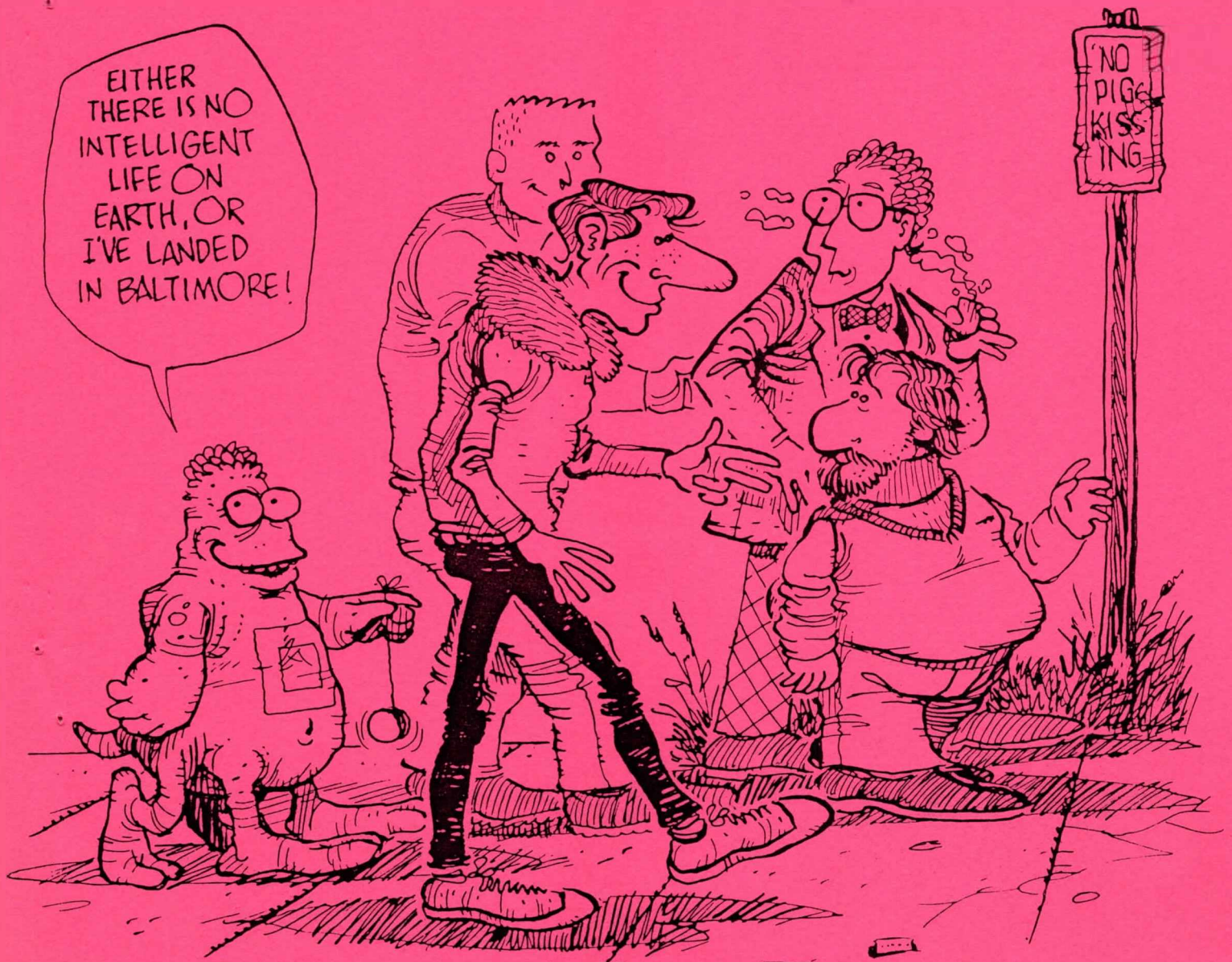
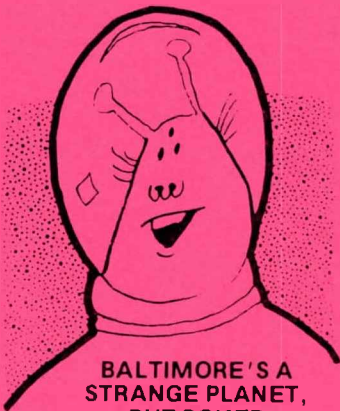


**BSFAN
THIRTEEN**

EITHER
THERE IS NO
INTELLIGENT
LIFE ON
EARTH, OR
I'VE LANDED
IN BALTIMORE!





BALTIMORE'S A
STRANGE PLANET,
BUT POKER
IS POKER ALL
OVER THE COSMOS.

FINALLY!

BSFAN THIRTEEN

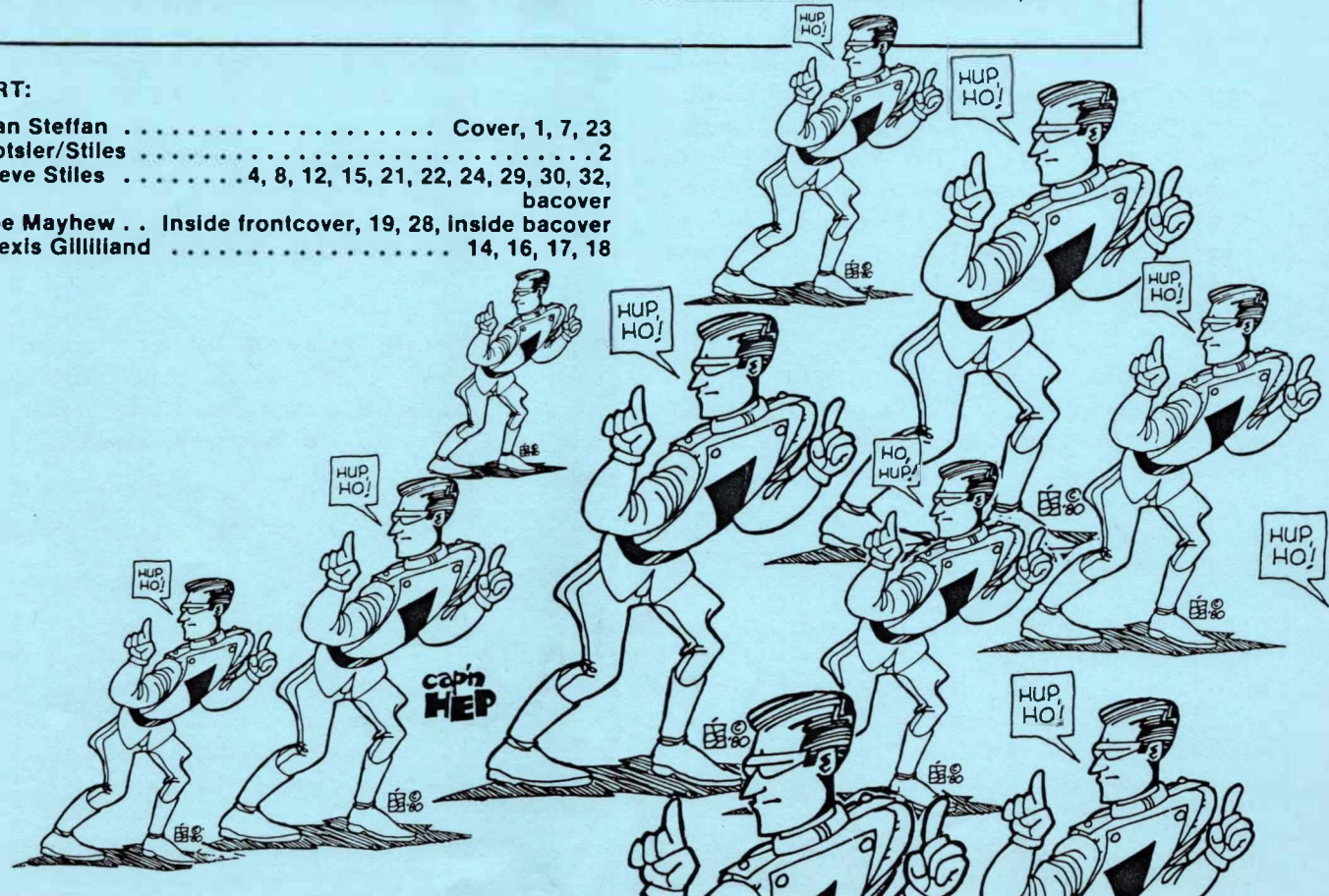
SPECIAL BALTIMORE "ROOTS" ISSUE. JANUARY, 1984



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Contrary to popular belief, there is a BSFAN 13. At this very moment, you're grasping it in your eager hands. You must be, otherwise how could you be reading the deathless prose contained in this editorial?

When I first took over as BSFAN editor, I had no idea that it would take me two years to produce an issue. I can't claim that it's because I can withstand the pressure heaped on me by the illustrious, now ex-president of BSFS, Sue Wheeler and other club members and friends. Somehow I managed to ignore the onerous weight. However, I had to pay attention when my husband, Steve Stiles, who still claims he intends to complete his TAFF report, threatened to have our exuberant horse of a pupdog sit on my head.

Actually, he was getting tired of being bugged by Joe Mayhew and the specter of unfinished fanac when there's so much pro cartooning to do. He felt it was long past time for himself, as the art director of a clubzine from the city of crabs, to move on to bigger and better things. Besides, ConStellation was over.

What! You don't buy that as an explanation! OK, dear reader, you asked for it! Here's the whole sad story.

BSFAN was to be a showcase and is. It presented a chance for both of us - with the help of ConStellation's superb copier and BSFS money - to show fandom just what we could do if left on our own. Steve and I wanted to show the world a zine we could be proud of. The previous two BSFANS, to which I'm sad to say I contributed, were so poor that the decent folk of BSFS were ashamed to mail it out.

Then the conspiracy began. I repeatedly asked for contributions and assistance but next to nothing came of it. There was no way

anything of quality could be produced. When over eight months had elapsed and I almost was ready to turn it into a personal zine, we hit on the idea of asking previously active contributors and former Baltimore residents to fork something over to us. A theme was born.

BSFAN 13 would give current club members and visitors to our "charm city" for worldcon a chance to gain some knowledge of the depth and breadth and history of Baltimore fandom. After all, I was lucky enough to obtain articles from Jack Chalker, Jay Haldeman, Ted Pauls, and former editor Mike Kurman, along with pieces from such current club stalwarts as Sue Wheeler and the irrepressible Mr. Mayhew.

Having become enamoured of computers because of access to ConStellation's Trash 80, yet miffed by some of the antics of the committee, I elected to use Pat Kelly's Apple, which he so graciously offered. However, Pat was running Balticon, I was working for that slaver Waldenbooks and all three of us, Pat, Steve and me, were heavily involved in ConStellation. Add to that two robberies in six months, training a dog, freelancing for much needed money and my mother moving here and it began to look like BSFAN would never materialize. When Pat had time, I didn't or something else would come up for one or all of us at the last minute.

The first break came when I was fired in March. Balticon quickly followed and so did an editorial job for me with, blessings upon blessings, regular hours and good pay (This editorial is being typed on the VAX at work, after hours, and printed on their daisywheel printer). ConStellation, being the leech that it was, sucked the life out of the spring and summer months. We missed getting BSFAN 13 to the hungry worldcon crowds.

