

his quest for the sacred firegem of Balto, he was struck by the sudden realization that still in his satchel was that tattered copy of

B S F A N 4

BOBIE OFFUTT
FUNNY FARM
HALDEMAN, KY. 40329

BALTICON ISSUE

which he knew to be the official organ of the Baltimore Science Fiction Society, edited by Mike Kurman, 16-I Rich Mar Road, Owings Mills, ~~WASH D.C.~~ Maryland 21117. He knew by heart the names of the publications committee members: Steve Miller, Sue Miller, Sue Wheeler, and Judy Kurman; that this was the April 1976 issue, with a circulation of 100; and that BSFAN is available for the usual. Should he discard the zine, or keep it as a poignant reminder of times and places never to be seen again?

□Thish is late. Thish also had to be limited to the size of #2, and some material intended for #4 will not appear until next issue. The reason? A rather quick decision to move, to the emerging fannish capital of Maryland, Owings Mills, now home of 4 (four) fen (the astute will be able to identify the others). Moving ain't like it used to be, when a few trips with loaded car and you were in. And now suddenly Balticon 10 is almost upon us, and this issue must appear in time for the convention. So...let's consider BSFAN, for now, irregular in both schedule and size.

What's been going on since last issue? The second annual Rosedale mini-con was held (BSFS's contribution to the Baltimore County Public Library's annual Celebration of the Arts). Somewhere between 60 and 75 people enjoyed films, a slide show, panels, a talk, and Compton Crook, Tom Monteleone, Jack Chalker, and special guest Ted White.

The winter was once again warmer than usual, with the warmest February ever; yet between mid December and early February there were repeated periods of bitter cold. Temperatures remained below freezing from the early morning of January 17 to the late morning of January 24, excepting 3 hours one day when the mercury soared to 33. January 19 it was 5 degrees. On January 23 the upper Chesapeake Bay, including Baltimore harbor, was frozen into ice up to 10 inches thick (first freeze up since 1971). But...February 13 it was 66. February 17 it was 76. By February 19 crocuses were blooming. By February 29 the forsythia were in bloom. March 5 it was 83. March 9 up to 10 inches of snow covered the area.

Finally, there came the CB craze. Science fiction fans rushed out to buy their units, and soon we were hearing conversations like:

"Break one nine, this is Alien calling the front door.

That you, Martian?"

"Negatory, he gafiated. This here's Ganymede Greaser."

Anyway, this here's BSFAN 4, smallish though it may be, and if you're reading this at Balticon, hope you're having fun.□

He thought and thought. The cold wind whipped his thick fur cloak; the bushes creaked as their twigs bent forward and back. Finally he came to a decision. He would keep the zine...for though he wanted with all his soul to forget, he knew there would come the time when only the memory of those days could sustain him. He knelt for a moment and called the holy name, but then, as he was about to set forth upon

CONCAVE CURE
by
Comier O'Nare

□The story thus far: Once
a pun a time a ship of col-
onists landed on Rokreek
Planet. They covered the
landing site with temporary

Part One
II - Discovery
(continued)

shelters, instruments, and machines, and sent out a buggy to explore the surrounds, photograph the flora, and take pictures of the fauna. Victor stood on a large rock overlooking the rugged terrain.□

Below him lounged Sheri and John, his buggy-mates. On three sides, as far as he could see, stretched brush and jumbled stones, small and large. On the fourth was part of his rock, blocking his view. "Beautiful country," he called down.

John pitched his voice to carry. "Wonderful."

"Angela used to like this kind of landscape," Victor shouted, trying to edge his way around the protuberance. "I'll see if I can..."

With a great thud he fell off the rock.

They were at his side within seconds. He was unconscious, his form strangely twisted. Breaking out their field stretcher, they carried him back to the buggy, where they administered first aid to him with the vehicle's medical equipment. Shortly the instruments were indicating that his condition had stabilized, and they started back to base, Sheri at the controls.

"Who's Angela?" she asked. Somehow she had slightly ripped her uniform, and a small portion of her thigh was visible.

John's eyes were drawn to this bit of skin. "Dunno. Who's Phil?"

Conquering a flash of panic, she feigned concentration on her driving. "Phil?"

"You called out 'Phil' in your sleep last night. Twice."

Dodging what from all appearances seemed to be a medium sized rock, and was in fact a medium sized rock, she said, "I don't know any Phil."

"And the night before you called out 'Mark.' Who's Mark?"

On a low rise just ahead some feature of the terrain was reflecting sunlight into her eyes. "I don't know anybody named Mark either," she said in a controlled voice, the buggy nearing the source of the glinting light. Gasping, she abruptly halted the vehicle.

Resting on the stony ground a hundred feet away was a gigantic concave metal disc.

