

ASCENDING DESCENDING



Our cover this issue is an actual Lego® construction; the photo has not been manipulated or digitally processed. What you see is what you get. (It appears that they may have used a wide-angle lens to add a little distortion.)

It appears to me that the "dirty work", so to speak, is



Welcome to

ASCENDING DESCENDING

a SFPazine,
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Intended for the November, 2002 mailing
of the SFPA

done at either the lower right or the upper left corner of the stairway.

The photo can be found online at <http://www.lipsons.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk/escher/ascending.html>; i haven't checked the site further, but i understand that if you go to <http://www.lipsons.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk>, there are Other things well worth your attention to be found.

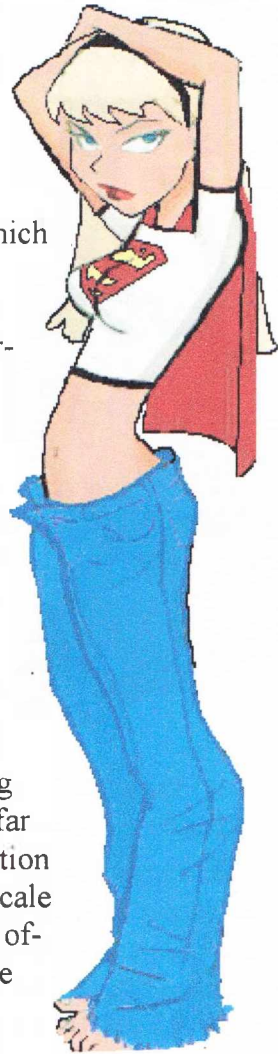
The gimmick that makes this photo work is the fact that the camera has only one eye; it's widely used in film-making, to put what's called a "foreground miniature" into a shot -- remember James Bond flying the little jet plane into the open doors of a hangar? Actually, it was a 1/10 scale model, and there was a 1/10 scale model of the right half of the building front placed ten times nearer the camera than the real hangar, and aligned so that its edge was invisible because it matched the surface of the real hangar perfectly. With its one eye, the camera has no idea that one thing is nearer than the other so long as you can maintain depth of field.

Another thing this principle makes possible is "forced

perspective" -- where models or background paintings are made in which objects that are supposed to be further away than they really are are smaller than closer objects -- an example of this would be the elevator shaft in the original *Die Hard* film, which tapered inward, using smaller and smaller scale building materials. (This in turn led to a problem with the apparent speed of the fireball that roars up the shaft at Willis changing as it gets nearer the top as a given actual vertical distance represents less apparent distance...)

It was also used to put together most of the shots featuring normal-sized people and leprechauns in *Darby O'Gill and the Little People* -- in that case, a hugely-oversized set was built that the people portraying the leprechauns performed on, rather far from the camera, and a very small section of its floor was duplicated at normal scale and set Much Closer to the camera -- often up in the air on a crane. Again, the camera's cyclopic view caused the closer objects to apparently be part of the more distant scene. (One problem with that was that, using the relatively slow film stocks Disney used in the Fifties and early Sixties, in order to stop down the camera enough to get enough depth of field, they had to absolutely flood the set with light, and it was almost too hot to work there for long.)

{I'm sure *Steve* -- if no-one else -- has followed this overly-long, probably opaque discourse, despite my best efforts to mess up writing it...}





Of Some Interest
(Possibly)
To My Fellow
SFPAs:

I've just ordered a new version of my DTP software; it's not an upgrade to the DTP itself, per se, it's basically an addition of one property that i like the thought of -- the ability to save my DTP files as PDF files, complete with illos and so on... in other words, the ability to publish a zine (either on disc or online) that can be read on a computer equipped with Acrobat or Acrobat Reader.

Checking my files, i don't think that i have all of this year's zines still on disc, but i may. If i do, i'll be publishing a CD version of my zines for the year -- and certainly, assuming i'm still in SFPA (assuming i'm still alive and can afford electricity to run the computer) next year, in time for the Egoboo Poll mailing, i'll be publishing such a one-year compilation -- given that CD-R discs cost rather less than a buck each in bulk (i think i paid less than a quarter apiece for the latest pack of 100 i bought), publishing the entirety of my year's work on one CD and burning enough copies to send one to everyone will probably be cheaper than printing one issue on paper either on the DeskJet or at Office Depot.

(Well, i just looked and i think i do have all of this

year's zines on disc -- at least i see November '01 and January '02 -- ah, hell, can't find March. Or did i do a March zine of any length? Anyway, there's May and July and September (these being the mailings they were intended for, of course...)-- i guess i could do it this mailing, if i have the energy.

Too late for the Egoboo Poll, of course, but it'll start a tradition.

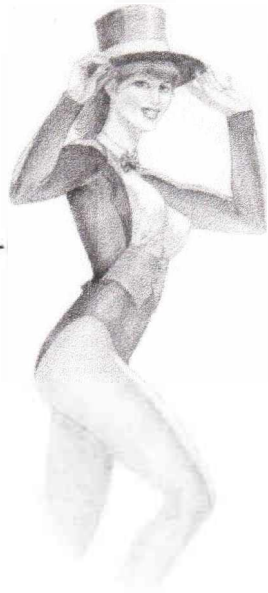
The thing is, this DTP is essentially the same package i bought off a "cheap software" display at Office Depot to run on Windows 3.1 something like ten years ago -- apparently someone picked up the rights to it and has been updating it ever since. Having paid for three upgrades since then (counting the PDF upgrade which i haven't received yet), i find myself with a total investment of about \$40 (not counting "postage and handling") in a quite-powerful software package that lets me do all sorts of Neet Things if i want to.

Generally, i use it by using EditPad to enter and edit the text, then loading it into PagePlus for formatting. It may not be quite so neet, in some peoples' opinions as using Word or PerfectWriter or whatever and both editing and formatting your text at the same time, but i Hate those programs so much that i never miss any alleged capabilities they have...

Charlotte mentions getting involved with

Yngvi is a Louse TKFWR

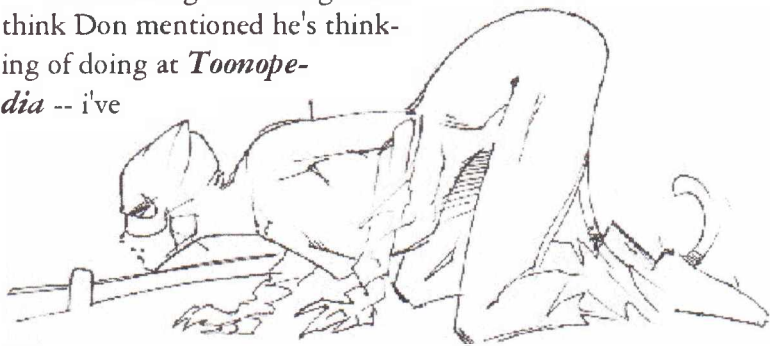
Patrick Stuart's books. I picked up the first of the Stuarts and found Absolutely Nothing for me in it,



although i did finish it. This is interesting, because it's a type of book i usually like well enough in a setting that i can deal easily with, too. So i'm at a loss to explain why i didn't feel anything at all about it -- i didn't even dis like it, just was totally unaffected. I guess part of it was the fact that i found Aubrey and Maturin (those are the names, right?) totally uninteresting and rather boring as characters.

Speaking of specialised cookbooks -- so far, in the past three months plus two weeks, Amazon.com have sold fourteen copies of the *Pirate's Pantry* Junior League cookbook (Lake Charles LA) (<http://electronictiger.com/reviews/pantry.htm>) to people who came from my website to buy them. Not only that, all fourteen sales were direct clicks on links from my review page, because i got the 15% commission on them. Which leads me to wonder, is someone out there telling people to read my review of this wonderful cookbook and then order it from Amazon, or is it just that the most popular thing i've got a review of (out of 156 reviews as of today -- about four or five more in suspense, submitted but not yet posted) on the whole damned site? I mean, people buy other things i recommend, but i doubt that i've sold fourteen copies of one of Dave's books altogether yet, though i do tend to sell one or two each of most of them every quarter... (And usually one or two copies of "Dark Star" (<http://electronictiger.com/reviews/darkstar.htm>) and "The Steel Bonnets" (<http://electronictiger.com/reviews/steel.htm>), as well...)