Yet we never gave up hope. BSFAN meant too much to me, especially after the ego bruising and hassles Steve and I received from certain ignorant know-it-alls high up in the ConStellation Know-Nothing Party. I knew that somehow I'd make my statement as to how a publication should look and read.

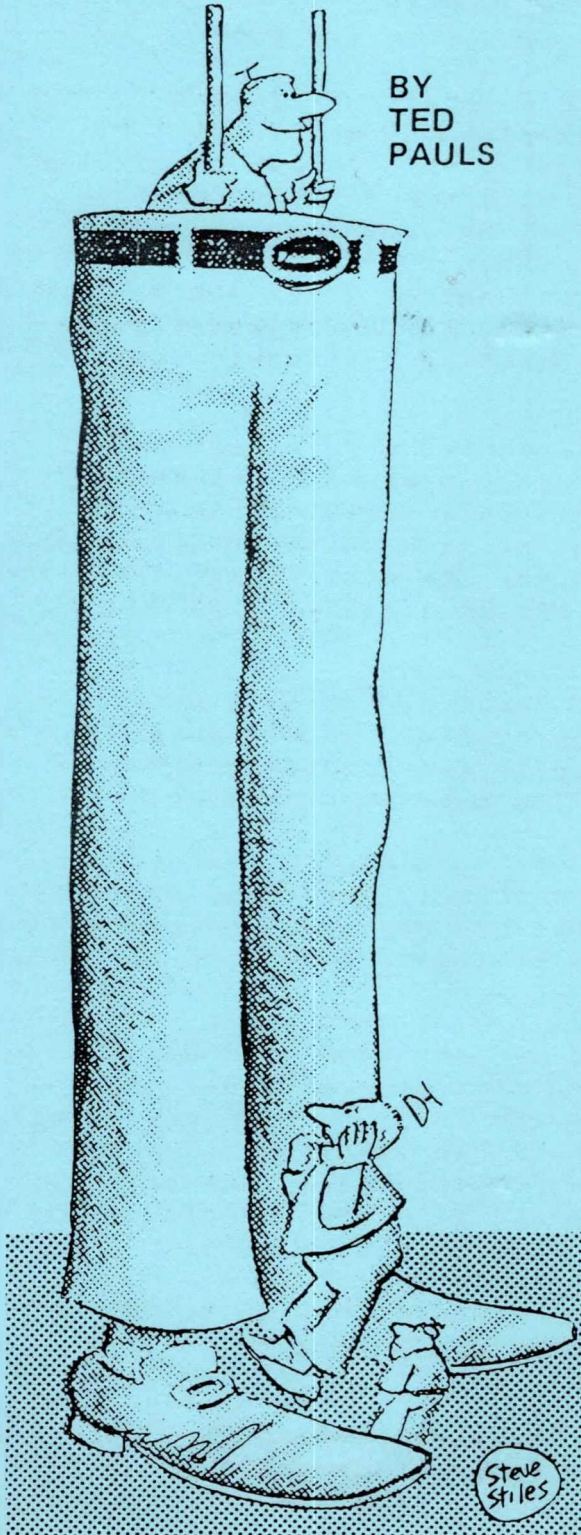
Life, however, kept interfering in fanac. There was socializing, preparing for worldcon house guests, trying now and again to contribute to a couple of APAs we belong to and even trying to find time to read, when the dog lets us.

Having a huge mutt in a household already populated by two cats can be harrowing. He always wants to play even if nobody else wants to. If left to his own devices for too long, he rips apart huge chunks of the living room couch cover, the couch itself or anything else he can sink his teeth into that doesn't bite back. Two bright notes are he's awfully good at being cute and it's been nearly a year since the last robbery attempt.

Still, I persevered. I think you'll agree that it was worth the traditional fannish wait. Steve and I hope to be able to look back on what we've produced with pride, even though it's only a one-shot. BSFS decided that perhaps another editor could get the zine out more often. At the last meeting, the October election meeting, the Stiles tandem, if Sue's not joking, was booted out of office in favor of Rikk Jacobs (By the way, rumor has it he's aiming to have his first issue out in February).

GIANTS IN THOSE DAYS

BY
TED
PAULS



Before there was BSFS, Inc., there was BSFS. And BSFA. And the Baltimore Group, the Baltimore Mafia, Baltimore Traveling Fandom.

BSFA was formed so long ago it is nearly indistinguishable from primordial ooze. It was founded in 1958 by Marian Oakes, who even earlier, as Marian Cox, had been involved in the first faint glimmerings of a feminist movement in fandom. (She was then one of a triumverate of femfans involved in a short-lived organization and fanzine. The other two were Marion Zimmer, later Bradley, and Noreen Kane, later Falasca, later still Shaw.) For nearly two years the club met on Sunday afternoons at Lew and Marian Oakes' housetrailer off Belair Road, in the country.

Membership probably peaked at eight sometime during the first year, and then, exhausted by the stratospheric atmosphere, settled down to a hardcore of five or six, not counting kids and cats, who were sort of difficult to avoid counting in a trailer. In fact, one of the members wasn't even a Baltimorean at the time, though he later moved here, Ted White. He already was a BNF, having recently suspended the acclaimed "Stellar" and begun publishing the more informal "Gafia", later "Gambit". Ted would tool up from Falls Church in his Jaguar for almost every meeting. The names of the others in the club are practically meaningless except to a devoted fan historian, Dick Wingate, John Hitchcock, John Magnus...

The "old BSFS" was formed in the back of a bus. Its subsequent development through

the early Balticons was previously told in these pages. In any case, my own knowledge of this period of Baltimore fandom is somewhat limited, since at the time I was taking a vacation, getting chased by police dogs, and other such exciting 1960's pastimes. When I returned to convention fandom (I'd never been away from fanzine fandom) at the 1968 Balticon, the club was in the process of breaking up.

Between the breakup of the "old" BSFS and the formation of the "new" BSFS in 1974, there's a remarkable and, I think, largely unchronicled period. For fan historians, whose benchmarks are the organized history of clubs and conventions, this period is probably regarded as an Age of Chaos. There was no organization. Balticon continued without interruption, being put on by individuals without any sort of club backing: Jack Chalker in 1969 and 1970, Brian Burley, Dave Halterman and myself in 1971, Karen Townley (later Pauls) and me from 1972 through 1974. They were tiny conventions by today's standards; not one of them drew above 250 people. (But: for tiny little cons that obviously couldn't afford to even pay guests travel expenses much less fees, we had a fairly impressive roster. From 1969-1974, the Balticon Guests of Honor were, consecutively: Roger Zelazny, Damon Knight and Kate Wilhelm, Harry Harrison, Gordon Dickson, Fred Pohl, and Poul Anderson.)

Instead of an organization, there was an amorphous, throbbing fan activity centered in Baltimore, indeed, hyperactivity. While there might be nothing in particular happening in Baltimore, excepting only the annual very low-key Washington's Birthday Weekend convention, there was always a great deal happening involving people from Baltimore. It centered around three loose groups. The Baltimore Group, Baltimore Traveling Fandom, and the Baltimore Mafia were, while substantially overlapping, three quite separate groups.

The Baltimore group was, very loosely speaking, something like an actual club (or maybe something almost but not quite exactly unlike a club). It had meetings, in the sense that everybody agreed to be at the same place at the same time, and it even, periodically, had elections; but before that image conjures up anything serious, I should add that the election rules were an enlightening example of how the Group was run. The rules were simple: (1) Anybody present could vote for anyone at all for any office whatsoever. (2) Nominated candidates had no say in whether their names would remain in contention, if indeed they were present at all. and (3) The results of the election would in no way confer any status, responsibility, authority, or obligation on the successful candidate. One of the more interesting results had Mickey Mouse beating out Mao Tse-tung for Chairman.

Mostly, the "meetings" involved sitting around Jack Chalker's dining room or Kim Weston's living room for a couple of hours, waiting to see who would show up. The closest we came to an "activity" at this portion of the meeting was when Chalker shanghai'd us into collating an umpty-nine zillian page Mirage fanzine. Occasionally, a newcomer, having heard about the "club", would show up at one of these Saturday evening get-togethers and would usually sit in stunned bewilderment, wondering why the club meeting didn't start. Rarely, but beautifully, a new person would show up who actually fit into the weirdness, would

survive the disconcerting "meeting", and would be absorbed into the true warp and woof of Baltimore Fandom.

The meeting would dissolve around 11:00 PM, whereupon we'd go out to a greasy spoon, have breakfast, and show up at Don and Debbie Sobwick's apartment shortly after midnight. Don worked for the Baltimore Sun and got home, after putting the paper to bed, at about that time. We'd settle in at Don and Debbie's for an all-night boardgame or poker session, sometimes culminated, but frequently only adjourned, by breakfast with Sunday morning TV cartoons. These all-nighters became so well established that, frequently, new people would be dropping over, without bothering to call, until dawn.

Those get-togethers were never, however, regularly scheduled. Meetings would most often be arranged during a marathon telephone conversation between Jack Chalker and myself, usually on the basis of: "any cons this weekend?" "No... anything happening in New York?" "uh-uh. How about Philadelphia? Washington? New Jersey?" "Nope, it's an open weekend." "Oh well, then, let's have a Baltimore meeting!" And we'd make the appropriate phone calls. There were never very frequent Baltimore meetings, because there were never that many free weekends.

Baltimore Traveling Fandom is a phenomenon difficult for youngsters reading this to comprehend. Once upon a time, before the First Oil Shock, gasoline was cheap: \$0.32.9 for premium (that's a gallon, not a shot glass). Hopping into a car and going to New York was a casual thing -- the tolls on the highways were actually a more significant financial consideration than gas costs. Spearheaded by the then practically ubiquitous team of Chalker and Pauls, Baltimore Traveling Fandom was everywhere.

By the way, the title of this reminiscence derives from Terry Carr and Ron Ellik, who during the heyday of "Fanac" in the late 1950's, acquired a reputation as "Traveling Giants" due to the fact they and several friends occasionally attended LASFS (Los Angeles) meetings from their home base in Berkeley. Ron Ellik later underlined his fame by hitchhiking cross-country to a world con.) however, apart from Ron's hitchhiking adventure, those early Traveling Giants were pikers compared to us.

In one year, I managed to spend all or part of 49 weekends in some city other than Baltimore (on nine of those occasions, two different cities in one weekend; on three others, three or more cities in one weekend). Jack Chalker was with me on virtually every one of those weekends, but he added a couple of other cities I didn't get to...And we were usually accompanied by one or more from a pool of maybe eight or ten other fans who were part of the group. We had virtually perfect attendance records at WSFA (Washington SF Assn., first and third Friday meetings, fifth Friday parties), PSFS (Philadelphia SF Society, second Friday meetings, fourth Friday parties), Lunarians (NYC, third Saturday meetings, first Saturday work sessions). And of course conventions: Balticon, Disclave, Lunacon, Philcon, Boskone, Marcon (Columbus), Midwestcon, Pghlange (Pittsburgh), etc.

