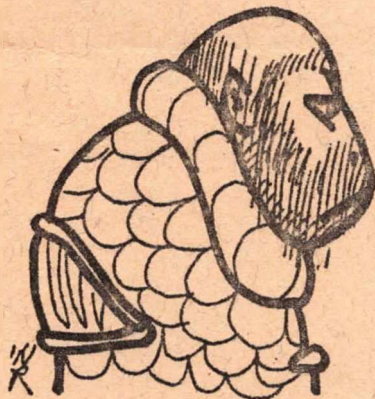


SPEAK BRASS

The frequent fanzine that jumps down, spins around, and picks a bale of cotton:
Published by Andy Hooper and Carrie Root,
4228 Francis Ave. N #103, Seattle, WA 98103,
members fwa. Available for the usual. This
is Drag Bunt Press Production #134, 4/21/92.
Material this time comes from Andy and
Carrie, with a note and a cartoon by Teddy
Harvia. Other Art by: Jeanne Gomoll, Title;
Carrie Root, page 3; Bill Rotsler, page 1.
Thanks to Mark Manning for all his help.

Abandon all hope ye who enter here...now serving espresso...

THE SOCIETY OF HEAVY METAL KLINGONS
by Andy and Carrie



All week we had been saying that we were going to go down to Tacoma on Saturday, to see what sort of things were happening at Norwescon 14, and all week people had been trying to talk us out of it. Their advice was well-founded and well-meaning, but it would be hard for anyone to move to a new city and resist a "major" convention only 35 miles away, especially when the alternative is sitting at home and unpacking boxes of books and papers. Perhaps next year we will listen.

Norwescon has a positive association in our minds because the 1986 edition of the con had been Andy's first introduction to Seattle and its fandom. We both had a superb weekend then, attended a raft of parties and excellent programs, and wound the trip up by getting married on the following Thursday. Even though we were told that the '86 con was one of the last of the "good" editions of the convention, we felt as though we had to give the modern version a chance.

We toolled by to pick up Jerry Kaufman and Stu Shiffman at about ten, and made our way south to the Tacoma Marriot. The first thing we noticed on arrival is that the hotel sits in a narrow band of new commercial development, surrounded on three sides by a bad neighborhood. We found it remarkable that the convention could be so near to the center of town and still be so isolated.

We lounged around in the lobby, reading the pocket program, leafing through the program book. We were too late for the "Meet the Pros" party; it had begun at 10 am. Fine print noted that all authors might not attend due to other commitments; most authors we know would still have been committed to bed at that time of day.

There were a few programs on the dock that would have been of interest; alas, most of them had been on Thursday or Friday. We recalled a riveting reading Greg Bear had given in 1986; it was difficult to find the room where the readings were held this year, and there was no schedule posted. Carrie decided to attend a program on the growing threat of political correctness to white, male fan privilege, and was pleasantly surprised to find the panel supportive of women's and minorities rights, to the disgust of most of the audience.

Stu and Andy decided instead to stroll around the dealer's room and the art show. We saw some impressive pieces at the latter, fine examples of the unearthly mannerism of Milo Duke and paintings by artist GoH Alan Gutierrez, whose work is especially nice without titles or UPC bars obscuring it. The dealer's room was short on books and long on bladed weaponry, but Stu was nice enough to introduce Andy to the people from

Don't bother trying to talk...no human sound can stand up to this!

Jesus built my hot rod.

MU press, where he became completely awestruck and incoherent in the presence of his idol Donna Barr, creator of The Desert Peach.

We decided to bend to the inevitable and spend the rest of the afternoon hanging out in the bar. Jerry practiced his gift for remembering names, and introduced us to a small horde of fen from Portland. It was a nice way to spend the day, but it did grind at the back of our minds that we had paid twenty dollars to watch the NCAA basketball tourney on the bar's TV.

The alternative to Duke vs. Kentucky was watching the fans queue up in costume, for the evening masquerade. The costume subject of choice for 1992 is clearly the Klingon Warrior; there were Klingons of both sexes, wearing uniforms of many different colors, and equipped with a variety of whips, knives, disrupters, and vibrators. Probably the most impressive of them was wielding an electric guitar shaped like a jagged lightning bolt...indeed, heavy metal music is said to have been invented by Kahless the unforgettable, so the choice was especially apt.

