



BRUZZFUZZEL NEWS

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RANTINGS AND RAVINGS BY CLAY

Well, as I look at my calendar I shudder to realize that yet another BRUZZFUZZEL NEWS is due at the mail boxes of the greater fandom! Seems like only yesterday that I was writing the RANT AND RAVE for #56...Wait! Ghad! That was yesterday! I've been so busy with real-world-work recently that I've decided to ram all these fannish activities into one big blowout! (I think I feel a breeze up my shorts!) So you guys and gals out there should have a true fan's dream come true: tons-o'-NEWS for you to peruse! Enclosed you will find what one well-know fan has called "a whole lot of stuff", while another zine editor has hazard to say "fun and some with the typin' so tiny"! Makes you feel good to be a fan In America, doesn't it! Just pound those pupils through these semi-well printed pages for the latest rants of the Bruzzfuzzel populace! And may I take this time to once again ask that near silent group to make this more than the J.R. and Skip rant rag! Add a little creative juice to those fannish flames and write or draw or review something for the ol'NEWS. We're all eager to hear about your thoughts on such subjects as Worldcons and Space Programs and Collecting and Artwork and Small Fuzzy Crawlers That Think of You as a Rather Large Area on Which to Have Various Functions Throughout Their Life Span! Of course, if you'd rather just puddin' out and read other people's thoughts all the time...well, hey, who am I to complain. -CLAY

WANDERING RUMBLINGS: THE FANNISH TRAVELS OF J.R.MADDEN

ChimneyCon '88
by
J. R. "Mad Dog" Madden

The second, one-day convention put on by the Chimneyville Fantasy and Science Fiction Society (CFSFS) was held Saturday, 9 July 1988, at the Sheraton-Regency Hotel in Jackson, Mississippi. Guests included George Alec Effinger (author), Michael Scott (gaming), J. R. Madden (fan), Hanthor [AKA James Petty] (comic artist/writer), and Roland Mann / Mitch Byrd / Steven Butler (fledgling comic persons). The convention featured double track panels.

The concom learned from last year and chose to spend a little more money so they could set up the function rooms and hospitality suite on Friday evening rather than early Saturday morning. It worked out very well and no one had to stay extremely late getting things ready. Saturday morning final setup went very smoothly, I thought.

Personally, I had three program items: a neofan's introduction to science fiction convention which included slides of last year's ChimneyCon (this

was not well attended), a slide show of last year's WorldCon in Brighton, and a panel, along with Eva McDonald and Jessica Scott, on the history of science fiction, Take 2. We had tried the history of sf panel last year but kept getting off the subject!

I found the convention to be almost too intense. We were cramming a two or three day con into only one day. I couldn't say to folks "Let's get together tomorrow and talk." There was no tomorrow. Scotty interviewed George Effinger as the opening item in the morning and I taped the interview for later transcription; it was VERY good. I was trying to go through the dealers' rooms to fill some of the gaps in my minor comics collection while not being late for my own program items. Talking with folks here and there filled in the few idle minutes.

In the one of the two dealers' rooms, guest George Effinger and his companion, Debbie Hodgkinson, were seated behind a table bearing paperbacks and hardbacks that had been sent to George as review copies; he was selling some in hopes of raising funds to pay off debts (and did better than he had hoped). It was his first experience behind a dealer's table and he found it to be pretty good as he got to see almost everyone at the convention at one time or another while sitting down. I requested a set of paperbacks be inscribed "Rejected from the personal collection of George Alec Effinger."

The convention had more space to work with this year so the dealers' room was expanded and more space was allocated for the gamers without having to cut back in other areas. There were two panels rooms for the two track programming plus a third room where panels/discussions could continue when the time in the regular room was expired. There were two hospitality suites; one by the concom and one by the local Star Trek club. Both the hospitality rooms featured video programming as well.

Being on and/or attending several panels, it appeared that the convention was somewhat overprogrammed. Several planned items never really got started due to a lack of an audience. With a one-day convention, the bulk of the membership needs time to go through the dealers room thoroughly, read the program book, visit the hospitality suites, so there may not be as much time left over for program items.

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On the other hand, it is a good idea to have panels and talks available just in case the need arises.

One of the concom told me Sunday morning he thought they had done okay financially but had suffered a drop in attendance from the previous year, down to about 200 from maybe 350 in '87. With Crescent City Con, another one day effort, in New Orleans on the same day, the folks from that region probably opted to stay home rather than journey to Jackson. Also, the concom may have had too many guests though I am sure the membership enjoyed the variety.

* * *



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SUNDRY SCRUTINIZINGS: A LOOK AT BOOKS WITH ANTHONY WARD

AGENT OF CHANGE. by Steve Miller and Sharon Lee. DelRey. \$3.50 is the simple story of a spy, "Val Con", an ex-mercenary, Miri, and a 3 meter tall alien "turtle" named "Edger". Well, maybe not that simple a story.

