

Variations on a Theme #8

from Rich Lynch • for SFPA 223 • written in September 2001

MilPhil

The Worldcon came to Philadelphia over Labor Day weekend, the first time it's been held in the City of Brotherly Love since 1953. This was the third Philadelphia worldcon, but because of the year it was held, the organizers did away with numbering and instead officially titled it 'The Millennium Philcon' (with no apologies to George Lucas).

For Nicki and me, the convention, in effect, began about a week earlier than that when an old fan friend from Los Angeles, R Laurraine Tutihasi, and her husband Mike Weasner stayed with us for a few days during their Worldcon and vacation trip to the east coast. I took them down to Washington for a walking tour and out to Hagerstown to see Harry Warner, Jr.; Nicki and I brought them to a couple of dinners with other fan friends, and then to a WSFA meeting in Virginia at the home of Alexis Gilliland. By the time they left to go on to Williamsburg for a few days, they might have been a little bit worn down.

MilPhil officially began on Thursday afternoon, August 30th, but for practical purposes it actually began the previous evening. It only takes about three hours to drive to Philadelphia from where we live in Maryland, and we made it to the hotel by late Wednesday afternoon, in time for the Boston and Charlotte bid parties that evening. There were some problems getting there. Even though Philadelphia isn't that far from us, we don't often go there, and we don't know the city nearly as well as perhaps we should. So we relied on the driving instructions that were in MilPhil's final progress report. That turned out to be a mistake. It turned out that Pennsylvania had recently renumbered the Interstate exits, and after we left I-95 at the recommended place none of the directions made sense after that. Luckily the exit we'd taken was Broad Street, which leads directly to the city center, so it actually didn't cause too much of a delay; usually, when you make a wrong turn in Philadelphia, you end up across the river in New Jersey!

Our hotel was in the middle of Philadelphia's Chinatown. We'd chosen it partly because of its (marginally) lower cost than the others in convention's room blockings and partly because we'd stayed at another hotel in that chain when we stopped in Cleveland last year on the way to the Chicago worldcon. It wasn't quite as nice as the one in Cleveland, but it did have a bit more character – the building the hotel occupied had formerly been a mill that had produced bentwood rocking chairs, and there were huge wooden structural beams in many of the rooms, including ours. Chinatown proved to be a good place for food, and most of our dinner expeditions with friends went there. The most interesting of the restaurants we went to was the Kosher Chinese Vegetarian restaurant (complete with a letter of certification by a local Rabbi), where there were dishes with faux meats made from seasonings, tofu, and other vegetables of various kinds. Eve Ackerman, who was there with us, ordered one of the ersatz pork dishes; afterwards she had some fun telling people that she'd found a way to eat pork without violating Kosher.

We never tried to fill ourselves during the dinner expeditions because there were usually a dozen or more parties to go to in the evening. For more than a year, Boston and Charlotte had

been staging an increasingly tense and unfriendly campaign for the rights to host the 2004 Worldcon (which Boston won, after all the votes were counted on Saturday night). They got started early, on Wednesday evening; the Charlotte crew had a suite up on the 21st floor of the Marriott and were doing their usual hot barbecue-for-the-masses, while the Boston people had all kinds of things to eat and drink, and were staging their event down on the 6th floor of the Marriott, where they had arranged five rooms in a row in an attempt to lower the population density. Besides those, the Japanese fans gave out samurai headbands and saki as they hosted two nights of parties to promote their 2007 Worldcon bid, the Los Angeles bid party for the 2006 Worldcon made us ‘Space Cadets’, and the Brits were once again pouring some single malt Scotch for their Scotland-in-2005 bid. And there were more yet! Some of the parties were somewhat indescribable in theme – there was even one whose theme appeared to be ‘worship of sugar’ and had a table piled high with all kinds of sugary treats. There was even a SFPA party of sorts, held in one of the rooms of the Baen Books party hosted by Toni (though, as usual, I avoided the one-shot).