Out of this informal traveling group grew the final "group", the Baltimore Mafia. Being such workaholics (and being, let us be honest,

power-trippers), the most dedicated of the travelers inevitably became prime-movers in these various organizations, sometimes formally as officers, but often just through always being on the spot and having constant contact with so many diverse elements of fandom. So, in the early 1970's, there developed a most peculiar situation in Baltimore fandom: Baltimore fandom as such hardly existed -- one little con and club meetings so irregular and unclublike that there were people who'd lived in the city and been active fans for years who didn't even believe such a club existed. And yet...

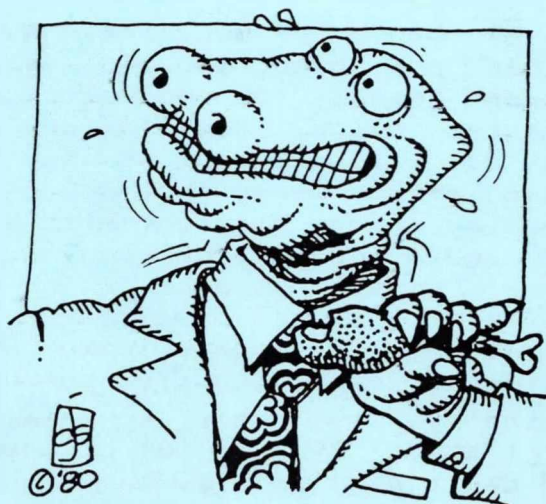
And yet: Jay Haldeman, living in Baltimore, ran WSFA and Disclave. Don Sobwick, then an expatriate living in Willow Grove, but definitely still a Baltimore fan at heart (and still hosting boardgame sessions -- the only change was that we had to drive an extra 100 miles to and from the sessions), was President of PSFS and Chairman of Philcon. Chalker was Chairman of Lunacon one year, huckster room chairman another. I ran registration for four different cons in four cities two of those years. To a very large extent, the committees of four or five regional cons were essentially interchangeable, and the most common factor among the people involved was that they were Baltimore fans.

And of course, we were all heavily involved in putting on Discon II, which I believe has stood the test of time and is still recognized as one of the best "modern" (i.e., large) world cons.

But enough of this remembrance of things past. Perhaps someday, if Elaine still wants me to write more about Those Days after reading this, or if you can catch me at a con in a mellow mood...perhaps I'll tell you about the Great Ferry Boat Searches ("stay on blacktop all the way and don't turn left at the Keystone station"), or the Night We Lost Ohio ("Dammit Mark, I know it's supposed to be around here somewhere!"), or the afternoon Jack Chalker's spanking new Mercedes with 600 miles on it died like a lead balloon on the Pennsylvania Turnpike, and the Karen Townley Memorial Bush, or the Great Wall of China Egg Foo Young & Marching Society ("Table for 47, please..."), or the weekend Jack and I and Mark Owings went to Montreal for the hell of it...

They were Jiants in Those Days...

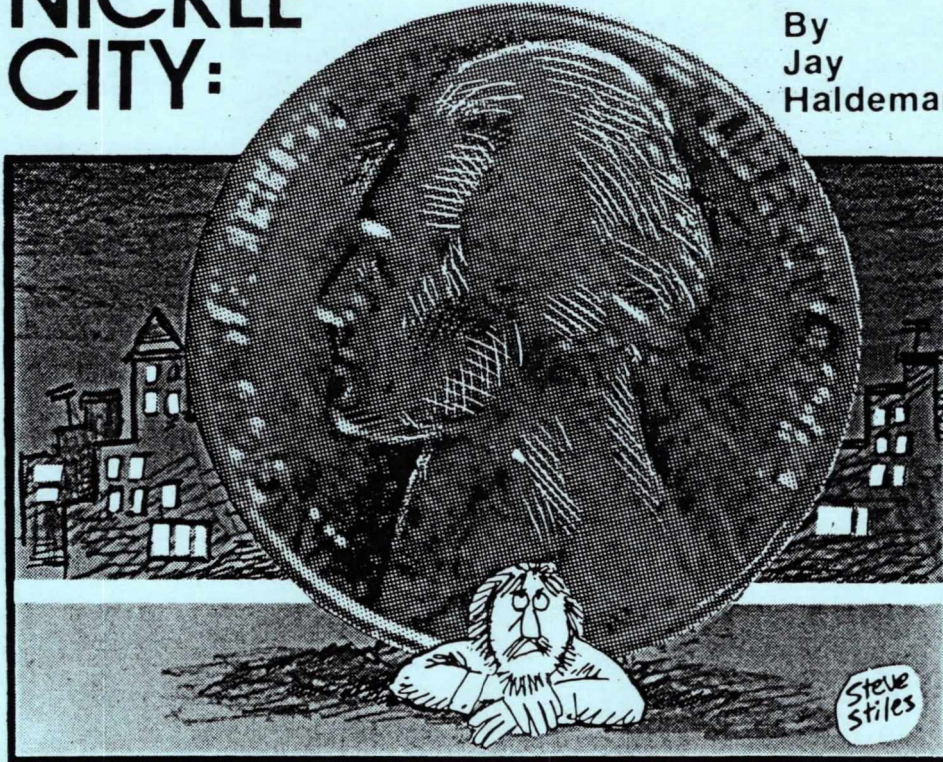
--Ted Pauls



LIZARD MAN EATING
AN ILLICIT CHICKEN-LEG!

NICKLE CITY:

By
Jay
Haldeman



AN INSIDE/OUTSIDE VIEW

I was a reluctant Baltimorean. though circumstances kept pulling me toward Poe's final resting place, I fought it all the way. I had lived for years in the Washington area. I was a Washingtonian through and through. Or so I thought.

So what if I worked in Baltimore? So what if I went to school there? At least I still lived in the Washington area. I was president of WSFA, for God's sake. If my wife happened to be from Baltimore; well, that was nothing more than geography. Or so I thought.

I had a '64 Corvaire. My first new car. Within a year and a half I had put over 125,000 miles on it, mostly driving back and forth between Washington and Baltimore six or seven times a week. Alice, you remember Alice, kept after me to move to Baltimore. I balked. Then one day I woke up at 5am to drive to work in the snow and went to class after work and drove back in even deeper snow, arriving home sometime after midnight with a bent fender. I had to get up and do it all again the next morning. Suddenly moving to Baltimore made a lot of sense. Or so I thought.

I really hadn't taken BSFS into consideration. I knew a lot of Baltimore fans, mostly through WSFA and various conventions, but living in the same town with them was something else again. To be fair about it, a lot of them became good friends. Others, well.... you can't win 'em all.

I should give some background to put this all in historical perspective. The time frame is roughly from 1965 - 1973. WSFA at that

time was mostly an easy-going group with some pretensions of organization. With the exception of the Worldcon stuff, our most pressing problem was what to do with Don Miller and his ever-growing WSFA JOURNAL and SON OF SON OF.... Mostly WSFA just partied and goofed off. Compared to BSFS at the time, WSFA was organized to the eyeballs. A large number of fans held memberships in both clubs and never missed an opportunity to gather in fannish togetherness: spell that party. Almost every weekend.

Things were never organized at BSFS. The highlight at most Balticons was Ron Bounds running around looking for microphones and dragging speakers out of the audience. Officers of the club were elected out of sheer bedlam, usually by default. If you missed that particular meeting you were most likely to be elected secretary. If WSFA liked to party, BSFS liked to crazy. For a while after we moved to Baltimore, they did it at our house on Woodbourne Avenue.

Meetings were called to order by whacking a large stump in the middle of our living room with a large machete. That was about all the order there was to those meetings. Sometimes minutes of the last meeting were read, usually not. A poker game ran continuously throughout the meeting. A lot of beer was consumed and one-shots were run off in the basement. It was fun, frantic fun, but it had to end.

Although we still hosted occasional parties, we stopped having the regular meetings there. People, probably visitors, kept walking off with books from my collection, a very unfannish thing to do. That bothered me, but not as much as the police. It seems that at one meeting some BSFS members were suspected of smoking pot upstairs, not an unheard-of thing in the late 60's. Not content to confront these crazed druggies face-to-face, someone (I've heard it was Pat Kelly's girlfriend, a nonfan, though I never found out for sure) called the police. This led to continual police surveillance of my house; which was annoying, to say the least. My phone suddenly developed an echo and my mail started arriving opened. I was pissed. BSFS met elsewhere, but friends were always welcome.

Ron Bounds' house on Paca Street was a great place for parties. When it got hot we just sat on the roof. We usually filled an old washing machine in the basement with ice and beer. When Ron's parents were around (rarely) we had to carry our beer around in soft drink cans. I wonder if it ever fooled them.

Many drunken one-shots were run off at Ron's house. We seldom had mimeo paper, but Ron always had lots of computer paper that could be cut down to size. TAPEWORM, my fanzine of that era, was born there. I remember one night Roger Zelazny walked in -- the first time I'd met him -- and we were in the middle of some crazy, drunken one-shot and he sat down and added a few more lines to the crudsheet. It wasn't enough to save it.

Once Ron and the Patt brothers went out and came back with a pile of hamburger they started to eat raw. It was the kind of thing they would do in those days. Since I worked in a parasitology lab I felt

obliged to tell them all the horrible things that could happen to people who ate raw meat. I guess I did a good job of it because there were three half-eaten sandwiches in the trash when I left.

And then there were the rip-offs. God, Baltimore was a place for that like I've never seen. My house was trashed twice and my car three times. But the real winner was Jim Saunders. Good old Jim. He could charm the teeth out of a horse and I was no match for him. He arrived on the scene from New York (having had family and a past in Baltimore) dead broke and with a sob story that would break your heart. He was trying to get on his feet. He had money coming from a thousand fannish plans. All he needed was a few bucks and some stuff. He got an apartment in Baltimore and Alice and I loaned him enough stuff to furnish it. Then he sold everything and skipped town. Sigh.

Another great place to party was at Dave and Vol Ettlin's place on North Avenue. Located above a typewriter shop (a fannish location if I ever heard of one), it had the added advantage of being right across the hall from an apartment full of hookers. People kept knocking all night long on the wrong doors. As many of you probably know, I finally married Vol, which was the only way I could find out how they got that pool table up all those stairs.

Lots of people are gone now (including me), moved or gafiated. Baltimore fandom has become something else, evidently as organized as WSFA. Most of the new people I hardly know, but they seem like good people. Still, I wonder about the old ones. I wonder if Baltimore is still crazy. It probably is.

On second thought, any city that can house so many diverse people and still have room for the Lexington Market has to be a little off-center.

It's not BSFS business directly, but I should mention the Guilford Gafia. It started soon after Alice and I moved to our rambling house on Southway. Several of us were just starting our writing careers and we decided to have a writers conference patterned after the Milford one. We had about a dozen of them over a couple of years. Regular attendees were myself, brother Joe, Jack Dann, Gardner Dozois, Piglet (George Alec Effinger), Ted White, Tom Monteleone, and Bob Thurston. Jon Singer, Ron Bounds, Ray Ridenhour, Dave Halterman and others also made appearances. The last day of the conference was an open party and lots of local fans tended to drop in. They were good times, I remember them fondly.

I remember other things: Toad Hall, pumping beer for Baltimore at Tricon, two cross-country trips with WSFA/BSFS to Baycon in '68 and LACon in '72, poker games with Chalker and Huff, late night drives to Lunarian meetings, many fine times in Balticons held in really crummy hotels. Whatever happened to Paul Schauble, Mike Hakulin, Chuck Rein? Does anyone besides me remember the 2000 imprinted shopping bags hanging from the ceiling while the paint dried, looking like so many green bats?

