ten dollars a week.*

However, there were compensations. My God, yes! I was the first kid on the block with magazines of my own. Being savagely underpaid didn't matter; if I could have found the money, I would gladly have paid Harry Steeger [president of Popular Publications which owned the magazines] every week for the privilege. I had an office of my own, with a desk and a typewriter and a rickety wooden chair for visitors to sit in while I lectured them on how to write for me.

I was the youngest of Popular's editors, but there weren't any old ones. The pulps were a youth industry. Among Popular's staff I don't believe there was a soul over forty-five, not even Harry Steeger himself. The average was somewhere in the mid-twenties.

The writers were even younger. Barring one or two aberrants like Malcolm Jameson and Ray Cummings, both in their fifties, most of the writers were under thirty. This was not an accident. Then as now, younger people were more adventurous, innovative, flexible—and cheap.

Cheapness counted very heavily, because pulp magazine publishing was as much a matter of trimming fractions of a penny as butchering hogs. Every month, the giant presses at Cuneo in Chicago poured out tens of thousands of copies each of twenty or thirty Popular Publications pulps. When they hit the newsstands, about fifty percent were picked up and paid for. The rest were quickly chopped into pulp, and the presses got started on the next month's run.

The quality of the stories in each magazine no doubt mattered somewhat—at least, it is pretty to think so—but it didn't matter much. What mattered was that the magazines be cheap. Hardly a pulp writer commanded more than a penny a word. A great many wrote for a great deal less.

The half-cent I was empowered to spend for each created word I bought was pitiful, but it was not the lowest rate in the industry. One of the air-war pulps at Popular was written entirely by one man at a contract price—sixty housand words a month for one hundred and fifty dollars.

There were even a few magazines who paid their writers nothing at all. Not in cash, anyway. What the writer got in exchange for a free story was a heartfelt pledge that, absolutely, cross his heart, the editor would surely buy huge quantities at top rates from those writers that helped him now—as soon as the magazine began to show a profit. But I do not recall that ever happening.

Of course, the world was cheaper. You could get a decent apartment for forty dollars a month, and potatoes were nine cents a pound. You could even support a family, well above the poverty level, on twenty-five or thirty dollars a week.

You couldn't do it on ten, though. I am sure of that, because I tried.

Depression Days 1932-1933

by Jack Williamson

NOTE: "Depression Days"—*I'm fighting a lunatic impulse to call it* "Depression Daze"—*is Chapter 12 of* **When Wonder Was**, *a book about my life in science fiction, just finished and now looking for a publisher.*

In 1929, Robert Van de Graf had built his first electrostatic generator, one more key to the unfolding secrets of the atom. By the early 1930's, he was famous for his "artificial lighting." Radio astronomy began in 1932, when Karl Jansky picked up a mysterious "cosmic hiss" and discovered that it was coming from toward the center of the galaxy.

I had joined the American Astronomical Society, which became the American Rocket Society in 1932. Our membership doubled that year to more than 100, and our bulletin reports that Robert Goddard has patented a new device for braking fast-moving aircraft—newspaper ridicule has taught him not to talk about spacecraft.

* * *

The Great Depression was overtaking me. Clayton's *Strange Tales* lasted only seven issues. *Astounding* quit buying in the middle of 1932, and Bates wrote me in October that "the worst has happened." Clayton had discontinued the magazine. He was returning *The Plutonian Terror* and *Dead Star Station*, which he really liked, "and which would, of course, eventually have been bought and used."

Clayton's bankruptcy was a heavy blow to me, because he had been paying two cents a word. Five hundred for *Wolves of Darkness*, my novelette in *Strange Tales*. A fair-sized fortune for an unemployed farm kid in those hard times.

Alva Rogers says the firm was still making money, but Clayton had gone too far into debt when he bought out his partner. His last *Astounding* featured my Salvage in Space. Though *Weird Tales* somehow stayed alive, Wright and Sprenger had to delay payment for my serial, *Golden Blood*. Their Indianapolis bank had closed.

My income for 1931 had been $1427.00, but it shrank in 1932 to only $305.00. The only check through the first half of the year was from Gernsback, fifty dollars on *The Moon Era*—a partial payment, and the last he made till I got a lawyer.

I could live at home on nothing at all, doing a few ranch chores in return for my keep, but I was hungry for experience. With forty-dollars left, I bought a small backpack and tried hitch-hiking. All the cars passed me by. Feeling a little bitter at all the fat cats who didn't stop, I learned to ride the freights.

