

No Goat's Toe #3

A progress report on the publication of *Beyond The Enchanted Duplicator...To The Enchanted Convention* and related matters of fannish interest. Published March 21, 1991 by Geri Sullivan, Toad Hall, 3444 Blaisdell Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55408-4315. Phone: 612/825-3558; PROMote Communications: 612/825-2292. All copy not otherwise credited: Geri Sullivan. Mimeography by Jeff Schalles and Geri Sullivan.

VIRGIN BIRTH!

It is oftentimes said that history repeats itself, and so it did again during the week of February 25, 1991. The site was not a humble stable on the outskirts of Bethlehem, but rather the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota. Fittingly enough, the virgin gave birth to twins. (The Holy Spirit searched fruitlessly for a second virgin, so the one at hand had to bear the dual delivery on her own, with loving support from that 20th Century Joseph, James Jeffrey Schalles. (Notice the Trinity ... of J's?)

Let it be accurately reported that the Virgin went into actual labor at 10 am on Friday, February 22, Central Standard Time, following two nights of false labor (false, yet true to the perfection of the final delivery). The unusually long labor continued intermittently for the next nine days. The birth was beyond the expertise of the local Medical Establishment, seeing as the labor occurred in both Minneapolis and St. Paul simultaneously. The doctors, media representatives, and tax collectors, racing busily between Toad Hall in south Minneapolis and Sexton Printing in St. Paul, caused massive traffic

jams on I-94 where it crosses the Mississippi River.

While the police directed traffic, Governor Arne Carlson contacted NASA, hoping they had finished construction of the subspace communications network. They hoped to talk directly with Dr. Conway at Sector Seventy Three General Hospital, in the belief they could benefit greatly from his expertise in such unusual medical matters. Alas, NASA's entire budget had been re-allocated to pay for the deconstruction of a bheer can tower to the moon, which had mysteriously appeared a short time after the last Loscon. The communications network wasn't scheduled for completion until the next millennium.

The entire situation gave Governor Carlson pause for reflection as he contemplated the importance of providing basic services during a budget crisis, be it national or local. He resolved the conflict by raising property taxes for lower and middle-income housing by 50% while lowering the tax bill on upper bracket homes by 15%. The Virgin immediately went public with a new plan to move Toad Hall to

Donaghadee, N. Ireland and replacing it with Strathclyde in South Minneapolis. By all calculations, taxes would decrease for all concerned parties. The negotiations are expected to progress smoothly, save for the sticky issue of exterior caulking, spackling, priming, and painting yet to be completed.

But back to the Virgin and her labors.

The labor that started on Friday continued through the weekend. By Monday morning, the Virgin welcomed the kindly words and advice of Dr. Wayne Boisen, a chiropractor in from Rochester, Minnesota. Wayne "you can take your 'Dr.' and stick it where the sun don't shine" Boisen* was able to get to the traffic jam and meet with the Virgin by making a series of adjustments in his route and schedule.

INSIDE

Life & Business –	
Minnesota Style.....	3
Proofreader's Follies	3
LoCs!	4

* Yes, I really did meet Dr. Boisen that Monday morn, albeit for an interview for another article I'm writing, and yes, it is an accurate quote.

**Continued:
VIRGIN BIRTH!**

The impending birth took on a frightfully life-like hue with the arrival of the red ink from Gestetner, also on Monday, along with more black ink, a box of new styli for the electro-stenciller (a torture device, like so many other medical instruments, to be sure) and an exorbitant bill. Later that day, Jay Rankin, our loyal (and hip) rep. from Sexton Printing battled the traffic jam at the Mississippi to deliver a silverprint proof of the St. Paul baby (the modern-day equivalent of being born with a silver spoon in one's mouth....)

Labor proceeded smoothly through the early hours of Monday evening, only to grow more and more difficult as the evening progressed. First it was the torrents of over-inking, then on to torn stencils and strippers needing adjustments of their own. The months of preparation and steady, deep breathing exercises saw the Virgin through the trauma until the cool voice of reason prevailed, "turn off the space heater, turn off the lights, and walk away from it. Jeff will fix it when he gets home."

So went the next six days and nights. The delivery went slowly, side by side, page by page. A healthy, bouncing, bright blue St. Paul baby was hand-delivered Friday, March 1. It spent the next two weeks in the Toad Hall foyer, absorbing the proper amounts of rampant fannishness to survive any future

mishandling in the post. Saturday night, Garth Danielson and Ken Fletcher stopped by to help Jeff and the Virgin, greatly tired from the long birth, as the last five pages passed through the mimeograph. Beer and pretzels accompanied the historic, sercon event.

Sunday afternoon found Jeff and the Virgin back at the Toad Hall Champion Mimeo Center and Frog Preserve, reprinting pages 5/6 and 9/10. The soft, fuzzy mimeo babe was born.

