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APPARATCHIK



This is the sixty-fifth issue of a tri-weekly fanzine, edited and published by Andy Hooper, Carl Juarez and Victor Gonzalez, members & founding member fwa, supporters afal, at The Starlitter Building, 4228 Francis Ave. N. #103, Seattle, WA 98103, also available at fanmailAPH@aol.com. Correspondence for Victor should be sent to 403 1/2 Garfield Street S., #11, Tacoma, WA 98444, and at Gonzalez@beringa.tribnet.com. See the back page for availability and trade info, including the addresses of our British and Australian mailing agents. This is Drag Bunt Press Production #269. **Apparatchiki:** Steve Green, Irwin Hirsh, Lesley Reece, Martin Tudor & Pam Wells. Ho ho — you didn't tell me that it was chunk-style!

Issue #65, August 8th, 1996

Barring Major Calamity

By Victor M. Gonzalez
Staff Writer

OUR DECISION TO SLOW down Apak's publishing schedule to tri-weekly likely has caused a few raised eyebrows among our faithful readership. But I think the

choice is a wise one that will improve the quality of the fanzine in several ways.

First of all, for those rubbing their hands together with glee, it doesn't mean that any further slowdowns are anticipated. The change wasn't made because we've run out of steam. Yes, it is difficult to publish as frequently as we do — in terms of work and money — and the longer turnaround will reduce stress to some degree. But we have not evaporated into Gafia: the fanzine will come out every three weeks.

We should be able to improve several aspects of the zine. Letterhacks will have a little longer to read and respond to the previous issue, so we can get a more diverse and thorough response, and we won't have to deal with as many letters that refer to stuff we printed several issues back. We'll have more time to select and edit the material we print, which should improve its quality — and this applies to our own material as well. We'll have more time to design and copyedit the zine, which should reduce the number of errors.

Which brings me to something that can't be called anything but a Mission Statement: we want Apak to be a great fanzine, not only because it comes out a lot, but because the writing and art we publish is of the highest quality we can obtain. We want to go beyond the idea that fan publishing is something done only for the fun of the editors and those mentioned within. We want Apak to be intrinsically interesting.

In some ways we have tried to be a fanzine that appeals to all. We present some — albeit eccentric — news, analysis of that news, letters and articles on fannish events, some account of the fanzines of the hour, essays on diverse topics, even some art — pretty much everything we've ever liked in a fanzine ourselves. We also provide a nearly immediate — by current standards, instantaneous — forum for fans to express themselves on topics they feel timely and important.

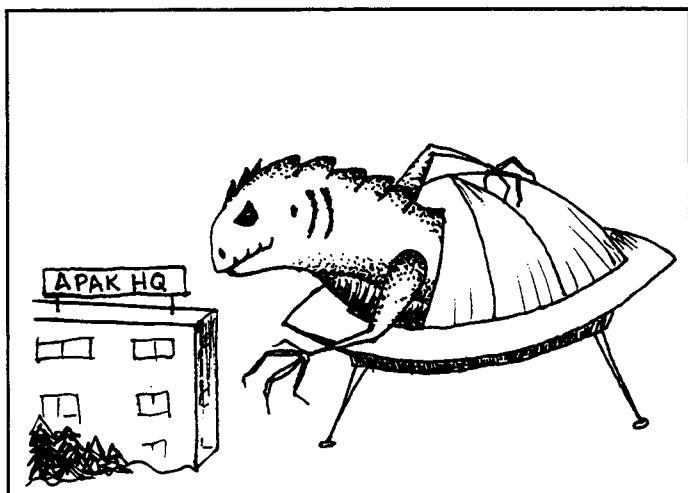
Since I started writing for Apak in issue #26, and started editing in issue #46, it has been my goal to improve the fanzine by reducing the amount of crud and bringing other talented people into the mix. We have columnists in Seattle, England, Australia and California; we encourage writers who have never written for a fanzine before and get their stuff into print quickly. Heather Wright's piece in #63 is among the best I've seen in a recent fanzine.

Andy brought me on board when it became clear that my contributions — many of which are behind the scenes in a sort of managing editorial role — required more authority. I asked Carl Juarez to join us because I thought we could use the design and copyediting help. When Andy and I realized the significant contributions he makes, including two changes of software and what amounts to a complete redesign, we signed him up as co-editor.

But there have been many problems, some of them coming from conflicts with other fans. We've made many mistakes in dealing with some of those conflicts, and whether or not we've always deserved it, pungent hysterics have become rather a third staple of the zine.

It is a significant problem. That perception might be keeping many of the good writers and artists we'd like to publish from contributing. I'm thrilled to have fans I admire writing for us. It has been a goal of mine to involve more people, both those known and not.

Apak has been engaged in one minor feud after another for the last several months, and I hope we're able to stay out of — or at least mitigate — those in the future. The longer schedule *(continued on page two)*



IN THIS ISSUE: After Victor's editorial, turn the page as Andy packs two news columns into one. Lesley Reece ponders her attractiveness to lunatics, then Ted White shares his appreciation of another alternative fandom. Steve Green returns to our pages after several issues off, with an account of his vacation in sunny Yorkshire. Then, a healthy hog's head of mail awaits, much of it focused on the baseball articles in #64. And as usual, Andy closes the zine with his fanzine count-down. *Cartoons and art: page one and two by Lesley Reece, page three by Sue Mason, page five by Bill Rotsher.*

The Portuguese call it Jôgo do Pau. I call it mayhem.

might mean we're able to give these issues more consideration, and avoid pointless acrimony. The bitterness that comes from these conflicts is inevitably draining to the Apparatchiki.

Andy and I both have a tendency to pop off when we get mad — and that has caused problems. But at heart we have proven ourselves reasonable and even friendly people. I challenge anyone to find a fan who has been excluded from publication for any irrational reason — or permanently excluded for any reason. Every person is a different case; in some cases we have declined to publish things because we wanted to avoid more ridiculous acrimony. Many times we have declined to publish things because we didn't think they were good enough. But we don't exclude or discriminate against those we aren't particularly fond of.

I think there may be a bit of a knee-jerk reaction when we encounter people who are confrontative in print — Joseph Nicholas comes to mind — but then we aren't going to allow ourselves to be kicked around either. My burgeoning conflict with Arnie Katz comes to mind; he has been hammering on the same points I brought up months ago, always with a tone of unbelieving derision. Mind you, at first I found this harmless; other Vegnants have responded more positively to my comments, and Arnie has the right to blow off steam. But eventu-

ally, when he went around the track for the fifth time, I felt I had to question what he was doing. Rather than the impression I seem to have given, that I just like ragging on WH, my actual goal has been to show the Vegnants that Wild Heirs could be better, despite Arnie's seeming belief that it is perfect.

Andy and I can only make decisions based on what we believe to be best for the fanzine — but we can get hurt too, and it's clear we could improve at resolving our external disputes. I believe, in most cases of hurt feelings, we did not start the battles — but that position is usually taken by both sides of any conflict.

Since Andy started this fanzine as a weekly 65 issues ago, it has grown, changed and slowed down. But it remains a unique fanzine in terms of frequency and longevity. This latest choice, to extend our schedule by a week each issue, I hope will allow us also to equal or better the quality of the fanzines that developed my standard of "good." That is what I wanted to do when I signed on, and progress is a sure motivation.



Come see! Fingertip Ice Server right in door!