They stared at the object in disbelief. "How much do you think it weighs, Sher?" John wondered.

"A ton. Maybe ten tons."

"Park next to it."

"We have to get Victor back."

"Let's take a quick look at it."

Sheri pulled the buggy alongside, and they bounded out. Engraved in the object was a word. An English word: doctor.

"What a strange disc," muttered a fascinated John.

Sheri was lost in dreamy speculation. "Maybe that's what it is."

"Of course it's a disc."

"No, a doctor. Why don't we lay Victor on it."

He looked at her. "It's impossible," he said, slowly, "that this is here. We are the first Terrans to set foot on this planet. We saw nothing in two days of orbiting to indicate that there is any intelligent life. Yet, when one of our people gets hurt, here this is, which

tells us in our own language what it's for." He smiled. "Well, let's see what happens."

No sooner had they placed the injured man on the object than an eerie orange glow filled the air. Within seconds Victor opened his eyes and looked at them. The glow immediately disappeared. He moved his head to look at his surroundings and his eyes opened wider.

Sheri and John exchanged amazed glances. John helped Victor to stand. "How do you feel?" he asked.

"Great!" Victor replied in wonder, his stare alternating between the disc and the tear in Sheri's uniform. "When I felt myself slip I thought it was the end. Now it's as if it never happened. What is this thing?"

"You've apparently been healed," said John.

"Most definitely." He laughed. "It's going to be a while before anything can burst my balloon."

"A concave cure!" exclaimed an inspired Sheri.

John chuckled. "Very good. But we better get back to base and make sure."

"Oh, no," moaned Victor. "Doc Butcher. That'll bring me down."

As they reentered the vehicle the radio was bleeping. John answered, "Buggy."

The voice of radio operator Code came in clearly: "We're under attack."

"Repeat."

"We're under attack by one ship. They called us just before they opened fire and said, in perfect English, that we're trespassing on their planet. They identified themselves as the 'Baltimorons'."

"Is that some kind of joke?"

"Their lasers are real enough. We activated the ship's force field to encompass the landing site, so we're all right, but you'll have to stay out there and hide under a tree or something. I'll call you back when it's safe to come in." The radio clicked off.

They looked at one another. "Could they be Terran pirates?" Sheri thought aloud. "That might explain the object."

"Pirates made that?" questioned John. "Anyway, I've never heard of pirates anywhere near this sector." He paused. "But I guess we'd better get away from the disc. There may be some connection. Sher, take us in any direction, until we run across a spot where we won't be so visible. Maybe we'll find a sign that says hide here."

It was dusk before they found a narrow pass between two great tilted rocks. Shortly thereafter they removed three emergency sleeping bags from the locker and turned in. John was awakened a little later by sounds of movement near him. He turned onto his side and saw that Sheri's bag was empty. In the shadows just beyond he could begin to discern a graceful, rhythmic motion. He watched and listened for a time, then rolled onto his stomach, turned his face toward the dark window, and closed his eyes.

(to be continued)

Baltimore's only exclusively science fiction and fantasy bookstore is White Hart Books, 2412 North Charles Street, 889-0099. Open M, T, Th, & F 6-9 and Sa & Su 12-6, Sue Wheeler's store sells paperback and hard-bound books, artwork, and posters.

A I had been looking forward to driving on the left side of the
D street, so on Monday following the Worldcon I rented a car (a Gal-
V ant, a 4-seater compact built by Chrysler under license from Mitsu-
bishi) to drive to the Healesville Animal Sanctuary, along with
Gail Barton, Alice Blackmun, and Don Pauley.

E Driving on the "wrong" side of the road is easy. I had no
N trouble staying in the correct lane as long as there was at least
T one other car on the road to go by, and if the road was empty it
U didn't matter which lane I was in. (All three cars I rented had
R floor shifts, so locating the gear-shift lever was no problem.
Never knowing where to find the turn signal was only a minor nui-
sance.) The only major problem: I think of a left turn as a turn
across traffic, so whenever Gail, who was navigating, asked for a
left turn I would try to turn right. Gail finally solved this by
specifying "your side" or "my side".

E It was a cold, rainy, High-Speed Ektachrome day, and the ani-
S mals preferred to stay indoors; nevertheless we saw several varie-
ties of kangaroos, a platypus, koalas, wombats, and quite a few
Australian birds. Upon our return we adjourned to the bar, where
the con committee's Bill Wright bought me a drink I'd like to in-
troduce to the States: brandy-lime-and-soda.

I was one of the 15 dedicated tourists who decided to see that
Eighth Wonder of the World, Ayers Rock. Tuesday we flew to Alice
Springs, "Centre of the Outback". Coming in, our 727 flew a right-
hand landing pattern. Ben Yalow, on the left side of the plane,
could not see the single runway and could only conclude the pilot
was going to land in the bush. Teeth chattering, he was nonethe-
less determined to go out like a photographer, camera still snap-
ping away as the plane hit the ground.

