

THE ADVENTURE OF THE
CURIOUS

DON-O-SAUR

NUMBER 37 OF A SERIES



Jeff Foxall



And by golly, that's exactly what it is. To be specific, it is Don-o-Saur 37, Vol. IV No. 1, the October 1974 issue of a science fiction fanzine published monthly by Don Thompson, of 7498 Canosa Ct., Westminster, CO, 80030. It is available in exchange for almost anything, but for those who insist on paying, it is 25¢ per issue, or \$2.50 for a 12-issue subscription. Any questions?

To be even more specific than the truncated colophon, this is the Third Anniversary issue of D-o-S. I had intended to make it a really special issue, running between 40 and 60 pages, with a half dozen different colors paper and a three-color front cover and lavish artwork by Kirk, Rotsler, Austin, Birkhead, Barton, Canfield, etc., etc.

In addition I was going to have a lot of words in the zine, and since I have never had much desire to let this become a genzine, I was not planning to rely on the words of other people -- oh, a letters section of maybe ten pages, but no articles or fiction by "outside" authors. Most of the writing was to be mine.

And how, you may well ask, did I expect to find the time or the energy to fill a giant sized special anniversary issue with words of my own composition?

I intended to cheat a little, is how.

You see, for one thing, I've had an extra week to work with. My deadline for the October issue was the fourth Saturday of the month (to coincide with MileHiCon) instead of the usual third Saturday of the month) -- five full weeks since publication of Don-o-Saur 36.

As it turns out, that advantage has totally evaporated. I'm going into that fifth week now and this is all the further I've gotten.

But I had anticipated that sort of thing, and if cheating just a little didn't prove effective, I was fully prepared to cheat a lot.

A thought had occurred to me: that even though D-o-S is three years old, only a very small handful of people have read anything that I wrote during the first two of those years (I know of exactly three people outside D'APA -- and no more than three or four in D'APA -- who might possess complete sets of Don-o-Saur and Don-o-Saur Coprolites). Some of the stuff I wrote during those first two years isn't too bad. Some of it is as good as some of the stuff I've written in the past year, since I've gone public.

So what I had in mind was that I might include a largish reprint section -- "The Best of Don-o-Saur," perhaps. It would be new to most readers.

And there was another thought. Just after D-o-S 36 was wrapped up, I took about a week of writing time -- a week that could have been devoted to Issue 37 -- working on a letter to my sister, Polly Ryan, with whom we stayed for a couple of days following DisCon. I had left Polly a stack of back-issue Don-o-Saurs, which she later read -- and locced. (Her name was in the AHFs, as she requested). Her loc went considerably beyond the range of the usual fannish communication, in-

dulging in a certain amount of insightful analyses and mild recriminations -- a privilege indisputably hers by virtue of her relationship to me. Her letter was two pages long. My reply ran to six pages. And, as I indicated, I really worked on that letter.

I hate to have work like that go to waste. What good is a six-page letter if only one person in the whole world reads it? And so I seriously considered (and am still seriously considering) including both letters -- or generous excerpts from them, anyway -- in this issue. Most of Polly's observations apply to me specifically, but some apply to fandom in general. For example, she accuses us of being impractical and unrealistic. My response to that charge could be of some more-than-merely-personal interest.

1 a.m. Monday
Oct. 21, 1974

The problem with this issue is not really one of finding enough words to fill it with, even though I now have only a few days left before it has to be finished (for MileHiCon). I could easily enough find reprintable material from earlier issues. (Matter of fact, I believe I WILL reprint issue No. 1 almost in its entirety, if only for the benefit of readers who have asked how I happened to come up with the name Don-o-Saur Coprolites, and whom I have not had the courtesy to answer). Or I could run Polly's letter and my reply -- that would take up eight pages right there. Or I could run some fiction. (No, I haven't written anything recently [for more than a year, in fact], but I haven't sold any of the stories that I started sending around way back in December, and some of them (one in particular) would not be out of place in a fanzine. Sooner or later than I probably will print "A Proud and Lonely Thing" in D-o-S. The workshopers seem to have been correct in their assessment of the story -- that it is so fannish that its chances of being printed anywhere except in a fanzine are very slim. Watch for it). Or if nothing else, I really could fill an entire issue with letters, not even including Polly's.

But the problem, as I say (and I'm taking a long time to say it), is not in finding the material, or even in finding the time to get the words typed onto the offset masters (that's what the hours between 12:30 and 2:30 are for. The problem is at the other end -- getting the pages processed and run off (and remember that all the pages with artwork, except for the cover, have to go both through the mimeo and the press. Even with everything functioning perfectly, it's a time-consuming process. And I've decided it is one of the Basic Laws that duplicating machines, of whatever kind, seldom function perfectly and never for very long at a time. The infinite variety of little mechanical problems adds to the amount of time consumed -- as well as to the excitement of publishing.

Time is my nemesis, my relentless adversary. Everything that I want to do is severely hampered by the inflexible demands of time.

What I would really like to do is quit both my salaried jobs and devote all my time to Don-o-Saur, and to Coprolites, and to DASFax and D'Apa (and I've been invited to join both TAPS and RAPS, and with just a little more time I could probably work both of them into my schedule).

What Carolyn has been seriously suggesting I do is to cut way back on my fanac -- to make Don-o-Saur a bimonthly or quarterly publication and to get someone else elected editor of DASFax, just as I got Gordon Garb elected OE of D'Apa) so I would have more time for teaching and for some of the odd jobs around the house that have been piling up.

I don't know what I'm going to do. It certainly wouldn't make much sense to quit either of my jobs right now (if only for the reason that if I did so I would not be able to afford to continue publishing). I may have to drop one or more of the jobs anyway soon enough, when [if] the Depression develops as it could.

You know, in a way I'm really looking forward to that Depression! I've been predicting the damn thing for something like 25 years now, and it will! certainly be a great load off my mind to finally be able to say, "I told you so," -- even though some of the people I first told so are long since dead or forgotten.

But I don't really want to discuss the Next Depression right now or right here [just remember, though, when it comes, that I told you so!]. My immediate concern has to do with the future of Don-o-Saur, and the question of how long I can continue to fit it into my schedule on a monthly basis. I really am reaching the point of total saturation in my work load. Each month, as the publication deadline approaches, I push myself to the very edge of absolute physical exhaustion. Thus far (I think) I have demonstrated remarkable resiliency for a decrepit old wreck of my age and general physical debilitation. I've been able to snap back from DASFA weekend --(what happens on DASFA weekend is that I always take that Saturday off from my job at the News, and I get up early on Saturday morning after having worked two days the day before -- not quite what I mean, but close: I meet my classes at school and then put in an eight-hour shift on the paper, from 3 p.m. to midnight -- and I spend all day Saturday on my feet, scrambling to get Don-o-Saur finished and run off and enough copies collated to take to the meeting, and to get Coprolites written and reproed . . . oh, yes, and to do the Roster for D'Apa, but thank goodness I don't have to do that any more!; and always on Saturday there are D'Apa members dropping in to have me run off their zines on my mimeo, which I have encouraged them to make use of, though I tried to indicate a strong preference for them getting the stuff to me earlier and not waiting until Saturday afternoon, but you know how that goes; and where the hell was I? Here I am, bogged down again in the middle of parentheses, enmeshed in a seemingly endless sentence; but stay with me; the situation is not desperate; I think I see the way out:-- and so I work right up until a few minutes before the DASFA meeting, sometimes even forgetting to eat but nearly always managing to take a hot shower because I need some form of relaxation before the start of the meeting, at which there is also work to be done, sometimes helping with the program or if nothing else helping with the collation of D'Apa; and then after the meeting there is the Dead Dog party, which I never manage to leave before about 3 a.m. because for some strange reason I never feel tired during the party; on Sunday I usually try to get up fairly early [9:30 or 10 a.m.] because I've got papers to grade for my Monday classes before I go to work at the News again at 3 p.m. Sunday. . . and then is when I start feeling tired).

What I started to say way back up there before I got into the parenthetical morass, is that so far I have been able to snap back from DASFA weekend. Period. I didn't say how long it takes. Each month I seem to get tired and to take a little longer to recover. Last month, during that Sunday shift at the News, I felt rotten, and almost too weak to lift a pencil and I made a number of mistakes that would have been bad if they'd gotten in the paper, but fortunately the slot person (yes, a female) was alert.