There were many good memories, many painful ones. We try to remember only the good ones and let the others rest. We had a party before we left Baltimore to set out on an unsure life in a school bus. Borrowing an idea from Banks Mebane, we had a white elephant party to get rid of the surplus. If you came you had to take something away with you. I remember being slightly bonkers and watching through a doorway as three people walked by, carrying a rug out. One by one they went, like a parade tied together by a rolled-up rug. Trailing behind was Ted White. He was carrying an American flag. All right!

It was perfect. It ended it all.

I left the next day and started down different roads.

--Jay Haldeman

ANTIFAN HEADS FOR BALTIMORE



Steve Stiles Dept.
I've been putting off continuing with my TAFF report. I guess it's been about 14 years since the last chapter appeared in the near-legendary QUIP --so I haven't been too crazy about resuming the project. Besides, I don't remember much, and I've lost all my notes. But nobody today remembers much about British fandom of the late 60s, including the British fans themselves (those anarchistic lunks), and I've been getting little reminders about my TAFF obligations lately; snide cracks, verbal threats, not to mention the psychic portents on my bedroom ceiling at three in the morning (those flying eyeballs are damned hard to hit with a broom handle, I'll tell you!). So I guess it's time...

Harrison Country

CHAPTER 18

PAGE 127

They were all in their Grey Lensmen costumes when all the really big homemade wine-making fans in Great Britain filed into the small room with all their little jugs of wine concealed on their persons, under coats, tucked behind caps and blaster holsters. When we were all assembled, we uncapped the jugs and drank from them one by one, making a little ceremony by rolling the wine around in our mouths in order to guess the various fruits and vegetables the wines were made from. Carrot wine, surprizingly enough, was really delicious, especially after being washed down with a hearty swig of strawberry wine. There were about 86 jugs of wine in that room with their 86 wine makers, and we were all smoking Benson & Hedges. I knew then that these wine-making fans of Great Britain were about the best gosh-darned guys I knew. Then I uncapped another little jug and sloshed a little around in my mouth --avocado?-- and it ran down my chin and all over my Carnaby Street shirt, putting out my Benson & Hedges. I had forgotten to open my lips!

Then I remembered that I was due on a panel sometime that evening. I didn't exactly know when, or even what I'd be saying, but I thought maybe I ought to do something. I wondered about that for awhile, and then it hit me: "Maybe I should get up off the floor!" Which seems ridiculous now, but at the time it seemed like the right thing to do.

(To Be Continued)

CHIP DELANEY'S FIRST BALTICON

THE BALTIMORE STAR, May 23, 1967

SCI-FI NUTCASES HOLD FIRST 'BALTYCON'

By Willis Stephens
Chief, Star Nutcase Division



John L. Chalker: Sees Little Green Men, works for School System.

BALTIMORE—Hordes of slovenly dressed eccentrics, flying saucer fans, Little Green Men enthusiasts and other weirdos descended on the Emerson Hotel this past weekend for "Balty-Con," a sci-fi convention for lovers of Star Trek, Buck Rogers readers, and other other drugged-out hippies from The Twilight Zone.

"By holding our convention here in Baltimore we hope to attract the attention of star travelling alien races," said Mr. Joe L. Calker, the "con" organizer. "Baltimore is, after all, the city of Poe, and as such is a focus of mystic psychic energies—a natural beacon for beings from other worlds." (Mr. Chalker teaches for the Baltimore Public School system. It should be noted.)

Guests of Baltycon included well-known sci-fi professionals like Mr. Delaney R. Samuels, Rupert Zelazny, and Ron L. Hubbard.

A typical con goer, Starchild P. Hobbitspawn was interviewed. "Like, wow," Hobbitspawn remarked, puffing dreamily on what seemed to be a handmade cigar.

It's really hard to believe, but Balticon was actually an accident that grew out of an election of officers. The original Baltimore Science Fiction Society was formed in 1963, in the back of a Trailways bus coming from Washington to Baltimore, by five Baltimore sf fans, all of them in their teens who were commuting to Washington SF Association meetings on Friday nights. The club that grew out of that was an odd one, but its membership grew in the mid-sixties until it actually passed the older WSFA. Its marathon parties (and marathon meetings, which sometimes lasted 18 hours of combined party and business) are the stuff for another story, but that old club never took itself seriously and that was the key to Balticon.

BSFS election meetings in the old days were party-type occasions. They usually were either uncontested or barely contested, but that never mattered. Elections were excuses to hold even bigger parties, and got to be enough of a phenomenon that folks from New York, New Jersey, Philadelphia and DC started coming. Meetings in those days were held in members' homes, most of which were barely able to hold the membership we had. When the elections started growing with out-of-town guests, we simply outgrew anything we had. By 1966 we had to take a function room in the downtown Holiday Inn, and the crowds and party were the biggest and grandest yet. Out of that came the idea that perhaps a party should not be tied to elections and should, instead, be a weekend long.

by
Jack
Chalker

So it was that, in 1967, over Washington's Birthday weekend, we rented the penthouse of The old Emerson Hotel and declared Balticon. I mostly, giving it a name so we could charge admission to defray expenses (something we couldn't do if it were an official meeting). That penthouse was sumptuous, all that penthouses should be, complete with a giant bar in a living room area, balconies with a nice city view and full kitchen. The party that year was a big success -- it broke even and about 75 people attended. It was decided not only to repeat it but to add a measure of program.

I don't remember whose idea it was, but there was a general feeling at the time that conventions were already becoming too crowded. It was getting particularly difficult to find and sit down and talk with your favorite writer or artist. Out of these general complaints (after all, regional cons were drawing several hundred and the world conventions approached a thousand people) and a sense that we wanted to do something different, the original Balticon program concept evolved.

What we would do is invite a specific pro we all wanted to meet and talk to, and tailor a one-day program around him (while keeping the party going, of course). The con would be kept in February because we wanted a small attendance -- we always aimed at 150 or so -- but also invited were local east coast professionals who also might like a relaxing time and would fill out the program.

Samuel R. Delany was Balticon's first Guest of Honor. It was also the first time he had ever been GOH at any kind of convention. We picked him because he was interesting to the bulk of BSFS. He had been writing since 1962 and his nine books and assorted short stories, by this Balticon, had already established him as a major and unique creative talent. Yet few had met him in the sf community and our curiosity was both undeniable and understandable. Delany and Roger Zelazny (a BSFS member) seemed to be the leaders of the new generation of sf writers. We knew Roger well -- what was this Delany like?

I'm not sure if we disappointed him, but he certainly didn't disappoint us. He was charming, an excellent and approachable conversationalist and the 125 or so sf fans from the area and along the east coast really enjoyed him. The Balticon concept worked -- one on one with somebody you didn't see all that often -- and, I suspect, our choice of GOH had a lot to do with establishing the format.

Balticon 2 was in the Lord Baltimore; the Emerson had inadequate meeting facilities for a program format and was slated to be torn down to make way for a bank parking lot. We did not, needless to say, get the Lord Baltimore's largest ballroom; we used a meeting room on one side of the lobby level for almost everything. I remember the acoustics were ridiculous -- we had our few hucksters in the back of The hall and you could hear any sound made by anybody anywhere in the hall. About the only real quiet was when Delany spoke.

I'm vague on The rest of the program, but there was an old-timer's panel headed by former sf magazine editor and anthologist Hans Stefan Santesson, as well as a fantasy panel chaired by Lin Carter. Considering the small attendance all program items were very

well attended indeed. We took a party suite on the mezzanine level for the bulk of the con, with a halfkeg of beer at its center. I recall our bar was unusually stocked, including "vodka" from Allied Chemical, a potent "blog", dry ice and all, and nuclear fizzes (this was a day when cointreat didn't cost an arm and a leg).

A good time was had by all, although I also remember we barely made our room commitment and lost around a hundred bucks overall, made up by me, Mark Owings and Roger Zelazny out of our own pockets (the club was poor and couldn't afford it itself). Still, I particularly remember it for a number of reasons -- it was the first, it was the first GOH position for Delany and only three days later I shipped out for basic training.

Samuel R. Delany went on, of course, to Hugos, Nebulas and well-deserved international acclaim. It's always been a point of pride with me that we recognized his unique sf genius first.

Balticon, too, went on, surviving the original BSFS, but it could not survive its enjoyable format. It was too expensive. Indeed it was mostly sf fans in the area who discovered Balticon who decided that the convention had to change direction, and restarted BSFS to do just that. It is Balticon, then, that is the continuity between the old and the new BSFS groups. It's kind of ironic, though, that a con founded because conventions were getting too large should grow into the largest regional sf convention in the world. The convention that prayed for 150 people -- but not many more -- now announces 3,000 member cutoffs. That's not to say that the present Balticons are not good conventions, but, looking back on Balticon 2, I can't help but wonder....

--Jack L. Chalker



Fandom In Baltimore vs



BALTIMORE FANDOM

BY JOE MAYHEW

A native of Baltimore once said to me, 'Joe' You have Maryland license plates: I didn't know you were from Baltimore. "His world was very small.

While I've been a member of BSFS off and on since 1963, I've never lived in Baltimore or seriously thought of moving there. I joined BSFS because it was near enough for me to make the meetings. I had friends who were forming a club, another outpost of fandom, more of what I enjoyed, more of the people I liked. I just thought of it as simply more fandom: science fiction fandom that is, not Baltimore fandom.

Many members of BSFS also belong to WSFA. They joined WSFA for the same reasons I joined BSFS. They enjoyed the fannish ambience. I doubt if any have joined as an expression of boosterism for Washington, DC. We leave boosterism to the mundanes: it's their world, but our planet.

WSFA is a local chapter of fandom. It doesn't have any restrictions about residence and it keeps fairly busy with the proper business of any SF club: Fanac.

Baltimore is a nice place to live. It has quaint customs and a curious accent; but then, so does Buffalo. It is as important as Philadelphia and as arrogant as New York. But it isn't any more special to fandom than these towns. Baltimore should not be the club's focus, only its locus.

A fan should live almost as a tourist in his hometown. That way he can discover its unique pleasures, keep its special aspects fresh in his mind and never let any place become mundane and ordinary. A fan organization should not limit itself to a single city, but should welcome the whole world, even the whole universe. But BSFS seems to be growing ever more obsessed with its city. I sense creeping boosterism. In touting your own little barricaded province you lose fellowship with the rest of the universe. It is hard to pinpoint exactly, instances of the attitude I am trying to describe, but its effects can be easily felt in their general gestalt. "Baltimore is Best" is not fannish, it is ignorant provincial boosterism. Out there, beyond the city limits, are worlds to discover. Don't let BSFS grow steadily and stupidly more ingrown.

The thing which draws fans together isn't the wonders of their hometown, it's a common need to reach beyond the known to meet and share with others who are interested in such possibilities and in the adventure of the mind. They may not sit around and talk about special subjects, but when they talk, they do it in a special way. BSFS was formed to draw such people together, to share their common bond. Fans are aliens in the mundane world, so it is pathetic for them to waste their energies banging its dull and tedious drum.