D But we landed safely and proceeded to the motel, where Genie
O diModica, our group leader, showed why she was called Genie by get-
W ting 15 people registered on 13 vouchers (Jan Finder and Ken Konkol
N had joined at the last minute and had no vouchers). Then to the
bar, where the conscientious but unsophisticated bartendress
("Please, sir, what spirits go into an Old Fashioned?") tried to
mix a Harvey Wallbanger, but got the other ingredients floating on
top of the Galliano instead of vice versa, thus creating the
world's first Australian Wallbanger.

We were not told that Alice Springs itself has tourist attrac-
tions, and therefore nobody did any serious sightseeing in town (I
did cover a fair part of the town on foot, though). That night we
went to a steak restaurant and asked for separate checks. The
waitress tried to oblige but ran out of checks.

The next day was spent in a bouncing tour bus on the road to
Ayers Rock--an 8 hour, 300 kilometer trip over dirt roads. The
country was flat and after the novelty wore off, dull. To pass the
time we hand printed in a pocket notebook still another one-shot,
Roc-Kon, which ran to over 6000 words of travelogue.

Our motel at the Rock was having a mouse plague. Konkol and
Finder ended up in a different motel, with no mice but no heat.

Ayers Rock is an enormous piece of arkose (feldspar sandstone)
rising out of the perfectly flat plain. At sunrise and sunset the
reddish rock catches the pink light and changes color dramatically.
I got some beautiful pictures of the sunset that evening.

Next morning the staff overslept and just barely got us up in time for the sunrise. Ben Yalow, Wally Gonser, and I took a plane flight over Ayers Rock and the Olga Mountains. Following the flight and breakfast a park guide took us up to the rock.

There is only one practicable route to climb the rock, up a ridge that looks easy but is an exhausting hour long climb. The guide tried to talk the group out of climbing, but a more effective deterrent was that the first handholds are two hundred meters up. Ten persons from our bus made the climb, and reported that they didn't feel so pleased with themselves as a four year old had followed them to the top. We non-climbers, i.e. saner people, took a tour of the base of the rock to see the strange erosional features and the aboriginal rock paintings. Ayers Rock is a sacred place to the aborigines and part of the base was fenced off to keep tourists out.

In the afternoon we went to the Olgas. Unlike Ayers, the Olgas are formed of conglomerate, and, while their total size roughly matches Ayers, they are separate hills. Konkol and Finder climbed one of the Olgas and left a silver dollar on top to baffle future explorers. Yalow and I climbed part way after them. Ben was wearing his eternal sports coat, white shirt, and black bow tie, and a picture now exists of him climbing mountains in a coat and tie, taken with his own Nikon.

After a very nice dinner cooked over a wood fire we watched the multicolored sunset, and I got another series of sunset shots. The guide finally got us all loaded aboard the bus and was about to start off when the full moon rose over the Olgas, so we all piled back out again.

The next morning came the long bus ride back to Alice Springs. Konkol and Finder were ticketed for a bus that would stop at Wallara Ranch, that greasy spoon of the Outback; whereas our bus carried a "bush picnic". At the first rest stop the second bus caught up with us (just barely--our driver covered one 16 kilometer stretch in ten minutes; glad I had Dramamine), and Ken and Jan got permission to join us, by promising not to eat anything for lunch (we offered to feed them table scraps). The picnic was cold cuts and hot tea ("The gentlemen will please do their Boy Scout act and collect firewood.") but the exotic setting made up for it. That evening we had dinner in the fanciest restaurant in Alice Springs.

Next day I went to the Avis agency and rented a Leyland Moke to drive the 34 kilometers north to the Tropic of Capricorn. What that dotted line on the map actually looks like on the ground is a little billboard on the side of the road reading "Welcome to the Torrid Zone".

Our plane was an hour late arriving in Adelaide; to our surprise, our connections were held for us. Ken Konkol and I went to Sydney. He located two local fans (Jane Vine and a boyfriend of hers, who had a car), and they gave us a memorable tour of the city. Among other things we walked across the Harbour Bridge and took the ferryboat back. It is legal to drive a herd of sheep across the bridge, and these people of course had done it.

I decided to visit Gundagai, and get some last use out of my Australpass by taking the night train to Canberra. Ken thought it would be cheapest to travel with me (doubtful) so we stayed teamed up. Wally Gonser was wandering around looking lost and we talked him into coming along.

The train trip was in a European-style coach. We found the light switch in our compartment and were able to watch the scenery and the Southern sky through the window. In all eight other compartments were

people trying to sleep with the lights on.