Obviously though something is going to have to give. That's the point that I keep circling circling around, seemingly afraid to close in on. I might be building up my courage or fortitude or whatever to make an announcement of some kind...

But wait! Before I tell you about the future of D-o-S (and while I'm still deciding) wouldn't you like to know a little more about its past?

Of course you would.

I'm pretty sure that I have mentioned previously that Don-o-Saur Coprolites came into existence in October 1971 coincidentally with the birth of D'Apa, and I have given full credit to Paul Angel as founder and first OE of D'Apa.

But I have never told the full, true story of how D'Apa was born, and it's

time I did. At the same time I can finally give full credit where credit is due for a lot of other things -- such as for doing a great deal to keep DASFA in existence during its first year or two with her enthusiasm for it and for SF in general, and with her gift for making new people feel at home; to say nothing of her enormous personal influence on my own development as a fan -- except that I do intend to say something about it.

I am referring of course (had you guessed?) to the Elder Ghoddess -- to Doris M. Beetem, mother and mentor of two other widely known Denver actifans, Doris D. and Rose Beetem.

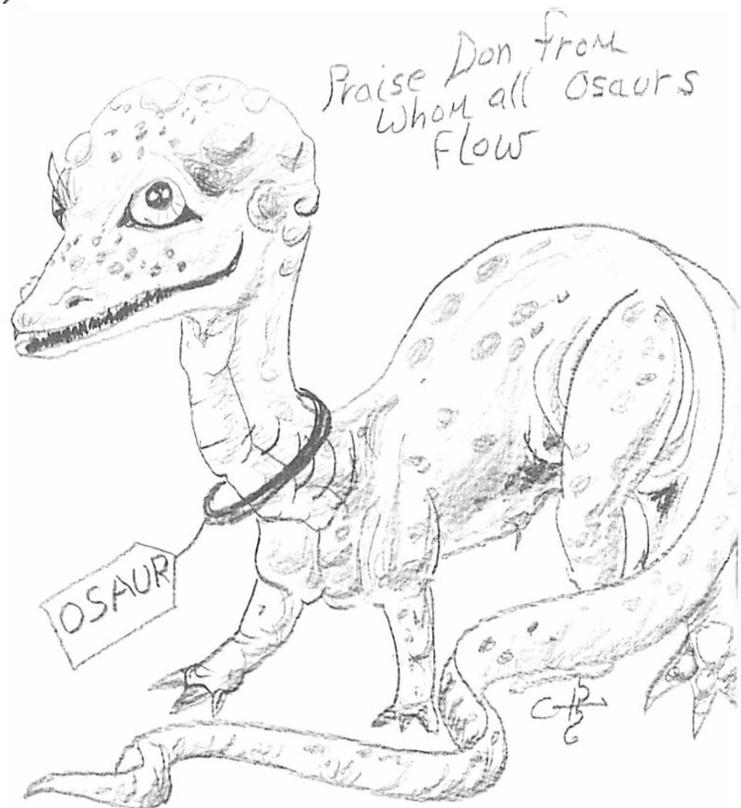
All three Beetems were very early DASFA members, the Ghoddess at least (and maybe the girls too; I'd have to look it up and I don't have time) being in from the very start. Ghoddess was Director of the group during its second year, when Caz (the founder) started his gradual withdrawal. Doris has always preferred to keep a very low public profile in the offices that she has held because while she is magnificent in one-to-one interpersonal relationships and in very small groups, when it comes to addressing a crowd of more than ten, she lacks confidence; yet her impact on Denver area fandom has been profound and continuous.

Ghoddess is the Official Nagger, both of Slan-apa (that's where she picked up the EG appellation) and in DASFA. Almost from the start she began pestering me to broaden my fannish horizons. She kept loaning me fanzines and giving me N3F mailings and talking about cons. It was her insistence, as much as anything, that finally got me to my first con, back in 1971 (Westercon 24).

At about that same time, she was working on Paul Angel. Paul wanted to join Slan-apa, but it was full at the time. Ghoddess told him that the obvious solution was to begin a new apa of his own. No one can withstand one of the Ghoddess' nagging campaigns for very long, and Paul was no exception. In October 1971, the first D'Apa appeared, with a roster of ten members but with initial contribs from only three -- Paul, Dave Dalman, an almost totally non-literate youth (his means of repro was carbon paper), and myself. (My repro was ditto; Paul's was mimeo).

Today D'Apa's membership is pushing 30, but Paul Angel and I are the only ones of the original ten who are still in. Rose Beetem and Carol Angel got in on the second distribution, and they are still quite active, though they have combined their zines and their joint effort undergoes a change of title every month.

The title of my zine was Don-o-Saur Coprolites, and if you want to know why, turn the page: I'm reprinting my whole first issue.



DON-o-SAUR COPROLITES #1 A submission to D'apa #1 (October 1971)

I will begin logically, by explaining the title:

Coprolites (pronounced coprolits) are fossilized fecal matter (or turds, for the sake of clarity). Don-o-Saur is a sort of pun on dinosaur, cleverly making use of my first name (--but surely even you got that); and the deliberately obscure reference is to a rather pointless anecdote told by Avram Davidson in his banquet speech at Westercon XXIV on the Fourth of July, 1971.

The title seemed to fit perfectly my cumbersome, archaic, scholarly, dry, pedantic, and yet withal witty but more often downright shitty personality and style of writing.

Any questions so far?

Oh, the anecdote? Well, I told you it was pointless, but if you insist... However, I must ask that you pay close attention and don't interrupt, because the story is a bit involved and I don't intend to go over it more than just this once.

Damon Knight it seems had done Avram Davidson some enormous favor. Overcome by gratitude, Davidson sought a means of repaying it, so he asked around among Knight's friends to find out what, above all other things, Damon Knight really wanted. And it turned out that Damon Knight had often expressed a strong desire to possess a dinosaur coprolite for his very own.

-- It occurs to me now that the story did have a sort of a point after all: it was to illustrate that Avram Davidson, supposedly a science fiction writer, actually knows next to nothing about science; this experience was his closest contact with the field. Keep this in mind; it may help you to understand what follows --

Anyway, having determined Knight's foremost desire, Davidson resolutely set about attempting to fulfill it.

He wrote a letter to the Curator for Paleontology at the Museum of Natural History in New York, having, as he said, some notion that they must have packing crates full of the things lying around.

And then he waited. And just as he had almost forgotten about the whole thing he received a letter on museum stationery from a certain Dr. Pfennybessing, who apologized for the delay in replying, but pointed out that Davidson's letter should rightfully have been addressed to the Curator for Vertebrate Paleontology. The letter went on to explain disdainfully that dinosaur coprolites are much more rare and valuable than Davidson seemed to realize; and Dr. Pfennybessing emphasized the difficulty of determining whether or not any particular found object was a true coprolite. Most so-called coprolites, he declared, are mere wind-polished gizzard stones. He said it was impossible to say for certain that an object was a coprolite unless it was actually found in the proper place within the skeletal cavity.

What all this amounted to was that the museum had no dinosaur coprolites available for distribution.

Mastering his bitter disappointment as best he could, Davidson finally went to Damon Knight and told him the whole story, confessing in the end his failure to find a dinosaur coprolite for him.

After thanking Avram Davidson for his kind intentions, Knight said that as a matter of fact it wasn't actually true that he absolutely had to have a dinosaur coprolite.

"It isn't?" gasped Davidson.

"Oh no. Any kind of coprolite will do."

"Damon," said Davidson, "what in the hell do you want any kind of a coprolite for?"

"Why, I want to use it for a paper weight."

* * * *

To be perfectly frank, the laughter was just a bit hesitant when Davidson told the story, so don't feel guilty if you didn't exactly double over with helpless hilarity.

On the other hand, don't get mad at me. After all, I told you it was a pointless story. Twice, I told you.

And anyway, in this context, the story isn't all that pointless.

Which is not to say that it is necessarily representative of the sort of stuff you'll be getting from me in D'Apa. Most of what I write probably won't be nearly so amusing.