A celebration was called for. Being sure the Edgewater Inn was closed at that late hour, it being after 2 a.m. in Northern Ireland, we instead travelled south to Bloomington, Minnesota, home of Kincaid's Steak House. A few James Page microbrews preceded the trans-continental feast of Columbia River King Salmon and New York Steak. Out of consideration of those readers with sensitive constitutions, I will avoid detailed description of the slugs I downed with glee unseeming to a Virgin. Suffice to say, there was sufficient garlic. We adjourned to the bar, where the Virgin turned to Smith and Kerns made with Chambourd (a black raspberry liqueur), while Jeff sampled the extensive collection of single malt scotches.

If only the labor were truly over. The hearty babes cried out for loving hands to collate, staple, and bind them. Collating racks filled the front hall. Comp. copies and paid orders received highest

priority. All were in the mail by March 8. But the hands of Jeff and the Virgin, talented though they may be, were no match for the 25,000+ sheets of paper that wanted collating.

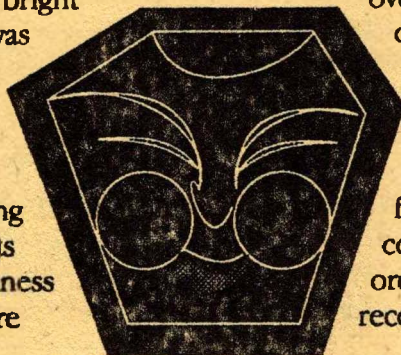
A party was clearly in order.

March 16 proved to be the best choice of dates and it was that afternoon that Terry A. Garey, Peter Hentges, David Dyer-Bennet, Martin Schafer, Garth Danielson, David "fannish as hell" Emerson, Denny Lien, Ericka Johnson, Karen Johnson, Elise Krueger, Pamela Dyer-Bennet, and Karen Schaffer lent their helping hands and collated (and stapled) nearly 800 copies of the Standard Edition. GoshWow. Jeff made pizza for our dinner and we finished in time for the official BEDEC Release Party, which began at 9 p.m.

There is much to tell of that afternoon, and of the celebration that followed, but it will have to wait for other days. One story can't wait: Terry Garey baked a magnificent loaf of bread, in the shape of a toad. Elise and Pamela wrote the following tribute in its honor:

"Full fathom five our bread-toad lies; of his bones are gluten made; those are pickles that were his eyes ..."

As of this writing, 96 copies of the Collector's Edition await collation, and most of the rest cry out for binding tape. The delivery charges are paid in full, and LoCs are wahing our way. The babe grows quickly; already copies have found their way to Sweden and Australia. As births go, it is all quite miraculous.



SHIFFMAN ©90

The Reality of Life and Business – Minnesota-Style

One of the many delights of life is being pleasantly shocked and amazed by friends, especially when they do something completely out of what you believe to be their character. Fred A. Levy Haskell has delighted me with such surprises so many times that I've learned better than to predict what he might do at any given time. After all, he once accompanied me to Valleyfair Amusement Park, and I've the pictures to prove it. Walter has been known to go forth and do likewise (well, not that he's accompanied me to Valleyfair, yet, but he did accept Magicon's invitation for 1992). Businesses here in Minnesota show similar predilections. They sometimes do the most unbusinesslike things!

Take, for example, the ease with which one can have a garage door replaced. Some four years ago, Toad Hall's garage needed a new door. I measured the width and called a few companies listed in the yellow pages to obtain prices. One offered to simply come and replace the door while I was at work and bill me for the cost.

They'd never met me, seen no identification, and had no credit references, yet they were willing to install the door and extend hundreds of dollars in credit. Ah, the wonders of trust. I must confess to an evil obsession with the thought that one could simply call and order new garage doors for ones neighbors, or enemies. A name, an address, a phone call: viola! A new garage door. Why, if you had a new automatic opener installed at the same time, the homeowner might not even be able to drive into his own garage!

Then there was the day a few weeks back when I called Logos Productions and ordered three cases of Fibertone paper (2 for BEDEC, 1 for SFFY), 2 boxes of E-stencils, and 4 tubes of "low-cost" ink only to be asked, "And what church are you with?"

After fessing up to having a private business, I made arrangements to pick up the order, thus saving \$25-30 in shipping costs.

Jeff and I drove to Inver Grove Heights, just south of St. Paul. Before we drove around to the loading dock, I asked, "Would you like a check?"

"Oh, no. We'll just send you an invoice."

This sort of trust isn't unique to Minnesota, or even to small towns elsewhere. But it is a welcome surprise, making, as it does, life ever so much more pleasant.

'One final look over ...'

My normal work "evening" stretched and stretched on Thursday, February 21 as I made copy changes to the April issue of TASTE TODAY, back from the client that afternoon and due at the designer's Friday morning. 'Round about 7:30 am, I took a shower and debated whether to fit in a short nap before Jay Rankin arrived to pick up the BEDEC masters at 10 am Friday.

The desire to give the copy "one final look over" won out, so I stayed up. I didn't attempt to read, but simply looked at each page to make sure it was there, looking its best. At page 7, I found the first thing that needed changing. Nothing dramatic, so I made a note of it on the back of a handy Uncle Hugo's bookmark and continued turning the pages. Page 14, I jotted another note. On page 18, the chapter headline was a teeny bit low ... another page for the list.