In the lobby of the Canberra hotel I saw John Langner, who was leaving for Sydney that night. John said he would like to go to Gundagai with us provided we could get him to the airport by 7:30. So the four of us happy travelers (three mathematicians and a printer) hopped into our Kay Rent-a-Car (another Galant) and with Ken at the wheel drove to Cooma. From Cooma Langner drove over the Snowy Mountains, actually driving through one snowfield, and made it to the Yarrangobilly Caves. The caves are 10 kilometers off the main road down a one lane jeep track--how did anyone ever discover them? From Yarrangobilly Wally drove up to Tumut and then by back roads to Gundagai. On this last stretch we were stopped twice--once by a herd of cattle crossing the road and once by a herd of sheep.

Gundagai was once a stopping place for bullock-wagon drivers and their faithful dogs, and many folk songs have been written about this. Several famous ones (some off-color) share a refrain about a dog on the tucker box, "nine miles from Gundagai". Eventually a statue was erected of a dog sitting on a tucker box, oddly only five miles from Gundagai. We got to see this statue, unfortunately after dark.

I drove the last stretch back to Canberra. Australian roads: the national speed limit is 100 km/hr (62 mph), but Australia lacks the high speed road network we have. While some highways are up to American standards, most Australian roads are in about the same shape as say Charles Street in Baltimore or Canal Road in D.C., so 100 kph is sometimes optimistic. Also, teenage drivers are restricted to 80 kph during their first year. Invariably you will get caught behind one in a no passing zone. Add to this overloaded trucks on two lane mountain roads and you start longing for the Interstate system.

We returned to Canberra fifteen minutes after the plane left. Langner made plane reservations for the next morning.

The next day we called the Kay people and informed them that we were taking the car to Sydney. Then we did a quick tour of Canberra, mainly seeing the War Memorial, a museum of Australia's role in the World Wars. A really unexpected exhibit was the wreckage of Baron von Richtofen's plane. The Australians claim credit for shooting down the Red Baron.

On to Sydney. Ken drove on the open road and I got Sydney rush hour traffic. Next morning I took the car to Kay's to turn it in, and the Kay people wanted to know where I had been the night before (and where I had found a dirt factory). The previous day they had flown a driver to Sydney to drive the car back to Canberra. If you ever wondered why rental cars are so expensive...

As we waited at the Sydney airport for the plane to Auckland, Shane McCormack presented each of us with a daffodil, claiming it was a boarding pass. Once on board we planted the flowers in the seat backs, making the cabin look like a flying greenhouse. The entire crew had to come back to take a look, and not one could keep a straight face.

New Zealand has a very strict agricultural quarantine, so we either had to leave the daffodils on board or else declare them at the inspection station. Of course we did the latter.

Two buses met us at the airport, so we had a smoking and a non-smoking bus. The smokers called theirs the "Executive Bus"; we called it the "Cancer Bus". Our driver told us he had been nineteen years in the Merchant Marine and was prepared for anything. For the next three days there existed a constant state of warfare between him and us. I think he won. Sample: Some sheepshearers had knocked off for lunch,

leaving the radio playing. When they returned all the rams had fainted. Why? The radio was playing "There'll Never Be Another Ewe".

The first morning in Auckland we were free to explore the city; that afternoon the buses took us on a tour. Most interesting were the numerous extinct volcanoes. Extinct means not having erupted in human memory. Human memory in New Zealand goes back only to the arrival of the Maori, circa 1300. Auckland being in a classical cinder cone field, there is a good chance that in the next hundred years or so a Paracutin will erupt within the city limits.

Next day the Southern Hemisphere winter did us in. It was raining, and the water table was so high that the glow-worm caves at Waitomo were closed. We continued on to the geyser fields at Rotorua and the DB Rotorua Hotel (DB stands for Dominion Brewery, which owns the hotel).

At Rotorua is one of the three geyser fields in the world (the others are in Iceland and Yellowstone Park). The field is small, a couple of acres filled with paint pots, boiling mud, hot springs, and, while we were present, two active geysers; however, it is sufficient to supply hot water for the city and to fill the atmosphere with a strong brimstone smell.

That night we attended a concert of Maori folk songs and dances. Following the Maori a visiting Australian children's choir came on stage and started off by singing that famous Australian hymn "We Shall Overcome".

Early the next morning the more adventurous (myself included) went to the Rotorua airport for excursion flights. We had hoped to fly around the crater of an active volcano, but the bad weather foiled us again; so we settled for a flight over the Rotorua area. The air was very rough and the pilot given to aerobatics.

Waitomo was still closed, so we filled in with such things as a local zoo and a sheep-shearing. Then back to the Auckland airport, where a group picture was taken, and we split up. I flew back to the States that night.