But I had to tell the story to give you at least a fighting chance of understanding the title I had selected.

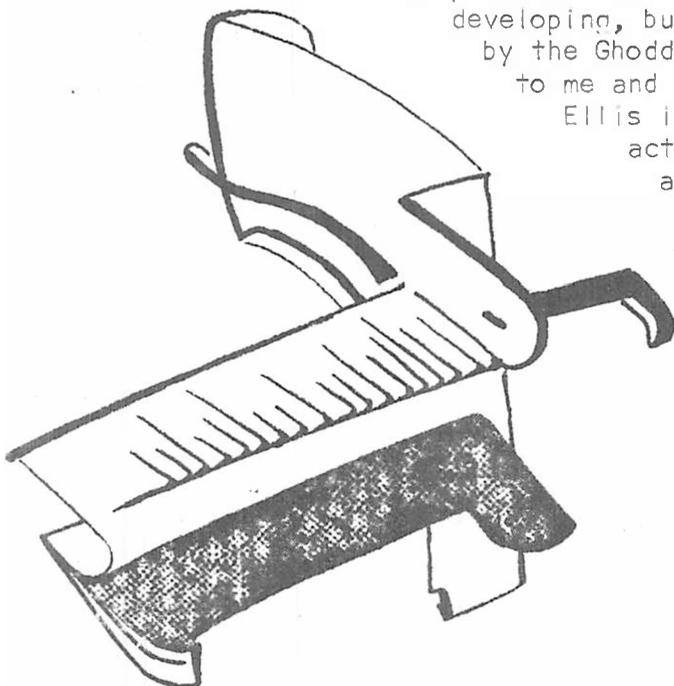
And, if you interpret it correctly, it does give a hint of what's to come: Hard, glazed droppings from an ancient animal.

end

And from that rather forced and stilted beginning, Don-o-Saur has grown into. . . well, whatever it is. Believe it or not, that piece you've just read-- or skipped, as the case may be--was actually composed. That is, I wrote a first draft, edited that thoroughly, retyped it on another sheet of paper, making additional minor changes, and only then, when I was thoroughly satisfied with it, did I commit the thing to ditto master. That's kind of hard for me to believe now because it has been a long time since I've followed that practice in my writing. (Except for fiction, and that hardly counts because I just haven't done much fiction writing lately.)

Anyway, DC grew, largely as a result of nagging from the Elder Ghoddess. At some point, she started nagging me to produce a genzine. I began to think about the possibilities. I talked with Fred Goldstein about them, and at one time Fred and I has almost decided to co-edit such a publication. I had to drop out of that project, largely because of the way DC was developing, but by then Fred had been thoroughly infected by the Ghoddess' enthusiasm, which she had transmitted to me and which I had passed on; and so Fred talked Al Ellis into teaming up with him, and together they actually did produce DENFEN DROPPINGS #1 about a year ago. There hasn't been -- and won't be -- a #2 because Fred decided to go public with his apazine (Goldstein's Vanity Press, or GVP) just as I had with mine, and Al turned his full attention to developing himself as a fiction writer.

(One of the parenthetically interesting things about DD is that it contains a story by Al Ellis called "Fire in the Sky," about which Al commented in his editorial: "I know now it could never have sold professionally." Check the latest issue of VERTEX --Dec. 1974. In the Pot Pourri section you will find a very short story by Albert C. Ellis called "Fire in the Sky." Yep. Same Ellis; same story).



cm

The Ghoddess' latest nagging campaign, incidentally, is aimed at getting all the members of D'Apa into some other apa as well. She admits that her motives in this drive are purely selfish (and in other such drives too, I guess). She loves to read fan writing, but she doesn't care much for the work involved in belonging to a lot of apas herself, or of writing a lot of locs, and the idea of publishing a general circulation zine of her own is utterly repugnant. So she has calculated that if she gets her loyal subjects in DASFA involved in other apas, she will be able to borrow their mailings and indulge her abnormal tastes to the fullest without any of the unpleasant side effects. She would probably admit that there isn't much justice in a situation like that, but she could probably argue that Ghods and Ghoddesses are not bound by such petty human considerations as justice and injustice.

In giving credit where credit is due and in the process of sketching in some of the history of Don-o-Saur, there are two other names I want to mention.

One of them (this may surprise you a bit, and I'm sure it will surprise him even more) is that of Richard E. Geis.

Perhaps the quickest and simplest way to explain is with an excerpt from DC II, August 1972:

...some interesting stuff in today's mail. Most welcome, most formidable, most engrossing and most unexpected was RICHARD E. GEIS 2, a 44-page mimeographed highly personal fanzine which I'd noticed reviewed in LOCUS just a day or two ago. The LOCUS review was brief: "A plunge into the mind of Dick Geis is both fascinating and repelling, but worth trying at least once." Right!

I'm sure the reason I got a copy is that I was once a subscriber to SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW. I've always felt a little guilty about that, because I subscribed just before SFR died of too many subscribers; it was probably mine that killed it. I received three copies of SFR just as it was at its peak (a Hugo winner); and then, in the fulness of time, I received a refund for issues not received. But my name obviously remained in Dick Geis' files, and so now comes REG 2 with a sale price of \$1 per copy and issued whenever he has 44 pages of stuff ready to be reproed. I can hardly wait to get COPROLITES out of the way so I can settle down to a thorough examination of REG. My immediate reaction contains a large element of simple envy. Geis is doing what I've sometimes thought I'd like to do if I were only willing to take the time necessary to do the writing. A cursory inspection also reveals that Geis covers a wider range of topics than I do (or have in COPROLITES so far). He says things about sex, for instance, that do not repel me and that I do not disagree with, but which I would suffer agonies trying to write about with equal honesty.

I'll read REG 2 from cover to cover, and I'll write a long loc to Geis; I may even send him some back issues of COPROLITES and try to get hold of a copy of REG 1 from him. I may contact some of the other fans whose zines are reviewed in REG, sending them copies of COPROLITES in exchange for their works. And I may, damn it all, little by little, by slow, painful degrees, work myself up to putting out a personalzine of my own, aimed at a somewhat wider audience than COPROLITES is.

I did write the long loc to Geis. I did send him the back file of COPROLITES. In the letter I told Dick that I enjoyed REG but that I was afraid he would be responsible for the birth of a lot of bad fanzines trying to imitate his. The essence of Dick's reply was that I ought to try to broaden the readership of DC.

Nothing much happened for another year. I kept on producing DC each month for D'Apa, never missing an issue, seldom falling below four pages, occasionally

hitting six, but doing virtually nothing to broaden my readership or to make any kind of meaningful contact with random beyond the Denver area.

And then I bought a mimeograph, and that one act changed my entire life. Things became possible that until then had been scarcely conceivable.

I wrote another letter to Dick Geis at about this same time, expressing my mild disappointment that he had abandoned the intensely personal style of REG in favor of the slick professionalism of THE ALIEN CRITIC. I reminded him of my prediction that there would be imitators and I conceded that so far I hadn't seen any. "I hate unfulfilled predictions," I told him, "especially if they're mine," and I concluded that if he wasn't going to do the sort of thing he'd set out to do, and if nobody else was -- then I might have to do it myself.

Please don't misunderstand: I am not trying to make any comparisons between DOS and TAC or between my writing and Geis'. And no one to my knowledge has accused me of imitating Geis. But still I do want to make public acknowledgement of the fact that Dick Geis provided part of the impetus that got Don-o-Saur to wherever and whatever it is today.

The other name that I wanted to mention is my own.

Hell, why not? What's wrong with acknowledging that I owe a debt of gratitude to myself? You don't think that Don-o-Saur would have achieved even the modest degree of popularity it has if I hadn't done a lot of hard work on it, do you?

But that's not the point I want to make. My main idea here is that in order for you to understand the history and development of Don-o-Saur, I will have to provide you with some more information about myself.

The key fact is that I seem to be a born journal-ist. I was a journal-ist long before I was a journalist. There ought to be two separate words to make the distinction that I'm after here. In my own mind there are. I never use the word "journalist" when referring to my newspaper career, and actually I don't know of any working newspapermen who do use the term. We're all just newsmen, or reporters or editors or copy readers or announcers or whatever. It's only the PR people and the J-school academicians who think of themselves as journalists. Yet the term "journalist" does apply to me, but in its older sense of one who keeps a journal.