So i'm doing something that i think Don mentioned he's thinking of doing at *Toonopedia* -- i've



searched Amazon for every Junior League book, and i'm making a special page listing every one of them with links to buy the suckers. Let's see if that brings in some money. And i've put a begging bowl on the front page. I think i might add a link from every review page, too to the donation page... ((Actually, the last few quarters, i've actually done slightly better than breaking even between what i've made off Amazon and the cost of running the site.))

Speaking of making money off websites reminds me that Bill Holbrook reports that he was dropped by the company that had been putting banner ads on the "Herd Thinners Inc" (*Kevin & Kell*) site -- they told him it was actually costing them more to put the banners on his site than they were making off click-thrus...

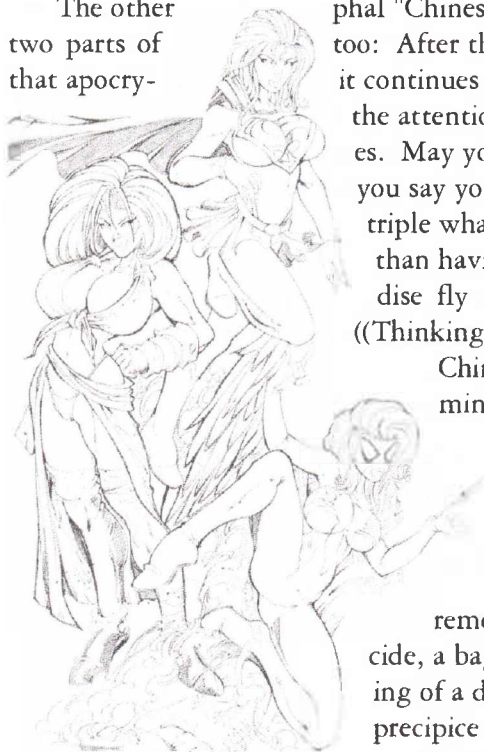
I wish we could have made DSC -- the last con i've been to was the Birmingham DSC that our car broke down on the way to. Unfortunately, broke as we are, we can't afford cons. Sigh.

The "usual DSC stalwart" who was missed the most of all would have been Meade, i'm sure -- i can't imagine attending an Alabama con without at least seeing Meade. I just heard that Dal Coger had died, as well -- it's been a Very Bad Year. ((In the world of music, the second Ramone -- Dee Dee -- has died; i sorta think i heard he died from an overdose; not a surprise, really. {Sorry -- just interrupted your MC for a while to go hunt up articles about Dee Dee's death. Heroin OD, as i expected. Once upon a time i thought he'd kicked that shit.}))

Not making direct comment to "Joys of Interesting Times", i must say that i find it amusing that the pilot who led the drive to arm pilots was a Delta pilot -- At one time Delta pilots couldn't hit Denver with a map to help, and we're going to give them guns?



The other two parts of that apocry-



phal "Chinese Curse" are relevant, too: After the "Interesting times" bit, it continues with "May you come to the attention of those in High Places. May you receive exactly what you say you desire." Now, that is a triple whammy significantly worse than having a mere bird of paradise fly up your nose...

((Thinking about fictitious Ancient Chinese Things puts me in mind of the quote from Kai Lung (Which Hank ought appreciate): "It has been truly said that there is no situation in life which cannot be remedied by honourable suicide, a bag of gold, or the thrusting of a despised adversary over a precipice on a stormy night."

Speaking of the question of the rights or non-Citizens: I have just read the entire text of the Consitution. The only times it mentions "Citizens" is when stating what the requirements for Federal Office shall be (and a couple of mentions of Citizens of States in context of such things as what the Federal Judiciary is for, extradition and similar things). One can interpret the Preamble to be limiting, but one can also interpret the Second Amendment to be limiting, too.

Anent your comment to Brad Foster (and his about obsolescence): I have to re-purchase the entire Ramones catalog on CD -- Rhino has done it to me again, re-releasing them in beautifully re-mastered editions with loads of extras. Pooh. (Incidentally -- have you got the re-issue/re-master/new tracks version of *Will the Circle be Unbroken?* and *Circle 3* is due out soon; sounds like it ought to be better than that train-wreck *Circle 2*...)

Mentioning getting "gargoyle waterspouts" -- technically, by strict definition, all gargoyles are waterspouts.

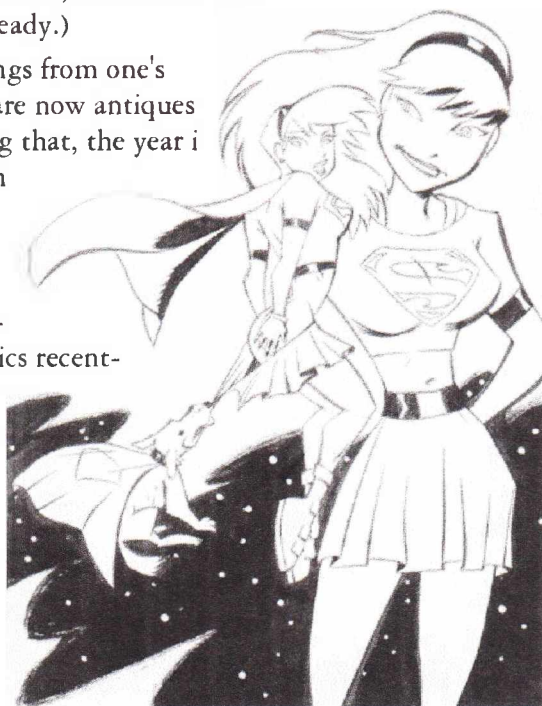
Anent computer upgrades -- we just bought a Gateway 200Mhz (with overdrive chip -- originally 120MHz) Pentium so that Kate and i could both play online and use it as a print server; i had picked up a toy that has no Windows 2000 drivers (that's what's on the machine where Kate is currently playing 1602 AD) -- it prints colour pictures using Polaroid film packs; beautiful results, but expensive per-print costs. (Slightly over a buck a print if i can't find any more of the single-pack units Staples was remaindering at \$2.50/10-shot pack...) Perhaps if i do that PDF disk collection of all my zines for the year, i'll use it to print labels for the jewel boxes...

Anyway, we bought an entire system (used), monitor and all for right at \$100, and a network card for the other computer and CAT-5 cable for \$25...

Last i looked, MicroCenter in Marietta would sell you a 100MHz Pentium machine (with 1.8Gig HDD and 48Meg RAM) for \$29.95, and MicroSeconds on Roswell Road had Kyocera laser printers for the same price (you have to order the cartridges/toner online at \$70 a pop, but still, a working laser for \$100 is a good deal...; if we were working, i'd have one already.)

Speaking of things from one's Prime Of Life that are now antiques -- i was just thinking that, the year i was born, Superman had only been published for ten years, and here we've had the fortieth anniversary of Marvel Comics recently.

Well, if one knows the proper score for something on a record, and one has perfect pitch (like Mike Rogers, BTW), then one



can tell if the record was cut offspeed. Otherwise, one can do research, i suppose.

"Arabian controlled states" -- there are no such things, just lines in the sand drawn by the Western Powers and traditional tribal leaders...