Val Con is an ex-First In Scout who was changed into a super spy and assassin by his clan. He is also the foster brother to a member of a powerful, long lived, non-human race of beings who look something like giant turtles. While on an assassination mission, he ran into a young lady who was being attacked by a group of thugs. After helping her fight off these attackers, Miri hit him in the head, by accident. She took him home and patched him up, just in time for the two of them to be attacked by another group of killers.

Most of the story is the process of two crippled people, one a mind warped assassin/spy and the other a burned out ex-mercenary, learning to trust someone else, and then to love each other. And while this love

story is taking place, the two of them also have to fight off assassins from a criminal syndicate, the planetary constabulary, a terrorist group, and Val Con's employers.

For a strange mixture of spy novel, romance novel, and SF novel, with a lot of humor thrown in for good measure. I liked it. Be warned, this is a book with a sequel someplace out there. I'll give it a 7 and am looking forward to the authors' next work with a lot of anticipation.

Do you all remember a simple little movie called ALIEN? Remember how it was sort of "Haunted House In Space"? Well, the next book is in this same vein. DERELICT, by Robert L. Hovorka, Jr., Ace, \$2.95 is not a book to read alone late at night. I know, because I did.

The story starts two hundred years from now, the interstellar passenger liner Goddess had engine problems. Ensign Pamela Dubois was at her lifeboat station while the liner transitioned between stars. On emergence, something went very wrong in the engine room. She was ordered to abandon ship as soon as she got her passengers on board. She, a maintenance Starman, and ten passengers got out of the Goddess just before she broke up.

However, just after blasting free of the Goddess, the lifeboat was caught in some kind of backblast from the engines and was tossed into an unknown star system. During this unusual transition, two passengers died, and Dubois was knocked out. Unfortunately, the star system they transited into had a superhot W class star at its core, and had no planets. But after scanning the system, one anomaly was spotted. Another ship was orbiting the star. However, it was an alien ship that was orbiting close to the central star. And Humanity had never met an alien race before.

As this ominous ship was their only hope, they approached it with a great deal of intrepidation. As they approached, they saw an open small craft bay in the side of the ship. To get the lifeboat out of the radiation of the giant star, the Ensign took the lifeboat in, and the wall closed up behind them. What happened next makes for a very scary book. Hovorka takes the old standard situation of trapping a group of people, some with secrets they are trying to hide, in a terrible situation, and then testing them to destruction, and runs with it. But besides being scary, it is also a very good SF novel. Everything that happens is logical, just not human logical.

I recommend this book highly, if you are looking for a good fast, scary read that will leave you looking into the dark corners of your room afterwards. I give it an 8.

For a complete change of pace, try TALTOS. Steven Brust's newest book about Vladimir Taltos, from Ace, \$2.95. If you haven't read any of the previous books about Vlad and his familiar, a teckla named Loosh, go out and buy them now. You are missing a lot of fun. For those of you who don't like Fantasy, give these a try. It is "Fantasy with rivets", as someone once said.

Vlad Taltos is a third generation Human living in the world of "Faerie". The "elves" are a long lived, taller, stronger, humanoid race that has ruled their world for thousands of years. The humans had entered this world from "the East" while the elves were fighting each other in a very bad civil war. Humans are strictly second class citizens. Even Human magic, called witchcraft, is looked down on by Eleven sorcerers.

Vlad is a both a witch and a sorcerer, because his father wanted him to be an Elf and his grandfather wanted him to be Human. He can also fence like either a Human or an Elf, also due to his strange upbringing. His father also bought him a place in the local Mafia, called the Jhereg. In the first three books, Vlad changed from just being a gangster, an assassin, and a thief, into the closest thing that world has ever known to a private investigator. And he normally works cases for the highest, most powerful beings of society. In TALTOS we learn about his early years and how he first got started as an investigator and trouble-shooter.

The story starts when one of Vlad's outmen taking off with some protection money he was collecting. He runs to the "home" of one of the most powerful given Sorceress, who has been undead for a thousand years.

When Vlad finally works up the courage to go see her and ask for his money back, she tells him she needs him to take the Paths of the Dead and return the soul of the next Empress to the living world. Vlad is not thrilled. But the money is very good. It is not very healthy to cross an undead Sorceress, and in one of the other books we have learned that Vlad has the reincarnated souls of one of Fairie's greatest heroes, so off he goes. Besides this adventure, we learn in several flashbacks about his childhood and how he became the hero he does become in the later books.