Last year, after Chicon 2000, I wrote that I hadn’t been on any programming but there hadn’t been much that I would have been interested or able to contribute to, anyway. This year was different – I was able to find so many interesting panels that I was having trouble finding free time to do other things. I moderated two panels, one on the Heidelberg Worldcon of 1970 (I had some good panelists in Tony Lewis, Waldemar Kumming, and Robert Silverberg), and another on present and future means of energy production (with Jordin Kare, Vicki Warren, and Greg Benford). The latter had more than 200 attendees, which made it the most well-attended presentation I’ve ever directly participated in, as fan or professional. Except for the Hugo Awards.

For the 11th year in a row, Nicki and I had been nominated for a Hugo Award for our fanzine, *Mimosa*. And for the second year in a row we finished second behind Mike Glycer and his newszine, *File 770*. Dave Langford won two Hugos this year, one (as usual) for Fan Writer, and the other for his Short Story, “Different Kinds of Darkness.” Another winner was Jack Williamson, who at 90+ years old, is now the oldest person (still alive) to ever win a Hugo Award.

There were many SFPAns at MilPhil – Toni and Hank, Sheila, Eve, Tom Feller, Arthur Hlavaty, Janice Gelb, Irv Koch, and Guy Lillian. Guy had also been nominated for a Hugo award, for his fanzine *Challenger*; I think he’s going to win one eventually, though Mike Glycer will need to end his hot streak first (and Mike will be tough to beat next year, out in San José). Meanwhile, let’s repeat the mantra: “It really *is* an honor just to be nominated!” Believe it.

It was good to see Guy again, and especially nice to see his wife Rose. Nicki and I had felt bad about missing Guy’s wedding, back in June, but we did manage to spend a bit of time with Guy and Rose, taking them to lunch one day at a Chinese restaurant and taking a photo of them (for a wedding quilt Nicki will make for them) in front of one of Philadelphia’s more famous sculptures. The subject of the sculpture seemed entirely appropriate.



There were quite a few memorable moments at MilPhil. I got to meet a fanzine editor from the early 1950s, Joel Nydahl, who became famous back then not only for the spectacular two-volume “annish” of his fanzine *Vega*, but also in the rather abrupt gaffiation he made soon afterwards, attributed to burnout (though he now claims there were other reasons, as well). I also got to meet a Russian fan, Dr. Yuri Mironets, who had been brought to the convention by a special fund administered by Philadelphia writer/fan Catherine Mintz; Yuri has been a recipient of *Mimosa* for several years, but I never thought our paths would cross as I’m not likely to ever go to Vladivostok. And even though we didn’t win a Hugo, we still shared in the thrill of the moment; fan artist Teddy Harvia (a.k.a David Thayer) did, and his 16-year-old daughter, Matilda, was present – MilPhil was her first convention!

The most memorable moment of all for me, though, came early Saturday evening. For the past three years, the Bucconeer people have been using leftover resources from the 1998 worldcon to fund an annual student science fiction essay, story, and artwork contest. There are dozens of entrants each year, and the awards presentation is held at the Worldcon. I sat through about half of this year’s presentation (I was one of the readers for the essays) and then I left to go talk to Bruce Pelz, who was sitting near the entrance to the main concourse of the convention center. Not long afterward, there appeared a man and his wife and their little girl; they had driven from Maryland to Philadelphia so the young lady could accept her award and recognition as one of the finalists. It seemed to me that neither the man nor his wife were SF fans; I don’t think they had convention memberships, and they were late because the woman had to work that day. They didn’t know where the ceremony was being held, so I hurriedly brought them there, and it turned out that the ceremony was still going on and the young lady was able to go on stage, shake hands with Hal Clement, and receive her certificate after all. Afterwards, before they left to go home, the man took a photo of his wife and their daughter beneath the ‘World Science Fiction Society’ banner in the convention center, and you could see how happy the young lady was. They spotted me, came over and thanked me, saying I had “gone the extra mile” to get them to the ceremony on time. It was just a little thing, but it made my weekend. Losing a Hugo wasn’t such a big deal after that.