**DON'T THINK OF
THE LAKE OF FIRE**

Harvested by Andy

AUSTRALIAN READERS ARE REMINDED that this is the last issue that some of you will see unless you let us know you'd like to continue receiving it. No hard feelings if you don't, but we're going to try to find

some more Australian fans interested in participating in the fanzine.

Steve Swartz has completed his move to Seattle, and is very anxious to receive fanzines, preparatory to his re-entry to the field. His new address: 4114 Interlake Ave. N. #4 Seattle, WA 98103, e-mail at sswartz@ifusion.com.

From Mark and Elizabeth Bourne comes word that Portland fantasy writer Jo Clayton has been hospitalized with myeloma. They say she is receiving state-of-the-art chemotherapy, and is fighting hard. Although her condition has temporarily blinded her, numerous fans and friends are on hand at Room 686, 6SW, Good Samaritan Hospital, 1015 NW 22nd Ave., Portland, OR 97210, to read cards, letters and books sent by well-wishers. Books on tape would also be appreciated.

Mark says that her biggest problem right now is boredom, and that she hopes to be able to use her laptop again in a month or so; until then she has continued plotting out further novels in her head. We wish her a speedy and productive recovery.

From Tim Kyger, notorious Worldcon Boffin of the Past, comes word of the birth of a baby girl, Emma Danyel Hagan Kyger, 8.5 lbs. at birth; 21 inches in length. Born 11:07 am on 7/11/96. As Tim said, "Mother and daughter doing fine. In fact, all doing fine. Except for sleep."

Apak readers generously offered subscription money during my trip to Texas last month, but in my heat-addled condition I seem to have lost track of one subscriber, that is, I remember being paid four times but can only recall three names. If you've bought a subscription but haven't appeared in the agate roll-call on the final page yet, let me know, and this error will be speedily corrected.

Not being a con-going comics fan myself, I was unable to detect the tang of misinformation when the supposed temporal conflict between the San Diego Comics Con and San Diego's Westercon 51 was suggested to me by parties unremembered in El Paso. The two or three members of our readership for whom this might have posed a conflict can now relax.

Salient details of the TAFF itinerary of Martin and Helena Tudor, cribbed from TAFFlon Tudor #1:

22 August: Heathrow to Las Vegas
29 August: By goat to Los Angeles
2 September: Los Angeles to San Francisco
5 September: San Francisco to Seattle
9 September: Seattle to Washington DC
13 September (Friday) Back to Heathrow.

The most noteworthy feature of Martin's plan is his intention to write and publish his trip report, titled *Have Bag, Will Travel, while on the trip itself*. He intends to take notes, write them up on the machines of various fannish hosts along the way, e-mail them back to Berni Evans, who then produce the final copy and mail them out to his mailing list. This is mad, of course, but who are we to argue? If you want to be sure to get the first edition of these, send six self-addressed stamped envelopes to Martin before the 17th of August (but one suspects that envelopes reaching Berni Evans after that date would still be returned with fanzines in them).

I must apologize for giving ambiguous signals about Apak correspondence in the colophon. Letters to Apak should be sent to me at Francis Ave., while letters and trades specifically to Victor should be sent to his address in Tacoma.

Rumors: Francis Ford Coppola is rumored to be preparing a film adaptation of Phil Dick's *The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch*. This speculation seems no more or less solid than the one which has Stanley Kubrick working to film Ballard's *The Drowned World* (or "Super Toys Last All Summer Long", depending on what source you read). And reports have reached us that special ribbons visible only in the ultraviolet spectrum will be set-completers at LACON III. If you see nothing . . .

Don't believe in anything that you can't break

Rice and Rationality

by Lesley Reece

NORBERT, THIS WEIRD LITTLE guy at work, was driving me crazy. I was in the break room one boring afternoon, buying a package of fat-free caramel-corn flavored rice cakes out of the

vending machine. They aren't my favorite snack, but I was hungry and they looked more nutritious than the fritos and gummie bears. I had just sat down to eat them when Norbert suddenly appeared behind me.

"Those aren't very good for you," he said, shaking his little grey head.

"Yeah, I know," I said, stuffing one into my mouth.

"Well," he said, "They look like they're healthy, but they aren't."

"Yeah, I know," I said, trying not to spit rice fluff on him.

"The worst thing is what they do with them," he said, pouring some overheated Yuban into a dirty white plastic mug. "They sell them to third-world countries, you know."

I didn't know that. I didn't believe it, either, but I knew he'd go away faster if I agreed. I tried to say "Yeah, I know," but my mouth was full and "Mmmbf" came out.

Norbert helped himself to five or six sugar packets and shook them by the corners. Crinkle crinkle crinkle. "Then when the poor people get ahold of the rice cakes and eat them, there's this stuff in them that expands in your stomach and robs you of all the vital nutrients." He kept shaking his packets.

"Uh huh," I said, wondering if he intended to add the sugar to his coffee anytime soon. Crinkle crinkle crinkle.

"Then the poor people starve" — at last, he opened all the packets with a little whispery *rip* — "And it's all our fault. We could stop this." He turned, looking for a plastic spoon to stir his coffee with. I jumped up, almost knocking over a nearby chair, and hurried out of the room without saying anything else. My break was over anyway, and I didn't want to stick around for more.

The rice-cake scandal turned out to be one of many theories. Over the next couple of weeks, I watched Norbert as he collared other coworkers and lectured them nonstop. He didn't seem to have to breathe between sentences. His favorite subject was, naturally, Them. They had talked the health care industry into making everyone sick. They had invented a supervitamin but were keeping it a secret. They knew all about extraterrestrial intelligence. They had captive aliens working for Them. Behind his back, we called him Flying Saucer Man.

Avoiding Norbert wasn't easy. He lurked in the break room and hallways, in the elevator and around the lobby, waiting for

victims. Twice I had to run for the ladies room when I saw him coming at me, smiling, grotty coffee cup in hand. The whole thing was starting to piss me off. Luckily, I was pretty good at staying away from the office weirdo. I'd had experience. They love me.

I don't know if it's something about my face that makes me seem like I'd be a good listener. Maybe it's that I'm not incredibly talkative, especially with strangers, but the Norberts of the world always find me, wherever I work. It's not just the office, either. Since I don't drive, I'm exposed to a lot of crazies in bus situations. They usually look normal enough, and they try to hook you into a discussion by asking you what time it is or if you have change for a dollar. The minute you respond, you're lost; they take it as a sign that you want to talk to them and start off on a tirade. Aliens and health care conspiracies have been popular for the last couple of years, but before that I remember the Russians coming up a lot, as well as various theories about plots to kill all poor people.

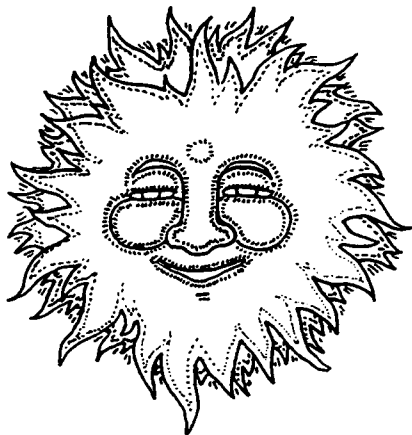
Supermarket checkout lines are bad, too, because the tabloids are right there, providing subject matter. Even college campuses have their share of ranters. Last year, in the registration line for the community college I was attending, I stood next to a guy in a blue velvet leisure suit who treated me to a long recitation of his problems with the Veteran's Administration. "They think I'm crazy," he kept saying. Every so often he'd step out of the line and do a couple of James Brown moves, his badly-fitting pompadour wig bouncing along in time with the music in his head. I made sure to find out what he was taking so I could sign up for something else. Fortunately, it was his lifelong dream to become an optometrist.