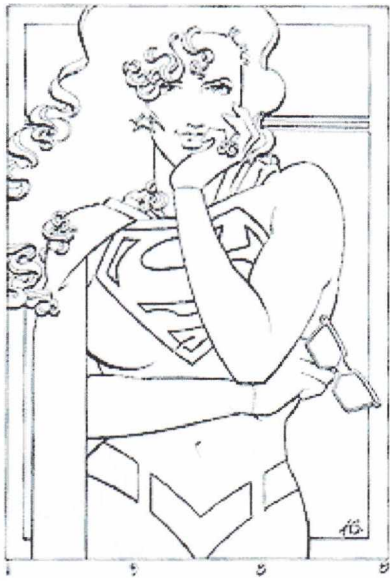
Which movie did you review negatively -- *Pearl Harbor* (which i haven't seen, having avoided it like the pague) or *TORA TORA TORA*, the movie that drove Akira Kurosawa to attempted suicide? Either deserves one, except that *TTT* has got some lovely traditional-type effects work (including one truly scrumptious use of the front-projection technology invented by Will Jenkins)...

The thing about Ann Eifel in Luann that the strips i reprinted didn't show was that for the month or so beforehand, he'd been playing her so that she looked like a Predatory Older Woman (cue Dory Previn's "When a Man Wants a Woman" for a rather pointed disucssion of the differences between a "romantic" older male and a "predatory" older female...) with designs on Zane... and then sudden-

Spiritus Mundi ghliii

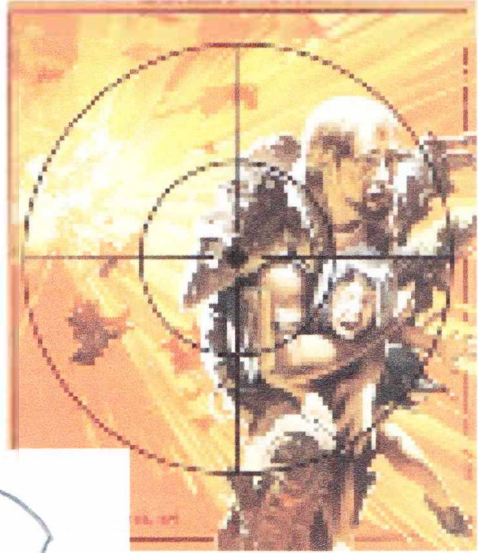
ly, in two strips, he turned the whole thing around.

Luann has always sort of sideswiped Big Issues with a humourous-but-pointed approach that the overall image of the strip might not suggest -- couple years back when the exchange student Miguel lured Luann out to a Romantic Parking Spot and basically explained that of course, he'd respect her in



the morning (her cell phone rang at the last moment), or the sequence i didn't see some years back when Luann was a perpetual thirteen years old, when a Momentous Event In Her Life occurred, and the logic of the continuity required her to tell Bernice but he was afraid that if he actually Said It Aloud, so to speak, it would offend people, so when Bernice asked Luann what was up, Luann responded in a balloon that just said "."

Redliners is a "man against nature" SF story, in which the "redliners" of the title -- post-traumatic stress disorders waiting to happen big-time -- are assigned as guards/defense team to an involuntary colony going in on a planet that makes Harry Harrison's Deathworld look positively benign. As i say,



by defending the colony, they work out their own personal salvations -- or deaths, in some cases because, on clear reflection, death seems the best ending to them. Heavy on the allegory, but that beautiful cover says it all...

Actually, puppy-dog Jack turned out to be fe-

that had the hip joint removed fairly normally except when she wants to move FAST -- as when i took her out on her leash and she caught a live mouse the other night (definitely a terrier). Right now she's got sutures in her tummy, because the other day she went to the vet to be broken.

Does anybody in the Atlanta area need a perfectly lovely and loving mostly-terrier with a slight limp and a wonderful, loving disposition?



However, as written, the most recent kiddie-porn laws did criminalise anything that portrayed or appeared to portray sexual activity among those under 18. Period. Real kids or cartoons or text.

Are you sure that that Conrad cartoon you mention had a statue of Calley? Ollie North would make more sense, really.

Just as you say happened with Al Capp, in Walt Kelly's last years he had lost his edge and a lot of his Nixon/Agnew stuff was just bitter and not very funny. Although caricaturing Spiro as a hyena in a White House Police uniform... I seem to recall that the last really good major sequence in Pogo was the Pandemia sequence where they thought they were on Mars but found out they were in the Outback -- and that was far enough back that it featured an absolutely deadly LBJ caricature as a cowboy centaur called "The Loan Arranger" whose inavriable greeting to anyone -- old friend or total stranger -- was "Howdy there, Ol' buddy -- put 'er there!" I think that was the sequence that gave us the "...and he is us" line. Kelly, at least, remained just anout the same liberal all the way through.

George P. Burdell -- not "Burdette" is a little more elabo-

rate a creation than that; Way Back When -- i forget the year -- some genius (obviously) created an signed up George P. Burdell for a full course shcedule -- presumably all of his own classes (and with the size of lecture sections at Tech, in the days before computers, it would be difficult to do a process of elimination and decide who).

For the entire semester, he (or they) proceeded to do all of Burdell's classwork and homework as-ignments -- his lab notes, his assigned papers, his tests -- everything. Consider that this was in addition to his own/their own schedules and that they gave 'Burdell' good marks but made his work completely different from their own.

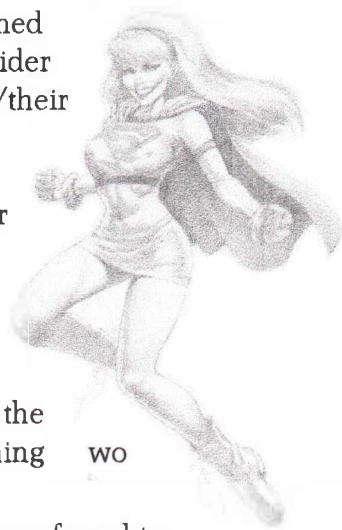
From then on, someone would sign Burdell up every semester. When Tech went to computer registration, the Dean or someone made the mistake of publicly stating that nothing wo uld be heard of Burdell henceforth.

Come registration day, Burdell was found to be in the computer for every section of every class in the catalog.

Personally, i'm not very impressed with Luckovich's stuff. In my opinion, the J-C took him on because they drove away the best political cartoonist they had in a long time -- Doug Marlette -- and lost "Scrawls" to retirement, and Luckovich's stuff kind of looks slightly like Scrawls's if you hold it on a diagonal and sorta squint.

Couple years ago i rode a Greyhound to Louisville (and back a couple months later) and at one point i looked up from my book and out the window and i was staring straight at Wigwam Village (or its identical twin brother).

The "...three girls who sang the a capella 'Hallelujah Chorus'..." you refer to are almost certainly the Roches. I



would want to carefully consider anything Rolling Stone said about them; most of the music industry seems to regard them as some sort of freaks because they prefer to write and perform their own material in an idiom all their own without asking Big Boys who obviously Know Better than the little girls what's a good idea to do... As to their "Hallelujah Chorus" -- yes, it is a sort of trick, though i believe that they worked up the arrangement originally for a strolling Christmas carolling gig they did, collecting money for Good Causes. They all turn out to be younger than me -- even Maggie (i think she may be your age) and are wonderfully crazy ladies from whom i turn put to be two degrees of seperation away, because when Maggie and Terre were in Hammond LA they were roommates of the elder sister of Bill Davis of Dash Rip Rock. They did voices for "the singing Roach Sisters" on a Tiny Toons episode, and the funniest joke in the routine turned on being familiar with their personalities and stage show. They write beautiful songs and sing them in weird harmonies and they've retired the act and i miss them tremendously.



Dee Dee Ra- mone Remem- bered By Kurt Loder

06.06.2002

The Ramones, with their torn jeans, black leather jackets and walloping, supercharged riffs, were not only the definitive punk band (they created the classic

form); they were also a great American band. And Dee Dee Ramone — who died at his home in Hollywood on Wednesday night at the age of 50 — was a crucial creative motor within the group (see "Dee Dee Ramone Found Dead In Los Angeles").