I've enjoyed the earlier books a lot, and enjoyed the background given to Our Hero in this one. But even those of you coming into the series cold should find the whole thing very enjoyable. I give it an easy 7. And once you read these books you'll never see Fairyland in quite the same light again.

CONFLICT OF HONORS, by Steve Miller and Sharon Lee, DelRey, \$3.50, is a nicely written book with a fun space opera story line. There is nothing really original in this book, but the characterizations are good and the story really moves right along. And, while it is set in the same future Universe as Miller and Lee's first book, AGENT OF CHANGE, IT IS NOT A SEQUEL! I am glad to report that I thoroughly enjoyed this book for two reasons. First because I liked the authors' first book and, second, because I am glad to see they aren't just a flash in the pan and I can expect to read more good stuff written by them in the future.

CONFLICT OF HONORS is the story of Priseilla Delacroix y Mendoza and the rest of the crew of the starship DUTIFUL PASSAGE and how she, and they, changed each other, mostly for the best. The story starts with Priseilla being banished from her home planet, a Terran colony settled by followers of the Old Religion, for "blasphemy". At 16 standard years of age, she had to leave her family and home and start working in Free Trader tramp starships. After several years she had managed to learn enough to work as a Cargo Master on an alien Free Trader. As the plot really starts to thicken, she is marooned by her crooked shipmaster and captain on a small, isolated, and low tech planet because, while working her job as Cargo Master, she had discovered her ship was smuggling illegal drugs.

When she attempted to hire on as crew, for she had no money, with the next ship leaving to a main transshipping planet to report the drug smuggling, she was welcomed aboard the Free Trader/Yacht Dutiful Passage by its eccentric half Terran captain. He signed her aboard as a "pet librarian" (he had a thing for strays of all kind) and began training her as a pilot and Second Officer. She soon found out that her previous captain and his family were the mortal enemies of the Dutiful Passage's Captain's family. She was soon caught up in the continuing feud between these two mortal enemies, and was instrumental in the resolution of their conflict, and the story.

Priseilla is an interesting, and different, character who is thrown in to some interesting, if a little strange and weird, situations. Most of the secondary characters are a varied and weird bunch that I found delightful. And while the background of Miller and Lee's Universe is still not totally clear to me, it is interesting and has some unique elements. I am looking forward to their further explanations in future books. I'll give this book a 6.5 and say I am looking forward to their next book with a great deal of anticipation.

I am glad to report that there is a new and very good space opera series that has been out for the last six months or so. The total series is called THE SAND WARS and the first two books in the series are SOLAR KILL and LASERTOWN BLUES. They are by Charles Ingrid and are both from DAW for \$3.50 a piece.

The series is about the adventures of "the last Dominion Knight" and those that help and hinder him in his various quests. The story starts several hundred

years in the future with The Empire under attack from an implacable alien race of Invaders. In spite of its name, The Empire was actually only a very loose confederation of various Human, and a few allied Aliens', planets. When these Invaders conquered a terrestrial planet, they killed all other lifeforms on the planet and turned it into a desert only good for their use as a hatchery. Hence the series title, THE SAND WARS.

The most elite forces of the Empire's military were the Dominion Knights. They were power suited infantry who only fought "the Pure War". They vowed to only kill enemy soldiers, not the innocent, and do it with minimum damage to the ecology and environment of the planet where the war is being fought. Needless to say, the Knights and the Invaders were in a total war to the death. But there were other Imperial officials with different priorities.

While fighting on the latest planet to be invaded, Lt. Jack Storm, a Dominion Knight fresh off the farm planet and officer training, and his soldiers were fighting, and loosing, a rear guard action against the Invaders. And waiting with mounting despair to be withdrawn. The Invaders were winning the battle and the local alien race saw their racial extinction in the near future. So this local native race, which had only a low level of knowledge of the physical sciences, but a very high level of biotechnology, came up with their own plan for fighting off the Invaders. Therefore, unknown to the Knights and every other offworlder, each time the locals repaired any of the Knight's powered armor, they "infected" the suits with a biological agent that slowly changed the Knight into an inhuman berserker.

When the Imperial High Command saw that the battle and planet were totally lost and received the first reports of the Knights turning into monsters, a token few troop transport starships were sent in to pull out the remaining survivors. However, the Invaders destroyed all but one of the transports before they could escape from the system. The one surviving ship made the jump, but was so badly damaged that all life support systems soon failed.

Seventeen years later, the derelict transport was discovered drifting dead in space. When a rescue/salvage crew went on board, they found only one person still alive. And he was in cold sleep. But before Jack's body had been frozen, his mind had been hooked up to a debriefing device. For all those years, he had been going over and over and over the final weeks of that last, lost, battle. The doctors were sure he was crazy. And sometimes Jack felt the same way. The government kept this "wondrous" news of the survival of the last Knight quiet and kept shifting Jack Storm around from hospital to hospital while they healed his body, but not his mind. But his personal belongings were always shipped with him. And in with his goods was his infected, powered armor.