-- Joe Mayhew

A FEW REMARKS ON CONVENTIONS

by
Alexis Gilliland

WHAT A GREAT
CONV!



I was chairman of Disclave from 1974 to 1978, and in 1981, for a grand total of six times. (My first convention was Discon I in 1963 and I hang around a lot.) What follows is idiosyncratic opinion and no way for anyone else to put on a convention.

The fact is that conventions are ensemble fan activity. Any particular group of fans will have different priorities, different experiences, and different ideas about what a convention ought to be. In general, all of them are right, although certain mistakes due to inexperience may be repeated and repeated, just as novice fan editors may fail to leave sufficient margins in their fanzines.

What we find at conventions are the art show, the huckster room, the program, the movies, the guest of honor, and the parties. You might say that one or another is more important and, depending on what sort of weight you give them, you change the flavor of the con. A convention, like a flower, attracts a clientele according to the colors it displays. Leonard Nimoy as the guest of honor will attract a different set of fans than Arthur C. Clarke.

The first thing that you have to decide is who this convention is for. That is, who are all these people? Once you know that, some of your other decisions

become much easier. Thus, if you are drawing media fans... a generic term used to mean non-readers... it is at once obvious that the film program is of prime importance. If you are drawing SCA types, The program should include concessions to costumes, a masquerade, or (since nobody dances anymore) the fannish equivalent of a fashion show. Artists would naturally look to a well organized and profitable art show. Hardened con goers look to meet their friends and have parties. Neos look to the program...and perhaps the con suite, if they are lucky enough to find out about it. Pros look to the bar, since it is deductible. The con committee hangs out with the con committee of other conventions, when they aren't coping with unforeseen substances hitting the fan.

The second thing, after you figure out the people you want, is how you are going to entertain them. As a practical matter, you wind up doing a balancing act. Yes, we have an art show, and yes we have a program. The question is, who gets the ballroom and who gets the little room on the second floor? The con chair...or the committee...weighs their priorities and makes a decision. Perhaps it works out badly. Perhaps not. An "established" convention knows what its priorities are, and knowing that it wants a balance in a particular range, it can tell that a given hotel is unsuitable without actually having to throw a convention there to find out.

The third thing, which all too many people think is the whole cheese, is the logistics. Operations. The nuts and bolts of making the con work. The details. Buying beer for the con suite. Negotiating with the hotel. Putting the programs together. The fact is, once you know who you want to come, and how you figure to entertain them, the details fall into place. You still have to pay attention, but in most cases you won't have to think very hard to make a good decision. In an "established" con, you simply do what was done last year.

There is a bit of a problem. In '74 Disclave registered 240 people. In '78, 1000. In '81, 1400. I haven't figured out what the compound growth rate is, but I wish my bank account was paying that kind of interest.

Basically, it is not easy to stay the same when you are growing like Alice in Wonderland. An "established" con is not the same twice...some people might even say that it isn't the same once. But perhaps enough continuity can be provided





so that someone coming back will feel things are kind of the same.

The con committee cannot insure that their convention gets a lot of repeat business. All that they can do is make sure nobody comes back. This is known as screwing up. A goof can be memorable. A disaster can be of historic dimensions. But a good job? You can tell your art show director was OK when they ask him to do the worldcon art show. You can tell your program items were good when other cons use them (that was maybe why you used them). But the con was a success...to the extent that it was a success...because you let a lot of people put it on. Even though you couldn't make them all happy. And what do you mean by success, anyway? The dead dog party ran till Tuesday morning? That you filled 58 trash bags?

You do your best.

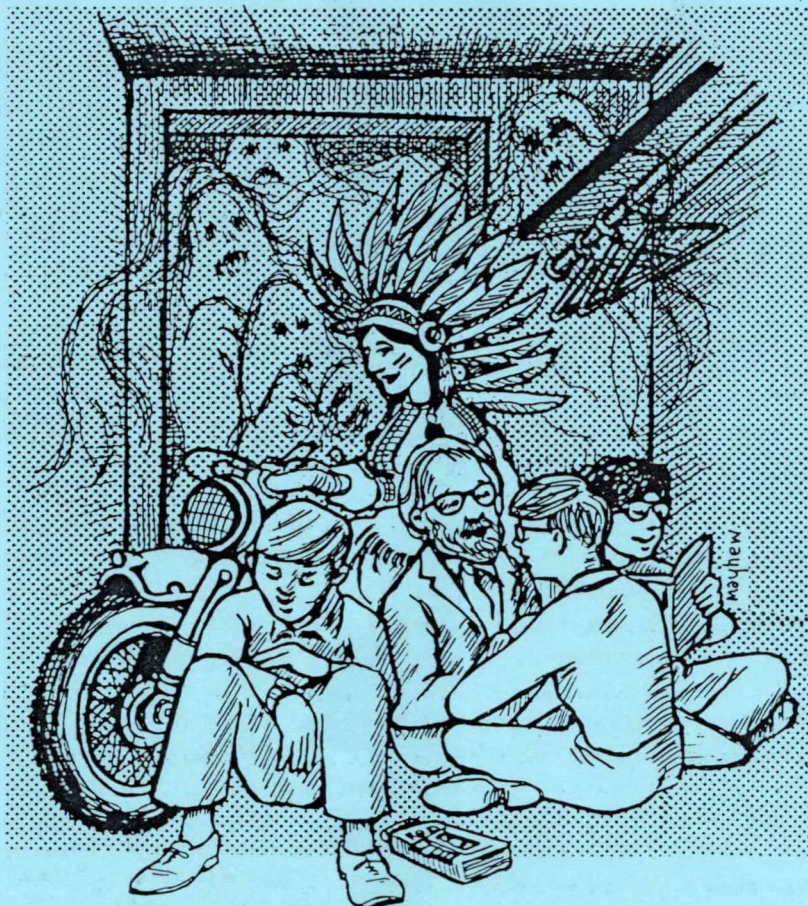
And next year...if the economy doesn't collapse...if the hotel doesn't change hands...attendance goes up 25%.

Your best was pretty good? Do you want that extra 25%?

There is one other thing. Money. Money is a terrible reason to put on a con. Making money as a first priority is a good way to ensure a bad con. On the other hand, losing money isn't so good either. Especially losing a lot of money. Probably the best that can be done is to avoid spending that doesn't help. This is logistics, but it is also knowing what you want to do. And it helps if cost can be controlled. Why rent "Black Lagoon" when you can borrow it from the library? The essence of a science fiction convention is the use of lots of volunteer labor. What would it cost if you were paying the minimum wage? Or professional rates? What it would cost is enough so that if your company didn't send you, you wouldn't go.

That about wraps it up. I see I didn't tell you how to run a con after all. Things like never using glass bottles in the con suite. Or the virtues of keg beer. Or the relative merits of all the local hotels. Or how to negotiate with the convention manager. Or how to make the PLO party quiet down. Or how to keep the night manager happy in the face of considerable aggravation. Or how to talk to the SWAT team.

--Alexis Gilliland



THE BIRTH (AND DEATH) OF THE CLOSETCON

BY MIKE KURMAN

Rich Dixon invited me to the August 14th BSFS meeting because after the meeting he was going to show slides of the space shuttle, views of various parts of the Earth's continents as seen from the shuttle in orbit and assorted close-ups of various planetary and lunar bodies. Having always enjoyed both close-ups of bodies and Rich's company, I arrived at the new BSFS clubhouse and was immediately impressed at how much things had changed since I gafiated in early 1979. A fantastic building with such well-organized space. 75 percent of the fans at the meeting I didn't know. And 85 members! That's almost WSFA size (although I suppose WSFA's up to 200 by now).

At any rate, while talking with some of the people I did know, I was told that BSFAN was going to be doing a retrospective on Baltimore fandom, and Sue Wheeler suggested I write about the days of the closetcon. Actually, this topic has been chronicled before, in BSFAN #1, but who's got a copy of that?

It was in the early days of Third Period Baltimore fandom, soon after the birth of BSFS in 1974, when there weren't any 2500 member Balticons and \$18,000 BSFS bank and money market accounts. It happened that Judy Flum (then Kurman) and I were going through this

parapsychological phase. We lived in Timonium at the time. For those of you out-of-towners, this was the suburb immortalized by the late Compton Crook (Stephen Tall, "Mushroom World", F&SF 11/74) for its unique source of energy that could power a starship's scoutboat. We figured that with this much energy available we might be able to get some psi action (or maybe even some other kind of action).

Now you'll have to forgive me if I've forgotten some of the people who were involved in our experiments. I recall that at various times Rich was there, and Charlie Ellis, and there was Simon, and a female American Indian motorcyclist. Certainly others, but memory fails.

Our bedroom had a walk-in closet to beat all walk-in closets. Its length was the width of the bedroom; plenty of room for six people in sitting or reclining positions. This closet became the site of a bizarre series of attempts to unleash the paranormal and experience some of those things that humanity was not meant to know.

Sad to say, the handful of us were apparently not meant to know, because all of our experiments ended in failure, save one which was a bit strange.

I can recall four things we tried to do. One was to record the voices of dead people on cassette tape. We soundproofed the closet, adjusted ourselves into comfortable positions, invited the spirits to join us and then remained perfectly silent while we recorded a blank tape for 15 minutes. We then played the tape back at full volume twice, in case we missed something the first time (spirits talk softly). We heard only the soft whoosh of a blank tape.

Another was to look for auras. You had to stare at another person's reflection in a mirror for several minutes, and soon you'd see, we'd been assured, a faint glow surrounding their head and upper torso. Oh, we saw faint glows all right, but you'll see fuzziness around anything if you stare at it long enough.

A third thing we tried to do was to levitate someone. What you did was sit someone down in a chair. Place four people at his or her sides and back. Then a fifth person would begin to recite a rhythmic counting. One, two, three, four. With the count of one, one finger of each of the four persons would be placed under the subject's armpits and knees. With two, full hands, one upon another, on the person's head. With three, repeat first position. With four, repeat second position. Once a smooth rhythm had been established, the counter would end a four-count with the command "Lift". At this, the four persons would levitate the subject, each using one finger under an armpit or knee. Needless to say, even four very strong fingers can't lift a person into the air. But the funny thing was, one night Mark Owings was the subject, and two of the four persons lifted his legs with one finger each. No lie. He swears he didn't help them.