I've been keeping journals, off and on, for about 35 years -- since I was 12 years old. I got a diary for Christmas that year and I kept it up faithfully -- for three or four weeks. Maybe a little more. When I was 16 I got another diary



for Christmas, and this time I stayed with it for a matter of months because by then I had definitely decided I was going to be a writer when I grew up -- or preferably even before. When I was 18, I took a long driving trip with my parents and Polly -- to Virginia and back. I kept a very detailed, day-by-day, sometimes hour-by-hour account of that trip, and if I sometimes missed a day, I was careful to write twice as much the next day to make up for it. I have that journal; I know I still have it somewhere. After I was married, while we were living in Mauston, Wis., I started typing up that travel journal, intending to send Polly a copy of it. I'd finished about half of it when I sat down at the typewriter one day (actually it was late one night) and batted out a paragraph about blood flowing from a water faucet. I was so intrigued with the idea that I kept playing with it until it grew into a 17,500 word story, which I called "The Telenizer" and forthwith sent to Mr. H.L. Gold and Galaxy magazine. It was accepted.

For quite a number of years thereafter I was trying to learn the craft of fiction so I could sell more stories, and in all the excitement I never did get back to typing up the travelogue.

When we were living in Dubuque my fiction writing hit a dead end. I was devoid of ideas, couldn't get started on anything. Just to maintain the discipline of writing every day, I started a journal. It lasted for several months and I still have it somewhere in my files.

After we moved to Denver I once tried a different kind of journal -- this one concerned only with my reading. For one entire year I kept a log of all the books that I read. Not just a log of the title and author but a brief summary and commentary on each one. That too is still in existence.

The summer after I started teaching full time, I found myself somewhat unexpectedly unemployed. To fill some of the empty hours I started writing -- no, not fiction; a long letter to a friend in California. The letter grew and grew. It became a journal. Toward the end of the summer I sent Herman Scheiding a manuscript of something like 65 pages (I had been aiming at 100). And I wish I had kept a carbon copy of it. It contained a few passages of some fairly good writing, as I recall.

Not too long after that I started another journal because suddenly, with that letter to Herman, writing had become easy for me. Always before it had involved elements of agony, but now the words flowed (sometimes) without obstruction from my brain through my fingertips and onto the paper. That isn't quite accurate. At times it seemed that that process was almost reversed: the words seemed to originate in my fingers and I was not conscious of them in my brain until I saw them on paper. Quite often I still have that sensation. There's a feeling of exhilaration that goes with it and that keeps pulling me back to the typewriter.

Gradually the journal dwindled as Don-o-Saur Coprolites grew. Or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that gradually they merged, so that now, and for some time past, Don-o-Saur is the journal.

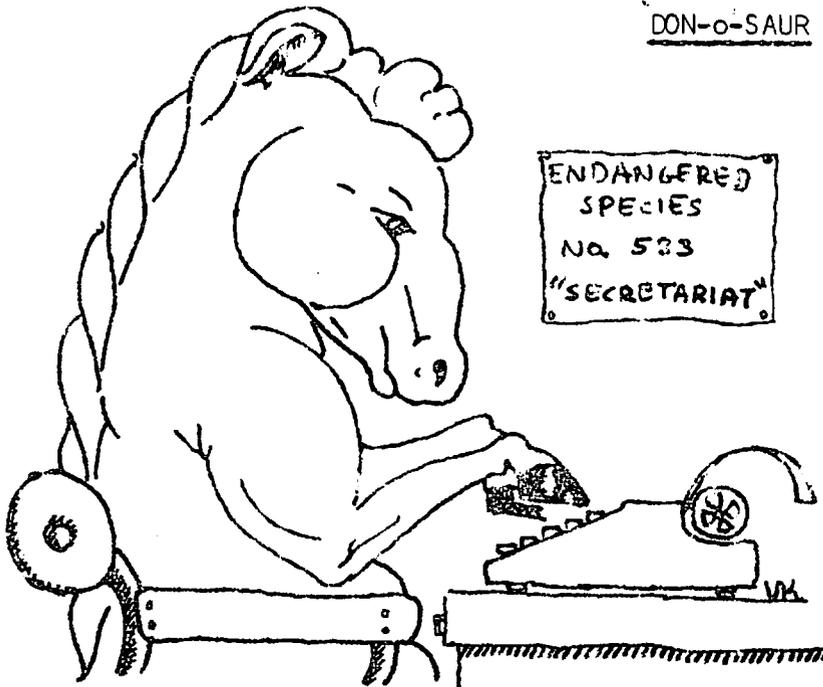
And the point of all this is that I seemingly have found my literary niche -- publishing a journal in the form of a fanzine seems to be the fulfillment of my destiny. Oh, I may from time to time, sporadically, keep trying to write fiction. But I don't know. When there's so much satisfaction in this kind of writing, why would I want to do any other kind? (Well...okay...money. Maybe).

The announcement about the future of Don-o-Saur that I thought I might be leading up to?

Forget it. I have just talked myself out of it.

Don-o-Saur will continue as a monthly until further notice.

LOCCER ROOM



Lesleigh Luttrell We are
525 W. Main St. very flat-
Madison, WI tered to
53703 be on your
list of people you
"wanted very much to meet,"
but we would rather have been
among the people you did meet.
Especially since we were among
the people you almost met.
Hank thinks he remembers see-
ing you, but I guess neither
of us noticed you and had
time to remember who you were
when you were around our table

(things got a bit hectic at the hucksters table occasionally, but not all the time).
Anyway, we'll be looking for you at KC (I don't think we'll make it to Aussiecon).
I enjoy your fanzine a lot. Denver in '81 sounds good to us (we've been hoping a
non-California bid would appear sometime.

Don D'Amassa
19 Angell Drive
E. Prov., RI 02914

DOS 36 just reinforced my opinion that conventions are getting too big. Although I did meet most of the people on my list, I obviously never found you. Mike Blake kept saying: "He just left" or "I've seen him several times," but never while I was there.

I did get to Jodie Offutt's panel, and actually met several people there for the first time. But in the confusion, I never had a chance to meet Sheryl Birkhead, who was on the panel, or Jodie Offutt. And now I read in your lettercolumn that Brett Cox was there, and I never saw him either. That particular get-together struck me as a good idea, though, and I hope it will be repeated at future conventions. Moshe Feder mentioned somewhere along the way that he was thinking about fannish equivalents of the Hugos and that that might lead to a convention of fanzine people only someday.

p.s. MYTHOLOGIES #1 should be in the mail within the week. A month late isn't too bad.

There was quite a bit more to Don's letter and in fact I could have quoted from an earlier letter that had arrived just barely too late even to be included in the WAHF of DOS36; but I skipped ahead to the postscript about MYTHOLOGIES because the first issue of Don's brand new zine arrived just today, and I want to say a few words about it. If I don't write about it here I'll have to loc it, and it seems a more economical use of my time to do it this way. I get a lot of fanzines nowadays and I enjoy all of them to a greater or lesser extent, but few of them create in me an immediate compulsion to respond. Generally, when I do find myself in the grip of such an impulse, I just try to relax. I take a nap or read a chapter or two of a book, and nearly always the fatal urge diminishes, recedes, releasing me from its clutches. But I had an extra reason for wanting to write to Don anyway if the occasion to work it in here hadn't arisen so conveniently.

Several months ago Don wrote to me, saying he was planning to start his own zine, and he even indicated that his enjoyment of Don-o-Saur had contributed to the decision. So of course I had been looking forward to MYTHOLOGIES. I was not disappointed.