When he was finally released, he was a 41 year old mind in a 23 year old body. And he found his home planet had been the last planet the Invaders destroyed before the war ended. So, with no family or friends, and with deep feelings of paranoia, he was shipped to a frontier planet as a Ranger and told to keep a low profile. And over the next few years, he slowly healed his mind and soul.

And then parties unknown burned the planet off. The only way Jack survived was by getting into his armor just before the firestorm destroyed his station. He then managed to fall thru an Ancient stargate and ended up floating alone in orbit. But he realized he wasn't just paranoid. Powerful beings were out to get him, even if it meant killing millions of innocents and an entire ecology to do it.

Jack was picked up after several days by a privateer come to investigate the Burn Off. He then joined this mercenary band to get enough money to travel to the Capital and try to find out what was really going on. On the Capital, he ran into Amber while escaping from some bad guys. Amber was a seventeen year old street child, a thief, almost a whore, and an assassin in training. She first saved his life and then fell in love with Jack, and he with her. But he felt he was too old for her. So he began his attempts to make a "lady" out of her, while keeping her out of his bed. She was not amused, but stayed with Jack to keep him alive. After all, he was one of the best soldiers

in the Universe, but he is not a city person, like her. With these two fighters for Truth, Justice, and the Imperial Way together, nothing could stand in their way! Right.

The series is their continuing adventures while attempting to find out just what is really going on in the Empire, who the bad guys are, and how to defeat them before Jack's infected armor destroys him. Or the bad guys do. And his armor is slowly developing its own independent mind and doesn't really want to destroy Jack, just help out. Like a two year old child would. A two year old child with the power to destroy whole planets. This is fast, colorful, and enjoyable space opera. It has a lot of fun elements with some very dark undercurrents. I give it an easy 7.5. I'm looking forward Jack's, Amber's, and the armor's next adventures with great anticipation.

Mercedes Lackey has written a lot of filksongs and a pretty good hard fantasy trilogy. She wrote both a short story and a filksong about two women travelling together set in the same world as her trilogy. She wrote other short stories about these two, and eventually a novel. The novel is THE OATHBOUND, BOOK ONE: VOWS AND HONOR, from Ace, \$3.50. Tarma is a warrior and Kethry is a sorceress. I can hear her moans now. Not another feminist fantasy! But this one is different. Trust me.

Before the novel's start, Tarma had her entire tribe wiped out. She alone survived and pledged herself to a goddess if the goddess would help her with her revenge. The goddess made her a nearly sexless killing machine. Tarma ran into Kethry just before she killed the last of the raiders. But only with Kethry's magic help. The two of them became Oathbound to each other so that Tarma would have a tribe and Kethry would have a family. They then went out into the world to right wrongs, build reputations, and make a lot of money. With the money and reputations, they planned on opening a school that taught both self defence and white magic.

This book is partially a collection of short stories tied together plus a short novella. Some are merely all right and others are very good. Some are humorous, and others are very nasty. I liked both characters and the way Lackey writes about them. I'll give this a 5.5 because, while it is a good read, it all has been done before. Maybe not nearly as well, but it did seem a little stale.

There is another "shared universe" novel out. It is called WAR WORLD: THE BURNING EYE, and was created by Jerry Pournelle, and is from Baen Books, \$4.50. It is set mainly on the planet Haven in the same universe as the Co-Dominium and MOTE IN GODS EYE. If you remember Jerry's future's time line, after the fall of the Co-Dominium and the destruction of Earth, an Empire rose out of the ashes. After hundreds of years of progress, that Empire fell apart in Civil War. Then the Empire of MOTE rose to command space. One of the main reasons for the First Empire's fall was the war started by the Sauron Supermen. We learn more about all of this history in this book.

Haven will be discovered about 50 years from now. Haven is a cold, almost desolate semi-terrestrial (think Siberia) moon of a brown dwarf/gas super giant planet orbiting a very dim red dwarf star a long way from anywhere important. The original colonists were mostly religious types looking for a new planet to settle far from the evils of the Co-Dominium. Then the Co-Dominium's Bureau of Relocation started dropping political prisoners, criminals, and various malcontents in on them by the thousands. Many died. Neither the climate nor the original settlers welcomed the newcomers. However, some survived. They even set up their own independent "city-states" and countries. Most were soon in a constant state of war against each other.

When the first Empire finally conquered the planet, peace finally came to Haven. But the toughest warriors joined the Imperial Marines and left to help the Empire bring Peace to the Stars. Then the first Empire started to break up. One planet, Sauron, used biological and biotechnical technology to develop a "superior" Human Being and soldier. They called themselves the Sauron Supermen. To destroy these people, the Empire fatally bankrupted itself. But it succeeded in saving Humanity from the Saurons' tyranny before dying.