The only way to keep the Norberts at bay is to wear sunglasses and a walkman at all times, while having a couple of foreign accents ready so potential assailants will believe you don't speak English. I have tried this, and it works. The problem is, though, that you miss the interesting stuff. Once on the bus, a really good-looking man in a spangly pink evening gown turned to me and said, "I don't know how women wear pantyhose every day. These things are killing me! How do you manage?"

"I stopped wearing them," I said. It turned out s/he hadn't been doing drag performances very long and was still getting used to the "beauty" process. We ended up talking about makeup as theatre, and how so much of the male-defined feminine ideal depends on sacrificing physical comfort through these strange cosmetic rituals. I got off the bus with all kinds of new ideas about women and beauty, whereas if I'd just worn my walkman I would have been worrying about my homework or wondering what to eat for dinner.

The case for sane, rational conversation is that it greases the skids of communication. When everyone knows what everyone else means, transactions are conducted much more quickly. If you ask a store clerk how much something costs, getting a lecture about aliens in return is anomalous. You don't need it. It slows you down. But if all conversations are restricted to "rational" subject matter, life gets boring. There's nothing to laugh at, nothing to start your creative processes, nothing to make you feel sane in comparison.

That's why I've decided to listen to old Norbert once in a while. So what if his ideas are badly thought out, at least he has a few. At any rate, aliens are certainly more interesting than my other coworkers' personal problems. As for the rest of the Norberts, I'm going to keep my ears open. I'll probably kick myself a lot, but at least I won't miss anything . . .



C.S. Lewis, Noel Coward and George Orwell, all running against No Award

ProgRock: Another Fandom?

by Ted White

REMEMBER PROGRESSIVE ROCK? King Crimson, Yes, Genesis? Dinosaurs of the '70s, right? Wiped out by Punk and the New Wave and gone by the '80s, or so you might think if all you read is *ROLLING STONE* or any other mainstream

rock publication. (We'll ignore the fact that King Crimson reformed in 1980, made three well-received albums, went dormant again, and has come roaring back in the mid-'90s with new albums and tours; that Genesis has never quit, albeit they moved away from progressive almost 20 years ago — but, hey, Phil Collins just quit, and both Peter Gabriel and Steve Hackett just rejoined, so maybe changes will occur!; and that Yes has been floundering, reforming and reforming again, for more than 20 years without getting anywhere . . . we'll ignore that, because along with Pink Floyd those three were *the* icons of early '70s progrock . . .)

Progressive Rock never truly died. It went underground. Prog bands of the '80s made private recordings, issued in the low hundreds — fanzine circulation! — and prog fans exchanged obscure tapes. Then came the advent of the CD, and with the CD a gathering reissue program that has revitalized the catalogs of many kinds of music (such as jazz). The first prog reissues came from Japan in the late '80s. Japan had discovered prog just as it apparently ended, at the end of the seventies, issuing lps of various European groups (mostly Italian) in 1979 and 1980. By 1986 Japan was issuing CDs of the same albums in a "European Rock" series. Early reissues were the first four albums by PFM (an Italian group marketed in the UK and US by Manticore in the early '70s). And in Italy the Vinyl Magic label began reissuing Italian lps on CD, while in France the Musea label was doing the same thing for French lps.

The sudden reappearance, 15 and 20 years later, of these progressive groups and albums led to a new audience for progrock, and a rekindling of interest in the music. Today there are literally thousands of CDs available of progressive rock — more, in fact, than there ever were lps, since most of those low-volume privately-released lps are now out on CD, along with reissues of virtually all the original commercially-released albums — plus all the *new* albums being released on CD by reformed or new prog groups.

I have three or four thousand such CDs myself, collected since 1984. Various people, like Ken Golden at Laser's Edge and Greg Walker at Syn-phonix, have started labels devoted to reissuing obscure progressive lps on CD. Others, like Doug Larson, do a mail-order business in obscure progressive CDs from other parts of the world (I have done a lot of business with Doug).

Now a fandom has coalesced around progrock. Fanzines, cons, the works!

A few months ago I got a letter from Dave Bischoff. Dave is an old friend — I've known him since the early '70s, and we were both in *The Vicious Circle* from the mid-'70s on, until he moved out of my area to eventually settle in Eugene, Oregon — and he had recently discovered a strong interest in progressive rock. "All that stuff you used to play at writers' group meetings...? I've recently gotten into it." He had questions. He wanted recommendations. And he turned me onto a progfanzine, *PROGRESSION*, which he was getting.

There are a number of rock fanzines, of course — hundreds, probably — and several devoted to progrock. I had been getting *AUDION*, a British fmz put out by the Ultima Thule (a

record store and mail-order outfit) people. And, more recently, *EXPOSÉ* which is the offspring of the Exposure Radio people in California. There are others, published in France, Scandinavia, and Italy. *PROGRESSION* comes out of New England and is more fanzine-like than the other two (which is to say, less professional in appearance and content), and, like real fanzines, has a long letter column.

Dave also told me he was coming east to go to Progscape in late June. Was I going?

The fact was that I hadn't even heard of Progscape. I'd heard of Progfest, though. It was run by Greg Walker in Los Angeles. Musea had recently released a 2-CD set from Progfest '94, and I'd heard good things about the 1995 Progfest.

Truth to tell, I'm more attracted to Progfest '96 than I am the 1996 LACon, but I won't be able to attend either, *sigh* . . . Progfest is like a convention and a concert combined. Four or five bands play each day, attracting 600 to 1,000 attendees. Bands and dealers set up tables and sell CDs, publications, t-shirts, etc. Some of the bands are from Europe, most of them making their first US appearances. (In 1994 Sebastian Hardie, a progressive Australian band — with two albums — from the '70s, reformed and played at Progfest.)

Progscape is an attempt to do the same thing here on the east coast. It was held in Towson, a college town north of Baltimore but still inside the Baltimore Beltway, on the campus of Towson State University, in Stephens Hall. Dave went to it Friday night and attended the full program Saturday and Sunday. I had other plans for Saturday, but drove up Sunday, arriving about 3:00 p.m.

Progscape was the brainchild of a guy named Larry who owns a Baltimore CD store called Of Sound Mind, which apparently sells a good variety of progressive CDs. He had put on a one-day Progscape in 1994, skipped 1995, and come back with this two-day version for 1996. (Friday evening had featured Mastermind as "a local warm-up show," and Saturday's planned bands were Fourth Estate (USA), Porcupine Tree (UK), Miriodor (Canada), and Iluvatar, which actually went on Sunday. Dave raved about Miriodor, but I don't recall him saying anything about Porcupine Tree, the British neo-Floydian band.) Unfortunately, Progscape 1996 drew only around 200 people, which I gather was financially disappointing, and, coming after the previous Progscape's losses, probably means this one was the last. They didn't seem to be trying to compile a mailing list for future events — a bad omen.