MYTHOLOGIES I is 14 pages, not counting front cover; it's dittoed on a sort of tan paper (buff?). The colophon identifies it as a personally oriented fanzine, and it's easy to see why Don makes the careful distinction. It contains a poem ("Birchers") by Lee Carson (it's a frontal attack on the John Birch Society using bludgeon and bulldozer; a deft, delicate pin prick is so much more effective for this sort of thing); a poem by George Fergus ("Meteorologist's Soliloquy") which is an unabashed parody of Hamlet's "To be or not to be" soliloquy; it's not bad. Then there are two items by Paul DiFilippo: a vignette scenario of "Bob Hope Entertaining the Troops During WW III," which would be hilarious if it weren't so horrifying; and a Ferdinand Feghoot parody (or two of them, actually), "Bypassing Time and Space With Isabella Figholler," by "Beowulf Thornville." If you like FF, you'll like IF.

All that is the salad.

The meat dish in this repast is served up by Don himself with two narratives. One is called "Myth," and the other is "Fable." Fable is an entertaining and at the same time heart breaking account of 18 months spent in the land of eternal flat tires -- Lawton, Okla. Myth is one of the most penetrating essays on prejudice that I have ever read -- and one of the best written. I intend to use it in my freshman composition class as an example of how to write about the sort of abstractions that freshman composition students do insist on trying to write about. With the careful and enormously skillful use of concrete examples, Don brings the whole screaming issue of prejudice to life and leads the willing reader to a face-to-face confrontation with two crucial questions: what does one who hates prejudice do when he sees clear manifestations of it in his own loved ones? and, is prejudice, perhaps a fatal flaw in the makeup of the human animal? Don's answers are tentative, not dogmatic.

I can't speak too highly of MYTHOLOGIES. I was glad to get it and even more pleased after I'd read it. I had known previously from Don's letters and from reading his articles in other zines that he is highly intelligent, with a probing, analytical and incisive mind. MYTHOLOGIES shows other sides. I know now that Don D'Amassa is also a deeply feeling, deeply concerned human being (no insult intended) with a stimulating and refreshing sense of humor -- and that he writes as well as anyone in fandom. And a damn sight better than most.

Jodie Offutt
Funny Farm
Haldeman, KY
48329

...You know why I think there are sometimes why-did-I-say-that-dumb-thing afterthoughts after meeting people? It is akin to the familiar-strangers business that's been discussed in Frank Balazs' zine. You're seeing-meeting someone for the first time who you are already on pretty familiar paper-terms with. There's a transition to be made and sometimes it's a little awkward. That's what Ken Gammage was talking about in his letter.

Often it isn't -- as it obviously wasn't with you and Mike and Sheryl. Add to that the just plain excitement of meeting people and the hyper atmosphere of a con. I think we are all beautiful and all my feelings about the con are good and friendly. (If I sound a little on the naive-optimistic side, so what? It's not a bad way to approach people).

Jackie Franke shares the credit on the fanzine people get-together. She not only encouraged me to make the move toward arranging it, but also made the signs that were posted. My sole purpose was to meet people whose names I knew through fanzines. It worked! I met several who I probably otherwise wouldn't have. And it pleases me that others made some contacts, too.

[Here is from an earlier letter by Jodie, written after DisCon but before she received DOS 36].

...I have to comment on Wayne Martin's suggestion about horse & buggy. When I think of all the driving I do in the course of having four kids (two in high school and two in elementary) who are fairly active in school (band, football statistician, 4-H, newspaper staff), and that we live ten miles from town . . . (I haven't mentioned grocery shopping, dentists, library, movies) . . . Lord God! I'd hate to do it all with a horse and buggy.

Besides, if we all traded our cars for horses we'd be up to our knees in horse-shit! Talk about pollution! No thanks.

Bill Bowers
PO Box 148
Wadsworth, OH
44281

...Don't let 'em give you a hard time about using electrostencil for art with the multilith. It makes sense in that the electro-stencils are considerably cheaper than having A-M or somebody make a plate for you.

I sincerely doubt that you can do anything repro-wise with fanzines that hasn't been done before, somewhere along the line. But half the fun (he said, remembering a lot of those 'fun' things) is trying different processes, and doing the best with what you can get your hands on.

I'm probably one of the few fans left whose first fanzine was actually hectoed (and I've spent the last 12 years on a carefully plotted crusade to destroy all existing copies of that!), and I'm here to tell you that anything is better than that!

But then look at what Mae Strelkov does with hecto and wrapping paper. Paintings, yet. Surely there is no barrier to a fan bent on publishing a fanzine...

Who is this Glicksohn who mentions me? You say he was at Discon? Should I know him? Is he Somebody? *sigh* I guess that's the price of fame, having these nobodys go to any length to link your name with theirs.

Now I know how Harlan feels.

You are right. Sheryl is fantastic. And someday, someone is going to finally convince her of that.

[I suspect that Bill may get some strongly disputatious comment on his remark about being one of the few fans left whose first fanzine was hectographed. I know of a few right here in Denver and Boulder. Maybe that claim will get Chuck Hansen riled up enough to give me a loc.

[As to Mike Glicksohn . . . well, yes. Actually he is just somebody I made up -- as the following letter establishes pretty conclusively].

Mike Glicksohn
141 High Park Ave.
Toronto, Ontario
M6P 2S3

I enjoyed DoS 36 immensely and found it extremely accurate in capturing the essence of the con. You're so right about the frustration one comes away with because of the sheer size of the thing. And the silly part is that I know my time was pretty well filled for the whole con, so it wasn't as if I weren't actively enjoying the con. But there's still that sense of having missed out on a large number of pleasurable activities because of being busy somewhere else. (I didn't notice that Jodie's fanzine thing had been switched from Sunday to Saturday, for example, so I missed it and was bitterly disappointed).

You have a good ear for dialogue, a good memory, or a good imagination. I don't remember saying the things you attribute to me (at least not all of them) but since they make me sound pretty good, I'll allow that indeed that was probably just the way it was. And I'm glad to see you give some much deserved egoboo to Sheryl, who deserves as much praise for her talents and her personality as anyone else I know in fandom. (Thanks too for the complimentary write-up for yours truly; reading that I know you must have been dazzled by Sheryl. I almost didn't recognize myself...)

I still don't believe in Faruk von Turk, whether someone was at Discon wearing such a nametag or not. You see all sorts of nametags at cons with invented monikers on them and I'm afraid I don't accept that as evidence. In fact, I don't even believe



your claim that such a person was there, because I was there and if he'd been there we'd have met, right? So you see, you're obviously making the whole thing up.

In fact, I think you made up the whole idea of a DoS 36 with a Discon report in it, because I certainly never got a copy, and I get two copies of your regular issues, so...

[I didn't really forget to change the type ball for Mike's letter. I just decided that since he was only a figment of my imagination he should therefore speak in my typeface. (Naw, I'm not really that subtle; I just forgot). But did I forget to mention that Don D'Amassa's new zine is "dedicated to the proposition that there is no such thing as reality"? Right on!

Harry Warner, Jr.
423 Summit Ave.
Hagerstown, MD
21740

I was wondering why you didn't go to the Discon, and then came your latest issue, and bless you, you were there after all. That brings to 2,497 the number of fans I wanted to see in Washington and never laid eyes on. In fact, I have been toying with a theory to the effect that every fan was at Discon.

The only exception I've been able to establish with some degree of assurance is Donn Brazier, and maybe he isn't telling the whole truth when he says he didn't go, because he's a good-hearted person and might hate to contradict those who told me he didn't make it. Did you ever stop to consider how many different world cons a person could attend in the same three or four days, if he could somehow relive the same four days several times, doing exactly the same things, but on the second and third runs through, turning his head just a few degrees in another direction or walking through a lobby or function room just a few seconds sooner or later? An entirely different set of encounters, different invitations to parties, different conversations, and so on.

Your conreport makes me envious of your ability to get together with some of the people I missed. Jodie Offutt, for instance; I'm also badly smitten and all I have to blame for my condition is one photograph of her that appeared in a fanzine somewhere plus those wonderful little columns and articles in various fanzines.

It's also nice to know that Sheryl Birkhead Fandom has gained another convert in you. Before the Discon, I hadn't dared to hope that she could be as nice in person as she is on paper, but By George, She Did It, as Henry Higgins once exclaimed under entirely different circumstances. She is as selfless a person as I've ever encountered, in or out of fandom, and her constant doing of good deeds for others is particularly outstanding in fandom where so many others are self-centered people out only for personal ego. Like you, I found her outwardly self-possessed and she

deserves some kind of special big heart award if her conduct at cons is accomplished by victory over internal nerves.