Exploring Classical Music

Philadelphia, besides being home to the U.S. Mint, the Liberty Bell, Robert Indiana’s ‘Love’ sculpture, and the 2001 Worldcon, is also the home city for one of the world’s great orchestras. The Philadelphia Orchestra became famous back in the ‘50s and ‘60s, under the baton of the great conductor Eugene Ormandy. There are many recordings of The Philadelphia Orchestra from that period; the one I’m recommending this time is music by the Russian composer Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov (Sony Essential Classics SBK 46537) which includes two very fine orchestral suites – the *Cappricio Espagnol* and the wonderful *Sheherazade*. In particular, *Sheherazade* is a delight to listen to – it was inspired by the the composer’s mental images of scenes from *The Thousand and One Nights*, and the four movements have very descriptive titles: “The Sea and Sinbad’s Ship”, “The Story of the Kalander Prince”, “The Young Prince and the Young Princess”, and “Festival at Baghdad – The Sea – Shipwreck”. Intermingling through all of these, at various times is a solo violin which acts as transition – the violin is the voice of Sheherazade. At times this is a bombastic composition, at other times it’s a delicate thing. The more I listen to

this enchanting work, the better I like it. The music just carries you away.

More recently, the Philadelphia Orchestra has been led by a series of the newer generation of conductors. One of them is the Italian conductor Riccardo Muti, who was the principal conductor for the orchestra in the early 1990s. One disk from this period I can recommend is The Philadelphia Orchestra's recording of Beethoven's 9th "Chorale" Symphony (Seraphim 73284), one of the thematically most complex symphonies ever composed. It was completed in 1824, three years before his death. The composer was deaf by then, and perhaps was becoming aware of his mortality – the first movement gives you the impression there is an immense philosophical struggle going on; you didn't get anything like this in any of his earlier symphonies. The symphony progresses in theme to being more thoughtful or pensive in the second and third movements, then very lyrical in the finale, as if the philosophical struggle in the first movement had been resolved. Much of the symphony should be familiar to the listener, for example the 'Huntley and Brinkley' opening to the second movement. Of course, the most famous movement of the symphony is the final movement, with its chorale "Ode to Joy", which sets the words of Friedrich von Schiller (from 40 years earlier!) to perhaps the most famous melody in classical music. But it was entirely recycled; Beethoven had used that same melody in an earlier composition, a Chorale Fantasia for piano, about 15 years earlier.

The symphony runs well over an hour, making it by far Beethoven's longest composition, and therein lies a (possibly apocryphal) tale. When the compact disk format was being devised about a couple of decades back, the famous German conductor, Herbert von Karajan, insisted that CDs be designed such that there would be enough capacity for Beethoven's 9th Symphony to fit on a single disk. The 'legend' has it that Karajan's words carried so much weight that the CD developers acceded to his wishes; what's more likely is that CDs would have had this much storage capacity anyway, just from technical design considerations. But it's still a fun story, of how Beethoven may have influenced a cutting edge technology of the time. Certainly the 9th Symphony, with its then-unprecedented use of chorale in the final movement, was equally cutting edge. A recording of this symphony is an essential in any classical music library.

"I See Smoke Across the River"

September 11th was a bright, clear day in Washington. I was at my desk at work that morning, doing web site development and listening to the local classical music station, when the hourly news had a report that an airplane had crashed into one of the World Trade Center buildings up in New York City.

I was able to get to the CNN web site before it was overwhelmed by the number of people trying to do the same thing; it had a photo showing much worse damage than I had expected to see; clearly this wasn't just a terrible error by a pilot of a small plane. The radio station soon carried another breaking news story that the other World Trade Center tower had been hit by another plane, and then from down the hall there were people saying the Pentagon had been attacked. I went to the office across the hall (my office only looks into an interior courtyard), and I could see billows of dark black smoke coming from across the river.

We were told to leave the building and go home soon after that; there were reports of explosions up on Capitol Hill, at the State Department, and at the Old Executive Office Building. All hoaxes and runaway rumors, luckily. There was also a report that the subway was not

running, again false – if it had shut down, I’m not sure how I would have gotten home.