Going up the steps (more than a flight) in front of Stephens Hall, I could hear the subliminal thump of drums and bass before I heard recognizable music. Inside the front door were "dealers' tables" much like in any huckster room, one of which turned out to be Progscape Registration. They sold me a one-day ticket but seemed uninterested in registering me in any way. I was told that one of the bands scheduled for Saturday — Iluvatar — would be playing today because the singer had problems with his voice earlier. And the French band Eclat had been substituted for Ronie Stolt's Flower Kings, the Scandinavian band advertised to headline the show. Right now Glass Hammer, a band from Tennessee, was playing.

The tables were in a lobby, beyond which was a good-sized auditorium. I had my hand stamped at the door, and plunged in. The auditorium was dark except for the stage, and for my unadjusted eyes it was impossible to see very much. So I stumbled down the left aisle until I was maybe 20 rows from the front, where I found an empty seat to the left of the aisle. The band was, as I subsequently found out, taking a rest, leav-

Hmph! Maybe I'm new wave.

ing the drummer center-stage with an acoustic guitar, playing with the keyboard-player and doing a quiet, effective piece. All too soon the band returned, to play louder and less interesting stuff. Glass Hammer have two CDs out, but probably played material from them before my arrival. Now, with a new singer, they were playing rockier stuff, concluding with Argent's "Hold Your Head Up," which I enjoyed more than I might have expected. (Later, in the lobby, I talked with the woman who played secondary keyboards and did wordless vocals. Her name, she told me, was Michele Young, and she sold me a copy of her solo CD — on the same label as Glass Hammer — which impressed me when I played it. She can sound a lot like Kate Bush.)

When the lights went up at the end of the set, I discovered as he stood up and looked around that Dave Bischoff had been sitting just ahead of me on the other side of the aisle. During the break between sets we went back to the lobby, where Dave introduced me to some of the people he'd already met. I browsed the CDs for sale, subscribed to PROGRESSION and EXPOSÉ, talked with various members of various bands who had their own CDs for sale (most of them \$10 and under), and then ran into someone I knew: Steve Feigenbaum, who owns Cuneiform Records and Wayside Mail Order. I've known Steve since the seventies, and he was glad to see me and took me over to meet the people from Musea.

Iluvatar is a Baltimore band with several CDs out on the local Kinesis label. Theatrical chords hung heavily in the air when the curtain went up on their performance, and Dave Bischoff, whom I was now sitting next to, said excitedly, "Get ready for a Genesis experience!" But despite the resemblance of the opening to that of Genesis' "Watcher in the Sky," Iluvatar pretty much put me to sleep. Literally. Although it was only about 5 p.m., I found myself "resting my eyes" and drifting in and out of a semi-conscious state. As I observed later to Dave, "the trouble with most American bands that try to be progressive is that they can't shed their bar-band backgrounds. When in doubt, they always end up falling back on the standard clichés." I might have added that for the so-called "NeoProg" bands (Marillion, IQ, Pendragon, et al — a group into which Iluvatar also fits), the "standard clichés" are recycled riffs which I characterize as "generic Genesis." Iluvatar managed to recycle clichés from both camps, to very little positive effect.

After that set Dave and I went out for dinner. Towson is something of a college town and we had no problem finding decent restaurants, settling on Korean food that evening.

The first band to play that evening was Braindance, a New York City group that comes out of what is now called "MetalProg," the heavier end of prog, or maybe more adventurous end of metal. Braindance is fronted by a male singer who is a bodybuilder and doesn't mind showing it off, but the real leader is the guitarist, who wrote most of the music, a woman named Vora Vor. She struck me as a female Robert Fripp in terms of her guitar playing and music.

But I found I enjoyed the music more live than I did on the Braindance CD I bought. The latter gets tedious in spots.

Each band was supposed to play for only an hour or so — since an extra band had been sandwiched in that day — but Braindance played for nearly two hours, pushing back the schedule to the annoyance of the Progscape organizers.

After Braindance came Boud Deun, a Northern Virginia band made up of violin, guitar, bass, and drums, who play a

kind of '90s Mahavishnu Orchestra: very high energy, with odd angular twists. Their hour was intense, but enjoyable.

By now it was getting late, but finally Eclat came on, well after 11. The French band (whose CDs I have) tended at times toward the kind of French theatricality in their vocals that characterizes Ange (and which I dislike), but their music was solid, and a good end to the day, the show, and to Progscape. After a brief encore, they ended at about 12:30 a.m., leaving me with more than an hour's drive home. I used the time to listen to another CD I'd picked up, this one a reissue, on Musea, of a late-'70s French band, Arachnoid. It was better than any of the music I'd heard live that day.

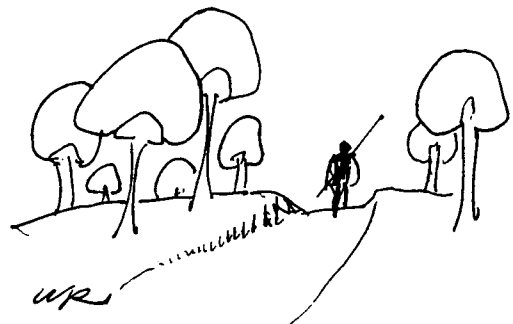
For my first "progcon" it was an enjoyable experience, as much for the community I'd found with fellow prog fans as for the actual music I heard. I'd like to go to more, but I don't know if there will be more, in this area at least, if the financial failure of Progscape is any indication. But Progscape was badly promoted (it was hardly promoted at all!) and I think a much larger potential audience exists than was tapped into here.

It's a proud and lonely thing to be a Progressive Rock fan!



One thing I didn't go into in this piece, but which I'd like to emphasize somehow is this: Sturgeon's Law applies to ProgRock as it does to every area of artistic/creative/commercial expression. Just because I'm a ProgRock fan doesn't mean I am blindly enthusiastic about every ProgRock CD that comes out. Please don't slag me out of hand just because you heard a Marillion album one time and hated it. I did too. In fact, I find little to like in most of that subcategory known as NeoProg. And I recognize that not every group with progressive ambitions succeeds in achieving them. Progressive rock at its best is the most demanding form of rock, the most ambitious, and potentially the most rewarding. But a lot of ProgRock falls short of meeting those demands. Some is empty pomposity, some is vain posturing. Some bands/musicians have the vocabulary (the chops) but little or nothing to say with it.

Entirely too many have copied Genesis' 70s style but lack the wit and talent to use it as creatively as Genesis did. In the early 70s every ProgRock group had its own style and sound; now entirely too many belong to a "school" — the Yes School, the Genesis School, the Gentle Giant School. Only the music of King Crimson has resisted this kind of generic copying — but there are a number of bands in France, Spain and Japan which have profited from trying Crimson's musical directions. In France, Shylock, Dr. Folamour, and Exclusive Raja come to mind. In Spain, Rivendel (despite the Tolkeinish name). In Japan Bi Kyo Ran has based its music directly on Red-period Crimson (and issued one CD of Crimson covers). And in Sweden there was Anglagard (now broken up, after two albums) and Anekdoten (very Crimsoid in the best sense). But I'm getting carried away here, and could keep going on and on.



She is exactly the kind of person the Beatles can't stand.

Fannish Memory Syndrome

by Steve Green

TO NORTH YORKSHIRE, FOR Ann's and my annual escape from Civilization As Others Know It. Whilst the sheer weight of English history often pins this country's social and political evolution to the

ground, there are few spinethrills to compare with strolling around a castle erected three centuries before the original North Americans watched Columbus' fleet appear over the horizon and thought "Damn, there goes the neighbourhood".