Gail Barton's illustrations are particularly good in issue 36. I keep staring at the one on page 11, trying to keep firmly in mind the fact that it's a mechanical reproduction of a drawing. It looks exactly like an original illustration and it takes all my will power to prevent me from speculating that maybe Gail spent a week doing the same drawing over and over again on a hundred or more sheets of paper to make sure no mechanical device would spoil its merits.

My grandmother died a couple of years ago at the age of 98. She had been in excellent health, had a razor-sharp mind, and lived by herself, running an apartment without help, until something went wrong inside. She had been in the hospital two days, and a series of tests for the source of the trouble was scheduled the next day. In the evening, some relatives were in her room. She was talking about something or other, suddenly hesitated, and said, "Bill's calling me." Bill was a son who had died seven or eight years earlier. An hour later, she had a heart attack and died. So I'm quite interested in the study of the American Society for Psychical Research. I've had no personal experiences with the departure of a soul, but long ago I read a biography of Louisa Mae Alcott who claimed to have seen one leave the body; I think it was her mother's death in a dark room that caused the experience. There seems to have been a lot of such reports in the old days. I wonder if the white walls, bright electric lights, and white-covered beds in hospitals where most people now die have been causing reports of this phenomenon to grow fewer in recent years?

George Fergus
3341 W. Cullom Ave.
Chicago, IL 60618

On the subject of ego survival after death, I'm getting tired of all this talk of people having been revived after death. Being dead used to mean that you had stopped breathing, until they discovered that you could live

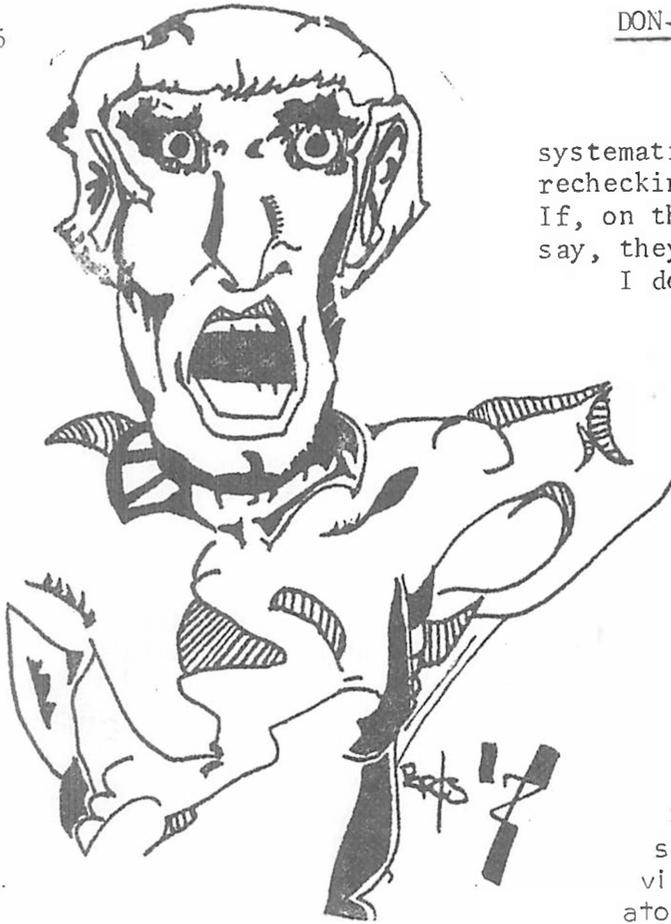
for 5 or 10 minutes as long as your heart was still beating. Then for a long time the criterion was that your heart had stopped, until they found that enough oxygen remains in the blood to keep your brain cells alive and memory intact for a minute or two even after circulation has stopped. (The brain is the heaviest user of oxygen in your body, and thus is the first to deteriorate after the supply is cut off). So being "medically dead" now means that you must have a flat EEG rather than a flat EKG. I know of no one who has been dead in this modern sense and later revived.

Roy Tackett
915 Green Valley Road NW
Albuquerque, NM 87107

And so you went to Discon and found it huge? Yes. I didn't. Go to Discon that is. (As a matter of fact no one from here did which makes us croggle a bit at your statement that you met Dick Patten there. . .)

[Hum. Yes. well. Ahhh. One or two other people also expressed polite crogglement at my claim to to have encountered Dick Patten at Discon when they had clearly understood he was not there. But there's no problem, really. I give you a choice of the two theories that have been offered thus far in the lettercol: Mike Glicksohn's that I invented the whole thing anyway; or Harry Warner's that Dick was (and so were all the rest of you) there and he and you are just lying about IT. Oh, there is a third possibility, but of so mundane a character as scarcely to deserve consideration -- namely that I might have met some other Patten (like Fred, from Culver City, CA, perhaps) and the wrong name stuck in my mind. I really don't know].

My knee-jerk reaction on your last item was amusement at a "psychical research group" being called "scientists." That comes from years of thinking about only the physical sciences. Yet science is any body of systematized knowledge. If the American Society for Psychical Research is conducting their research



systematically, if they are checking, rechecking, and rechecking again, they are conducting solid research. If, on the other hand, they are merely reporting hearsay, they're adding nothing to the body of knowledge.

I doubt very much that the employment of "highly sensitive film and other sensitive measuring devices" will come up with any meaningful recordings on the departure of the soul.

Of course this won't prove anything anyway since the "soul" is not material. Having taken the position of the unbeliever in this question of survival after death I know for certain that there is no way that I can convince a believer to adopt my position. On the other hand I could easily be convinced that what the believer says is true... all he has to do is show me a soul.

[Rubbish, Roytac! Such a simplistic dismissal of the issue is unworthy of you! Suppose an unbeliever in modern physics said to you: "All you have to do to convince me of your position is to show me an atom." Could you do it? I'm assuming for the nonce that you are more or less a believer in the modern system of physics].

Bruce D. Arthurs
57th Trans. Co.
Fort Lee, VA
23801

Did you know that the "little green man" you say you resemble was a self portrait by Kelly Freas? Really. He couldn't find anyone else who looked more elfish or whatever, so he set up a mirror and started painting that cover.

I'm writing a Disconreport, also. So far it's nine pages long and only up to Saturday afternoon.

Sam Long
Box 4946
Patrick AFB
FL 32925

I saw the Freas LGM from Mars painting, or rather a small study for it, at Joe Green's house the other day; and you are, as you observed, the spitting image of it or it of you, depending on your point of view. Have you thought of getting a photo of yourself in the LGM's position and expression next time you put your makeup

on, and sending Kelly a copy?

Teggeddizzi (as they say in Italy)

Ben P. Indick
428 Sagamore Ave.
Teaneck, NJ 07666

Your con report was refreshingly personal, totally non-vindictive, and even made me sorry I missed that enormous affair. Actually I rather share Sheryl's attitude about the throngs; in my case maybe I feel rather removed from most of the fans by virtue (?) of age. Aw, I'm not the oldest, just older than most. Still, it would have been fun to meet you, Sheryl and some others whom I like and respect from Fandom, irrespective of age. I can well understand why you are so taken with Sheryl; there is a quality about her which her drawings and her writings express so completely that it simply has to represent her essential self. I am certain she is not merely beautiful, which most girls are, but innately lovely.

I can appreciate the occasions you and Tony C. and others mentioned met, shook hands, and had nothing to say. That's how I feel at the moment! This is because DOS said it all so well, and my initial paragraph summarized my response.

At the only Con I have attended in years, decades in fact, last year's Lunacon (of which I made only the final hour!) I wandered about seeing no one I could possibly know until I ran into the ubiquitous Sam Moskowitz. This urbane and talkative gentleman is always nice to meet, and it made up for much. Still, even here, I felt lost in the mobs; I guess if I ever make a Con, I'll prefer a quieter, smaller one. Of course, in my case, I would go alone anyway; my family has about no interest at all in my hobby. If my wife or kids came, they'd stare at the fans, vertical and prone alike, as some sort of freaks. I guess I would not be excluded!