We landed at Honolulu and had to disembark for Immigration; then on to Los Angeles. One last vignette: riding back to the East Coast in a one-class DC-8, the less comfortable seats and cramped cabin made me realize that I had been spoiled for any lesser airliner by those Air New Zealand DC-10s. □

A GOOD FANZINE.

Gore Creatures #24, Gary J. Svehla, 5906 Kavon Ave., Baltimore, Md. 21206; \$1.25; 52 pp. Gary has been putting out GC for a long time, and it's one of the top ten zines in looks, as far as I'm concerned. Offset, profusely illustrated with sketches, photos, cartoons, and movie poster reproductions, with an excellent cover illo...words fail. Although the layout may seem a little blocky at times because of the large number of square and nearly square cuts, GC is obviously put together with large doses of TLC. In #24 there are articles on Nosferatu, "Oldies But Moldies", The Thing, sf in movies of the 1950s and why it was the way it was, and reviews by Gary. A serious fanzine with a movie/terror focus, GC is well put together and well rounded. Worth the money and then some.

- Steve Miller

CON REPORTS

PgHLANGE. Pghlange is sponsored annually by WPSFA (Western Pennsylvania Science Fiction Association) in Pittsburgh. The 1975 convention was held September 26-28 in the Holiday Inn at suburban Monroeville.

L. Sprague de Camp was Guest of Honor, and a more articulate, knowledgeable, and fascinating speaker would be hard to find. Mr. de Camp spoke at the banquet Saturday evening on topics evidently close to his heart: H.P. Lovecraft, and writing. During a prolonged question and answer period following his prepared talk, Sprague and Catherine de Camp cautioned would-be writers on various contractual pitfalls they have encountered with publishers during their careers. A well organized and talented pair.

The banquet itself was noteworthy for the good food. Undoubtedly the relatively small group in attendance and the buffet service were factors.

Rusty Hevelin, 1975's DUFF winner, presented a preliminary Aussiecon report in the form of an extensive slide show with commentary. Rusty made the con and the country seem great. Too bad Australia was too far for most of us.

Being a relaxacon, Pghlange is heavy on parties. Friday we arrived late, having become lost in the wilds of Pittsburgh, but we did see a few people in the halls and went to the con committee party. Saturday we went shopping at open-air malls, and paid a visit to a State store for tequila (to mix with Coke in the Baltimore tradition). Both events were somewhat novel to someone from the Baltimore suburbs.

Saturday night there were numerous parties, one of the largest and longest lasting hosted by BSFS. The Amber Society sponsored a party featuring their own inimitable persons, and mead--sweet and strong from silver goblets. Much good conversation and a most relaxing weekend.

- Sue Miller

PHILCON. I spent my days in the huckster room and can offer little comment on the program beyond: a) diligent questioning reveals that no one else admits to having seen it; b) the huckster room refilled within 20 minutes after the scheduled start of Samuel Delany's speech (I was impressed by what little I was able to see of Delany); and c) I've previously seen Rusty Hevelin's Aussiecon slide show which will probably tour the con circuit. It is an interesting travelogue but needs to be shortened; however those who did not get to Australia will be delighted to be able to share in the con even to this small extent.

The art show's highlight was Sean Spacher's copper sculptures, which create a sensation wherever exhibited. The time and care Sean puts into them are obvious.

Perhaps the con's flavor can best be captured by visualizing: dinner at Moes, the greasy spoon across from the Ben Franklin, where previous fannish groups had depleted the hoagie makings, and the waitress somehow set the coffeepot on fire (I pointed this out because I was too tired to face the necessity of running out if the restaurant caught fire); Amber...a lovely shadow at the Amber party; chatting with andy offutt as he checked the bathtub supplies in the con suite (he appeared to approve); enticing two young but shapely Trekkie femmefans, who were standing dismayed in the hallway looking for a party which had failed to open at its advertised time, into the Amber party, where they quickly found a place; riding in an elevator with a large chair, which

had obviously started out in the hotel lobby; greeting numerous old friends; and finally riding home with a new enemy, a large metal jewelry stand, which persisted in jabbing everyone occupying the back seat at every shift in weight.

Philcon could be summed up as a definitely pleasant way to kick off the 1975 holiday season.

- Sue Wheeler

STAR TREK CON & RHOCON. Over the New Year's weekend (January 2-4) there were two cons in D.C.: Al Schuster's Star Trek Con at the Hilton, and Rhocon at the Sheraton Park. Schuster's S.T. Con was packed as usual, with estimates ranging from 5000 to 10,000, and the usual assortment of celebrities were there. However, there was no evening/night action at all.

Rhocon, a Perry Rhodan/sf con, was sparsely attended, with less than 300 registered. It often seemed that there were only 50 or so people there. The parties at night were quiet, so conversations with guests A.E. Van Vogt, Gordie Dickson, Ben Bova, Forry Ackerman, and various European Rhodan authors were possible and pleasant. The few fans that were there had a good time hanging out with their friends and the pros. A low key but generally pleasant small con.