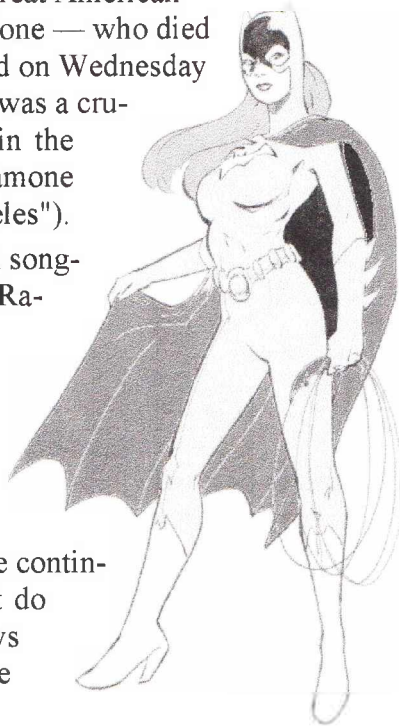
"He was the main songwriter," guitarist Johnny Ramone told MTV News. "And he was one of the great star bassists of all time — the model for all the punk bassists after him.

"It's shocking," he continued. "I thought he didn't do drugs anymore. He always walked a tightrope, but he was a survivor."

Dee Dee

and Johnny had talked about forming a band as far back as 1972, when they both had piddling jobs with the same company in their native Forest Hills in Queens, New York. "Then we decided we wanted to be normal — and you can't be normal if you're in a band," Johnny said. "But then I lost my job in 1974, and I said to him, 'Well, let's start a band.' "

The group ultimately wound up including minimalist drummer Tommy Erdelyi ("Tommy Ramone") and singer Jeffrey Hyman ("Joey Ramone" — who died of lymphatic cancer just 14 months ago). Johnny (born John Cummings) provided the group's thunderous riffs (played so fast that their early sets at New York's CBGB sometimes lasted just 20 minutes). Joey brought a loveable, melodic bubblegum consciousness to the group. Tommy contributed a basic, compulsive thwack. And Dee Dee, who wrote such early Ramones gems as "Havana Affair" and "Long Way Back to Germany," (and hollered out the "One! Two! Three! Four!"





kickoffs so familiar to fans at live shows), added a sometimes startling personal candor. (One of his songs, "53rd and 3rd," on the Ramones' 1976 debut album, reflected his experiences as a sometime male hustler scrounging for drug money at that notorious Manhattan pickup intersection.)

Dee Dee's longtime heroin addiction often made him difficult to deal with. "He was a complete liar," says former Ramones manager Danny Fields, who's now writing a book about Joey Ramone. "Nothing he said was true. He once told me, 'I think with my heart, man.' I said, 'What a good thing you don't think with your head.' "

On the other hand, Ed Stasium, who worked with the Ramones early on as a producer and engineer, says that Dee Dee "seemed to me at all times to be the same, whether he was f--- ed up or not. But then I never saw him down and dirty."

Stasium recalls talking to Dee Dee after the Ramones recorded their (relatively) biggest commercial hit, the 1980 album *End of the Century*, produced by legendary '60s pop-master Phil Spector (whom Dee Dee claimed held him captive in his mansion). "He told me, 'Man, I don't know who played bass on that record. I know I wasn't there.' But, you know, he definitely was."

After years of unjustly minimal record sales and brutal, nonstop touring, Dee Dee quit the Ramones in 1989. He briefly became a rapper, of all things (very unsuccessfully), and later, after moving to L.A., an extremely marginal novelist. He was also a painter in later years; and although the popular perception was that he had fallen out with the Ramones because of their incessant internecine squabbling, Dee

Dee in fact kept writing songs for the group right up through their studio swan song, the 1995 album *Adios Amigos*.

"They were guys who had arguments between themselves," says Arturo Vega, the Ramones' art director and conceptual consultant. "But by the next morning, they'd be talking to each other again." Dee Dee reunited with the Ramones for their induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in March; and just a few weeks ago, at a solo-with-band appearance at a booksellers' convention in New York, he offered up a tribute to his departed friend Joey, performing the signature Ramones tunes "Pinhead" and "Blitzkrieg Bop."

Johnny Ramone said it "took about 12 hours" before Joey's death sank in last year, and he figured there'll be a similar lag in processing Dee Dee's departure. "It's hard, you know? It's hard to hear about these things and finally realize ... you know: 'They're gone.' "

Walter Brennan was playing character roles as far back as about 1940, when he appeared with Bogart and Bacall in *To Have and Have Not*.

Twyggdrasil & **Treehouse Ga-** **zette** **R Dergrove**

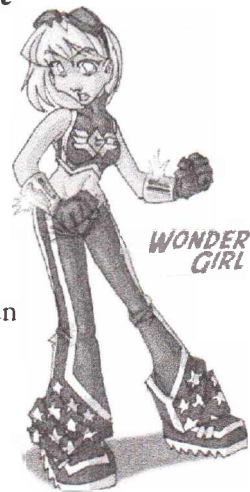
The book that "proves" that *Through the Looking Glass* alludes to Jewish wisdom sounds like the claims i heard a few years ago that *The Wizard of Oz* was actually a populist/

Granger "free silver" allegory.

Asbestos as such is not considered hazardous; it's "friable" asbestos that's the bad guy.

Steve lives further from civilisation than we do. And we live way too far from the nearest shopping mall.

I have no trouble believing that the planes hitting the WTC could have caused



that much destruction without added explosives -- all that was necessary was to start a big enough fire, as it turned out, and the whole thing came down. While jet fuel is not, ordinarily, particularly explosive -- it's kerosene, after all -- punch the plane in through the walls, ripping the wings, where most of the tankage is off and open in the process, and i-don't-know-how-much kerosene sprays out on everything and gets ignited and there you go.

I have gotten grouchier and grouchier as i see those "This is Dena, This is the nickel bag that Dena bought ... This is the family who were wiped out because they got in the way of the cartel." teevee spots, which claim that marijuana has to be smuggled into the US, putting it into the hands of the drug cartels. It seems as if each generation forgets that when their own parents lied to them about things they could check on, they tended to disbelieve other things that were actually true, and having forgotten, repeats the exercise.

I find Faust's "Max Brand" westerns unreadable (he also created Dr Kildare under that name). *Yes, Destry Rides Again* is a "Max Brand"; i don't recall hearing of a musical version; Dietrich sings a couple songs in the saloon in the Jimmy Stewart film.

While the Magen David may not be a religious symbol, it is a symbol of religion.

I think i paid \$25 for this current monitor; it's a decent Samsung.

Forbidden Planet based on *The Tempest*? Wosname the scientist is Prospero. Robbie is Ariel. The Monster From The Id is Caliban. The planet is Prospero's island. There's no doubt, actually.

The problem with the bit about people {the record industry} "not wanting to lose their property rights" is, unfortunately, that the people who own those rights -- and make the real money off them -- are not the people who actually make the music.





"Rock musicians, eh? Are you rich then?"

"No -- but me manager is."

(Malcolm MacDowell and Alan Price in *O Lucky Man*)

Parish records were often used to establish citizenship and residence and so on in the 18th Century and even later.

About reprogramming cell phones -- unfortunately, i'm pretty sure that a Sprint phone can't be reprogrammed to work with AT&T -- i think they're using incompatible systems. I do know that Kate's AT&T can't be reprogrammed to work with Veri-

zon, for instance.

Well, whether you say that Herriman was Black probably depends on just what percentage of Black ancestry makes you Black; we'll have to let Don respond on this, but it seems to me, for some reason, that he was what might better be called Creole. And i don't think the gender of the Kat was ever definitively established.