Tim C. Marion
614 72nd St.
Newport News VA
23605

Please do not feel bad about not sitting down and having a long talk with me at DisCon; I firmly believe in not talking to anyone who I have absolutely nothing to say to. This happens a lot, no matter how much I may care for someone -- frequently I find that we have nothing to talk about. So

what's the point of straining to try to find something to say? Besides, if you had asked me to sit down and talk with you for a length of time, I would have had to refuse, because at the time I needed to use the restroom and then get back to my conversation with Leah Zeldes and a few others (and at the time I'm afraid I wouldn't have had the presence of mind to say, "Hey, I have a better idea - why don't I introduce you to Leah Zeldes?")

To alleviate any doubt left in your mind, the person with you was wearing the nametag of 'Carol Thompson,' who I assume is your wife. Right?

[Hoo, boy! I gotta tell ya, Tim C., you have not exactly alleviated any doubts with that comment! Certainly not in my wife's mind! "Who were you wandering around with named Carol?" she asked me. "No one," I assured her. "He's just confused." Aren't you just confused, Tim? Come on, get me off the hook. Tell her you were confused? You see, the problem is not just that my wife's name is Carolyn. Lots of people who have known her for years and really should know better still get confused and call her Carol; she's used to that. What makes this situation sticky is that all the time she was at the Con, she never wore a name tag, not being a member! Memory does play weird tricks, doesn't it? Like me seeming to remember Dick Patten; and if I get down to Mike Shoemaker's letter, he will point out that I attributed to Mike Glycer words that were actually spoken by him! But back to Tim's letter:]

Maybe it's good that I never did get to meet and talk with Sheryl; she sounds so innocent and so beautiful inside I'm afraid I would have fallen in love with her too-- and then I would have been in a sorrowful state; I'm already in love with one femmefan!

Re the art in DOS - I agree with Mike Glicksohn that I would rather see your wonderful prose than bad artwork. Not that I have anything against your artists; some of them I even like (particularly most of Gail Barton's work and all of Canfield's stuff, and the few of Bill Kunkel's weird little doodles...)

Leah A. Zeldes
21961 Parklawn
Oak Park MI
48237

I picked up a copy of Don-o-Saur 35 in the N3F room at Discon, and have only just now gotten around to reading it... I remember seeing you around the con. People kept pointing you out to me and saying, "That's Don Thompson." And I said, "Oh, really?" with exactly the proper goshwow pitch and intensity and I don't think anyone ever even suspected I didn't know who the hell you were. I'd heard the name before then, of course, but that's about as far as it went. Well, every fan was a neo sometime.

Did you really think people would cut up your zine to send that petition to Wayne Martin? Well, I suppose there are people who would. I didn't, but not for

that reason. The decision to gafiate was Warren's, and I know he put a lot of careful thought into the matter. It is his choice, and as such should be respected. Pestering him is only going to make his resolve stronger. If Warren wants to return to fandom, he will, but only his own desire will induce him to do so. Right now I know he is rather amused and bemused by the attention his gafiation is getting, but it hasn't done anything to change his mind.

[Well, I'm not so sure about that. However, I don't want to start or perpetuate an argument. The excerpts from the next two letters are presented to bring the issue more or less up to date]

Wayne W. Martin
4517 E. Redlands
Fresno, CA 93776

I want to thank you for printing the petition in your zine. I've already received and forwarded to Warren one of the slips which I got from C. William George. Any that come in after I left Florida will be forwarded and sent on to

Warren. Again, thanx -- it was a nice way to close a fannish oriented issue. And thanx to those who responded.

Warren Johnson
131 Harrison St.
Geneva, IL 60134

I must admit I was a little surprised to see Wayne Martin's petition printed in Don-o-Saur. Wayne wrote me a while back telling about the project, which about shocked me out of my seat -- that anyone would go to all that bother. What

shocked me even more was the fact that the first signature on the petition was Ted White!

I don't know. There are, obviously, very strong forces motivating me back into fandom, both from various fans and from my own psyche. I seem to fit the stereotyped fan quite well: I am quite introverted...I do have a hard time getting around in social situations, but I attribute part of that to inexperience; I never have been much of a mingler.

If you'll permit me to indulge in some self-psychoanalysis (from somebody who hasn't even read Freud or Jung...) I think my social withdrawal first came because of my father. Now don't get me wrong; there's nothing 'bab' about my father -- just that he is more or less of an introvert also. I seem to have read somewhere that a child always searches for a father figure. Well, my father didn't provide that, and I think I always have been sort of insecure and so forth because of that ever since.

I think I tried to build myself up as my own father image: I wanted to be 'self-sufficient' emotionally, at least. Coupled with this, it is a simple fact...that I'm more intelligent than the norm. When I worked at it I got much better grades. Achievement tests showed this, too. ...What all that did was to give me the idea that I was better than everybody else.

But here I got into this fandom thing...not only are people talking about science fiction (occasionally), but by and large, they're intelligent about it! I grew enamoured of it; I really felt this was My Thing.

But then there were those obstinate fannish types, who apparently couldn't make a serious comment if they were paid. I disliked them intensely, because of my own superiority complex. I drew some bad remarks, as the petition indicates, and sort of began to lose all my total love for fandom.

But don't get the idea that I'm still antagonistic to fandom; I know, after reading some comments from various people recently, that there are those who want to see more of my writing. Obviously, my judgements were superficial; and as Chris Sherman (who has been encouraging me to come back into the microcosm) put it, I really don't understand people. I probably don't. I hope, though, that I'm learning.

I believe one of my biggest reasons I gave when I gafiated was that it was taking too much time. Well, as it worked out, I really haven't been using that 'gained' time all that well; most of it has been spent lying around, which only gives

me insomnia later on. Maybe my gafiation has been premature. Maybe I should stay around fandom a little longer. I don't know. I really don't know.

[My personal feeling is that only a few more friendly cards and letters and/or petition signatures will enable Warren to make the right decision. Maybe he's already received them; his letter was dated more than a month ago. I hope that by now he does know!]

A L O C O F A S O R T

By Mike Bracken, PO Box 802
Fort Bragg, CA 95437

This morning my car stalled about a block from home and I couldn't get it started again after 15 minutes of trying, so I wound up pushing it home.

"Hey, Ma, my car stalled and I can't get it started."

"Huh?"

"I've got no way to get to school."

"Well, hold on, I'll take you. Just wait till I get ready."

"Okay."

In the car, exceeding the speed limit, in an attempt to get me to school on time:

"Ma, could you stop at the post office?"

"No."

"Why?"

"You'll be late."

"No I won't."

"No."

"Please?"

"What time is it?"

"Quarter to nine."

"When's school start?"

"Nine."

"Well, if you hurry."

I opened the PO box and found a post card from Chris Hulse (you know: the guy with the \$8 mimeo) and D-o-S #36.

At school, first period, trying to draw my fist and read D-o-S at the same time (it's impossible, believe me), teacher walks up, starts conversation:

"What's this?"

"Don-o-Saur."

"WHAT is it?"

"Oh, a fanzine."

"Huh? It's not like yours, is it?"

"No."

"Does it come from around here?"

"No."

"Where?"

"Westminster, CO."

"Who publishes it?"

"Don Thompson."

"He a friend of yours?"

"Ah, sorta."

"That's nice."

"Yeah."

Same class, a little later, a guy who occasionally draws things



for my zine spots it and asks:

"What is it?"

"Don-o-Saur."

"What's Don-o-Saur mean?"

"Uh, I think it's a pun on Dinosaur; ya see, the guy who puts it out is named Don. See, Don-o-Saur. Get it?"

"No."

After that I hid it in my locker.

Anyhow, I enjoyed the issue. I've also read Linda Bushyager's con report and you both agreed that it was too large. I do, however, think that you made the con seem more of a gathering of people than just a con. It seemed like there were PEOPLE there, not just crowds.

Andrew Dyer
907 Joyce Lane
Nashville, IN
37216

This is my first letter to any fanzine. I really started looking seriously at fanzines only a few months ago. It is really impressive to see the results of the fan in print. The contribution that fanzines can make is very large.