The last few days (it’s September 14th as I’m writing this) have had a feeling of unreality about them, as if I’m stuck in the middle of a Clancy novel, hoping to quickly reach the end and return to the real world. Certainly some of the images have been terrible to see, over and over again. I think the most disturbing ones were the shots of people jumping from the upper floors of the towers – there was a couple who held hands just before they jumped, and another of somebody who had transformed his death leap into almost an art form, head first with legs crossed as he fell. Then there was the photograph of the upper floors of one of the towers, of people at the windows looking out for help that would never arrive; the photo was taken just before the tower came down.

It has been a strange, sad few days...

Mailing Comments, SFPA 222

Jeff Copeland (OE)

I can’t remember if I voted for the new SFPA constitutional amendment, but I do know I was a bit ambivalent about it. I do agree that the OE should be held blameless whenever somebody publishes something derogatory in SFPA. But I hope you (and your successor) will not turn such a blind eye the next time non-SFPA stuff, like the sort Markstein used last time, is brought up here in an attempt to discredit a member of the apa. There was no way you could check on Markstein’s claim, so you let it go, even though it turns out to be false and nothing more than a cheap shot at me. Next time, I hope you (and your successor) will ask for some supporting evidence, or at least check with the person attacked to see if the accusation holds any water, before allowing such a SFPazine to be part of the mailing. (No disrespect intended, by the way.)

Norm Metcalf

On errors produced by misquoting: “Do you see any discrepancies [between what I quoted from your SFPazine and what you wrote]? Well, nothing significant; I think I kept your remarks in context, actually. Certainly I stand by my point, that Sam Moskowitz was not immune to making mistakes of fact from time to time just like every other science fiction historian. Please be a bit more specific on what you see the problem is.

On accurate research: “Your quotation from a David A. Kyle article citing Mark Blackman about Sam Moskowitz being wrong about the beginnings of the Lunarians may or may not be accurate.” And, pray tell, what are you basing that statement on? Your own gut feeling, or do you have a source? The Kyle quote is accurate, by the way – and I ought to know, since it was published in *Mimosa*. As for the basis for that quote, I believe it is accurate too – I talked to Mark Blackman at MilPhil (whom Dave quoted in his article), and specifically asked him about Sam’s involvement with the founding of the Lunarians. Mark said he has a copy of the minutes, and that Dave’s information was, in fact, correct. I will take no offense if you do not wish to take my word on this, and will provide you Mark’s address if you’d like to check it out for yourself.

On Denver fan history: “As for revising Robert C. Peterson’s off-the-cuff history of Denver fandom, yes I should get to that in a few months.” I will very much look forward to reading it!

On fairness of the Hugo awards: “It’s obvious that some of the best stories never get nominated and the best nominees often lose out to inferior works.” That was very evident at this

year's worldcon, where there were Retrospective Hugos presented for the year 1951 (for works that had appeared in 1950). There was much criticism of the results in several categories (even among the winners – Robert Silverberg, the winner for Fan Writer, said on the podium that he didn't deserve the award). Visibility wins out.

Ned Brooks

On older cars: “[The] 1957 Chevy [was] one of the ugliest cars ever made, a sort of last gasp of corrupt art deco. Both the '56 and '58 were nicer looking.” But it's always the '57 that you see at road stops or in auto shows. It must have had something going for it, to be so popular. Or maybe it was because bazillions of them were produced?

Richard Dengrove

On “respectable” classical music: “I happen to like Richard Addinsell's ‘Warsaw Concerto’, which any self-respecting member of the cogniscenti considers drippy sewage.” Not sure that's true; it's actually a very nice short piano concerto in one movement, very Rachmaninoff-like (and there's a story about that I'll write about some other time). Classical stations play it once in a while, and I'll always listen to it when they do.

me

The Postcard Diary of Eastern Europe I published last time is now on the World Wide Web (with nice color photos, in place of the crummy B&W scans I used in my SFPazine). Here's the URL: <http://www.jophan.org/eurodiary7/>

Sheila Strickland

Finally got to meet you again – after what? 20 years? – up in Philadelphia. And thanks for rescuing me from the one-shot! Next year again in San José?