Our yearly exodus to the Dales began three springs ago, when I was still managing to eke out a meagre living by freelancing for a series of sf/film magazines which promptly folded with the regularity of Italian parliaments. In view of our joint desire to gafiate totally from the Rat Race, spending a week in a converted 1841 stable on a working farm in the tiny village of Harmby (a couple dozen houses, one pub) seemed the ideal solution; my wisewoman wife has even pondered whether the building might be haunted, given several slightly odd incidents since our first visit, though I'll remain unconvinced till I hear spectral hoofbeats in the night.

Leyburn, the nearest town (around one mile distant), is mentioned in the 1086 DOMESDAY BOOK (William I's post-invasion stocktake) and assumed the role of local capitol when neighbouring Wensley became a ghost town following an outbreak of bubonic plague in 1563; fortunately, the Black Death is all but eradicated these days, and the few remaining pockets in central London are easily identified by raven-robed monks waving handbells at major road junctions. Across the valley lies Masham (site of two breweries and birthplace of one of the chief traitors against Henry V on the eve of Agincourt) and Spennithorne (birthplace of an 18th Century eccentric who tried to assassinate George III); this healthy local disrespect for royalty may be one reason I feel so much at home here.

As always, my major joys on vacation mix archaeology and bibliophilia. For the first, a visit to Richmond Castle (erected at the order of William I and damaged by general neglect during the 16th Century rather than the usual internecine warfare); for the latter, various expeditions into musty caverns to unearth such delights as an 1888 guide to Yorkshire (hardly cheap at £25.00, but which launched itself in my estimations when a 1939 road map slipped loose from a pouch at the back) and, er, a pair of Robert Lionel Fanthorpe hackworks from his penal servitude at Badger Books in the '50s. The former obsession speaks for itself, but on behalf of the latter, a priceless quote from PERILOUS GALAXY (written under the pseudonym "John E Muller"): "He looks far more like

an earthling [*sic*] than any of you. He looks more than an Earthling — he even looks English!"

Be honest, what *more* could any sentient alien lifeform strive for?



THERE'S ALWAYS FANDOM, of course. One of the few claims made for the fannish community which actually stands up is our reputation for turning a blind eye — or at least a compassionate one — towards those among us who transgress social convention to such a degree that, in many cultures, they'd be booted out of town without even the opportunity to confess their behavioural quirks on *Montel*. Like Freemasons and priests, we more often than not close ranks and attempt to reassimilate rather than excommunicate offenders against generally accepted mores; indeed, in common with most social groupings where alcohol or drugs play a significant role in the bonding process, those anti-social outrages which don't actually leave a body count in their wake are almost always met not with a lynch mob but guarded amusement. Short of defrauding a fan fund or allowing a bunch of Scientologists to take over your worldcon, we'll forgive virtually any atrocity.

I still recall the glee with which one Novacon regular revealed how he'd engineered revenge upon his room-mate, an infamous prankster in his own right, by masturbating in the hotel shower and adding the resultant bodily fluid to the Glaswegian's shampoo. I've no idea if the target of that particular stunt ever discovered what had taken place, but the hoots of laughter greeting his arrival and the widespread queries as to his favourite brand of hair gel must have raised at least few suspicions in his mind.

Of course, much depends upon the identity of victor and victim. Those who've just received Martin Tudor's first TAFF newsletter will be aware of my nickname for my business partner these past nine years, "Teflon Tudor", earned by his astounding ability to walk innocently away from the most heinous fannish crimes. When once, after a particularly heavy drinking session in the city centre, we jointly decided to enroll a fictitious fan into the Birmingham Science Fiction Group, was it he who took the brunt of the committee's fury? I think not. Found guilty of sinister magicks by MiS-saigon's witch trial in February, did he follow my example two years earlier and place his neck on the chopping block — or escape with a little cosmetic mutilation? Don't bother sticking your suggestions on a postcard, folks: by the time the Anaheim Centre is naught but a smoking ruin and Martin's hurriedly hiding his cigarettes, you'll already have the answer.



"I think I've seen it all . . . I think I could handle a Johnny Cash concert."

AND NOW, YOUR LETTERS:

[APH here: The revelation that the originals for the UK edition of Apak #62 went missing in the mail does a lot to explain the predominantly American character of our recent correspondence JAE LESLIE ADAMS (621 Spruce St., Madison, WI 53715-2151) starts off with some thoughts on the nuts and bolts of fan-publishing:]

'Checking through a couple of back issues I wonder, has Andy got Lesley writing exactly to fill the page now too? Then I think over various subtle typesetting methods that would have the same effect, and wonder if that's supposed to be Carl's job. And then I remember that I really do know how Andy does it, because I've watched over his shoulder while he filled in column space with entertaining and right-to-the-point natter (not

to mention his ninja editing, even to the extent of adding badly-needed concluding sentences to my own slapdash efforts).

"This letter was galvanized by Victor's observation in # 63 that "computers have simplified the task of making a fanzine so much that hand crafting takes more time than the rest of the process," as well as both Andy's and Victor's offhand remarks on the design of various fanzines. It seems likely to me that the design of Blat! owes something to the professional expertise of its editors. I believe the same might be said of Telos and Izzard. This kind of work sets a pretty high production standard. Yet I'm a great believer in all of us amateurs jumping into artistic projects we don't strictly know how to do. The lack of formal credentials necessary to participate in one of the most charming things about fandom. But mixing it up between the pros

and amateurs is another.

'It seems to me that if you're going to fool around making changes to those packaged layouts, you have better have a good idea of what you are doing. My personal gripe is with the fonts on the screen, which from a letter-arts viewpoint are pretty kluged up. When I got Windows I was all excited at the prospect of fixing this, until I took a quick look at the alternatives provided, which were worse than the default font. I know beautiful typography can be done on screen because I see it on TV in the automobile advertisements. So I restrain my shudders and escape the virtual desktop to the relative purity of plain old non-wysiwyg DOS letters on screen. Shrug. It took hundreds of years for printers to work up all the wonderful solutions to type problems and page layout that we have available in books. I suppose we're going to have to wait for beautiful letters and proper margins in our software until the German typographers get it worked out.

'One of the interesting pitfalls I have noticed of using DTP software with loads of fonts is that a great many of those fonts (particularly the sanserif ones), are not particularly suitable for mimeo, while they are fine for photocopying. Right now my theory is that those giant courier-typewriter serifs are just the thing for mimeo duplication. Of course this is partly because in my small experience I have watched an awful lot of terrible copies come out of the mimeo. Elegant fonts like the Stone series frequently lose it all where the ink gets thin.

'This is all just a roundabout way of saying we're a bit spoiled by the easy availability of xerography. When you take the job to the copy shop nowadays, if it comes out looking really nasty you can just tell them to turn up the darkness control and run it again.

'Zine publishers who do their cut-and-paste by hand are driven to use DTP not only because it's quicker but because our erratic and crooked paste-ups are in visual competition with the computer's superior precision. Laying out a lengthy publication manually is like John Henry's battle with the steam drill. Yet the cheap and easy way to get titles strewn hither and yon at interesting angles, or a logo design with the letters all different, is by hand. The tool that reduces drudgery is a fine thing, but it's silly to strive for a handmade appearance with an industrial process. Handicraft is the careful attention to details through out the process . . . not an extra added ingredient.'