Finally, we waited for the Odic force to appear. It seems that if you spend several hours in a completely darkened room (closet), with a piece of copper wire stretching from under the closet door across the

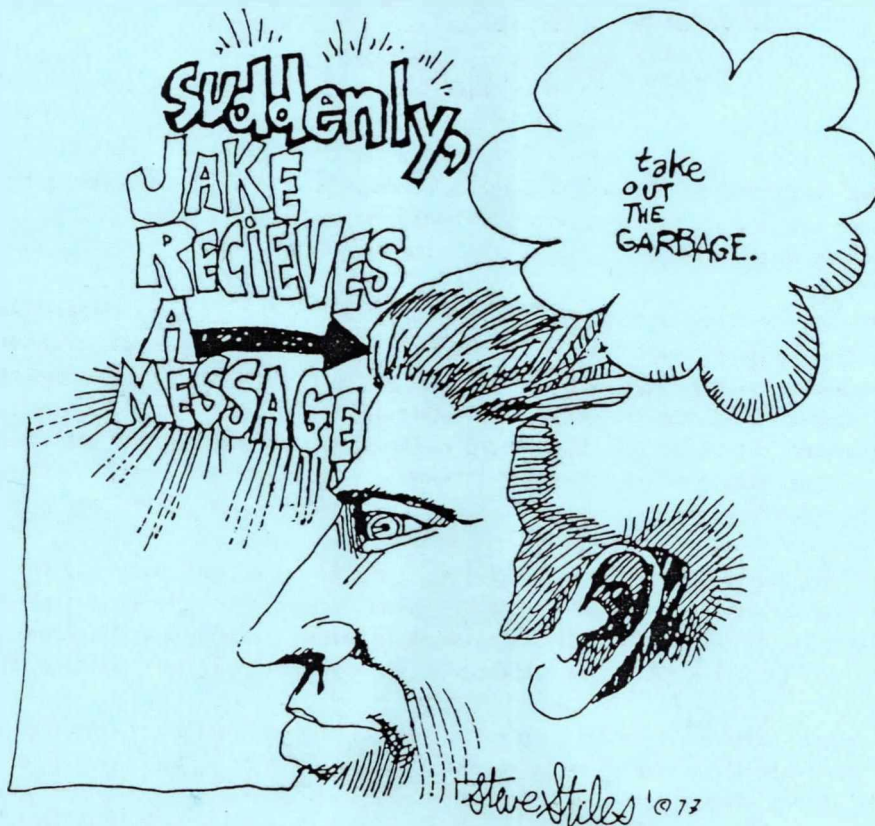
room and out the window, you will eventually see bright colors appear at the inside or closet end of the wire. Those of us who had watches with fluorescent dials removed them. For three hours we waited in a closet with a towel under the door crack, blocking out all light. Did you know that when all light is blocked out, your eyes never adjust to the lack of light? After three hours, we saw nothing, and I mean nothing. We couldn't see even the faintest outlines of the person right next to us, let alone pretty colors.

We kind of lost heart after our failures, and only repeated our experiments a few times, to no avail. But it was interesting spending half a night in a completely black closet with four or five others. People tended to shift their positions, and you never knew who was now next to you, whose body part you had just brushed against, who was allowing your touch to linger.

Closetcons had a short lifespan and then we never did them again. It was more important to direct our energies to planning real cons and serious partying. But their memory remains, one of those silly things you did when you were younger that was kinda fun. Maybe some of the new faces I saw at the meeting will rediscover closetcons. If they do, I hope they'll invite Comier O'nare.

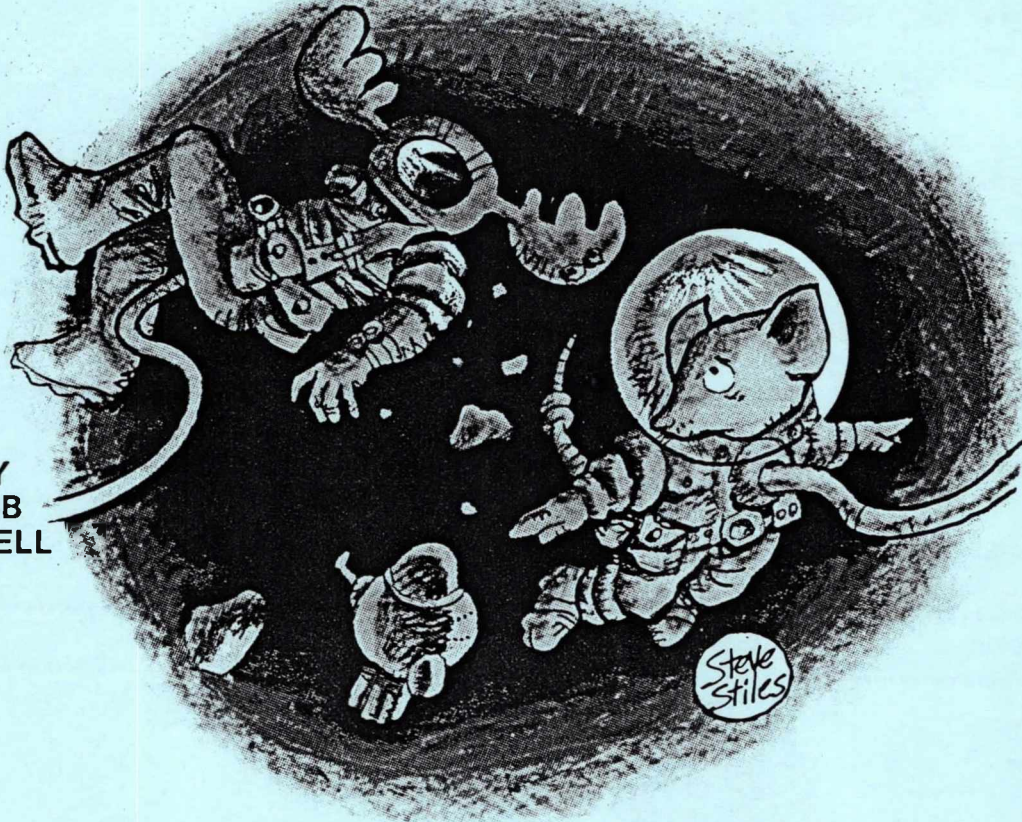
--Mike Kurman

.....
 The world consists of things and other things happening to things.



CON JOB

BY
BOB
LOVELL



Some folks profess amazement at the way civilization developed in the early centuries of the Third Millennium; however, it was nothing but the inevitable result of celestial mechanics and a given level of technology. Take the Asteroid Prospectors' Associations, for example...

The rockrats came out to the Belt originally as employees of the big earth corporations and the UN Solar Development Authority, usually aboard one of the mobile space colonies that were being mass-produced at L-5. Once out in the Belt, many of the miners quickly realized that they could strike it rich as independent prospectors, free of the company store, so to speak. Thus, the rockrats spread throughout the Belt in their singleships, usually homemade contraptions flanges together out of old fuel tanks, surplus thrusters, and whatever they could buy, beg, or "borrow" from their ex-employers (the companies resisted the independent movement at first, until computer projections demonstrated that the independent prospectors could cut their overhead and increase profits).

The rockrats went out in ones and twos and small family groups, and although many said they wanted to be space hermits, they still had a craving for human contact. Unfortunately, the light-speed time lag over millions of kilometers, and the difficulty of keeping their parabolic antennas properly aimed, made radio communications difficult at best. The solution to this problem was the com-net known as the Asteroid Prospectors' Association, or APA.

The rats would record audio or video messages, carefully composed and containing greetings and comments to the other members of the APA, and flash them to their agents at one of the major worlds. Keeping a parabolic reflector aimed at a bright point of light like Earth or Mars (actually dedicated consats in orbit around them) was easier for a rockrat than trying to keep track of dozens of constantly moving, almost invisible spacecraft spread out over a couple billion kilometers of deep space. The agents, usually referred to as OE's (orbital editors), then retransmitted a

complete set of messages back out to all the members of their APAs via the big dishes at their disposal. The old JPL used a similar technique to maintain contact with its farflung fleet of robot probes in the twentieth century. These communications went on for years, at regular intervals, and allowed the scattered spacers to comment on each others' efforts, play games of chess, and conduct love affairs and feuds.

An unanticipated spin-off of the APA system of communication was the increase in literacy among a generation that grew up in the semi-literate society of earth. No longer able to get away with the instantaneous, unthinking ease of planetary telecommunications, the spacers gradually stumbled into literacy.

But it wasn't quite enough. Loners though they may have been, the rockrats nevertheless required closer human contact of a kind their computer terminals could never provide (there is nothing quite so horny as a spacer who has been out too long in a singleship). Fuel was precious, especially in those early years, and the typical prospector could not just blast off for a little R & R any time s/he wanted. This was recognized as a serious problem.

Fortunately, a solution was at hand (no, not that kind of solution, and not in that hand, either). The same computers that plotted the orbits for astronauts and space colonies were put to work calculating the orbits of every spacecraft, space station, and inhabited asteroid in the System. Delta-vees and fuel requirements and travel times were figured out for every possible combination of inhabited vehicle in space for years to come. As an object orbits around the Sun it periodically comes close to other objects in other orbits. These meetings are called conjunctions by the astronomers (a superior or inferior conjunction depends on who's closer to the Sun, or to use rocket slang, who's on top).

The rockrats were able to plan their voyages years in advance, making allowances for fuel, etc., and were able to get together every couple of months whenever they drifted within range of other spacers. These conjunctions, called "cons" for short, soon became the mainstay of life in space. Many spacers planned their whole lives around their con schedules. Some mining colonies in the Belt even went so far as to boost themselves into different orbits to enable more spacers to have cons with them.

It was inevitable that several groups of spacers, usually associated with the larger space colonies, hit upon what seemed like a good idea at the time. Why not try to get all the spacers together inside one world for a super conjunction, say, once every couple of years or so? Soon, committees of space colonists were hopping from ship to ship, asteroid to asteroid, branching out in vast, overlapping sequences of conjunctions, throwing parties for the other spacers and promising unworldly delights for any who would like to come to Ceres or Juno or Phobos for a Systemwide conjunction. "L-5 in '35!" and "Pallas in '42!" could be heard across the system.

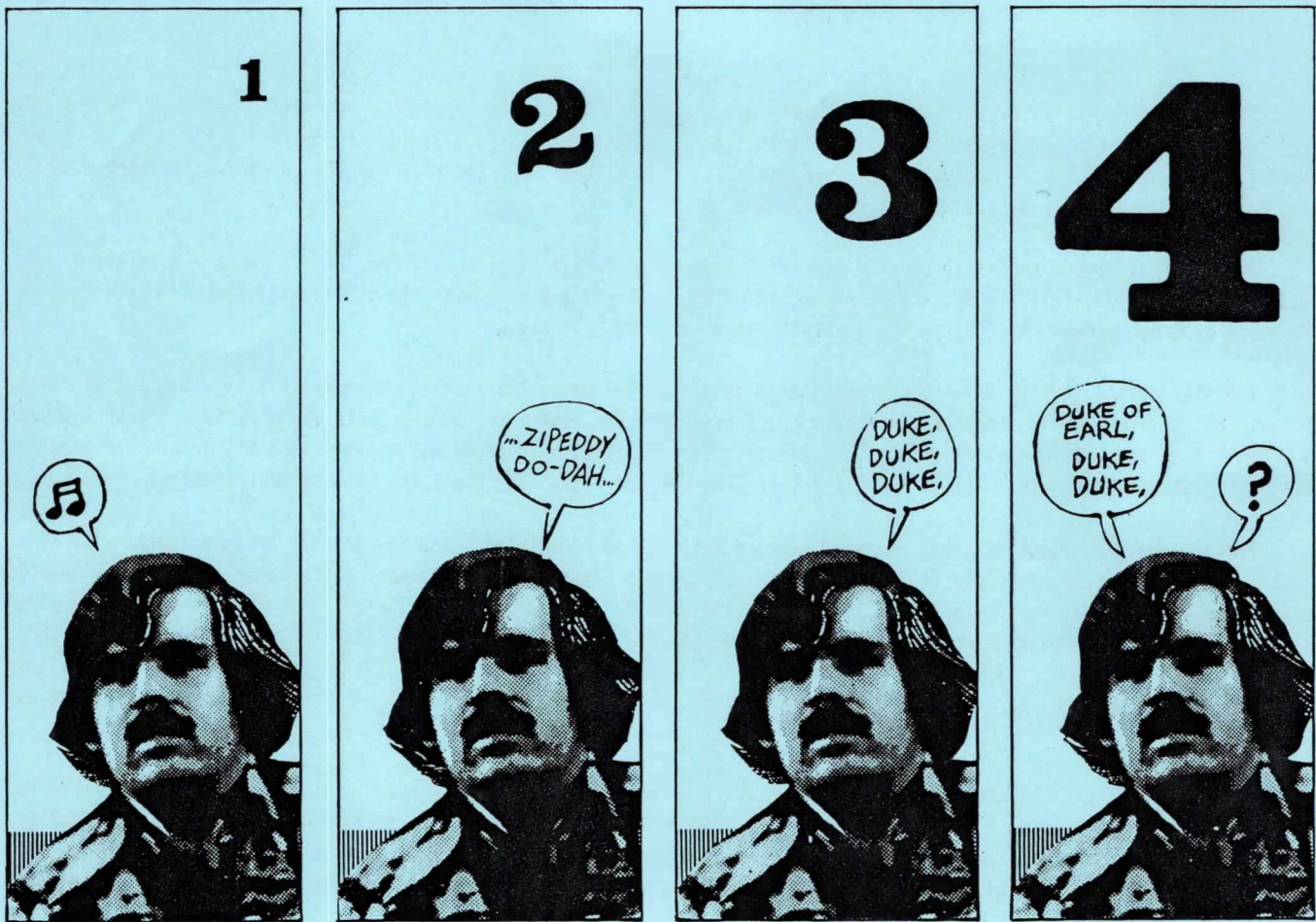
And thus was born the concept of the Syscon, to be held in vast, artificial habitats that were specially designed for such activities: the ConWorlds...