"The Girl with Three Blue Eyes"? Try "Eight foot two, solid blue..."

Buffy? Confusing? Not if you don't shut off your brain...

Mentioning products on a radio or teevee program is "product Placement" or, by analogy from "payola", which was, indeed, bribing deejays to play certain songs, it was called "plugola".

Sorry -- zero Fahrenheit is not the freezing point of salt water; ice cream freezers work by exploiting the freezing point of salt water as opposed to fresh, and they don't get down to zeroF.

Oh, the musical *Buffy* was great; the problem is that thwriters couldn't seem to make up their minds where they were going, and the Nerds Of Doom were a pretty cheesy Big Bad. I understand that Joss had to come back and script-doctor several episodes after having signed off to others at the beginning of the season.

Ummm ... "Debra"? I don't remember any such. Perhaps Diedre?

As to Wonder woman and Bill Gaines -- see Don's comment this mailing about that; it was Bill Gaines's father who originally pulished Wonder Woman as owner of one of the two companies that merged to form today's DC.

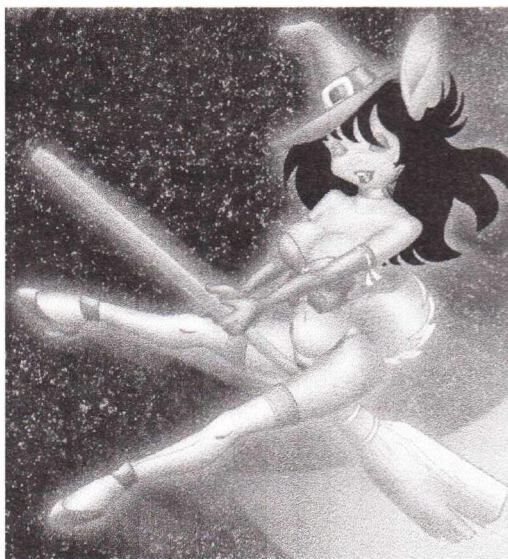
"Two Live Crew certainly become annoying." No, Two Live Crew start out annoying, and go downhill from there.

Well, as i pointed out, the length i calculated was for a sustained acceleration of 10G. Norm says that Verne actually posulated an acceleration in the thousands of G to get a workably-short barrel, apparently deciding in his accurate scientific way that it would be survivable.

Actually, Judge Lynch hanged the prisoner himself, rather than let an angry mob free him. In some versions of the story (and there may be actual evidence for it) the condemned man that the Judge hanged was his own son.

Originally, Joe was an Indian character with strong First American (thank you, Canada) features. This was because the 45th Division, in which Mauldin began the war, was heavily laced with Indians (many of whom, who may actually have been better educated on average than the whites in the division, liked to play the Noble Savage bit on unwary visitors, including officers from the Inspector General's office and Congressmen...). At some point, as Mauldin's cartoons began to be seen throughout the Army in Stars & Stripes, that character metamorphosed into (or was replaced by) Willy, who was apparently a Whiteyes, albeit with a beak that made even my Dad and kid brother Jim's bowsprits look small-ish, and a new, non-descript (and apparently a bit less bright) straight man character (something of a self-caricature) was introduced, and named "Joe", the same as the earlier character.

But it (the carnivorous plant bit) was done so well and -- relatively -- subtly in *Minority Report*.



Haven't seen *XXX* yet, and i want to, but a bunch of new movies start today (it's 0530 Friday, 10/11) -- i've heard good and bad about *The Transporter*, particularly, and it's written by Besson...

osushigumi JCopeland

Dead Zone is the only Stephn King that i both finished AND liked. I particularly like the cameo by Bradbury's lightning rod salesman -- which Brad

Linaweaver and Bill Ritch, both huge Bradbury fans, failed to spot.

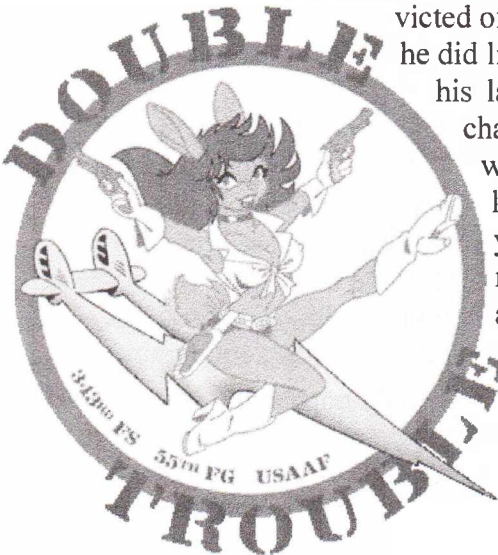
Unfortunately for your thesis here, the actual blunder in the charge of the light Brigade was made on the field, by the officer on the spot.

While the organisers and Right Wing spin masters managed to keep it from getting a lot of exposure -- amazing how things truly embarrassing to the Right have to be incredibly egregious to get significant coverage in the "liberal dominated" press -- everything in the first two sentences of your review of *Blinded by the Right* was available for those who had eyes to see and ears to hear and actually used them.

Of course, Clinton probably can not, in fact, be convicted of perjury, even though he did lie under oath. He lost

his law license over a charge of contempt -- which is something a lot of working lawyers who maintain a relatively high profile and go to court much may well be tagged with at some point in their careers.

Aluminum isn't magnetic, but the





eddy currents a strong magnetic field can set up in it can make it do Interesting Things -- we had a sort of "Mr Wizard"-type guy who came to my grammar school and, among other things, had a powerful electro-magnet (AC powered, i'm sure) -- he could set a flat aluminum plate on it, switch it on, and the aluminum plate would jump straight up several inches.

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As part of the current cross-title continuity in the Superman titles, "Ending Battle", Superman and Luthor have a long and relatively civil -- and private -- conversation which looks as if it could begin a redefinition of their relationship.

Also, we find out that the Secret Service's codename for President Luthor is "Cueball".

I do a Google on "mike weber" and i get an unlimited hydroplane driver who lives in Dawsonville GA.

Anyone care to check the address in the colophon of this zine?

My website comes near the top of the second page. I search on "michael a. weber" and i get about ten or more pages mostly about a doctor who specialises in hypertension. I also discover that the priest Dan Ackroyd played in a tee-vee series was named "mike weber". *Sigh*

Alltheweb.com works pretty good, too -- i did a search on the same criteria i'd given Google earlier one day and found a bunch of stuff that Google hadn't hit. Of course, it missed stuff that Google came up with. So i use both -- if one doesn't hit good, i try the other before giving up.

"Stationary stores" -- i would hope that all stores (except perhaps those on boats) are stationary. I think you meant "stationery", so called because you bought it from a "stationer" who had a "station" where he set up outside (i

believe) the Inns of Court.

I have, on occasion, driven Mercedes. I always felt as if should be heading off to invade Osterich. Neal Boortz drives a Mercedes. (Janice will get that one even if no-one else outside Atlanta does).

Speaking of gorgeous women with brains -- Brinke Stevens has a degree in Marine Biology; i believe at least a Master's.

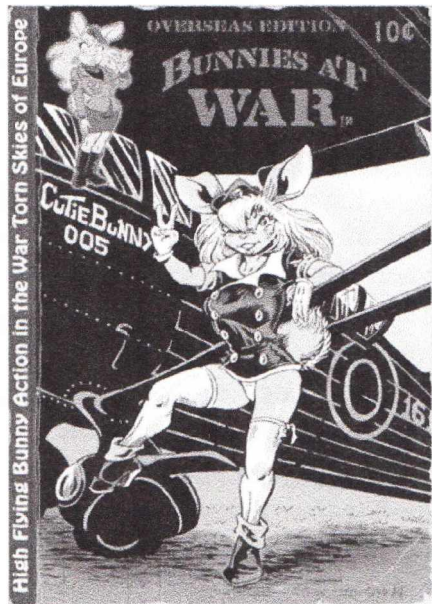
The demo in which the pilot, gun ready to use, didn't have time to is all too common -- every year a number of people are shot with their own guns that they had on hand to "protect their homes".