[VMG: I agree that Blat! and Telos/Izzard have and had experienced people doing the design — but I don't think standard templates are the way to go if you don't have so much personal knowledge of design. Those templates are used by everybody, from bridge club newsletters to corporate profit reports. If you strike out on your own, your fanzine will look as they all did once: a little different. And you'll learn how to do design, as well.]

[APH: In general, I share your last sentiment; craft in publishing has a lot more to do with the imagination and the eye than it does the brute mechanics of producing the 'zine. Yet, we here at Apak World HQ are quite familiar with the difference between what shows up on the screen and what goes on the paper. It's always a surprise when you see what the font truly looks like.

As far as DTP simplifying the process of publishing, my observation is that it takes just as long as it always did, but now you don't have to worry about making mistakes during the process and having to start a page all over again. This is such a significant difference that I think it's hard for contem-

porary publishers to even imagine what it was like trying to avoid making typos and carefully repairing each one with corflu

Now, as might be expected, we got a lot of baseball-related mail on #64, like this note from F. M. BUSBY (2852 14th Ave. W., Seattle, WA 98119):]

'Baseball should be seen in full, not constricted by TV cameras to those abominable close-ups with batter and pitcher within apparent spitting distance, denying us any view of pertinent movement elsewhere on the field. It is best enjoyed outdoors. And preferably untelevised; its pace needs no further slowing by frequent mandatory commerical breaks. The TV version of the game falls entirely outside my tolerance.

'It may be that Gina was hard to find because the once and future ~~Duchess~~ Duchess of Canadian Fandom went back to being Gina Ellis some years ago. Within the past few months she has gained a spouse and lost a gall bladder, which is certainly more constructive than the other way around.'

[APH: Just so. And your comments on baseball on TV are echoed by many serious fans of the game, but if given a choice between watching the World Series on TV, and missing it altogether, baseball on TV would fall easily within my tolerance.

A lot of fans frown gently on our considering the sport at all. TED WHITE (Twhite@logotel.com) wails:]

'So I got #64 in the mail, Monday. But it's all about baseball!

'I went to my first major league baseball game about a year ago. A fellow worker here at Logotel got married at Camden Yards, during an Orioles game. Wedding guests got free tickets. (The actual ceremony was in a function room — not in the stands — but the bride in full regalia assended the stands to much applause from the audience.) We stayed for eight innings and then the skies opened up and we escaped during a down-pour which threatened to flood out the parking lots. It was pretty much as I'd always imagined it would be: mostly boring with brief moments of excitement. Nice venue, but nothing I'd Pay Money for.

'I'd rather watch my son, or friends, playing baseball. I don't relate well to grown men being paid millions of dollars to play a sport — any sport. And even a game played by friends (like, the softball games at Corflu and Precursor) doesn't normally thrill me that much. Sports are really made to be PLAYED, not watched. I became a fan, in part, because I didn't "fit in" with my sports-oriented peers in school, although I was an average player (and a very good runner). I was a nerd among jocks. I guess I still am, *sigh*.'

[APH: And we likewise gave concern to RAY NELSON (333 Ramona Ave., El Cerrito, CA, 94530-3739), who writes:]

'Baseball?

'I know baseball was played at the First Worldcon in New York in 1939, but for me fandom was always an alternative to baseball & all those other mundane sports. I mean, is it really fannish for one bunch of men to do their best to humiliate another bunch of men? Or if that's fannish, is it fannish for other men (and one or two women) to sit around and get off on this humiliation? Or if that's fannish, for all those people to actually pay money to sit around and get off in this humiliation, money that could have been spent on printing & postage for a zine, or to go to a con? Or even, Ghod forbid, to buy a science-fiction book or magazine? Or maybe even to go to a Star Trek movie? Is that really fannish? I don't know. Maybe I'm just an old fan and tired.'

"What's appalling is that my brain turned out to be horribly normal."

[APH: Ray always knows how to open out a discussion into deep philosophical issues. How can one who defends the purity of the fannish ethos with such vigor be old and tired? But there are others who read just as much subcultural passion into baseball as Ray does Fandom, such as KEVIN W. WELCH (P.O. Box 2195, Madison, WI 53701) who relates:]

'My baseball fandom came late when I saw Gaylord Perry's 301st win in the Kingdome with my roommate Jerry. I remember three things: how old Perry looked, how dingy the Kingdome seemed after being open only six years, and how close and clear the players were. We had good seats and didn't pay much for them. It seldom got better than that.

'The rest of the 80's I lived in downstate Illinois, where everybody followed the Cubs or Cards. I threw a dart and came up a Sox fan. They won ugly in '83. I listened to 130 games on the radio that year and read about Harold Baines and Lamarr Hoyt in the Tribune every day. Comiskey Park was a homely old dump with flaking whitewash and I'd sit in the left field seats facing away from field and toward the housing projects beyond Veeck's exploding scoreboard imagining my grandfather sitting in the same seat watching Joe Jackson throw the 1919 World Series. It could have happened.

'I changed my ATM number to 1903, for Robin Yount and Harold Baines. My last trip to Comiskey, I saw Baines hit a home run; a week later he was a Texas Ranger. That was the end of something, but soon I was out east and we watched the Blue Jays rattle around in another division, while they played in a building called either "Sky Dome" or "The Concrete Convertible" ("ball park" and "stadium" aren't quite the right words). Toronto wasn't weighted down by the history and the stadium and it was municipally hip to watch the Jays. Fifty thousand polite Canadians did the wave each inning, giving the whole affair a squeaky-clean youth-group atmosphere. But you couldn't look past the Sky Dome walls or the Jumbotron and see much of anything. Baseball was played in a shopping mall. The seats conjured up memories only of Luis Leal and Jim Clancy. My grandfather had never visited Toronto, as far as I could tell (though my parents honeymooned in Quebec City). Joe Carter hit a home run almost at the stroke of midnight and Nike painted a six-story mural of the moment across the street, but that was it for the Jays and for baseball too, as far as that goes.

'When the strike came, I was almost relieved; I hadn't felt at home with the game, though I could never pinpoint why. After a year, baseball came back, but it was invisible. The National Broadcasting company hid the games on Friday, showing the Indians playing the Chumps-du-Jour up against the X-Files. The only thing that saved baseball for me was Seattle, almost unbelievably, in the one-game playoff and the series against New York. And that just might have been the start of something.

'Now I'm back in the Midwest and the Sox have Baines back. He's hitting the crap out of the ball and I read the box scores every day in the Trib, just like it was 1985 all over again. Nobody accuses baseball of being hip now. It might be a good time to go to the old new ball park.'

[And for one or two others, baseball is a youthful passion that sometimes twinges like a phantom limb, but is mostly forgotten, as with ROBERT LICHTMAN (P.O. Box 30, Glen Ellen, CA 95442), who recalls:]

'My peak period for interest in baseball was before I became a fan, in my early double-digit years. My family moved from Cleveland to Los Angeles in late 1950, and sometime after

that (may have been a year or more) I remember being taken with my brother to baseball games. This was in the days before the Dodgers came west, so the teams we saw were the old PCL Hollywood Stars and Los Angeles Angels. I remember finding baseball less intriguing in person than on the radio. Those were the years when a player name of Bobby Bragan was stealing a record number of bases, when the play by play on the radio was being barked out by (I think) Vin Scully, making his initial appearances on local radio before (like Johnny Carson years later on TV) going on to national fame. (Victor's comments on the feel of Yankee Stadium reminded me that I still have a wispy, but definite memory of the feel of a composite of the two stadiums where the Stars and Angels played — Wrigley Field and Gilmore Stadium, both long disappeared.)