Irv Koch

On being invited to be a Worldcon GoH: “Julius [Schwartz] is walking around fandom insisting that he be the Fan GoH at a Worldcon.” Actually, I like the idea. Julie had a few decades where he was a comics editor at the expense of involvement in science fiction, but he still has better credentials than some of the people who have been chosen in previous years. As for his claim that he was editor/publisher of the first fanzine, that depends on how strictly you define what a fanzine is. If it is broad enough to include anything published by science fiction fans or fan clubs, then no – *The Comet* [May 1930] is generally thought to be the first. The fanzine Julie is referring to, *The Time Traveler*, first appeared in January 1932, which was co-edited by Julie and also Allen Glasser (and possibly others – I'd have to do more research to be more precise). *The Comet* (retitled as *Cosmology* starting with issue no. 2) generally followed the Gernsbackian ideal of what fandom should be – a way of nurturing younger people into becoming future scientists – and published articles like “Chemistry and Atomic Theory” and “What Can Be Observed in a Small Telescope,” where *The Time Traveler* emphasized things more of interest to science fiction readers, like biographical material about authors, bibliographical listings, and even some fan-written fiction. *The Time Traveler* was the first of its kind.

Guy Lillian

On *A.I.*: “Joe thought it derivative and dull; I saw in it a profound reflection on the nature, power, perversity and purpose of love, and was deeply moved.” Your mileage might vary, I guess. I saw it as deeply flawed, with some plot holes big enough to fly a spaceship through. Most of the human characters came across as shallow, and some of the science fictional elements just were not very believable, even for a science fiction movie. After watching the movie, and I don’t really want to see it again, I decided there was indeed a reason why Kubrick never made this movie. I predict it will not make the Hugo ballot next year (for whatever that’s worth).

On the Retro Hugos: “Yes, [they] are silly, as they reflect current appreciation of a work or an artist, not contemporary.” Yes, I absolutely agree, and the results from this second attempt at them at MilPhil reinforces that. If these had been voted on in 1951 (at the Nolacon!), there’s no way Freas would have won for Best Pro Artist, or Silverberg for Best Fan Writer, and it’s unlikely some of the fiction winners would have been the same. Actually, the whole list of nominees would have even been different. This is really a mostly pointless exercise.

On Moskowitz: “What did you think of Joyce Katz’s recent reprint of the demolition of Sam Moskowitz’s research and style by my teacher, Fred Chappell?” Actually, I haven’t read it, so I can’t say. I’ll have to look to see if it’s on her web site. Based on Norm’s comments this time, I guess you should be asking him that question, not me, but I can kind of guess what his response would be.

On my early career as a research chemist: “Here I was impressed that ... Henry Welch had been awarded a patent, and you had eight of the things before you truly started your career! What did you invent – a better can opener?” Nothing so useful. All of them were chemical processes – some for making an organic hypochlorite intermediary that we had thought might be useful in making more stable inorganic oxidizers, and some for improvements in the electrochemical process for making potassium hydroxide. All have expired, and as far as I know, none were ever investigated beyond bench scale. The one process I developed (again, at bench scale) that I had thought might really be useful was never submitted for a patent – it was a way of regenerating pure potassium carbonate “seed” material from dirty potassium sulfate for use in coal-fueled MHD power generation (the potassium carbonate produces potassium ions at the high temperatures in a MHD process, and the ions carry an electric charge). This was a much less energy intensive way of regenerating the potassium carbonate from the by-product potassium sulfate (which is formed when the sulfur in the coal reacts with the potassium) that any MHD process had planned to use. But MHD research was de-funded by the Department of Energy in the late 1980s (too high a capital cost per kilowatt and too many unresolved materials science problems), so I guess it didn’t matter in the long run.

Trinlay Khadro

On cyber privacy: “I don’t want my address up on ANY web site, I get enough spam.” Just for the heck of it, I did a web search on trin@dias.net, and it turns out your email address is *already* on the web, and more than once. One of them was when you signed a web site guest-book, and another lists you as a contact for a Wisconsin-based group. Spam doesn’t automatically happen when one’s email address finds its way to the web; I think it’s more dependent on what sites you visit, and to a lesser extent, who your ISP is.