Next: More fun things to do in zero-gravity.

--Bob Lovell



Big toes speak to hair follicles.



Looking around me carefully now as I walk among the buildings, I hope no one will recognize me until the proper moment.

Coming up, there's a clock. Almost TIME. Almost time for all the workers at UMBC to go home for the evening, except for those library-bound souls who must serve the needs of the "stodent" until midnight.

Tick, tick, tick... there it is, the sweep hand rushing around and around and around... 4:56, 4:57, 4:58, 4:59, 5:00... 5:01!

I'm free! The statute of limitations has surely run out now.

Now the red brick of UMBC has little terror for me. Fandom may, but fandom isn't likely to blame me, too much. It was probably a fannish-type of thing to do.

It all started... where? George Proctor of Texas? Joe Don Looney? Gary Mattingly of everywhere?

Sigh.

These people, if you haven't heard the names before, are all, or at least were, fanzine editors somehow connected to each other in the wilds of Texas and Texas A&M. Joe Don was the first fan I'd ever corresponded with: I'd seen that he was looking for book reviews.



The Seven Year Rule

by Steve
Miller

Where had I seen it? Would you believe *Writer's Digest*? Yes, Joe Don had written to *Writer's Digest* asking for submissions to his fanzine... and I wrote. Not only did I write a letter, but I also sent along a number of book reviews. I was 18 or so, never heard of SF conventions, and trying to write for a fanzine.

He accepted all of my reviews. At that time I was reading a book a day: Joe Don decided I could be his book review columnist and took all 17 of them.

And then, in the *Real Soon Now* tradition, Joe Don never published his zine. Still, being a good guy and feeling that he'd made a real discovery in someone who'd send off 17 reviews at the drop of a hat, he gave some of my reviews to George Proctor (who thankfully edited them mercilessly) and others to Gary Mattingly (who published a few and passed a few on to the Texas A&M SF society's fanzine, *Stanley*).

Suddenly I was the new Texas fan, Steve Miller, who was going to school at UMBC up in Maryland.

Then I met Charlie Ellis and Bill George and Gary Svehla, who all happened to be in my classes at UMBC and all worked on fanzines... and was drafted.

Not that I immediately began putting out my own fanzine.

Instead I started turning out reviews. Bill George helped turn me into (along with CDMR (Commander) Ellis) into one of the main book reviewers for a tiny fanzine known to this day as "Black Oracle". Mini-magazines they were, photo-reduced until you needed a magnifying glass to get details out of the offset photographs.

Then I had some reviews used in an overseas zine, Horizons du Fantastique. Then. Then. Then. I was on the road to ruin and didn't know it.

I suggested to Charlie Ellis that we should have a club. You know, a Science Fiction Club.

Gary Svehla thought so and so did Sue Nice (who was Sue Miller for five years sometime later) and so did Bill George.

Thus was born the Infinity Circle at UMBC. It lasted a little over three years, and though it was really a pretty boring club as such things go, it had a great effect on my life.

For one thing, I was elected Director, or Dictator, or whatever. After all, it had been my idea, right? That meant I was responsible. Not having been responsible before, I found the experience enlightening and no doubt good training for my post of Director of Information for BSFS (also known as MOP for Minister of Propaganda).

Also, because of the Infinity Circle, I met Roger Zelazny.

I had to think up program ideas for our weekly meetings. Mostly we talked. Sometimes we talked about SF books, sometimes about SF movies, but always we talked. Eventually we thought we'd like to have someone else to talk to, since there were only about seven regular members in the club.

I knew Roger Zelazny lived nearby. I'd seen it in a blurb for an Ace book.

So, being direct and responsible, I called him up. He invited me to his house. Imagine!

Next, he agreed to talk to the Infinity Circle.

So, one Wednesday in 1969 Zelazny drove the two or three miles from his home in his beat-up Ford, and talked to us for almost three hours. Not only did he talk to us, he brought along lots of magazines and paperbacks to give to the school library, along with some hardbacks as well. you know, just a few review copies he'd had lying around the house....

Immediately after the meeting, Zelazny and I carried these boxes of books up to the library. Actually we'd met in the library conference room which was later to become my office when I was Curator of UMBC's SF collection, and then had to walk around outside to get into the real library because the security system worked that

way. Anyway, the library was very happy to get the hardbacks, and even agreed to put a "Gift From the Library of..." sticker in them, against Zelazny's wishes. The paperbacks and magazines (Amazing, Weird Tales, Astounding, including many pulps) they couldn't use. At all. And so Zelazny gave them to me, and I really was happy to get them, and no, I didn't mind, and that was that.

So I thought.

But Joe Don had started it all, really he had.

Because the Zelazny books attracted readers, readers requested more SF books. The librarian took note.

I, in the meantime, managed to teach several classes on SF while I was still an undergraduate. That meant there was real demand for the books several times a year. Other professor-types also were using more SF. Suddenly SF was starting to become OK among library circles.

At that point, a professor from the College Park campus of the U of M tried to donate his paperbacks and magazines to the library at College Park. They refused him. Humph! Sci-Fi indeed!

He then, inspired by a course description of SF courses at UMBC, donated them to the UMBC Library. They were shelved in the room where Zelazny had first spoken to the Infinity Circle.

After a year or two of buying new SF books as they came out, the librarian decided what he had was a Collection. What he needed was a curator. And he, after talking through his problem with several people, selected me.

Seven years after I left the UMBC SF RESEARCH COLLECTION I have found that some of what I did should best be forgotten. acquiring WPSFA's (Western PA SF Association) library when the books were going to be thrown out -- now that wasn't bad. Nor was saving some manuscripts from the trash heap. At least someone might get a chance to see them now.

I'm not sure, however, that the collection deserves all the fanzines from the Coslet collection, an addition I heartily agreed to when the librarian pointed it out in a sales catalogue. Ten thousand fanzines, plus more donated and bought afterward, and most fanzine fans don't know where they are. Thousands of 1940's zines, hundreds of zines from the '30's. Ah, so much history of conventions, of publishing houses, of famous fans who went on to become filthy pros...

Too, there are the Kelly Freas paintings, the renderings and design work for the Skylab patches, the portfolios...

Not to mention the first editions of Skullface, the complete run of Amazing, Astounding, etc....

At 5:01, you see, you can't get out of these fine things. They are only available a couple of hours a day, or by special appointment. I worry at times that it is my fault -- that if I had stayed with the collection, things would be different -- that maybe the local fans would be more involved and would pay attention to these things, that maybe the local fanzines would be stronger.

Seven years. I helped collect all these things, not knowing that Baltimore fandom was already tiring of fanzines, tiring of fanishness... and no, that's not right either. Baltimore fandom was coming into its own as a convention fandom then, and the accelerating splitting of fandom into Star Trek/Star Wars/Confandom/Trufan-fanzine fandom/Costume-fandom/ and especially into Media (i.e. non-print) Fandom was barely evident.

Well, its about time I guess, 5:06, seven years later. All water under the bheer keg. I'm a free man. Never again...hey you, yes you, over there, you wanna read a fanzine...?

--Steve Miller

We should think of a hippopotamus in terms of its milieu. Yet to think of a hippopotamus in other than its milieu helps.





Atlanta, Georgia may be the phoenix of the Southeast, but it's a mole when it comes to science fiction.

I've been interested in SF for as long as I can remember. My introduction to it was in two forms: television (Flash Gordon, Buck Rogers, Jet Jackson, Twilight Zone, and various movies shown on TV) and comic books (an addiction I'm still fighting). As my reading expanded, I discovered that my elementary school library was blessed with a large selection of SF. They had Heinlein, Asimov, Del Ray and Clarke. I began reading and re-reading their works and others.

Unfortunately, there was more quantity than quality present: the Asimov assortment consisted of the Lucky Starr series and one short-story collection, the Clarke selection was a collection of short stories containing I Remember Babylon, the Heinlein works included were almost all of his juvenile novels, etc. (I found out later from friends that there were better works from these authors, but these friends were reluctant to loan them out.) I perused bookstores, but after buying a couple of pieces of trash, I decided there had to be another way.

Eventually, I found my way to the county library (it was within walking distance). Another miracle occurred! They had a shelf on a rack devoted to science fiction! (The fact that it was in the rear of the basement didn't strike me as significant at the time.) I started reading through this collection, watching it grow as I read, gleefully absorbing such notable volumes as Danger, Dinosaur (Lester Del Ray), Tales of the White Hart and Childhood's End (Arthur C. Clarke) and Foundation (Isaac Asimov). Other novels in their collection were The Face of X (John Walling), No One Goes There Now (William Walling), When the Gods Came (John Adams), Invader (Karl Zeitgart), The Other Side of Time (Keith Laumer) and The Atomic Age and The Mind Cage (A.E. Van Vogt).

My high school library devoted much less space to SF. However, I did find the collected novels of H.G. Wells and some works by Poul Anderson. Sometime during my high school years my mother bought an old copy of Analog at a flea market. The concept of a magazine devoted to science fiction was totally new to me...and a delightful surprise. However, being broke most of the time (I was a lazy bum), I didn't subscribe. My Analog collection grew mostly by happenstance.