One thing about deciding to be a Klingon; the costume seems to be particularly forgiving of the average fan's pear-shaped physique.

In the effort to get to the 11th floor, and attend the San Antonio in '97 party that was to be held in Will Siros' room, we got on to a nearly empty elevator car on the third floor. This turned out to be going down. Well, we figured, we'll stay on and ride up on the next leg. You always feel a twinge of guilt doing this, but the crowding didn't seem extreme tonight; most people were still at the dance. But when we got to the first floor, a portly young man in a Starfleet Commander's uniform ordered us off the elevator, saying "Sorry folks, but you may not ride the elevators down to go up." We grumbled and shuffled off the car, as he stepped on; then he turned around and said "Plenty of room here, do you want to get back on?" Most of us stood and stared; only Andy, who is more confrontational by nature, had the presence of mind to offer an abusive retort.

Things weren't much more organized up in Will's room. He was having a slightly glum weekend, due to the fact that he was fan Goff at a convention with no real interest in fans. The MC forgot all about him at the banquet, introduced all the other guests and let them deliver their speeches, before recalling Will and pointing him out to the exiting audience. Stu and Andy and Jerry were all able to commiserate, having been guests at conventions that conspired to ignore them as well. It seems like many cons select a fan guest on the recommendation of a single committee member, and understandably lack any idea of how to involve the putative honoree in the convention.

Now it turned out that they had booked him onto a "quiet" floor, despite his announced intention to have a bid party. Security was solicitously apologetic, but raised hoops for him to jump through anyway. They called and asked if he would please come down and sign their party register; no, no one could vouch for him...no, they knew nothing about any so-called "Fan Guest of Honor." Hearing this, Jerry leapt to the rescue. "I'll go talk to them," he said, pausing only long enough to borrow Will's name tag. Will was therefore able to keep his party open, for however long it would take security to figure out Jerry was an imposter, and he set about describing the wonder of San Antonio.

Jerry re-appeared shortly thereafter. They had found it completely credible that he was Will Siros, but he had been stymied when they asked for his driver's license number (needed in case we went wild and set fire to the hotel, I guess). He claimed to have left his wallet in the room, and they said it would be fine if he just phoned it back down to them. Will sighed and picked up the phone, dialing security. "This is Will Siros," he said, "and I have my driver's license here. Texas. Number 4640-0224."

"Gee, you have it memorized," said Andy.

"No," said Will, "I just made it up."

Fascism having once again been thwarted, we went back to the conversation and devil-may-care swilling of Coca-cola we were engaged in before. On the whole, the party was the best part of the convention, and we stayed a little longer than we had intended to. As far as we were concerned, the committee had made a fine choice in selecting Will. We made vague plans to possibly get together again before he left Washington, and he bade us take sodas or munchies with us; otherwise they were just going to get left for the hotel. We thanked him, and promised that we would all be there in San Antonio in 1997.

As we walked down the stairwell, Andy asked "Is it just me, or do the rest of you feel guilty for leaving him here as well?" -- aph & cr

Remember: Rate performance, not potential.

MY DINNER WITH BATISTAS by Carrie



I was jealous. I was reading about the dinner party to end all dinner parties, prepared by my oldest and closest friends, and we weren't even invited. Of course, the event was held in Madison just a week after Andy and I left, and we couldn't reasonably expect them to fly us back... Still, it made me sad to think of all the good times I was missing.

On the other hand, we haven't moved to a social wasteland. Since we've been here I've been to a convention-and-a-half (Norwescon doesn't count 100%), several parties, and four excellent dinners, one

of which highlighted a rather remarkable evening in Wallingford.

I guess Andy and I have been adopted as honorary residents of Interlake Avenue, because the event in question was a birthday celebration hosted by Jane Hawkins, Vonda McIntyre, Luke McGuff (of the 4100 block) Grace Carlson, and Glenn Hackney, in honor of Kate Schaefer (the latter three of the 4000 block). Also celebrated was the three-week anniversary of Kate and Glenn's grandbaby Amber P. Hackney, on whom much of the excitement was rather wasted.