Page 22 caught my eye with an unfortunate line break at the top (not in your copy, Walter, the page breaks changed with the addition of Stu's illustrations).

Then I SAW the chapter heading. What happened to the oblique type for IN WHICH JOPHAN IS RICHLY REWARDED FOR ENJOYING HIMSELF ???

Finding such obvious errors at the last minute is immensely rewarding. Staying up paid off! I decided to further tweak page 27, and found a comma that needed to be a period on page 36. Page 37 had apparently jammed in the Kinko's copier when I had a dummy copy made on Thursday evening, for it was crinkled and in need of reprinting.

All told, I reprinted 7 of the 44 master pages — 16% — After all of our proofreading, AFTER the final, FINAL proof!

I know better than to think I caught everything.

After Jay left, Jeff and I went to the Original Pancake House for breakfast, to celebrate and to dream. (Chuck, it's the place that's the My II pizza place at night.) Then it was home to Toad Hall, where I climbed into bed for a good afternoon's sleep. Then the real labor began. But you've already read about that.

The LoCs are coming! The LoCs are coming!

Leave it to the Bob's Bloch and Tucker to be among the first to send letters of comment! Neither one willing to be outdone by the other, their letters arrived in Saturday's mail, just before the collation party began.

Tucker's letter, in 1-inch tall, heavy black printing:

"Gosh-Wow!

It's the mosta of the besta!

© 1939 by an unknown fan, as quoted in Time Magazine.

Bloch, of course, had a counterpoint to Tucker's note: "What a marvelous surprise! Willis, White and Shiffman have reason to be proud, and I've reason to be grateful for your kindness in sending me a copy. Everyone connected with this labor of love has my fervent congratulations for preserving the best traditions of trufandom and combatting creeping Tuckerism over the years."

That's all fannish as hell, but I think you will also appreciate hearing spoken comments from Minneapolis fans Ken Fletcher and Garth Danielson. A few weeks back, Ken stopped by the house to pick up some work he's doing for PROMote Communications. I showed him one of the two final Kinko's proofs. There was another meeting going on in the living room at the time, so I didn't have time to chat. He was unusually quick to take advantage of the situation, and walked out with the proof copy! When I walked into

Uncle Hugo's SF bookstore two days later to pick it up, he called across the store, "Geri. It's great!" Another surprise, as you'll see when you meet him. Ken is exceptionally soft-spoken, and not taken to calling out in public. I approached the cash register, where Ken was working, and jotted a few notes as he bumbled

at me: "It's great. It's a cosmic story, with lots of good lines ... It was really fun reading the set-up lines, and there are some great one-liners ... I really liked Jophan's success in his Mundane job. It's a fun story, I laughed out loud." (Ken, laughing out loud? Walter, I refer you to my Hyphen 37 LoC for comparison..) He then leaned over, in a conspiratorial fashion, and whispered, "It's religious."

Returning to his normal, quiet voice, "These guys have all their cylinders going as far as making a story, and an educational story at that. They're clearly current — now — not frozen in 30 years ago ... I think the con people are going to be very happy ... It's like a Neo-Fan's Guide, it entertains you, and leads you through being socialized."

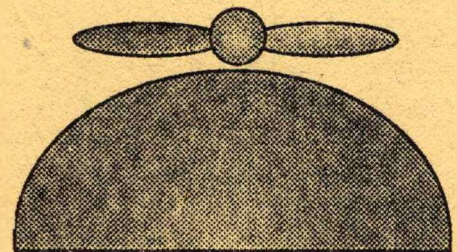
Earlier today (3/21), Garth Danielson called from work. "I just wanted to tell you how much I'm enjoying it. I'm just 10 pages into it and I really like it. It makes me feel really fannish, and that's something I haven't felt in a long

time. I've been pretty fatisfied lately."

Moshe Feder read the story on the flight home from Janecon. (Janecon celebrated Seattle-fan Jane Hawkins' 40th birthday. She and Luke McGuff surprised most of the attendees by getting married during opening ceremonies.) "I read and enjoyed it on our otherwise awful flight home from Seattle," he wrote in a brief note that accompanied an order for two more copies, "only to find my signed copy waiting for me. Now I'll have to reread it to find the pun Walt's note says I inspired! Well, I don't mind. Nice work! Fandom is proud of you."

Then there was Walter's phone message awaiting me on the PROMote line. Jeff immediately made me punch out the tabs on the tape so we wouldn't accidentally record over it. That was really nice about the four of you going to the Edgewater Hotel for Madeleine's birthday dinner. I wish we'd been there, too. (Happy Birthday, Madeleine! Glad you liked your present.)

I'm really looking forward to Minicon, and to the next couple of months, as BEDEC begins to spread through fandom. Whee!



Shiffman © 1990

The sequels you didn't even know you were waiting for...

A fannish dream come true...

Journey with Jophan...

Beyond The Enchanted Duplicator...

and

...To The Enchanted Convention

by

Walt Willis & James White

Illustrated by Stu Shiffman

Available Early 1991

Collector's Edition

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Standard Edition

(\$6, postage paid: Volume discount available)

Proceeds to fannish causes

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