'But I got over it. I became a fan just before turning 16 and all sports interest was left behind. Since then I've periodically noticed when various teams have made a good showing — rather like your Mariners are doing lately — and have watched some parts of some World Series, but mostly I just ignore it.

'Like E.B. Frohvet, I appreciate Andy's sercon side and am happy that it's possible that side of him to peacefully co-exist with your more fannish side. Whenever I've run across your writing on the mother literature, I've always paid attention. You're one of my conduits to that part of the subculture these days, and I appreciate it.'

[APH: Happy to be of service, Robert. A more recent generation was treated to views of the L.A.'s old Wrigley Field when ESPN took to running episodes of *Home Run Derby*, a game-show of sorts filmed in the park sometimes in the early-to-mid fifties. The guy who could smack the most fly balls over the outfield wall won something like \$500, and the right to hold off next week's challenger. It was not especially scintillating television, but I was glad to know those programs are on tape; where else is one likely to be able to study Jackie Jensen's batting stance or Ferris Fain's follow-through?]

Yet some remain unconvinced, such as LUKE MCGUFF P.O. Box 31848, Seattle, WA 98103, e-mail temporarily at luko@halcyon.com):]

'Despite the best intentions of the Apparatchkikki, baiceaboll still be berry berry borrink to me. Although you, Andy, and Ring Lardner are the only writers who can make it come close to interesting. I SUPPOSE the idea that hooting at a television set can influence events dozens (if not thousands) of miles away is no more ludicrous than newspaper astrology columns, which I read avidly. (I particularly like it when ALL the signs say on Thanksgiving "spend a relaxing morning, then enjoy a family getogether." The brainpan boggles: How do dey KNOW?)

'Well, I'm off to work on a luminary for the Illuminarias Festival in Vancouver this weekend. About 15 or so people from the Arts Council go up every year, doing installations (last year, rubber duckies; this year, a living room) and fire sculptures. I particularly remember the stilt-walking illuminated giant-puppet birds emerging from the smoke of the Catherine Wheel fire sculpture in the middle of the lake; I felt like I was in "Black Orpheus," one of my favorite movies. This year it's the same weekend as the International Fireworks Festival, which should make it more of a treat.

'Steve managed to get me listening to the Grateful Dead, and there's a Robert Bly book he recommended in my To Be Read cabinet, but I draw the line a baiceaboll.'

What shall we do, what shall we do with all this useless beauty?

[APH: See, this is a good example of the right way to write a "baseball-is-boring" letter. You have to offer such a glowing description of some cultural activity you choose to embrace instead of baseball that any annoyance at the contradiction implicit in your letter is completely lost in the admiration of your prose.

But we have now received enough "baseball is boring" letters to last us through the rest of the season, thank you.

Now, CHRIS BZDAWKA (913 Walnut St., Verona, WI 53593) summarizes life for the struggling Apak subscriber before our conversion to tri-weekly perfection:]

'Apparatchik has me in a conundrum. Tuesday finds me searching the mailbox and, on alternate weeks, finding an Apparatchik. On the weeks it's there, I say "Yippee" as I shut the mailbox, devour it as soon as possible and have many thoughts on which should send me flying to the keyboard to LOC, LOC, LOC, like the wind! Then THE WEEK descends upon and by the next Tuesday, I'm searching the mailbox again, realizing after a few moments that *last* week was Apparatchik week and I still haven't LOC'd. Then THE WEEK descends upon me again, and before you know it, there's a fresh Apparatchik in the mailbox Tuesday, and I've got all-new LOCs I won't write.

'Months ago (or was it a year?), I was very interested in the letters from Joseph Nicholas & co. regarding the changes technology has wrought on our society, because I was researching the changes in homemaking and women's work at the turn of the century brought on by the Industrial Revolution. Oh, if only I'd written then, but now it is too late and I don't want to stir up Mr. Nicholas again. When I read Jerry Kaufman's response to the convention incident, I thought "Ugh, another fan turned homeowner," but you know, we all grow up. Well everyone except Victor. Anyway, it's wonderful to "meet" people through their letters.

'Until reading Dan Steffan's TAFE reports, I had little concept of the function of TAFE. I'd heard that fan fund delegates were all lazy moochers, but Dan seems to have sown his oats in all the pubs in the UK, and that is not a task for slackers. His stories of drinking merriment have certainly validated my own habits. Having never been further east than Lexington, Kentucky on a Greyhound bus in the rain, I thoroughly enjoy his vivid description of towns, stations, pubs, cabbies, etc.

'As a reluctant fan and ex-wannabe writer, I say thus: Lesley Reece is a goddess. Thank you, Lesley, for hanging your ass over the stern. Your writings are funny, engaging, and you sound like a swell chick.

'The great thing about APAK is that the people who have only been names in fandom to me have started to become real live (and sometimes dead) people. APAK's staff has provided not only anecdotes about the fans who died recently, but also put their work and place in fandom in context. Apparently, APAK is the sole fanac for some fans. Hey, you even got me to write a LOC.'

[VMG: Well, Chris, we slowed it down a week so you can keep up. And I have grown up, or at least a little.

Here's a letter from JERRY KAUFMAN (emailing us from JAKaufman@aol.com), who notices more statistics than we might have expected:]

'Just in case George Flynn misses an issue: Randy Johnson changes height from article to article in the latest Apak. He's 6'10" in Randy Byers' piece, but two pages later, Lesley's cut him down, relatively, to size at 6'8". I presume it's all carl's fault.

'I saw a lot of Randy (Byers, not Johnson) last week, along with A.P. (McQuiddy, not Hooper). Monday night we were all at the "sneak preview" of *Supercop*, the "new" Jackie Chan movie, along with Tami Vining. I'm so new at this JC stuff that I didn't know it was a dubbed version of a 1992 movie. No matter; never mind. It was like seeing a totally new movie to me, and lots better than *Rumble in the Bronx*. We all cheered as Jackie defeated dozens, and gasped in awe as his female fighting partner delivered kicks over her head and drove her motorbike onto the top of moving boxcars.

'Tuesday night we were all together again to hear Rachel Pollack read from *Godmother Night*, and to invite ourselves along as Rachel and some local nonfan admirers strolled to a Pioneer Square brewpub to discuss ancient goddess cultures. Aside from Randy nearly being skewered by a smashed glass (no hostile intent), and Rachel frequently admiring a couple expertly tangoing outside the Argentinian restaurant across the way, I remember nothing.

'Suzle and I joined a small workgang on Sunday to help former Clarion West honcha Linda Jordan and her husband Mike Eichner move to their new tiny house on the Tulalip Indian Reservation near Marysville. After a long hot day of loading and unloading, we grabbed a Dr. Becker (a Blue Sky Natural Soda). I presume it was meant as an imitation of Dr. Pepper, but I wasn't sure from the flavor. I began to fantasize that it was really the first of a line of Root Vegetable sodas: "Try our new Real Dirt sodas: earthy Rutabaga, zippy Parsnip, and Paradise Punch: Turnip, Cassava, and Manioc, with a hint of Truffle." Well, it was a long day.