With its last gasp, the Empire destroyed both the Sauron fleet and burned off Sauron. But one heavy cruiser escaped with a mixed male and female crew. It ended its escape flight in the Haven system. After nuking Haven's few remaining centers of technical civilization, the Saurons landed to take possession of their new home base. But the centuries of fighting the harsh environment, and each other, had made the Haveners almost as tough as the Saurons. And there were a lot more Haveners. So started another age of war.

I liked this book. A lot of the stories aren't really about war. For instance, Poul Anderson's story is about the withdrawal of the final Imperial Marine unit from Haven. But they are all good. There were funny ones, sad ones, glorious ones, and nasty ones. But I liked them all. If you want more stories set in Pournelle's future or stories with vivid characters in conflict, check out this book. I give it a 8.

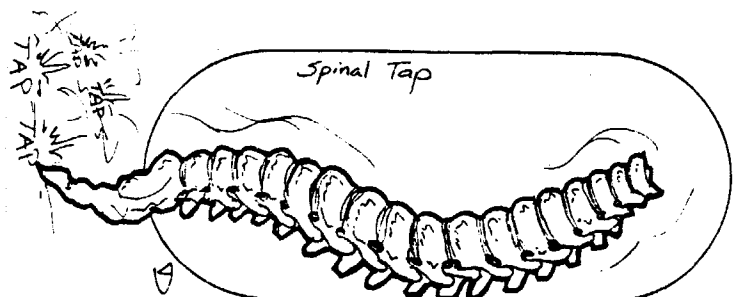
DEMON OF UNDOING, by Andrea I. Alton, Baen Books, \$3.50 reads like a first novel. But a very good first novel. The cover shows the Imkaira to be a cat/lion like race, but I didn't really get that from their description in the book. However they are a humanoid warrior race that go berserk when they go into battle. Leaders are those that can keep their rationality when all those about them are going mad. There is only one Terran in the book. And most of the Imkaira think he is the Demon of Undoing. But the story is filled with vivid characters living interesting lives.

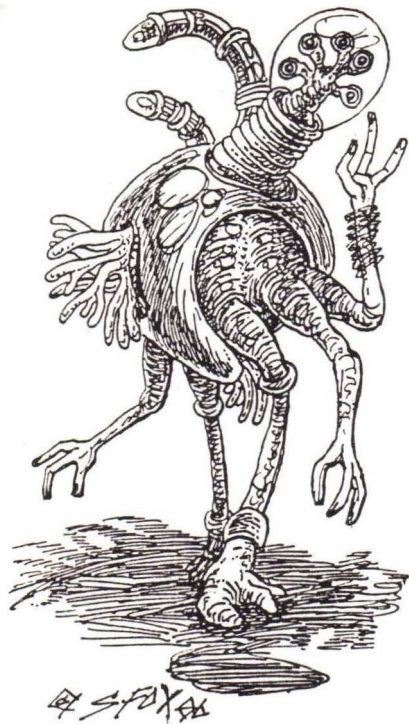
Our hero is Fenobar. While he is the son of a local king, he has a deformed left hand and arm. As he is an Imkaira warrior, he is supposed to fight with his left hand. But he had to develop a right handed fighting style. Also because of his deformity, Fenobar has become just about the most controlled and rational Imkaira there ever has been. Just to grow up and stay alive.

However, because of his deformity, he believes none of his people's gods and/or heroes will ever support him in his life and endeavors. So he has secretly pledged himself to the Demon of Undoing. The Demons came from somewhere else generations ago and brought writing, logic, city building, and politics to the Imkaira. And they hate the Demons for it. They feel the Demons Undid their "perfect" lives and destroyed their natural racial purity. So the Demons, actually Terran Interstellar Scouts, left them alone to work out their own destinies. But the Demons are still are remembered with hatred and fear.

Then, while on a quest to save his city, tribe, and father, Fenobar runs into a Demon, just before the Demon is to be sacrificed to the Gods. Since he is honorbonded to the Demons, Fenobar has to save this Demon. And soon, both Fenobar and his civilization are again being Undone by a single Demon that keeps asking Why? to all the old traditions and ways of doing things.

While this is a very humorous book, it is not a comedy. But the interaction between this Human who keeps asking Why? and our poor hero, who is a marvelous character with one of the biggest inferiority complexes in SF history, is truly funny. Fenobar is not just a Human in a funny mask, but an alien being with his own reasons for doing things. But it is amazing what havoc a little question or two can have on a civilization. I give this book an 8 and am eagerly awaiting Alton's next book. Even if it is a sequel to this one.