It was a pleasure to meet you at Discon. This was my first World Con and also one of the most enjoyable experiences of my life. Besides meeting people I had heard about, I made many new friends. Going to one world con makes you wish that you had made some of the others in previous years. Australia is a little far for me (and my pocketbook). However, I certainly plan to make it to Kansas City. I also hope to make it to L.A. next Labor Day.

I wonder what the general reaction was to the film, "A Boy and His Dog"? I liked it myself, despite the unusual ten-reel-with-a-gap-in-between manner in which it was shown. I reread the novella after I got home. If I were doing it, I perhaps would have emphasized other portions of the story, but I think the adaptation was a success. Any comments?

[Hardly any. I too liked the film in spite of the conditions under which it was shown. And all the reviews that I have seen of it have either been favorable or at least willing to give it the benefit of the doubt. I hope (but rather doubt) that it will be a commercial success. I won't take time here to try to explain the doubt].

Actually I enjoyed Harlan's question and answer session between reels. Don, I wonder what motivates a person to put out a fanzine. Is it pride, pleasure, ego fulfillment, or what?

[Masochism]

I wonder why LOCUS thought your art was so bad. It looks all right to me.

A question I'd like to pose for anyone: I know lots of folk with large collections of SF, much of it unread, and in many cases few plans for reading most of the remainder. Why? I have known of people who'd buy books, stick them in a box and hide them in the attic.

[Maybe next month I will repring Don-o-Saur Coprolites #2. In it I tell how I became just the sort of monster that Andy finds so mystifying. I don't explain why -- just how].

Vic Kostrikin
Route 1, Box 4
Gervais, OR
97026

Many thanks for DoS 36. One of the best con reports I've ever read. I felt as if I were there, right with you, but it's unfortunate that I had to do it vicariously.

By the way, thanks, thanks, thanks thanks thanks for printing my artwork, but I still feel much inferior to other fanartists. I've only been in fandom 5 months and I realize that I'm a little more proficient at art than at loccing. Hope you're not repulsed by my ineptness.

[No, I'm not repulsed. Hell, I don't see that Vic Kostrikin has to apologize to or feel inferior to anyone for the quality of his artwork. I am delighted -- proud and happy -- to be able to print his work. Checking back, I notice that I do have only one of his pieces this, but there are some fine ones coming up in the near future -- including a spectacular cover that I'm tentatively planning to use on issue #40.]

J. C. Kapalka
129 Lowell Ave.
Utica, NY 13502

Just got Don-o-Saur #36 and I was impressed by the cover. Actually, I was more impressed by the fact that you printed the thing. It's always gratifying to see your work on the cover of a zine that you don't edit yourself. Hope

the other readers liked it.

[What I'm hoping is that Jeff will forgive the messiness of this month's cover; and I want to announce to my readers right here that none of that is Jeff's fault. The smudginess is on the offset plate and it's my fault because I was trying to economize: I found a place that would do the plates for only about half what the other places in town charge. I had two other covers done at the same time -- #38 by Sheryl Birkhead and #39 by Marci Helms. They look all right. . .]

I also didn't care for the positioning of my "Yes, go on..." cartoon. It really didn't fit on that page. I had it in mind to go on a page with some arguments on it, like page 17.

[Yeah. My apologies again. That sort of misplacement of pictures is inevitable in the way I go about things, seldom making much attempt to correlate pictures with text. This issue I made a few efforts in that direction].

(Oh hell, the real reason I didn't like where it was is that those fabulous Gail Barton sketches immediately before mine made mine look shoddier than it was. Any more where they came from?

[Yes]

Sheryl Birkhead
23629 Woodfield Rd.
Gaithersburg, MD
20760

As I looked through D#36, my second thought (the first being that I should have waited a while to mail that cover) was you sure got up a lot of energy RIGHT after the con! My congratulations. If I didn't say thank you for the Don-o-Saurs (sorry!), I meant to & if I did (I hope so), I repeat it --

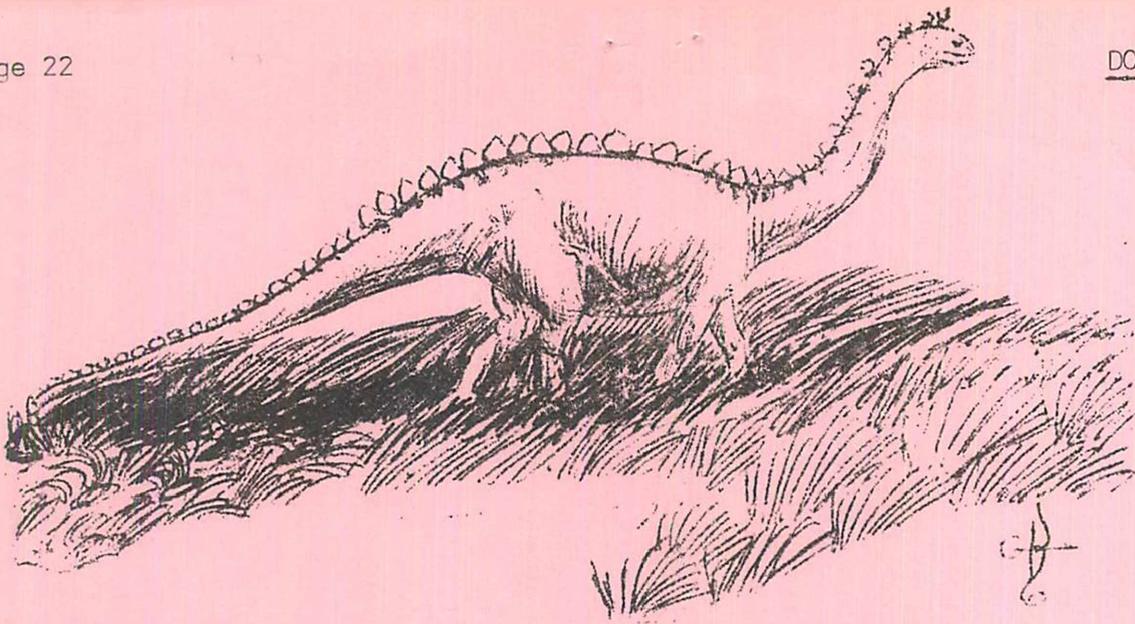
thank you. Glad about two other things -- that you DID go to the Ranquet (I've always been a coward to go... never been on the Chinese food search either) and that the name tag gave you a chuckle -- was worth it then.

You know, you better watch it -- people might BELIEVE what you print. In all honesty, I can't fault your recollection of our conversation, but I'm absolutely amazed that I seem to have sounded coherent. All the nice things you say, well... thanks -- but remember in the future, people might BELIEVE you!

I kinda agree with your comment on "bad artists." I have not had art courses or know what I'm doing (that's NOT limited to doodling) most of the time, BUT had my first horrible attempts been castigated, my non-existent confidence would have shriveled up even more -- if that's possible. The "trick," I guess, is to know if it's 'badness' through lack of talent, practice, knowledge -- and then TREAD LIGHTLY. I still say egos are very breakable and sensitive creatures.

IAHF: David Barnett, Brett Cox, Gary Farber, C. William George, D. Gary Grady, Laura J. Haney, Art & Flo Hayes, Dwain Kaiser, Neshia Kovalick, Harry Lindgren, Jeff May, Bob Mayhew, Michael T. Shoemaker (sorry about that, Mike!), Dave Szurek.

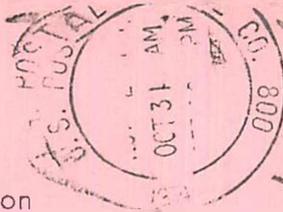
And again, I apologize if I missed anyone.



ART CREDITS: Front cover, Jeff Kapalka; Back cover, Gail Barton.
 Pages 5 and 14 also Barton.
 Jay Kinney -- page 2 heading and page 9; Vic Kostrikin, page 11
 Bill Kunkel-- page 7 (top); Carolyn Miller--page 7 (bottom)
 Brad Parks -- page 16; Marci Helms -- page 19



DON-o-SAUR #37
 Donald C. Thompson
 7498 Canosa Court
 Westminster, CO 80030



PRINTED MATTER ONLY

Jerry Kaufman & Suzie Tompkins
 622 W. 114th #52A
 New York, NY 10025