Allegedly about the best dramatised *Dracula* ever, from what i hear, may well have been Gorey's Broadway production, which, i believe, starred Langella.

Part of the trick to finding the more outre Supergirl, et al, images is to use "Advanced Image Search" and to be sure to turn off the nannyware that's built into Google that you have got to "Advanced" to even find out about...

What's the difference between a BB gun and a pellet gun? One fires BBs, one fires pellets. Okay?

Further definition: A BB is a solid round steel shot covered with copper. A pellet is a bullet/slug-shaped lead doohickey. Generally, airguns that shoot pellets hit harder and are more accurate than guns that shoot BBs. I have checked the specs on some of Crosman's CO2 pellet guns, and they throw a lead pellet with like 50%-plus of the velocity of a .45 round.



We seldom get blind calls from people trying to sell us stuff -- though i did get one from the newspaper just yesterday.

Jack the terrier went through a period when she played

New Port Ned

with a pair of slippers that Helen and i bought for Kate as a gift -- they had Scooby-Doo heads. She would pounce

on one, carry it somewhere "safe" -- sort of a "neutral corner", i guess -- and then "kill" it in the way you describe, which is hardly unique to feral dogs; it's the way that terriers usually kill their prey. She also gets intensely interested in mice she scents when we take her out walking -- one night she



pounced and caught one while she was still on the leash.

Nah. They can't get pizza delivered 'cos Hank was out throwing axes last time they ordered it and the delivery boy took one look and spread the word... It's like the house where the monster lives in the cheap horror films.

It's possible that if you install software with the anti-virus software on and don't restart either the computer or the anti-virus software that that software (and anything it does) won't be covered by the anti-virus until you do.

We just got our PCs networked. Of course, if we go beyond two we'll have to get a hub; right now we're just using a crossover cable between the two.

All alkaline batteries are (technically) rechargeable -- the reaction is easily reversible, so long as you monitor the cell's internal temperature in some way -- i think there's a characteristic relationship by which you can monitor the current being pulled and relate it to temperature changes so the cell doesn't explode or at least rupture. As long ago as the latter Sixties, Mallory (then-makers of the Duracell alkaline line) were promoting "rechargeable alkalines" and selling a charger for same.

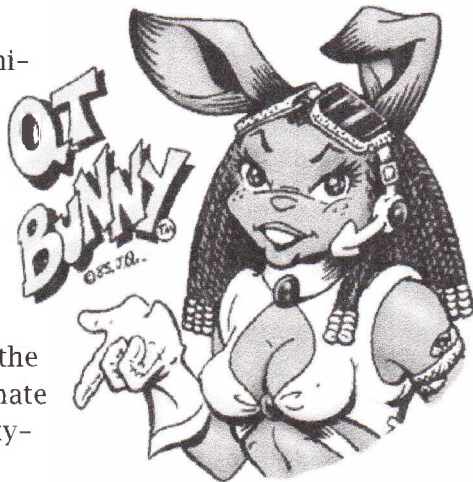
The classic stereoscope has a prism that more less enforces convergence when you look through it.

As to not having gotten MSWorks when you expected it on the computer -- OpenOffice is a free download and it Works Good. (<http://openoffice.org> will do it)

As i understand it, UNIX is a true multi-tasking OS, which DOS and Windows aren't.

I miss the AFLAC duck; the one where it hurled after riding the roller coaster was lovely. I despise GEICO, but they do have some good teevee spots -- the one with the squirrels high-fiving after one times its run in front of a car perfectly causing the car to crash offscreen is a classic, and some of the gecko spots -- especially the mascot auditions, with the former Taco Hell chihuahua. (Kate and i and some of our friends ritually chorus "Bring back the dog!" after every successive new Taco Bell ad travesty.)

The surface of aluminum is a layer of aluminum oxide it it's exposed to air -- a good tight mechanical connection -- say a screw-lug type, of the sort used in electrical panels -- cuts through the oxide layer, makes intimate contact and prevents oxy-



gen from getting in. The thermal creep, however, causes the connection to loosen, which allows O2 in, which increases the resistance even more than if the connection were merely loose, which leads to heat, which leads to fires. At the apartments where we lived before we moved out here to Dawsonville, the wiring was aluminum, and the new management instituted a program of annual inspections and retightening of the connections in the breaker panels.

Last i heard, Forry was out of the hospital and having to break up his collection and hold a huge yard-sale selling everything for horribly low prices.

Ummm -- a mile-long Columbiad. Assuming constant acceleration over the length of the tube, that's an average speed through the tube of

$$v(\text{average}) = 7 \text{ mi/sec} / 2 \\ = 3.5 \text{ mi/sec}$$

so that the time through the tube is

$$1/3.5 = .286 \text{ sec.}$$

which means that, substituting in $d = a/2 * t^2$, we get

$$a = 2 * 5280 \text{ ft} / .0818 \text{ sec}^2$$

$$a = 1164277 \text{ ft/sec}^2$$

$$a = 1164277 \text{ ft/sec}^2 / 32 \text{ ft/sec}^2$$

$$= 4035g \text{ (approx)}$$



therefore:

$$a = \text{ouch!}$$

It may be possible for humans to ride a higher sustained acceleration than 10g and survive; i haven't done any research on the question, i just picked ten as a semi-plausible-sounding number that might make the calculations a little cleaner.

I'm sorry i haven't gotten back to you with the tape i

made of your DVD of "Stone Tape" -- i taped it twice on the same cassette, once straight and once with the audio commentary track running. I'll try to get it in the mail soonest.

Guy didn't call me either -- and i have even dealt with the photo-equipment dealer he was here to visit (which, incidentally, since i didn't get an MC to Guy in last mailing, is nowhere near the "original" [and current but not for much longer] location of the Book Nook -- which is [for a while longer] right there at the intersection of Clairmont and Buford Highway. Apparently the little strip mall it's been in since about '73 or so is finally coming down, and they're moving to what sounds like the site of Irv's old "Cookbook and Mystery Bookstore" or right next door to it...)

I like the Mauldin cartoons on the covers.



Your cover pretty well hits the mark. Since we have a Hall-of-Famer on the Braves' broadcast staff, we heard about the Hall of Fame members' letter to management and Players' Association a bit before it broke nationally. *Tank McNamara*, which was roasting players and management equally over this (and has had a few choice things to say about contraction and the sever-

al-hundred-percent increase in the cost of Johnny Unitas autographs and other memorabilia lately) took one of their better shots over it.

Trivial Pursuits J. Gelb

I am so sorry to hear of Neil's death. This has been

THE LETTER, ADDRESSED TO BUD SELIG AND DONALD FEHR, PLEADING WITH THEM TO DO WHAT IT TAKES TO AVOID A STRIKE, WAS SIGNED BY 40 MEMBERS OF BASEBALL'S HALL OF FAME.



the routine with the HazMat team nuking the sock . Also, Waternoose specifically says, speaking to the trainee scarers near the beginning, that there is nothing more toxic than a child. Specifically (i just checked the DVD): "There is nothing more toxic or deadly

such a bad year for deaths of all kinds, and we still have two months to go.

Actually, the monsters in *Monsters Inc.* believe that the kids themselves (and their clothing) are toxic -- if they didn't, there would be no reason for

THE COMMISSIONER AND THE UNION PRESIDENT APPARENTLY HAVE TAKEN NOTICE.



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than a human child. A single touch could kill you."

I'm pretty sure that i'm not using nearly my full server allotment to run ElectronicTiger.com; i could check and see, if anyone would be interested in putting up a SFPA site...