FROM JOHN PURCELL:

Dear Clay,

Please note the above COA and would you please publish it in your zine? Thank you.

One thing I am wondering: If I send you \$10, not only will I get BRUZZFUZZEL NEWS in the mail, but I will also be a member of your club? Gosh! I may have to think of this, since I doubt if my zine pubbing rate would equal your bimonthly schedule. Hold onto your pocketbooks; I am seriously considering the possibilities here.

Alright, J.R. Madden is pushing my buttons every single issue so far. Now he bitches about the fans who love to watch the Dr. Who and other PBS shows, but fail to come up with even the basic \$25 annual contribution to the local PBS stations that seem to always carry not only Dr Who, but also Monty Python, The Goodies, Good Neighbors, The Eastenders, and so on, which a lot of us so-called intellectuals watch all the time. But do we ever contribute the cold, hard cash needed to procure those shows for our viewing pleasure? Not often, sayeth the bard. I think Minneapolis fans are fairly responsible in this regard, yet my general impression is that fans are still on the low-income end of the economic spectrum, so that while we may enjoy these programs, we simply cannot afford to support them in any substantial way. Still, I feel that if a stfnal community of over 100 fans can have a mere 25% participation rate at the basic membership rate of \$25.00 per year, that is \$625.00 that otherwise would not have been raised. And how about a club contribution? Depending on the sf club's treasury, a substantial contribution could be made. I am not one for Dr. Who or even Monty Python anymore, but in my experience sf fans are the major viewing audience of these shows. And so far I have yet to hear of any major contribution by Mn-Stf, but I'm not very active in the club so I could have missed out on anything they might have done. Still, J.R.'s basic point remains: why don't the local fans support their local PBS stations? I think he raises a very good point. Personally, I don't think sending off a check for \$25.00 each year would hurt a fan's pocketbook, considering the vaster amounts he or she spends on books, cons and whatnots over the course of a year. Maybe we should start looking at the hypocrisy of ourselves instead of the righteousness of our beliefs.

In short, dig. Give for something you believe in. Make it happen. I think I'm getting cynical in my fannish old age. Yet somehow I feel that most fans just aren't the same anymore. I can't put my finger on it, but a change has happened here in the Eighties, and I don't think I like the change.

Take care, and keep sending the zine.

(John- My observations of fans indicate that these are people who will whine and rant and worry about spending \$1.95 for a SF paperback, while at the same time not give a second thought to spending \$10. for a triple helping of Whoppers at the local Burger King...what do you think they're REALLY fans of?-CF)

COLLECTED CORRESPONDENCES

FROM HARRY ANDRUSCHAK:

Dear Clay:

Thank you for sending BRUZZFUZZEL NEWS # 53 and #54. They were delayed since they had to be forwarded to my New! Improved! address. So please note my CCA and update your records.

Another reason I have had to delay in writing this acknowledgement is that my new job as an Electronics Technician with the United States Postal Service has resulted in my being sent to the Technical Training Center in Norman, Oklahoma. Here I am trained on the new computer-controlled automatic mail-sorting equipment. 2 weeks in January, 3 weeks in February, 2 weeks in April, 2 weeks in May, and now a long 9 week school starting 12 June.

As you may have guessed, this has played havoc with my fanac time.

Even worse is that my spirit-duplicating machine is broken, and now in the repair shop. I have no idea if or when it will be working again. Maybe I'll have to find a buy a replacement. In any case, most of my pubbing efforts are on hold. I enclose a short zine I did last April, one of the last items of ~~xxxx~~ mine to be printed.

So I have ~~xxxx~~ brought all the fanzines that I have accumulated with me to Norman, in the vain hope of locating them ~~xxx~~ all.

The main interest of #53 was Madden's report of the 1987 Worldcon. I notice he mentions little about the site selection fiasco, or why Holland was allowed to hold the 1990 worldcon when no USA voters were sent site selection ballots in time to vote. Curious omission.

I also note Madden's comments on conventions in #54. I am not sure how qualified I am to comment on it, since I have cut back on my convention going in sobriety. As a recovered alcoholic, I tend to distrust the the party scene at conventions. I have been to two cons a year in sobriety. One is the annual LOSCON, held the weekend after Thanksgiving day, and the place I can meet a lot of old and new friends in LASFS. The con suite is non-alcoholic.

The second con per year has varied. In 1984 it was the Worldcon, in 1985 the LEPRCON in Phoenix, in 1986 NORWESCON in Seattle, and in 1987 SHERLOCKON II here in Torrance. I will be making the 1988 Worldcon, but probably no other worldcons for quite some time.

Another factor is that I now work for the Postal Service, and that means working weekends. I get tuesday and wednesday off. If I want to attend a convention, I have to use vacation time. And I really rather not use vacation time for cons. I'd rather go white-water river rafting, and have.