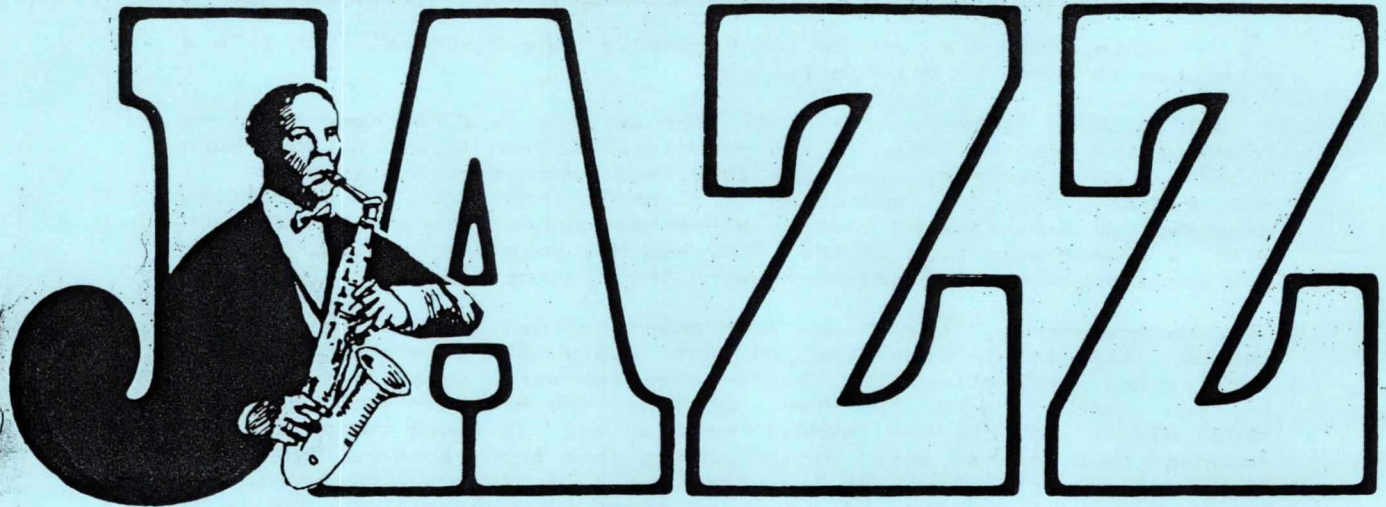
Finally, reaching college, I quickly located other fans, and we became fast friends. However, we had difficulty discussing books and stories. My friends had been reading novels and authors I'd never heard of: Dune (Frank Herbert), Cities in Flight (James Blish), City (Clifford Simak), The Moon Is a Harsh Mistress (Neil K. R. Jones), Foundation and Empire and Second Foundation (Isaac Asimov) and Needle (Hal Clement).

As I met more and more fans, this difficulty increased considerably. I'd been reading SF for over 15 years and managed to miss practically every major SF novel that had been published! Rather than depend on any one fan's collection, I took a non-credit course in SF and copied a list of the (at that time) 20 "best" SF novels. Studying for my degree prevented me from completely catching up, and since I've started working full time, I seem to have less time than before. But, now, at least, I'm in a place that's more active in science fiction, with people who seem to give the literature proper respect.

Now if I can just get the fans to quit staring at me when I start talking about the science fiction I've read...

--steve lubs

BALTIMORE AND ALL THAT



BY SUE WHEELER

Since its incorporation in 1729, Baltimore has been an invisible city. Despite its importance as a major port, industrial and manufacturing center and one of the ten largest cities in the US, Baltimore has been left off maps, confused with some city in the Midwest, dismissed as a mere suburb and generally ignored.

It has only been in the last decade that Baltimore has gained some of the recognition it has always deserved. The Municipal League recognized Baltimore by naming it All-America City for 1976-77; the West Germans recognized her by selecting the city as the subject of a television documentary on solutions to urban problems; tourists recognize Baltimore by filling chartered buses to Harbor Place and science fiction fandom has recognized Baltimore as the site of the 1983 World Science Fiction Convention.

Baltimore, of course, has been a center of fannish activity at least since 1966. Fanac is not the only area where Baltimore's achievements have gone unsung, for too long, however. the same is true in the musical world of jazz.

Kingsley Ames pointed out the relationship between jazz and science fiction in *New Maps of Hells*. A love for science fiction, he wrote, is "mostly contracted in adolescence or not at all, like addiction to jazz(sic). The two have much in common and their actual coexistence in the same person is not unusual."

Good jazz existed in Baltimore long before fanac was even conceived, and those of you who share these two addictions with me can probably name several jazz greats from Baltimore; e.g., Cab Calloway, Chick Webb, Billie Holiday. But how many jazz histories can you cite that give Baltimore more than a footnote?

Yet, Baltimore was a training ground for great musicians when jazz or jass was still ragtime. Eubie Blake, the great ragtime

pianist, had his vaudeville debut at Baltimore's Daly Theatre in 1912 and refined his piano technique at the Goldfield Hotel on Baltimore Street.

The golden age of jazz, according to Marshall Stearns, began when the word jass (at first obscene) surfaced in Chicago in the early teens, and ended about 1927 when such dilutions as swing, bebop, etc. appeared. From 1917 to 1927, Baltimore was an entertainment mecca and jazz was the byword in popular entertainment.

Writing as a theatrical reviewer in the Afro-American Ledger in 1925, William Ready commented that he could think of a score of Baltimore natives who had been able to move from the Baltimore musical scene to the presumably more difficult environs of New York and Paris. Among them were Eubie Blake, Johnny Ridgely, Elmer Snowden and Blanch Calloway. I hope that the inclusion of Eubie Blake would need no explanation.

There are other artists from the infancy of jazz in Baltimore who might share some measure of the recognition granted Blake had they been blessed with his longevity. For example, there was Elmer Snowden, who played with local band leader Joe Rochester from 1916 to 1919. In 1919 he joined with Duke Ellington in forming a trio in Washington, DC. Ellington rated him as the best banjo player in the Baltimore-Washington area, saying that he had "a flair for soul and ragtime and a jumpin' thin' that tore us all up."

Snowden left Ellington to go to New York in 1923. When he learned that Fats Waller would not be able to accompany him, he sent for his pianist friend, Ellington. After Snowden left the group, Ellington formed the Washingtonians, his first band to become nationally known. Snowden was still appearing in Baltimore as late as 1926. In the 1960's he was "discovered" by Philadelphia disc jockey Chris Albertson.

Two names that dominated the Baltimore music scene from 1917 to 1929 were Joe Rochester and Ike Dixon. In addition to working as a band leader, Rochester promoted his own dances, gave dancing lessons and joined with promoters in sponsoring dances at such local social events as the Easter Special Treat of 1920 and the Shriners' Annual Ball of 1922.

Members of Rochester's bands included Clifton Dorsey, also known as "Hawk", Rochester's moaning clarinetist" and Vernon Hutchins, once described as the colored Rudolph Valentino. Hutchins also worked with Ethel Waters' New Vanities and acted as host for Ike Dixon's Comedy Night Club.

Ike Dixon formed his first band, the Jazz Demons at the age of 23, in 1920. It included, in addition to Vernon Hutchins as vocalist, Ernest Buggers on piano, Clifton Haughton on saxophone and clarinet, Frank Blackburn on guitar and banjo and Ike Dixon on drums. Cab Calloway recalls in his autobiography Of Minnie the Moocher and Me sitting in on the drums with Ike Dixon.

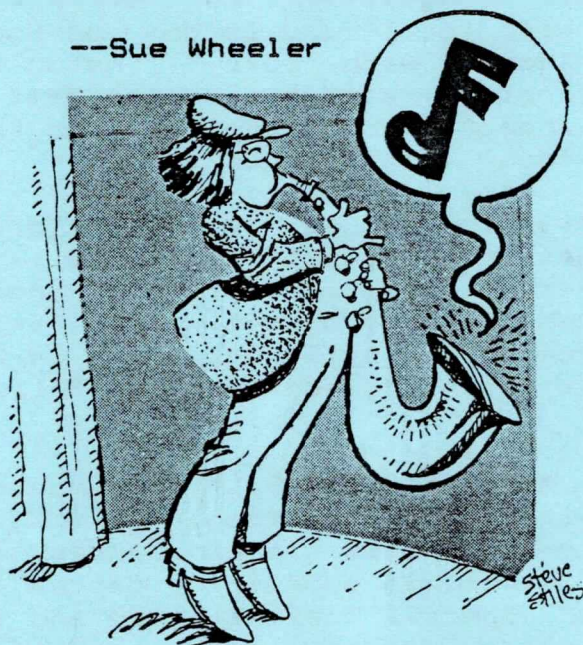
The Pittsburgh Courier of October 22, 1949 had this to say about Dixon: "His magical drumming, plus his skill with the saxophone, is

even now remembered by jazz historians." In March 1923, he was awarded first prize in a Philadelphia contest where he vied with artists from around the country. Upon his death in 1953, the Baltimore Sun rated his band as one of the nation's best. He is said to have been the first Black musician to have his own chartered bus, going on the road about 1928. He returned to Baltimore in 1934 to open the Comedy Club, which operated until his death.

These are only a few of the jazz artists of whom Baltimore can justly be proud. Our contribution to jazz has continued with Billie Holiday, up to 1982, when we can point to Ethel Ennis and Brenda Alfred, pianist Albert Daily and saxophonist Gary Bartz.

When you come to town, I will be happy to show you the Billie Holiday room, or the Left Bank Jazz Society or take you to hear the current attractions at the Closet, Perry, Ordering, Cafe Park Plaza. Then you will be able to hear for yourselves.

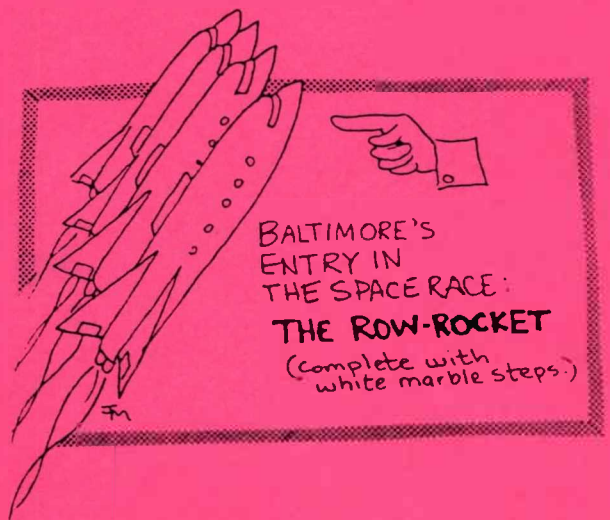
--Sue Wheeler



And on that note we conclude this issue of BSFAN (finally!). Damn all xerox machines, anyway-- we never could find the crank.

Astute readers may realize that there's no letter column in this fanzine. True; we searched high and low but were unable to uncover any letters of comment on the previous issue. We were puzzled but eventually found out why; BSFAN #12 was never mailed out! We trust that will never happen again--- so mail out those hot letters of comment so that the Spirit of Fanzine Fandom may thrive and grow in Baltimore, of all places, and that we may get our jollies. Mail 'em to:

Elaine Stiles, 3003 Eilerslie Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland, 21218.



BALTIMORE'S
ENTRY IN
THE SPACE RACE:

THE ROW-ROCKET

(complete with
white marble steps.)

**BSFAN
THIRTEEN**

AYE, THIS
BE BALTIMORE,
'AR, 'AR, 'AR!