On deadly maladies: "Joe Mayhew had 'Mad Cow'? Ai! D'ya know if he ate venison? There seems to be a version of 'Mad Cow' affecting deer and elk ... as well as some of the people who eat them." I hadn't been aware of the deer equivalent of BSE; I hope it's rare. But at any rate, Joe *didn't* have BSE; he had CJD (Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease) which similar in many ways but not the same thing. (Joe's decline was very rapid, which apparently does not happen with BSE.) How Joe became ill with CJD is something we may never know. He had open heart surgery several years prior to that, so maybe it was something in the blood supply (though there are people who think that the prions that cause BSE-related maladies cannot be passed via the blood). Best guess is that Joe had the bad luck to be that one-in-whatever chance where CJD spontaneously arises. This doesn't seem to be anything that CDC or NIH is actively pursuing.

David Schlosser

On the economy: "I don't think [a drop or crash in the stock market and a crash in the economy] go hand-in-hand at all." Steve Hughes seems to think just the opposite, and it's possible that both, or neither of you is right. A direct correlation, or lack of one, seems a bit of an oversimplification to me. Part of the NASDAQ decline was because some of the tech and dotcom stocks that had risen to such heights never deserved to be as high as they were at all, if the same criteria are used for judging the blue chips, and they finally came back to earth. Another reason, as you mention, is that the market gurus have gotten hard-assed lately about companies meeting profit projections to the decimal point. Anything even slightly below expectations equates to poor performance nowadays.

Randy Cleary

On theme parks: "We had never been to Sea World." Your description of it was positive, so I guess you enjoyed it? Actually, Sea World is one of the two theme parks Nicki and I have been to more than once (the other was Universal Studios, but in two different locations). "It stormed every day we were down there in the evenings." Only in the evenings? One of my etched-in memories of the Orlando worldcon, Magicon, in 1992 were the 2:00pm thunderstorms you could set your watch by.

Janice Gelb

On after-work events: "You often talk about embassy parties. Do you find out about them through work?" Mostly. But more than that, through networking. I got on the list for the annual Finland 'Glogg Buffet' holiday parties, for instance, because the former Science Attaché from Finland's embassy came to DOE for a meeting that I attended, and he and I talked for a while. One of my contractors is a consulting engineer who has many embassy contacts, and I've gotten invites through him. I've gotten other invites because I've had meetings at various embassies about energy-related matters. And sometimes, events are open for anybody who wants to come (though for some of them there are at-the-door fees); musical recitals and cultural events fall into that category. And at each of these events, I usually try to do more networking, to meet even more people.

On classical music: "Thanks again for the Saint-Saëns CD; I've been enjoying it at work." You're welcome! I'll have another CD for you next time I see you.

Gary Brown

On new car options: "If there was a downside to the car purchase, it was that while it came with a radio capable of having a CD player installed, there wasn't one in it." Same for my new Corolla. If I'd paid for it as an extra, I think it would have added another \$350 or thereabouts to the cost of the car. Right now I really don't have any good idea on what a CD player *should* cost, so I'll be watching to see what you do, and how much you pay when you decide to add yours.

Eve Ackerman

On vacations: Your vacation trip to New York and Quebec City sounded very pleasant. I've never been to Quebec City. I've been to New York several times, but not since 1997. I had Slovak visitors with me then, and we rode the subway from midtown all the way to the bottom of Manhattan so they could see the Statue of Liberty; after that we walked to Wall Street, passing by the two monolithic towers that are no longer there. The city will be different next time I go there.

