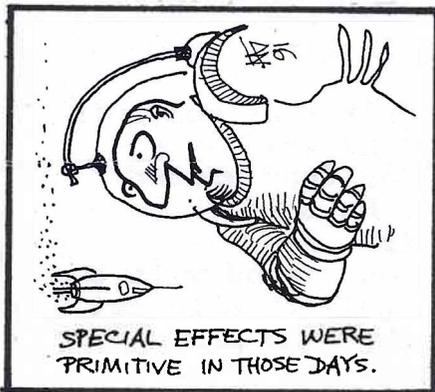


The frequent fanzine of pure spring water, published by Andy Hooper and Carrie Root, of 315 N. Ingersoll, Madison, WI 53703, members fwa, and available for the usual, 29 cent stamps, or \$1.00/2 issues. This is Drag Bunt Press Production #115, 4/17/91. Contributing this time are Jeanne Mealy & Luke McGuff. Art credits: Spent Brass logo by Jeanne Gomoll, Page 1, Alexis Gilliland 3 by Giovanna Fregni, 4 by Craig Smith.

The Pocket Mirror of Fandom

THE CONVENTION OF THE FUTURE: FURTHER RESEARCH



So, Carrie n' me load it up into Jeanne Gomoll's Brontocruiser with the power windows and room for 9, and we all head out for Minicon 26, gonna have us a little fun over Easter weekend. I think we had a few butterflies in our stomachs about this particular con, despite being grizzled veterans of many a blog blast and group grope for Foo Foo, for several reasons. I was worried about the convention having me on record; I had received no confirmation, and admission was \$50.00 at the door this year, perhaps to discourage drop-in riff-raff (Who knows if it worked). Also, Jeanne and I were to perform as part of Jerry Kaufman & Suzle

Tompkin's "Last Live Fanzine," probably the biggest event of their communal gig as fan GoH's. I was nervous and slightly squirrely, which rubbed off on Carrie, who responded to the tension by falling asleep in the back seat.

Of course, they'd gotten my check, no problem. All my worry and angst evaporated as we made it up to our rooms on the fifth floor; three doors down the hall was the Minneapolis in '73 suite, a big, beautiful room full of food and drink and fans and fanzines. Heaven will be a lot like room 506 was, except the windows will look down over Andre Dawson's head onto Wrigley Field. And the readings were about the best I have ever been at, all the material was interesting and all the people Jerry and Suzle had chosen were good readers with strong voices and a sense of timing. The session built smoothly to a marvelous conclusion, with David Emerson's memoir of Susan Wood and Terry Carr, one of the very best pieces of fanwriting I have ever heard, and which left nary a dry eye in the house. A young fan ~~with~~ came up to Jerry and I later in the weekend and told us that David's piece had helped him in thinking about his mother, whom he had lost to cancer a few weeks before. Powerful stuff.

(Continued on Page Four)

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HOT OFF THE WIRE: Best wishes to Arnie Katz, who says he is recovering nicely from cataract surgery, and manages to pub more issues of Folly while legally blind. Nice of him to drop the name, but he'll find out what modern fan feuds are like if he keeps saying half our editorial duo is from Minnesota, and fails to put the other half on the mailing label.

This issue features two articles from new contributors to SB. We apologize to Jeanne for holding hers for almost two years before pubbing it, but we trust the affliction she describes is still extant. Luke McGuff's Tiny Tale of Terror was also a submission for his class in English 101; pray for his professor, folks.

Absolutely no Paisley Nanomachines died to produce this fanzine

## TINY TALES OF TERROR: UNCLE FRANK'S NIGHT MANAGER

By Luke McGuff

The night manager at Uncle Frank's was a mad fuck -- tall, snap-wire thin, all elbows, tight, bitter lips under a pencil moustache and a long face. He shoved a .357 Magnum down his crotch. He hated Puerto Ricans in general and the Insane Unknowns, a North Side Puerto Rican gang, in particular. He lusted after PR women -- easily the toughest, sharpest, hardest women in Chicago.

I could romanticize him: Drinking whiskey in his room and shooting pigeons out the window until he was too drunk to hit them anymore. Loving cars because when a car broke you could fix it, when a woman cried it was worse than an earthquake.

The I-U-K's hung out at Uncle Frank's the year before I worked there. He said it was their regular hangout, about 60 - 70 every night. Not ordering much and scaring away the good customers. The night manager was hired to get rid of them. He loved his job, he was looking for a fight, something worthwhile.

He put in an all-male crew at night because he didn't want women in the way and he didn't want the I-U-K's looking at them. He gave away free fries and dogs to the police and firemen, as much as they wanted, whatever they wanted. Even black and Puerto Rican cops. He told them to stop by anytime and bring their friends, on and off duty.

His brother was hired as a security guard. Who stood around with a shotgun. The manager showed his gun to the I-U-K's and told them to get lost. When they drove by and shot out the windows, he ran into the middle of Halstead Street, and shot after the car like it was a take for a "gritty realism" cop show.

Now me, if I ran a hot dog stand in that neighborhood, I'd have given free dogs and fries to cops and firemen, too. All the time, not just at night. But the shit with the shotgun and the gun in his crotch, bragging about shooting pigeons between the eyes with a .22 from across the street -- I thought that was overly hard.

One time we were standing around, about four of us. Two brothers, me, the night manager, and another guy like me who was a wannabe tough. No customers were around, and everything was cleaned up. One of the brothers said to me, "I know who you look like, Luke. The night manager!" I walked across the group, slapped him jokingly in the face with my hat, and said "I am not a fuckface." It shocked everyone. The night manager turned his back real quick, started rattling the fry baskets like he wanted to break them.