- Lee Smoire

LOCS

BEN INDICK, 428 Sagamore Avenue, Teaneck, NJ 07666 ----- 11-11-75

Good luck with your Balticon. Kaufman and Tompkins should be the best act since Gallagher & Shean, and the latter didn't even put out a fine fanzine! I actually finally went to a con, the Fantasy Con, in Providence, and had a fine time. However, the thought of thousands of people at the N.Y. Expo in 1976 having a loud and great time while I am panhandling in the streets (I will have gone bankrupt in the forlorn Big Apple long before this) fills me with dismay. Lest any of the folks whom I met in R.I. recognize me next to the unattractive abstract sculptures in the Hilton's driveway, I'll wear my red wig. They'll never expect that! So give generously to that weary, gentle old man in the Raggedy Ann mop--but don't ask him questions.

BRAD PARKS, 562 Kennedy Road, Windsor, CT 06095 ----- 11-14-75

I abhor the naked implications you set forth in your "fanzine".

I say now and I will continue to say that I have never slept with Harry Warner and/or Leah Zeldes. And to say this to an audience of my friends! Well--I can only begin to tell you just how shocked I truly am.

And to mention my aversion towards whips and bondage leather--what a man does in his spare time is his business and no one else's. I was also extremely offended by your photo.

So my suggestion: Clean up this zine, or I may sue for libel. And I would hate to drag you through the slime and the slime and the slime and the mud!

DON DOHLER, Post Office Box 125, Perry Hall, MD 21128 11-15-75

Thanks for the copy of BSFAN 3. Much improved over #1, but I don't know how it stacks up against #2--the issue I did not get to see.

The most intriguing thing was the letter from Wayne Martin, which defended BSFAN 1 against a letter from Tony Cvetko, who obviously complained about the write-up on me in #1. Funny part of it is that I didn't complain even though, despite double-checking of the facts with Artemus, there were more inaccuracies in "Don Dohler--Who He?" than the nightly weather forecast. I wish I had seen #2 so that I'd know what Cvetko said, but I'm apt to agree with him: Don Dohler--who he? Who care? Anyway, for the record: CINEMAGIC was conceived long before I knew who George Stover was. What George's influence did advocate to me was the presence of such a large sf/film following in this town.

None of this really matters to anyone, but what the hell--it's been so many years since I've sent a LOC to a true-for-sure fanzine that I couldn't resist; and I've always ~~loved~~ loved that term: LOC, LOC, LOC, LOC...

DON D'AMMASSA, 19 Angell Drive, East Providence, RI 02914 11-15-75

Steve Miller's article on pros at conventions in BSFAN 3 is interesting, fairly accurate, but I'm not all that certain that the presence of one or more pro writers has much of any significance to a small regional. Certainly it helps if one has intentions of roping in a bunch of mundane people with only a fringe interest in fandom as opposed to sf, but with the growth of fandom as fandom lately, there is less and less need of attracting the fringe people. Obvious, since some cons are trying to devise ways and means of discouraging them.

I think your expressed doubt that Space 1999 will improve is well founded. The people behind it are trying for Star Trek's following, but they aren't much interested in whether they produce good sf, good science, or even good drama. So it will probably continue pretty much as it is. After all, as an independent show, its ratings have been so good that all three networks are now in a bidding contest to see who will have it exclusively next year. And I just read in the newspaper that there is an organized fandom in the offing.

A much more interesting issue than last time.

MARK R. SHARPE, 2721 Black Knight Blvd., Indianapolis, IN 46229 11-16-75

Gee! Thank you for BSFAN 3, but why did I get a copy, pray tell? I used to publish a fanzine--ECLIPSE and PARTIAL ECLIPSE--but those have gone by the wayside since college cut into my fanac. I will send you the last issue of E or PE if I can scrounge up a copy so I won't feel like a total heel, but, if you do not mind, I shall render a loc unto BSFAN. By the way, the BS wouldn't happen to stand for... No? I thought not.

My! My! We do seem to have a terrible liking for convention reports. Heaven forbid you think I said they were terrible, but there were a total of nine, if my memory serves me correctly. I do not, if you'll excuse the understatement, get orgasmic over convention reports. Mainly this is due to a nasty character flaw in my nature: jealousy.

I love conventions with a passion, though not quite orgasmic, and attend as many as possible out here in the metropolitan Midwest. ... If I cannot afford to go to a convention, college is expensive folks, I don't want to hear about the good times other luckier individuals had. I am selfish, if you were wondering, and cannot read convention reports without turning a sickly shade of green--envy. But, they were nicely written and read well. Unfortunately the interest, in my case at least, was not present. Keep up the good work...on the writing at least.