Our \$69 DVD player can be deregionalised by flashing the EEPROM, as i've said -- one can also change the default screen image, and ours currently displays Supergirl and Bat-girl. Since the flash changes the screensaver image also, there must be some way for the user to change that, but i haven't heard of it -- haven't checked the APEX forum, lately, though.

Well, the Goblin does eventually die in the comic, and his successor in the comic is in the film, so it's basically a condensation, rather than a change in the overall storyline.

Nobody much short of Jessica Rabbit (or Kelly O'Hare, as long as we're thinking about bunnies) could have the sexual edge of Mary Jane Watson, at least in comic book terms.

FREQUENT
FLYER
T.FELLER



Ummm, i believe that the Navajo codetalkers did have bodyguards, and would not be surprised if the guards did have orders to prevent their capture by Any Means Necessary.

Minority Report was a "yes, **but...**" film for me -- i can see (and even agree with) all or most of the Bad

with) all or most of the Bad Things people have said about it, but i still, overall, enjoyed it. That said, i doubt that i'd nominate it for a Hugo, if i was going to be nominating for BDP Hugos.

Haven't seen *Signs*. Eventually i'll get the DVD thru NetFlix, i guess. This also applies to *Reign of Fire* and *Sum of All Fears*.

Ummm, minor point -- Bill "Mauldin". And was Murphy considering Mauldin an REMF in his own person, or as a character in the film? Mauldin certainly had combat time, and spent hospital time recovering from a shrapnel wound (drawing, as he often did, inspiration from the experience -- in this case, Willy in a hospital bed, and a Medical Corps major is saying "Well, at least he could lie at attention..."). He was respected by the combat forces of the period. so far as i know.

J.E.B. Stuart could, i think (from what i seem to know about him) legitimately be compared to Custer -- the main way he knew to fight a battle was to charge straight ahead at the enemy. Like Custer, one major redeeming factor in his favour was that he wasn't afraid to lead the charges himself (or do i have him confused with someone else?)

And that shock factor that Jane Fonda mentioned, that total disbelief that this was Henry Fonda up there doing THAT, was what Leone wanted when he cast Fonda.

No, i quoted an article that devoted all that



space to
Scoobie Doo
-- scornfully, in
my reading. It
was about car-
toon charac-
ters. If *Leave*
it to Beaver
was animated
and Mrs.
Cleaver was a
babe in some
peoples' opin-
ions, then i'd have quoted anything the article said
about her.

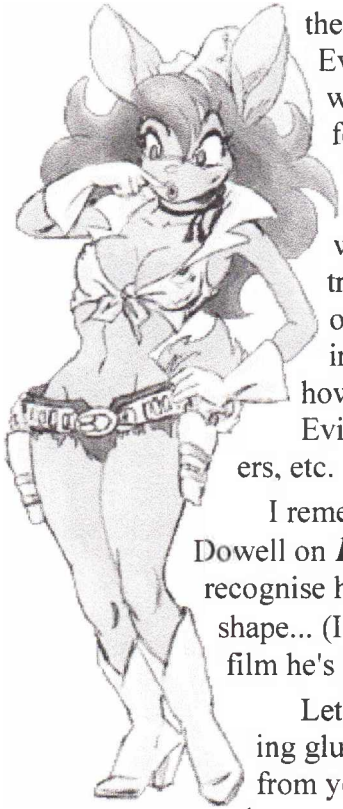


Yup. A Bad Guy is a Bad Guy. The fact that he's Our Bad Guy is irrelevant. But i do think that there is a small amount of logic in considering a Commie Bad Guy a bit worse than the average right-wing Bad Guy, because a basic tenet of Communism (at least the Leninist heresy) is evangelism. If all a dictator does is oppress his own people and lets his neighbours alone, i can see letting him alone. If a totalitarian regime actively tries to export its ideology and subvert other countries, then they are worse than one that doesn't and perhaps some consideration should be given to stopping them. Or at least watching to make sure that other nations that decide to adopt that ideology are doing it because they really think it might be a good idea.

† The Sphere
D.markstein

That said, this is not to say that playing Policeman To The World is, in my opinion, a Good Idea.

Ya know, i can recall when i was in grammar school and



they were teaching us about how in Evil Commyland you never knew who was actually a government informer, just watching for a chance to inform on you. I'm sure that someone who approves of the way that the Bush Minor Administration is trying to make a stukach of every meter reader and postman in the country will explain to us how this differs from the way that Evil Commies use their meter readers, etc.

I remember when i saw Malcolm McDowell on *Pearl* with Rhea Pearlman, i didn't recognise him. I swear his face has changed shape... (I still haven't seen the *Star Trek* film he's in.)

Let's just say that my position regarding glue traps for mice is rather different from yours; i don't want them to suffer, i just want them out of my house. With two cats (at least one of whom would drag home rats bigger than he was when he was half-grown and living in a Bad Part Of Town with his former people) and a fox terrier who once caught a mouse outdoors while on the leash, i'm not terribly concerned about them, in spite of our location out in the woods.

Now, if i could just keep scorpions out of the middle of the floor... (Though we haven't seen any for a while, but they do seem to run in cycles.)

I would recommend against hosting any potential SFPA site on Xoom, because the frame they impose on your pages is a real pain in the butt -- last i checked it made bookmarking the page you're viewing impossible, and would often open frames within frames as you surfed a site, continually cutting down how much of the page can actually be seen...

What some people refer to as "The War on Some Drugs", i reply to the "Federal Drug Price Support Program".

Thanks for the addendum on the Max/Bill Gaines confusion -- i knew about the merger that formed the current DC, but i had forgotten Max Gaines was part of it. I did know that he founded EC and that Bill inherited it.

Well, i feel the same way about the Webederland Incident as i did about the IguanaCon Incident, except not quite so annoyed because in the recent case Shorty seems to have slowed down to the point where he's willing to let it rest after only one screed and to not have incited sycophants to pile on.

What happened to your computer?

My family has several FrankenClone® computers; every time we upgrade ours (and it now has reached the point where even though it's nominally the same computer Kate had when we met, there isn't a single part in it that was in it when we met), the piece parts left over go into upgrading someone else's.

(Of course, the computer i'm typing this on is a 200MHz Gateway machine we bought monitor and all fro only slightly over \$100 and networked with the main machine. Now, if i can just get the update to my DTP that i ordered and get it installed on this one and updated on the other so i can do my zine formatting -- as opposed to text entry -- on either machine, all will be well...)

The 1957 Chevrolet Myth

Since i didn't get around to this in earlier mailings in any detail, and since i seem to recall that Ned was one of the people here repeating the Urban Legend of the Counterfeit Chevies, i thought that this is about as good a place as any to insert this comment.

Allegedly, as



stated by someone here, Irving Wallace and his son, David Wallechensky, in one of their books of "facts", report that the reason we still see so many '57 Chevrolet Bel Airs is because someone obtained/stole the tooling and continues to manufacture counterfeit Bel Airs to this day.



2002 Avanti T-Top (note asymmetric hood treatment, referencing original 1964 car)

In a single word, this is bulldust (as Nichola Monsarrat so delicately has it in *The Cruel Sea*).

There is not, and was not, a single factory capable of building an entire automobile in the manner that would be necessary to make that happen.

One plant builds engines. Another builds transmissions. Electrical systems come from a contractor[1], window glass from another[2], tires from another. Another plant -- whether owned by the company or on contract (depending on volume and whether anything esoteric is involved) makes body parts, and another supplies interior plants.

=====
[1] More or less -- GM has their own captive electrics manufacturer, Delco -- but at one time, at least, Delco and its Ford equivalent, AC, were required to bid in the contracts for new production lines in competitive bidding against other such companies, and woe betide their management if theirs wasn't the winning bid.