Steve Hughes

On where the buck stops: "If you're going to give [Clinton] credit for the biggest stock bubble since the radio era, you need to also give him the blame for the bubble bursting. In reality he had nothing to do with either." Presidents have been elected and tossed out of office many times on the strength of the economy; it happened to Bush senior, Jimmy Carter, and Herbert Hoover. It might happen again with Bush junior, but it comes with the territory. Certainly, Ronald Reagan's biggest stock in trade was that he "cured" the economy. As you imply, it's more complex than that. But eight years of sustained growth, on the other hand, hardly seems like it happened accidentally. One is forced to conclude that Bill Clinton was good for America's economy, for whatever the reasons.

On the economic future of the country: "I hope I'm wrong, but I think there are some rough times ahead." After what happened this past Tuesday, I agree with you that rough times are certainly ahead, but what happened in New York and Washington changes everything. There will be much more government spending on defense and anti-terrorism, not to mention rebuilding in Washington and New York. Any attempt to predict what the economy will be like a year from now will need the services of an Ouija Board.

Jeff Copeland

On vacations: Alaska sounds fascinating; I'd like to visit there some day. We just had one guy in the office go on a 3-month temporary duty assignment in Alaska (Fairbanks, I think), which sounds to me like a bit too much of a good thing. What you did sounds just about right.

On re-defining the Hugos: "I'd just as soon do away with the Semiprozine [category] altogether, but we've discussed that before." It's still a good topic, though. One thing that could be done is to redefine the category as 'Best Related Magazine' (we already have a 'Best Related Book' category) which would let in things like *Starlog* and some of the movie magazines, and also sciencey publications like *Sky & Telescope*. But *Locus* would still win.

Toni Weisskopf

On writing science fiction: Fascinating speech, and instructive as well, should I ever some

day want to try to write fiction (which I don't expect to). "[John W. Campbell] had a famous rule about no aliens, which explains why Asimov didn't write about aliens until the 1980s." This also explains why Larry Niven, perhaps the most successful hard-science fiction writer of the 1960s and 1970s, never sold a story to *Analog* until after Campbell died. Alien species were a staple of Niven's 'Known Space' series.

On possible Worldcon Fan Guests of Honor (for 2005): "Talk to Vince [Docherty] about the Glasgow bid; he's collecting names and I agree with you that Terry Jeeves would make a nice one." I also agree, as would Ron Bennett, Robin Johnson, John Foyster, Julie Schwartz, and many others from the 1960s and earlier who haven't been honored yet. I did get a chance to talk to Vince, actually, at one of the dead dog parties, and he took some notes. And how about some support for Ron Goulart and Robert Sheckley as possible Pro Guests of Honor for some future worldcon?

Gary Robe

Interesting trip report. I admire your sense of dedication and the desire to do good, but some of the things your group did sound a bit intrusive to me. Like some of the households you visited, we also do not talk to any door-to-door solicitors, of any kind (though we don't post any signs – we just politely decline to talk or accept any handouts).

Liz Copeland

On Glogg: The recipe you printed looks like it might be the one they use at Finland's embassy for their holiday parties; certainly there are raisins, almonds, and cinnamon sticks used, and some red wine too.

On Orycon: "Let us know in advance if you do accept invites to be on the Orycon programming. If you're going to be there, we'll try to go." We'd like to meet up with you again, too, but Orycon isn't possible this year, sorry. In fact, we have yet (either of us) to ever set foot anywhere in the State of Oregon.

Nice report on your Alaska trip. That's not one of the places I ever expect to get to, so it was pleasant to vicariously experience it as I read your report.

mike weber

On what it takes to win a DSC bid: "[The Birmingham bid was] allowed to win the DSC because ... you guys didn't call up someone here in Atlanta and warn them (as what happened in '79)." And what memories *that* brings back! We were all much younger then, and the series of feuds and unpleasantness that affected both Chattanooga and Atlanta fandoms hadn't yet happened. Those were the days...

Time to end this, but before I do I should mention that I received an email from Guy Lillian; at my request he had searched court records and could find nothing to show that Markstein had been arrested during his porno theater manager days. So, therefore, I'll modify the *Mimosa* web site, adding a pop-up disclaimer specifically about the probable inaccuracy concerning the arrest, while maintaining Markstein's anonymity by keeping his name blacked-out.

Now he and I can go back to ignoring each other.