Oh, my ghod! Comier O'Nare has a strange sense of humor, doesn't she/he/it (from the title Now You See It/Him/Them... by Gene DeWeese and Robert (Buck) Coulson). After that crack on the title page, she has the audacity to grant the publication of "Concave Cure" parts one and two. She must be a hoax!

"SF on TV" by yourself was interesting. However, the first episodes of Space 1999 were not just "quite poor"--they are suitable for burning. I have never seen a show with such total disregard for science in all my life, however short that may have been. I do watch the series, but, along with Juanita Coulson, the sound off. It is pretty, but the dialogue is miserable. But, the review/article was good.

The locs were fine, but I cannot comment on them further as I haven't the slightest idea what they were talking about.

The fanzine reviews were excellent and correct; however, I must disagree with Tim on his NOTES review: the Niven interview was excellent, not just good. I am a science buff, so I like NOTES immensely.

I had only read one of the books reviewed, Mary Staton's, and Dick is quite right. Leave this book on the shelves. Another book in the same series, Red Tide, is much better. Good for you! You got back at Comier for her nasty letter on the toc page. I hope to ghod, or Allah as the case may be, that I never have the misfortune to see a copy of that rank piece of literature, if your review was correct. Is it on the same caliber as Dhalgren? It is? My, it must be bad! By the way, does Comier sound Freudian to you? It does? You need help! ...

My library, in Indianapolis, has an excellent supply of sf, as one of the librarians is a member of ISFFA and a writer for fanzines. The library at Indiana University is also quite good sf-wise, but I have yet to check into it. The IU SF Ass'n has a library of sf paperbacks with about 5000 titles, so I do all my reading from there. ... By the way, why did I get BSFAN? I am dying to know. ☐There must have been a good reason.☐

K.F. BULOT, 10405 Bronwood Way, Rancho Cordova, CA 95670 ----- 11-22-75

Our library, here in Rancho Cordova, has a fair hardback section. From an analysis of the contents I found that it has about half the books you listed in Part A of the quiz. It doesn't presently have any of the books from Part B, but two of them are on order. The library has only three of the books in Part C but to make up for it they carry Analog and F&SF (and happily accept when someone donates their used copies of Galaxy).

The library's paperback section is uncatalogued but if it is looked over carefully there can be found a few treasures. By the number of books in the paperback section, the shelves are considerably better filled than in most libraries I've been in.

As for the authors that appear most frequently, the obvious. The

majority is in Asimov, Bradbury, Clarke, Heinlein, Knight and Anderson. They put all of Andre Norton's books in the children's section, which is something I don't think she deserves.

I also think it is too bad there aren't more people who care about what goes into their sf section. If there were, the budget for it would be bigger than it is, so more quality would go into the choices rather than quantity.

Although there are no programs of sf at the library, a junior college in nearby Sacramento brought Ray Bradbury to speak. The hall was packed and Bradbury got a 15 minute standing ovation. I wonder if this tells them anything?

TERRY WHITTIER, 3809 Meramonte Way, North Highlands, CA 95660 11-28-75

I really have to agree with many of the responses you got--BSFAN is an excellent fanzine despite not having any illustrations.

I've noticed a lot of comment concerning the pros and cons of con reports. ... It would seem that half of fandom is bored to tears by con reports (or feel left out), while the other half is fascinated by con reports (or at least well written ones). This disparity is disconcerting to all faneds, but cannot be pinned on the fanzines which print the con reports.

Personally, I have to wonder why this division exists. I find that many of the convention reports in BSFAN are easy to read and reasonably well written. Jim Landau's Aussiecon report was very entertaining--I had heard much about how good Aussiecon was, and have been looking forward to reading accounts of it. Whether a report is of more an objective and journalistic cast or if it is more personal and subjective in orientation matters little to me. I enjoy both, as long as the objective type is not simply a relisting of the con program, and the subjective is not mainly about experiences encountered on the way to the con or returning from it.

Conventions seem to be mainly concerned with a gathering of fans in both literary and genre activities as well as personal (read: fanish) activities. Consequently, a con report should concern itself principally with either or both of those aspects. If it goes beyond that, it ceases to be a con report.

I like the distinctive style of format that you are using; mainly, the inseting of the titles in many of the articles and con reports, and continuing overrun articles on the bottom of the next page. Your mimeo reproduction is really excellent--it shows that you care, that you're really serious about making BSFAN as good as it can be. That's the way all top-notch fanzines are.

The fanzine reviews could have been longer, and I'd have liked more of them. One is tempted to think that you were using them simply as filler--and nothing in a good fanzine looks like it was used simply as filler. My fault. Tim Daniels reviewed four zines, I printed three reviews; the fourth was considerably longer.