I wasn't alone; by the end of the year, a million jobless people were drifting around the country, most of them younger than I was. Though the seasoned hoboes told horror tales about such sadistic railroad bulls as Denver Bob, the trainmen were surprisingly friendly. One kind conductor opened freight cars for a hundred or so of us waiting by the tracks at Trinidad, Colorado.

I spent a little time in the hobo jungles, learning the lingo, but never tried panhandling. My few dollars went a long way. I could get a hotel room for fifty cents, and I lived mostly on staples I could eat in the room, peanut butter, raisins, cheese, and day-old bread.

At Pueblo, I toured the nearly idle steel mill. One day I set out to hike up Pikes Peak, but turned back short of the summit when my nose began to bleed. I stopped again to see the Rockies above Colorado Springs, and stayed two or three weeks in Denver, visiting the capitol and the mint, reading what science fiction I could find in the public library, and trying my luck with the army of desperate optimists rewashing the sands of Cherry Creek for very little gold.

The burlesque shows at the old Empire State Theatre were a more rewarding discovery. I had seen very little nudity, and I enjoyed the strippers. When my forty dollars ran out, I caught the D&RW ralroad down to Amarillo. One blustery night, that nearly blinded me with cinders in the steamy coal smoke, I got back to New Mexico on a Santa Fe oil tank car, tied to the frame with a rope in case I couldn't stay awake.

Back at home, I tried to put one of those drifting kids into a short story, *We Ain't Beggars*. It was rejected without comment by *Harper's* and *Atlantic*, but finally published for no pay in *New Mexico Quarterly*. The editor first wanted to delete such rude phrases as "son of a bitch," but decided in the end to let them stand.

That story is one of the very few attempts I've ever made to write realistic fiction. Most such efforts became so dull and grim that I abandoned them unfinished. Non-fan friends who look down on science fiction still sometimes ask what else I've written, but science fiction has nearly always been a comfortable vehicle for whatever I wanted to say.

Two more checks came in that fall, $125.00 from *Amazing* and $130.00 from *Weird Tales*. In funds again, I rode the freights back to Albuquerque to attend the university. Deeply discouraged, feeling I'd failed along with the magazines, I thought of trying some other career.

Psychiatry tempted me, because I hungered so to understand others and myself. I wrote my medical friends, Miles J. Breuer and David H. Keller, to ask about that. Though their replies convinced me that I could never find funds for psychiatric training, I did change my chemistry major to psychology.

Though money was short, I recall that as a fine year. Besides the psychology, I took courses that I hoped would reveal more about life. Freshman biology. One semester of economics; I refused to take the second, because I couldn't believe in the totally rational "economic man." A couple of courses in literature, the best of them a lecture series on "The Great Books" by a really great teacher, Dr. George St. Claire. Philosphy and Aesthetics, taught by Dean Knode, both rewarding.

I plunged into philosophy looking for some sort of absolute truth; when I read Pareto's devastating demolition of all systems except his own, it struck me that his must be equally vulnerable. I came to feel that philosophies are all simply works of art, responses to experience organized to express the emotions of their creators, really not much different from paintings, novels, or music.

I worked on the college paper and the student magazine. Better than the courses, I made new friends. Langdon Backus, a civilized and idealistic Easterner, devoted to an utterly impractical liberalism. Gordon Greaves, a freshman from Portales. He has been the editor of our home-town daily for many years now, recently a good companion on a tour of China.

I encountered anthropology. Though I was taking no courses, I ate in the dining hall every day with the dedicated students of mankind. Sometimes I joined them in their expeditions to Indian ceremonials at the nearby pueblos. At first I was astonished at their worship of everything Indian, but I soon caught a little of their eager interest, and began for the first time to get some sense of what culture is and a new respect for cultures not my own.

I got home from college with six dollars in cash and forty due to the university for my last month's board. Hungry enough to write again, I bought paper and typewriter ribbons and plunged into a serial aimed at *Argosy*. **The Legion of Space**.

The idea came from Dr. St. Claire's lecture on Henry Sienkiewicz and his three epic novels of Polish history. For characters, he had borrowed Dumas' Three Musketeers and Shakespeare's Sir John Falstaff. It struck me that same tricks should work in science fiction.