'Weren't turnips the original baseballs?'

[APH: While I have seen baseballs that looked liked turnips, I fear the answer is no. And Randy Johnson is in fact 6'10" tall, and I should have noticed that, if anyone.

RICHARD BRANDT (4740 N Mesa #111, El Paso, TX 79912, e-mail to rsbrandt@cris.com) finishes this issue's letters with a variety of comments:]

'How futile of Randy to attempt dissociating himself from baseball for all those years. After all, the two of them are joined at the seam.

'The last time I saw the Diablos play it was also against the Missions, and I accompanied a rabid Dodgers fan whose constant cries of "Go, Dodgers!" had me shrinking in my seat. Actually, the next to the last game was more memorable; not only was it 25-cent hot dog night, but there was a great fight that began when a just-beaned batter let the wood drop from his fingers and set out towards the pitcher with a grim and determined visage, and ended with both teams storming the mound. Has there been a lot of turnover among the Diamond Girls since I left?

'I will be happy to explain to anyone who asks why the conventional wisdom, which was that a Westercon could get one or two thousand people, even in El Paso, was fucked. Some reasons seem obvious in retrospect, others require inordinate travel to venues such as Phoenix and Albuquerque to work out.

'Note yet another email address, which is a good place to reach me since I'm paying for unlimited access to this provider.

'Ditto 9, guaranteed to be on the small side by those who should know, October 25-27; details from me, of course.

[WAHF: Chuck Connor, George Flynn, E. B. Frohvet, Steve Green, Irwin Hirsh, Sue Mason, Joseph Nicholas, Bill Rotsler and Martin Tudor. See you in three weeks!]

FANZINE COUNTDOWN, JULY 18th to AUGUST 7th, 1996

1.) **Wild Heirs #15.5**, edited by the Las Vegrants, 330 S. Decatur, Suite 152, Las Vegas, NV 89107: A superb and eloquent memorial for Charles Burbee, without whose life in and contribution to fandom, it is hard to imagine that I would be writing this, or that you would be reading it. Bill Rotsler leads with a heartfelt overview of how his life intertwined with Burb's. This is followed by three accounts of the week around the trip to scatter Burb's ashes at Amboy Crater, by Rotsler, Arnie and Joyce Katz. Burbee's own "I had intercourse with a glass of water" inspires equal measures of empathic pain and humorous hysteria. And Tom Springer hits just the right notes with his "I touched his piano." As Tom is one of the brightest and best writers to emerge in the nineties, his appreciation and good-humored admiration for Burbee allow the memorial to close on an up note, and gives hope that fandom will continue to embrace the latter's irreverent energy for generations to come.

2.) **Crawdaddy! #13**, edited by Paul Williams, Box 231135, Encinitas, CA 92023: Every time a new issue of this magazine arrives, I am once more amazed by *Crawdaddy!*'s intelligence, integrity and erudition. And three years into the new project, interrupted briefly by a bike accident and hospital stay, Paul seems to have summoned an impressive gestalt from the building blocks of his magazine. This issue features work by five authors other than Paul, some superb letters that could stand on their own as articles or columns, and then Paul manages to climb to the top of the heap and sound his usual pure note of love and admiration with his lead story on *Neil Young and Crazy Horse: The Complex Sessions*, a video by Jonathan Demme. Other highlights include Michaelangelo Matos (even the writers' names are remarkable) appreciation of the Swedish band the Cardigans, Carl Baugher's resurrection of Jimmie Rodgers, and as always, Donna Nasser's lovely woodcut illos. These days, when I imagine writing brilliant, clever pieces of criticism, I imagine them appearing in *Crawdaddy!*

3. **Waxen Wings & Banana Skins #3**, edited by Claire Brialey (26 Northampton Rd., Croydon, Surrey CR0 7HA GB) and Mark Plummer (14 Northway Rd., Croydon, Surrey CR0 6JE GB): At 62 pages, this ought to nail the lid shut on the notion that American fanzines are habitually larger than their British cousins. I must admit, I envy them the space and money to spend almost as much space as an entire issue of *Apparatchik* on their report on Eastercon alone. And gosh, don't these people have fun! The whole seamy tale behind Pam Wells' mad Condoms For America TAFF fund-raiser, which pranged because Americans were obstinate enough to prefer to buy old fanzines is recounted here, as is the strange bibulous obsession in Croydon Fandom (Jesus, it certainly feels odd to type *that* phrase) with small animals, especially goats (I plan to emulate their pub-crawling bent for goats by adopting the phrase "Croydon" as they do "goat" in their bar orders, thus, a typical apparatchiki editorial troika order would be, say, a Henry Weinhardt's Red Croydon, a Rum and Croydon, and a Pyramid HefeCroydon). Although one has to wade through a large moat of verbiage to get to it, there is material in #3 that warrants the longer genzine form: Paul Kincaid's fanzine review is one of the best and more critically complex I've seen lately. Claire's hopeful thoughts on the future of fandom, and Mark's crisis of identity on finding his appetite for SF somewhat stilled, are solid pieces of fan theory. A fine rival and counterpoint to *Attitude*.

And oh, the dizzying smell of fresh mimeo ink as I opened the envelope . . .

4.) **Critical Wave #46**, edited by Steve Green and Martin Tudor, say it with me, 24 Ravensbourne Grove, Off Clarke's Lane, Willenhall, West Midlands, WV 13 1HX GB: Reading all the news in CW at once is a good way to depress yourself; seeing all the losses fandom has suffered in the last quarter stacked end to end gives me a serious chill. But Graham Joyce's column is a tonic, as usual, and Dave Hicks appears to be writing the only serious ongoing fanzine criticism column in the English-speaking world. For this I will endure the mostly wrong-headed comments on SF media, three columns of award-related news in even smaller type than Apak uses, dour little mutterings on the once and future significance of prozines and the indifferent reproduction of the CW photocopier. Hmm, all these stripes of faded toner . . . wonder if ApakUK looks like this. Go now, and send Steve and Martin a subscription, so they can afford to have the machine serviced.

5.) **Jupiter Jump #25**, written and edited by Mark Manning, 1709 South Holgate, Seattle, WA 98144-4339: Mark has emerged, more or less, from a year-plus bout with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, and announces his return to publishing with this handsomely goofy SAPS zine. He's been keeping up on his reading, as always, and has correspondents from all over the globe still writing him with one odd project or another; this time one Moisés Hassón of Santiago, Chile is trying to document the original American publication of various stories that appeared in the Argentine pulp magazine *Narraciones Terrorificas*. And, as one feels is merely appropriate, Mark has a brother-in-law living in Azerbaijanistan, who sent a letter. All this and SAPS mailing comments too. Mark, fandom needs you.

Also Received:

TAFFlon Tudor, Martin Tudor; *The Flying Pig* #38, Darroll Par-doe; *Wild Heirs* #15, *The Vegrants*; *Door Knob* #50 & 51, Robert Lichtman for SAPS; *VFD* #2, Arnie Katz; *Brum Group News* #295 - 298; *Sempervivum*, Dale Speirs for Convention 16; *The Reluctant Famulus* #45, Tom Sadler; *De Profundis* #291 & 292, Tim Merrigan for the LASFS.

— Andy Hooper

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What fun is it being "cool" if you can't wear a sombrero?