...I noticed that you asked Laurine White (a neighbor of mine) if she knew that she was a "prolific loc writer". You can take it from me that she is. She sequesters herself in her apartment, at her typewriter in the middle of the living room, surrounded on all sides with fanzines and letters strewn all over the whole floor, and types like mad.

I thought the review of The High Crusade that Tim did was really excellent for its length. I read the book way back when I was just

starting to read sf (about 10 years ago) and had thought it awfully boring at the time. Now I would like to go back and read it again.

...I know it is a clubzine. But nonetheless I feel that you should express yourself more in the pages of BSFAN. As an editor, contributing your editorial capabilities and doing so much valuable work on the zine, you are entitled to take up more space in the fanzine that you play such an important role in creating. Your Fall monologue was very interesting, and I would like to see you get a little more reign. Also, the phonetically spelled names and stuff in the colophon were very amusing. I'd like to see you continue the practice.

The toc was extremely neat and professional looking. I will learn much from your fanzine, and this is just one of the places I shall look at when getting the next issue of ALTAIR together. ☐Gee...thanx for the kind words.☐

JEFFREY MAY, Box 68, Liberty, MO 64068 ----- 12-17-75

I may never get another letter written on BSFAN, but here is a letter on #3. In particular I have a response to Steve Miller's "Pros and Cons".

Steve's arguments seem to be something as follows: The presence of pro writers at cons is crucial in making a good con. The number of conventions is growing, and pros are asked to attend more and more often. While a con may pay some of its GoH's expenses, not all are covered; pros who attend on their own receive nothing in exchange. Moreover, pros who attend cons lose time which could be profitably spent writing. Therefore, in order to insure that pros can afford to come to conventions, con committees should pay them a fee plus expenses for attending. At least, pros should get their room and expenses if they come. Perhaps I've incorrectly summarized some of Steve's arguments, but I don't think I'm far off.

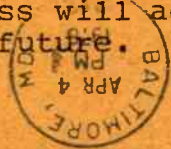
As you might have guessed, I am completely at odds with Steve in this. To begin with, I do not agree that pros have to be present at a convention to make it a good con. I have attended cons where the pros were very much a part of all that happened, and others with only one or two pro writers in evidence. I am not a sercon fan, and I can enjoy myself at a con whether that con attracts lots of pro attendees or not.

In a way Steve is right when he says that because the number of cons is increasing pros are asked to attend more and more often. However, I think he is assuming that most pros attend cons because they're asked to. From what I've seen and heard in fandom, unless they're GoH of a con, pros who attend usually do so because they want to, or because friends will be there, or because it's close to their home. These are the same reasons why fans attend cons. No one has suggested that fans be paid for attending cons.

The situation of a pro who loses money and runs up expenses because he attends a con is little different from that of any self-employed person or anyone who does not get paid vacation time from his job. If I attend too many cons I either have to stop awhile or start taking vacation without pay. I find it hard to believe that many pros have a work schedule which includes weekends, or that they work so hard they can't take some time off now and then. Steve worries about pros who are invited to several conventions a month, but it is possible for a writer to say "Sorry, no thanks" if his invitations exceed his abilities.

Steve concludes that we should start paying something to pros for attending. I am convinced that to do so would be harmful. Several months ago GRANFALLOON carried a letter from Lester del Rey on payments to pros and their effects. One main point that was made is that many sf pros are registered with speaker's bureaus; for them to take money for attending a con, especially if they appear on the program, could bring them into conflict with their contract. They would then have to get a fee whenever they attended a con. What would happen if pro A had to start asking a fee, and pro B wanted to attend a con without doing so but his speaker's bureau said no? There is then the matter of the effects on convention fandom of a scramble to hire the most prestigious pros to appear. Many cons are run on a "break even" budget which is possible because they don't have to pay through the nose (or out of the pocket) for pros to attend. Would you like to see convention fees increase two or three times to pay pros' attendance fees?

Now I have nothing against the pros, filthy pros though they may be. Some of my best friends are pros. I'm not sure I'd let my sister marry one, but then I don't have a sister, so I don't have to worry. Neither do the pros. Anyhow, while I can see the possibility that pros would benefit from being paid (most people do benefit from being paid), I believe that fandom as a whole would suffer. This has been raised before, and doubtless will again, and I was against it then, I am now, and will be in the future.



☐Also received locs from D. GARY GRADY, SAMUEL S. LONG, WAYNE W. MARTIN, ELST WEINSTEIN, & LAURINE WHITE; no more space; thank you all!☐

BSFAN
Mike Kurman
16-I Rich Mar Rd.
Owings Mills, MD 21117

*Jodie Offutt
Funny Farm
Salzman, Ly. 40329*

PRINTED MATTER