[2] At one time, one of the Big Three (Ford, i think) was running a plant that often supplied glass to the other two as well as their own cars; they once used this to leverage one of the others (Chrysler, if memory serves) when both of them were planning to bring out a new model called the "Falcon"...

All of this stuff comes together at the assembly plant -- like Ford's Hapeville plant[3], where they build the Taurus or GM's in Doraville which i can't recall what models they build.

Now, for cars which the company carries parts inventory on, you could go to a dealer or to a parts wholesaler and buy all of the parts necessary to build one -- for about three to four times the total cost of the new car... And parts for a car that's been out of production for more than a third of a century are probably not current stock -- at least, not all of the partsd necessary to build a car.

One might figure that the counterfeiters got hold of the necessary equipment to make body parts and other components.

Aside from the fact that this tooling would be valued in the millions, and its disappearance might be noticed, there is the fact that finding a site large enough to put it all would be difficult and ridiculously expensive, not to mention probably somewhat obvious.

Add to that the fact that while, by today's standards, the selling price of a really cherry '57 Bel Air is high enough that faking one up might actually be profitable, in the period when this operation would have had to be getting started and operating -- the late '50s and early '60s -- you would, essentially, be selling new cars -- ones that cost you more to make than the originals had cost GM -- for used-car prices. While the '57 was very popular in the day, so many of them were built and would have been available for relatively low, typical late-'50s used car prices (an era in which a new car lost as much as 60% of its "value" the minute that the new owner first turned the key in the ignition and started it up that the hypothetical fakers would have

=====

[3] Actually in Atlanta, due to annexation of a slender tail of land running south past Hapeville's city limits, in order to put the plant in Atlanta's taxbase.

to be selling new cars [that cost more than real ones to build] at used-car prices).

Basically, there's no way that the counterfeit 1957 Bel Air is a commercially viable proposition.

I think what the people have gotten hold of and conflated with the popularity and longevity of the '57 Chevy[4] is the story of the Avanti Motor Company of South Bend Indiana, Youngstown Ohio and Villa Rica Georgia.

The Avanti was built by Studebaker, originally. With a body design by Raymond Loewy's shop (also responsible for the Pennsylvania Railroad's GG1 electric motors and other Studebaker models), the Avanti was a really pretty two-seater, an attempt at building a true American sports coupe. Allegedly, Studebaker bought the STP Corporation (or a large interest in it) specifically to have access to the Paxton constant-volume superchargers that were offered as an option on the Avanti. The Avanti was also, i think, the first USA-built production car to have disc brakes -- not the first, certainly one of the first.

It debuted in 1963, when Studebaker was already struggling.

It might well have saved the company if (A) people had known about it and (B) Ford hadn't introduced, the next year, the Mustang which, for about half or less of the price,

=====

[4] Let's face it, American iron of the day was enormously overbuilt and durable. If it survived the general level of neglect that American owners afforded their cars in the day (when it was typical to buy a new car every year or two and people pretty much just changed the oil and drove them till something major broke before they consulted a mechanic -- except for tune-ups, which were necessary every few thousand miles because the ignition systems of the day were prone to get out of adjustment and/or simply wear out) or was properly maintained, there is no reason at all a typical Fifties coupe shouldn't live 50 years or more. Especially if it's popular and the aftermarketers get into the act with parts and so on.

looked like it ought to deliver the sort of performance and general quality that the Avanti, in fact, did.

Then Studebaker moved its production from the US to Canada, and decided to discontinue production of the Avanti, which was a high-cost, low margin "prestige" limited-production model, concentrating on standard passenger cars.

Well, we can look around us at all the 2002 Studebakers we see every day and see just how successful *that* idea was.

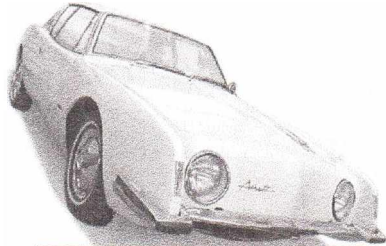
However, there were a number of fibreglass body shells (which were produced by an outside contractor) already bought and paid for or in the pipeline, and the plant (with tooling in place in South Bend Indiana where the Avanti had been produced was standing empty and not doing the local economy a whole hell of a lot of good. Studebaker needed to sell the idle plant and recover as much as it could, and South Bend needed an industry, so a group of locals -- at least one source says the employees at the plant -- formed the Avanti Motor Company, and began production of the Avanti II. The II was essentially identical to the original (the Excalibur SS 1938 Mercedes look-alike used a modified Avanti platform, i believe), with minor exterior changes -- adding a "II" to the name, deleting the Studebaker logo, etc. However, the sharp crisp lines and asymmetrical styling cues of the original were maintained.

The major difference between the II and the original was that the owner could specify exactly what he wanted in the way of exterior finish and interior trim. One car rolled out with a Carrera marble dashboard. Another had all interior fabric done with genuine Harris tweed. And so on.

Under various managements, the Avanti remained in production till the '90s.

And began again, in 2001, in Villa Rica Georgia, of all places.

For further info, consult <http://avantimotors.com>.



1964 Studebaker Avanti (i think)
– original logo, no side lights

I'm going to cut this off at 40 pages -- there may be more, since i'm not nearly through with MCs...

Sounds as if your floppy drive itself is going out on you. Last i heard, FDDs were cheap, and anyone who knows which end of a screwdriver cuts your hand when it slips ought to be able to crack the case and replace one.

Revenant
S. Strickland

Of course, cracking the case can often be the hardest part of a computer repair to figure out, even for experienced professionals.

Ghosh, i miss the machines --

Acer, maybe? -- that used their own case design; totally modular and a snap to open, take apart and put back together, but still used standard form-factor drives, power supplies and cards. Then there was Packard-Bell (in their earlier days, at least) who wanted you dependent on them and used almost totally proprietary-design components.

Your mention of translating "Doggie in the Window" using Babelfish reminds me of Fairport Convention's "Si tu partir dos", which is a "dog-french" translation of Dylan's "If You Gotta Go, Go Now" that they did with audience help one night at a show when they were bored and has become a permanent part of their repertoire since...



STOP PRESS

Went looking for the lyric to that song and found a four-CD set that is gonna be my birthday present; four CDs of Fairport rarities and oddities, a 180-page book, a book of posters and such from the Cropredy Festival, a Pete Frame Family Tree of Fairport (more up to date than the monster that's in his first collection; a chart entitled "Resolving the Fairport Confusion", which only covers up to the

temporary breakup in 1979, and still lists thirteen different lineups, i think... According to the Amazon site, his comment is "If you bastards change the lineup one more time, you can find yourselves another f**kin' geneologist..." and -- if mine is one of the first 5000 shipped, a certificate for a free fifth CD. Amazon lists the set at like \$91; but some of their "Z-Shops" vendors have it for rather less; so we ordered one at \$64. Now all i hope is that that vendor hasn't sold out and just not been updated yet, as happened when i was trying to find a copy of a book for my mother to give as a birthday gift to someone...

END STOP PRESS

Overall, the '90 Honda that we bought recently has been a Good Buy --even if we did have to replace the engine; the warped head that led to this came about because something put a hole in the radiator, nothing to do with the car's condition when we bought it. Gas mileage has been running high 20's to low 30's MPG, and the only current annoyance is that the A/C has stopped working.



I'd say that if you shot either a rabbit or a squirrel with buckshot, you'd probably have rodent-burgers rather than roast rabbit or squirrel. Probably something a little smaller than buckshot; most of the squirrel hunters i've know have popped their tree-rats with .22 rifles, actually.

You're prolly right about being able to predict the story in any given Doc Savage "novel" after having read two or three -- they were some of the most rigidly-formularised stories i've ever encountered.



Anybody else recognise what this "Swamp Thing" drawing is a swipe from?