The dinner featured Indian food, cooperatively assembled from samosas, pakoras, and nan from a local restaurant, safflower and white rice, and steamed vegetables from Vonda's kitchen, and a curried lamb stew that had been cooking in Jane's kitchen since last February. We all agreed that Jane and Luke got points for not tasting it to oblivion. Infant formula was available for those with more pedestrian tastes (Imagine Glenn balancing babe and bottle on one arm, and feeding himself with the other. Imagine mother Ruth's amazement when she finds curried rice in Amber's diaper.)

I always have a hard time with Indian food -- not the food itself, which I love -- but with the names. "Nan" reminds me of a teenage sleuth. And don't you think that "lamb curry" should be a brush found in a Montana Farm and Fleet? We decided that if we could stomach samosas, we should also be eating Pinochets and Batistas, while drinking hot Che.

But then, what's in a name? Quite a bit if you were to ask Kate. She says she's already set aside \$70 so that Amber can change her name when she comes of age. "Amber" is okay, but she might want to do something about the "P," which stands for "Peyote." I personally think that's no worse than many names we foisted on kids in the 70's, and it sounds much better than "Moon Unit" or "Sunshine."

Desert was birthday cake, of course, but we had to work for it. Vonda supplied a frosted layer cake, but we weren't allowed to eat it; in fact, Kate took it home uncut. Instead, Vonda hauled out a buhzillion cup cakes, cans and tubes of varicolored frostings, and a bunch of

sprinkly things. Kate got to work on the big cake, while the rest of us attacked the cupcakes. Some started with traditional roses, vines, and rainbows, while others went right to the candy dinosaurs and Teddy bears. Did you know that yellow frosting mixed with blue makes a good green, but that blue mixed with red makes mud? There were several contender's for the title of "prettiest," but the one I voted the weirdest involved headless Teddys fountaining blood.

As I said, we didn't eat all the birthday cake, but we did consume all the champagne. It's funny, but I don't remember anyone but Vonda and I actually drinking much of the stuff. Several glasses turned into science experiments -- I think the thesis was that the color of a bear would affect either the number of times it would rise from and fall to the bottom of the glass, or the speed with which it ascended. Luke ran a side experiment on the effects of rude sounds on bear buoyancy.

After dinner, Kate wanted to watch a video she had ordered on earth-berm housing construction. While this might not sound like an appropriate subject for late-night video viewing to many people, this group has title to a piece of land on the Olympic peninsula, and have been actively researching energy-efficient construction techniques for years. So the video. Unfortunately, this was mostly talking heads intercut with an occasional slide, or construction clip, but it's entertainment value was improved substantially by viewing it in fast-forward, accompanied by more of Luke's sound effects. We laughed until our sides hurt...I don't know, maybe it was the champagne.

We actually went on enjoying the party for the rest of the week, because Vonda made us take all our cupcake-artwork home with us. We ate them for desert each night, one by one...saving the Teddy bear bloodbath for the last, naturally. What I want to know is this: What happened to those Teddy bear heads? I bet the Somozas were behind it somehow. -- cr

Patricia. Penelope. Phoebe. Phyllis. Pocahantas. Podkayne. Prunella.

CIVIL WAR FORUM:

My brass
is spent.

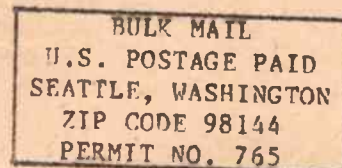


Thank
God for
plastic.

Teddy Harvia writes: "Jeanne Bowman's remarks on Grant's style of command imply a flaw in his character. Not true. Lieutenants and Captains are supposed to lead their men into battle. Generals are supposed to push. Grant did what his predecessors failed to do. He pushed his men off the front porch into the yard to fight, giving neither them nor the enemy time to rest until the war was over."

SPENT BRASS #11
C/O MARK MANNING
1709 SOUTH HOLGATE
SEATTLE, WA 98144 USA

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



Phil Tortorici
P. O. Box 57487
W. Palm Beach, FL 33405