Ah well, I suppose I am somewhat fatigued. A couple of thursdays ago I attended my first LASFS meeting in over a year at the clubhouse in North Hollywood, only to discover that everyone is complaining about the over-crowding, and wants to move to bigger premises. I am not sure if the finances can permit it.

And of course I have joined FAPA, The Fantasy Amateur Press Association, The Legendary Elephants' Graveyard of Fandom, where the Old fans go to Goflate and Die. This was made easier by the fact that FAPA no longer has a waiting list.

Nothing to do with any of the above, but have you heard the latest news about the Polzar sisters? You know, the ones who bring their teddy bears to the chessboard? Well, the oldest, Judith, has turned 11 years old and won her first International Master Norm at a tournament in New York. ~~W~~ may yet have a woman as the World Champion.

That is all for now, as I need to fix supper. Keep up the good work.

(Harry-Well good luck with that new job! J.R.'s comments on Worldcons have sparked quite a reaction from the massive crowds that gather around a BRUZZFUZZEL NEWSletter. He's so pleased -CF)

FROM HARRY ANDRUSCHAK:

Dear Clay:

Thanks for sending BRUZZFUZZEL NEWS #55. It must have arrived at my PO box some time in June. However, I have been spending much of my time in Norman, Oklahoma, attending the United States Postal Service Technical Training Center schools. I ~~y~~ care back to Norman on 10 July, and am stuck here until 19 August! After that I go home for a few days, then head off on vacation. I will wind up at HOLACON II, and hope to see a few of the fanzine fans there.

Clay, I don't want to sound bitchy, but this time the printing is just too small. That you did to Harry ~~W~~ Warner's letter is a crime. How do you expect me to read it? OK, I could whip out my Victorinox Swiss Army Knife, the "Swiss Champ" model that includes a magnifying glass. But I am not going to. Every now and then I hit my limits in fanzines that reduce print size, and this is one of those limits.

Of course, part of the problem may be burn-out. I have made it a habit to take all the fanzines I receive, stuff them in a small suitcase, and bring to Norman for locating. This way, at least I have something to do in Norman, which is otherwise a ~~xxxx~~ dull town to have to be in. So the last two days I have been blowing thru some really cruddy fanzines....dot matrix, faint print, and reduced type. A combination of all three is really too much.

Having got that off my ~~xxxx~~ chest, I do want to make one comment. I was barely able to read of the minutes where Janet complained about CONSPIRACY. Since I have some contacts with UK fandom, I can give her the ~~xx~~ straight scoop. Tell Janet that CONSPIRACY is bankrupt, in spite of selling its soul to the scientologists for money. Writing a letter will do no good. I wrote a ~~xxxx~~ registered letter and it was returned uncalled-for. Some UK fans are mumbeling about a special fund to raise money to send the program books to the non-attende but don't hold your breath awaiting it. And this on ~~xx~~ top of the site selection ballot fiasco.

(Harry-Janet finally got her program book! As for the printing...I'm working on a new format that should help this mess out. -CF)

FROM DAVID THAYER:

Dear Clay-

I brought out my microscope again to enjoy Steven Fox's art. I remember George Alec Effinger in his novel "The Nick of Time" commenting that authors rarely got feedback from their readers. It's nice to hear he's basking in attention at last. The abundance of clubzines noted by Harry Warner is a plus. They give novice writers and editors a place to start and develop.

Best regards,
David

Ron Hamblen

Upon my return from NolaCon II, I found a large pile of mail waiting to be sorted through. Partway down the stack was the latest issue of Thrust which I decided to thumb through quickly before working on more pressing things, like bills. Among his editorial remarks, Doug Fratz talked about the death of Ron Hamblen, an associate editor, on 28 May 1988 due to a heart attack. Ron Hamblen? Ron? Not that Ron! Surely not!? But, yes, it was that Ron, my friend in science fiction.

Ron had been a member of the BRSFL for a year or two. He did not come to meetings very frequently; there were usually other matters more demanding of his time. Though, one year, he did have a table at SwampCon displaying issues of Thrust and taking subscriptions. I had not thought much about not seeing him through the summer -- I figured he was just busy and would drop in again when he had some time.

In the last year or so, he had started to write science fiction in a big way. When he attended a club meeting, he would tell me he had submitted a manuscript. Next time I saw him, the manuscript had been purchased and he was working on an outline for a second book. Then, a third book was in the beginning stages. Then, I didn't see him for a long time. Then, I found out he was dead. Damn.