I nearly memorized Dumas years before. Still skittish in Shakespeare, I skimmed through the *Henry IV* plays, reading little except the words of Falstaff—which were enough to give me ways of talk and thought that brought Giles Habibula to life in my mind. Working through long summer days, writing one 2,000-word chapter in the morning and another in the afternoon, I finished the novel in three weeks, then spent three more on a second draft.

The delayed checks from *Weird Tales* were coming in by then. With the novel off to *Argosy*, I set out with my brother Jim on an economy vacation. We had an old Model-T touring car I had bought for a hundred dollars. Jim stripped that down, leaving little except the windshield and front seat and a box he built for our camping gear.

The first night out was nearly the end of the trip. We had stopped outside a junkyard to tighten the brakebrands on the fantastic device Ford called a planetary transmission. Jim dropped a nut inside. Hoping it would lie there, harmless, we cranked the engine. Not quite harmless, it demolished the magneto.

Rain that night caught us sleeping on the ground. Leaks in the tarp wet our bedroll. Jim says I wanted to abandon the car and get on a freight train. Instead, he borrowed a hoist from the friendly junk dealer, bought used V-magnets for very little money, and rebuilt the transmission.

In the Sacremento Mountains, we stopped to visit friends, an Irish family hard-pinched by hard times. Most of what they had to eat came out of a garden. They were poaching for meat. When we went out with the boys to look for a deer, the father told us that if we met a game warden, we were to wave him around, kill him if he tried to come close.

They seemed very serious. Jim and I were secretly appalled; we could only hope the wardens understood the rules. I suppose they did. We got our deer and nobody had to be waved away.

We went higher to pick and can wild rasberries growing where the

mountains had been logged and burned. On the way up we stole new potatoes and green corn from a field we passed. When they were gone, we lived for several days on cornbread cooked without grease, eaten with gravy made of cornmeal and water. And, of course, wild rasberries. They gave us diarrhea.

Cold rain fell on the slopes where we picked them, and came through the leaky roof of the abandoned house where we slept and canned them. We came out chilled and hungry.

Back at their home, we shared a little of the jerked beef we had brought in our own supplies and drove on again, down the White Sands. I remember how good the desert sun felt. We camped outside of El Paso to attend a rodeo and a bullfight in Juarez, a comic opera event where the bulls got more *oles* than the matadors.

Our next stop was with rancher relatives near my Arizona birthplace. They received us warmly. My uncle, Stewart Hunt, happened in from the Tapila, the Mexican ranch where he had retreated to weather the depression, which had killed cattle markets. He invited us there and sent one of his *vaqueros* to meet us at the border and guide us in.

A colorful cowman, the *vaquero* not only rolled his own smokes, but lit them with flint and steel. He had brought horses. We left the car and rode illegally south with him to the ranch. Here, high in wild mountain country, Stewart was nearly independent of everything outside. His people raised their own corn and beans and wheat, of course their own beef, and ground meal on their own primitive mill.

A frontier kingdom, where he still dreamed of progress. When he could find a little money for cement, his men were packing it in on burros nd building a masony dam across a narrow canyon. Later, when the cattle market came back, he bought an airplane to carry fresh beef to the west coast—overloaded for the altitude, it cracked up on the first takeoff.

We spent nearly six weeks there, living on beef and tortillas and beans. One of the *vaqueros* had a guitar, and at night they sang sad Mexican love songs. Jim hunted deer he really didn't really want to kill. I rode with the foreman and dreamed up new science fiction.

Back in Arizona, we drove across the state toward the Grand Canyon. I remember sleeping on the ground in the desert with stars wheeling ovehead—there's no better way to get to know them. Too, I remember man-eating mosquitoes that were always somehow able to find us under the tarp.

The canyon was a splendid lesson in geology. With no money for the mule-back trip, we hiked down the Bright Angel Trail to the Colorado, walking back through all the ages of evolution and on beyond the last trace of life into the dark granite of the inner gorge, formed four billion years ago. We drank at the river and hiked back to the top that same day—we were younger then.

Next day we climbed down into Meteor Crater, another fascinating record of our planetary past. Jims says I saved his life there. He was leaning to look down into one of the shafts dug in search of fragments of the falling object, holding himself by a rope wound on a windlass, when the windlass suddenly spun.

He says I grabbed his arm and pulled him safely back. I've forgotten the incident—and many other things—but he has been a good brother: I'm happy that we got out of the crater and back home both alive.

Jack Williamson


CHICON V