That night he gave me a ride home. Him and the other real tough guy, Peter his name was. Walking through the alley, Peter said, "Luke doesn't know we're leading him to his death. We're going to knife him and fuck him in the alley." The night manager smiled, tight and quiet.

We smoked the night manager's dope. It was winter, so he let the car idle for 20 or 30 minutes, listening to the classic rock station play Stones and Led Zep. He was driving a GTO that month. As the dope came on, my brain started misfiring with paranoid dreads that raced my heart. The night manager was silent. He dropped Peter off first. Drove me home in stone dead quiet, more scary than any screaming, any fakely jovial conversation would have been. Apology would have pissed him off even more. I didn't say a thing. Just goodbye, thanks for the ride, when I got out. He looked away.

That's when I got scared of the night manager. I thought, he carries a grudge and he'll act it out. He's got a gun in his crotch. The I-U-K's knew not to waste their time with me, but I was under his thumb five days a week, four to midnight. He wouldn't forget or forgive.

-- Luke McGuff

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...there's a rendezvous of strangers around the coffee urn tonight....  
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Wait a minute, Mr Postman...  
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CONFESSIONS OF A MAILAHOLIC  
By Jeanne Mealy



It was an addiction that grew slowly. Years ago, I got almost no mail. Couldn't afford many magazines, and didn't know many people to write to. I was also an erratic letter-writer, letting pen-pals in Australia and France fall by the wayside (much to my regret when I visited Oz in 1985).

And then...I learned to type. Ah, freed from the laborious travail of handwriting! I could clip along as fast as I could think, not worrying about forming the letters legibly. And then my family moved several times in three years, I graduated high school and earned money at a pre-college job. I began corresponding with friends

I'd left behind, sent away for mail-order stuff and...got hooked.

It wasn't an easy addiction. Developing letter-writing discipline is an ongoing struggle, even after hundreds of LoCs and thousands of personal letters and newsy Christmas cards. It's easy to rip open a letter or package. Not so easy to assemble materials for sending something and then write a coherent reply or fill out an order blank and write a (gak) check for the stuff. And yes, postage can be prohibitive.

But the rewards are great, oh yes. Coming home to a box of mystery, a heavy envelope with my name hand-scrawled on the front, a postmark of Canada, England, Australia or even California is a tangible thrill. Knowing that someone else spent time to send me something -- to use exotic stamps ("Life. Be in it" or "Arizona: Land of 10,000 Dried Up People"), that rubber stamp design, those stickers, even a special envelope...wow. I corresponded for a time with an artist who'd illustrate envelopes in wonderful ways. I worried, though, that the postal folks would reject them because the stamp and address weren't placed as per what I thought were regulation. Live and learn!

Just like sleepwalkers, mailaholics shouldn't be awakened to reality too quickly. Never get between a mailaholic and their mail, even if you're only teasing! Mailaholics find the strangest things fascinating. Personal letters are my #1 joy, followed by fanzines. I actually open offers from insurance companies, charities, magazines offering sample copies ("First one's free, really!"), and the like just to see what weird stuff awaits. I scavenge their copy for headlines, pictures I can use out-of-context, special stamps ("YES", "NO", "MAYBE") and giggle through their sky's-the-limit claims and promises.

I must confess, there are disadvantages to being a mailaholic. It can get expensive sending off for delightful mail-order goodies (stationary, rubber stamps, stickers, and even materials unrelated to correspondence). The pleasures of having penpals can lead to harder stuff: Apazines! Dozens of correspondents who want to hear from me regularly! It costs money to have the zines printed, and then to get my copy of the apa. I have to start on one apa's contribution almost as soon as I've sent one off for another. The dreaded Apa Treadmill (The fanzine LoC Treadmill is its counterpart). Do I have to send each apa member a birthday card, a Christmas card, a Valentine, or risk being thought unfriendly?

Ah, thanks for slipping the paper bag over my head. I've stopped hyperventilating. Wish you'd taken the groceries out first, but that's a minor quibble. Being a mailaholic ain't all iced tea and lemon slices, but it adds spice to my life. 'Scuse me -- mail's in! (WHOOOOOHHH)

-- Jeanne Mealy

None of the supposed turmoil and confusion of Minicon, very much a very big convention, reached us in our enclave on the fifth floor, and this has led me to rethink my theories about big and little conventions. I think any time you can apply the Minneapolis in '73 formula to any convention, you're sure to have a better time. What you do is this: You rent a big suite, not too far from the main convention function floors. You install two friends in the room, and they pay as much as they would for a normal double room. Then you get your group together and book all the rooms in the immediate vicinity. Everybody kicks in some extra money to pay for the rest of the suite, and does about a three-hour shift in charge of the party. The party expenses are also divided between the multitude, and you can also collect a little from your guests.



Craig Smith

While it is hardly a new technique, I have dubbed this the "Fortress Roscoe" method. It allows you to have your own little sanctum where the inanities of modern fandom can be escaped, a forum for your own guerilla programming, a place to do one-shots, a place to keep good beer without bringing enough to serve the entire convention...and yet, all these elitist pretensions can be pursued under the banner of hospitality toward other fans. Since you have the rooms nearby booked, no one is going to complain about noise. And if the madding crowd seems to be pressing in on you too eagerly -- hey, presto! -- SHUT THE DOOR.

Somebody ought to organize something like this for Chicon IV. I have a feeling we're going to have a considerable need for refuge and sanctuary. -- aph

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COA: Jon Singer, Avatar of Synchronicity, now resides at:  
1060 Ringwood, Menlo Park, CA, 94025  
Someone new to send fanzines to: Julie Shivers,  
3544 Ridgeway Dr., Madison, WI 53704  
Lost WAHF's from issue #4: Paul DiFilipo and Craig Smith.

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