Other than that SwampCon, the only time I would ever see Ron was at the BRSFL meetings. He would sit quietly and listen to the ramblings of the general membership. When the meeting adjourned and the stampede to a nearby restaurant was underway, he would tell me what he had been up to: writing, submitting, being on the way to becoming a published science fiction writer. He shared those joys with me and I reveled in them. I was never going to do those things but he was doing them and that was terrific.

In the usual definitions, Ron and I were casual acquaintances. We knew very little about each other -- except we were science fiction fans. Somehow, that made it more than just "casual" to me. We shared a love of science fiction which made us friends even though we saw each other seldom. Because we were friends, I felt terrible finding out about his death that way, months after it had happened. A friend should have known sooner, shouldn't he? I feel like I let him down somehow in that regard.

On the other hand, how often do we think we will always have another opportunity to talk with a friend so we don't have to do it right now? I am awfully glad I took the time to speak to Ron after those meetings and let the restaurant stampede proceed without me. He took the time to share his beginning success with me and all I had to do was take the time to listen.

-- J. R. Madden

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BUSINESS NOTATIONS: MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS BY CLAY

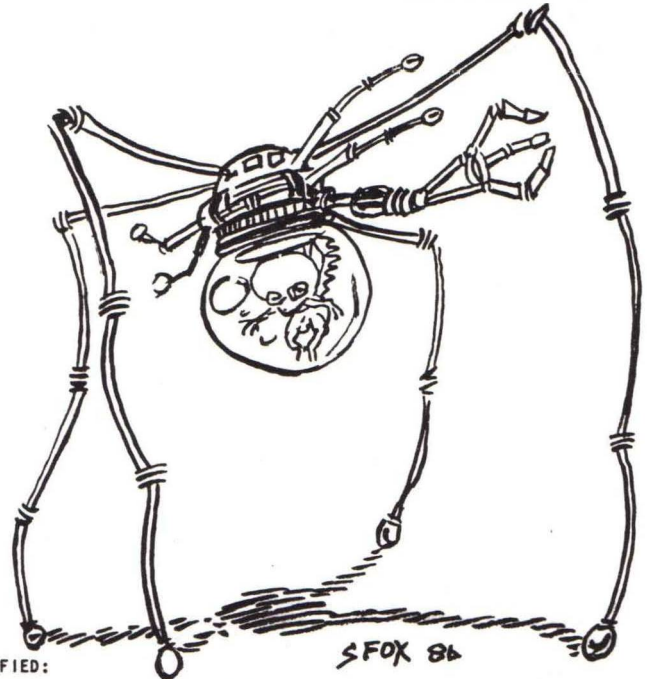
MEETINGS OF 9/88

Well, I was REAL busy...I mean REAL busy...so I couldn't make it to the meetings for this month. However, from the word-of-mouth around the fannish circles of Big B.R., I can deduce the following:

1. Just about everyone went to the Worldcon and found it to be small and unimpressive. We're waiting for Guidry and company to reappear in about ten years...it should be safe by then.
2. J.R. showed his slide show of the event. I can bet you the lights were out for this major happening!
3. Both Diane and J.R. showed up at the same meeting (Meaning the same place at the same time!) and there was no massive explosion within the library walls! Scientists are still trying to figure out why...(matter-antimatter and all of that!)
4. George went to the LSU club's meeting for a discussion of 'When you-know-what Fails' and will show up in October at the Bruzzfuzzel meeting...And he didn't get the Hugo...another worthless event at Nolacon come true!
5. J.R. finally got that massive mound of zines that Fourrier had been lugging back and forth to all those meetings...clouds parted.
6. There was a scheduled trip for the club on a swamp tour boat, but that got cancelled when the weather took a turn for the chilly.
7. SWAMPCON's guests are solidified and further information should be available soon.
8. Fourrier will show up at the last meeting in October...REALLY!

MEETING OF 10/27/88

J. R. burst into the room with a whole box of "World's Finest Chocolate" and proceeded to sell various bars to help finance his future retirement plans. He then passed out a "silent rant" sheet with various ideas and partial ideas abounding on the club's financial status and what might be done to solve such mundane problems. Clay then brought up J.R.'s last written rant which concerned the program needs of club meetings. Major (though not programmed) discussion ensued. Yes, programming will be done! Clay then mentioned the LPB DR WHO Fund Drive for December and took names for volunteering. (Dec. 3 and 10, 9:30 pm to midnight, "Logopolis" and "The Making of Dr. Who.") George Effinger arrived and started hot and heavy on his recent works (reality in fantasy?). He revealed that he has signed to write books 3 and 4 in the "Gravity" series. George then read a couple of chapters from his latest work. Cameras flashed, but he refused blindness as the words poured on. Scotty talked about the new "CyberPunk" game, and how he had redone some of the elements to his liking. (Pro Gaming Designing License in hand!) Everyone rushed to Rax where stuffs were consumed and snappy patter was displayed.



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