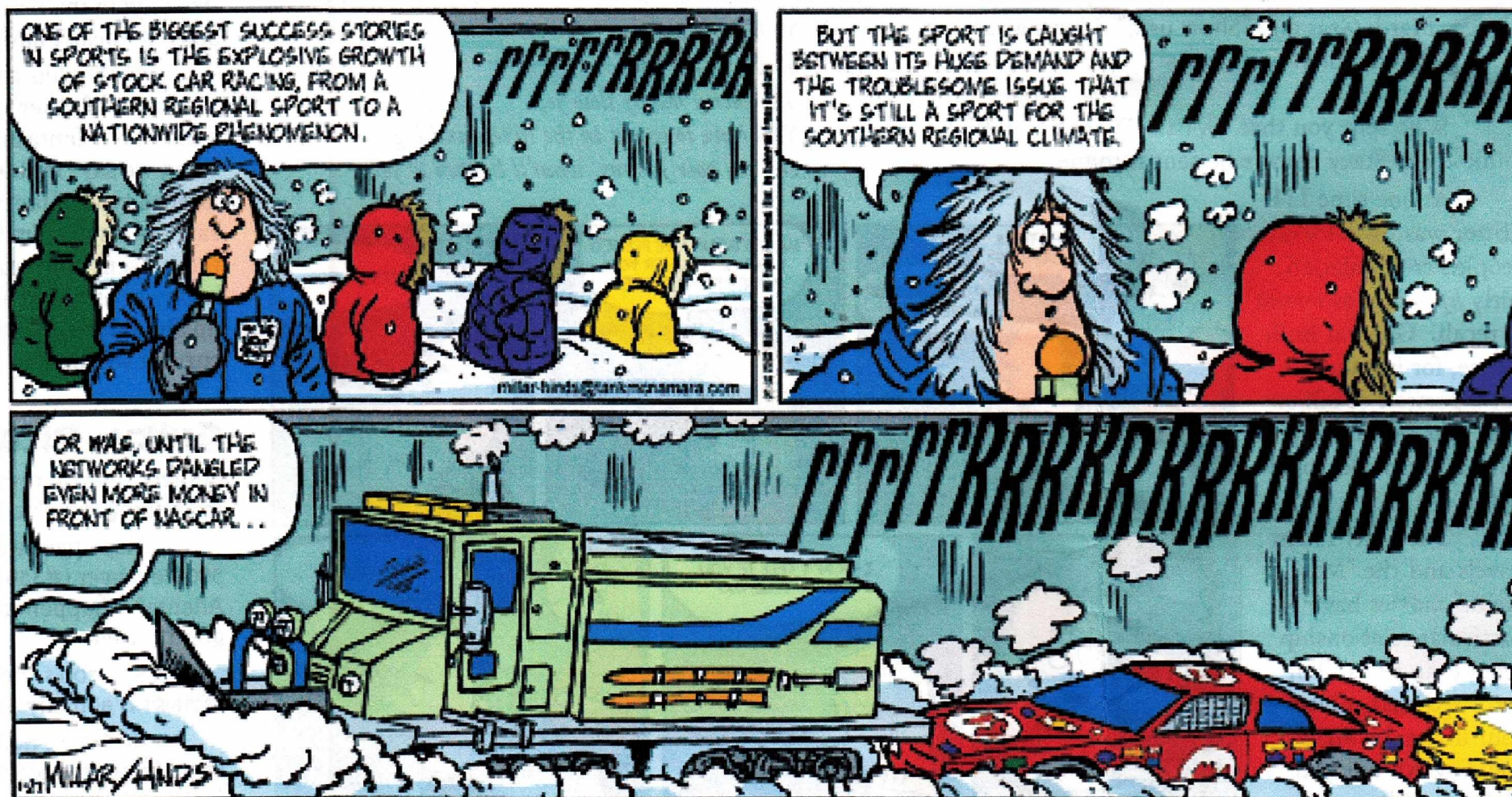


Send Out the Pace Zamboni...

TANK MCNAMARA

BY JEFF MILLAR & BILL HINDS



Mailing Comments on SFPA 226

The Southerner/J.Copeland/Good news -- I'm employed (sort of) making slightly better than Minimum Wage in a convenience store. Assuming that my ankles hold out and that I can remember all the damned prices of things, I ought to be able to cover the dues by next mailing.

Spiritus Mundi/ghliiii/Speaking of Mardi Gras and "Show us..." I have a cartoon parody for you...

Who sent you that "What's Wrong..." URL? I think it was Stacy Shaw who sent it to me.

At one time Li'l Abner was, by a lot of people's triangulation, fairly *left* wing, as i seem to recall. General Bullmoose, for instance, is not a portrait of billionaires that i would expect Oliver Warbucks to admire.

The Matt Helm novels and the "Matt Helm" movies have no particular relationship other than titles. I'm surprised that, given your liking for McGee, you haven't enjoyed Helm as well -- gener-

ally people who like one often like the other. (Though, come to think, Kate is a counter-example; she likes Helm but won't/can't read McGee.)

"Galaxina", you mean? "Putrid SF comedy, you say"? Sigh. "Galaxina" is one of two films that people throughout fandom denounce as trash which, i have found, will fill a video room at 2AM...

"Johnny Comes Marching Home" is a forced-cheerful version of "Johnny We Hardly Knew Ye":

*Ye haven't an arm,
Ye haven't a leg --
The enemy nearly slew ye;
Ye'll have to go out in the streets and beg
Oh, my poor Johnny, what'll happen to ye?*

You're right about the original Red Tornado.

Revenant/s.Strickland/Saw LotR, loved it. I'm looking forward with great anticipation to the next; can't recall a film sequel I've anticipated with more interest, except possibly **Terminator 2**.

We've been making copies of films we didn't feel like buying the DVD of, which our hacked Apex allows since it doesn't have Macrovision any more.

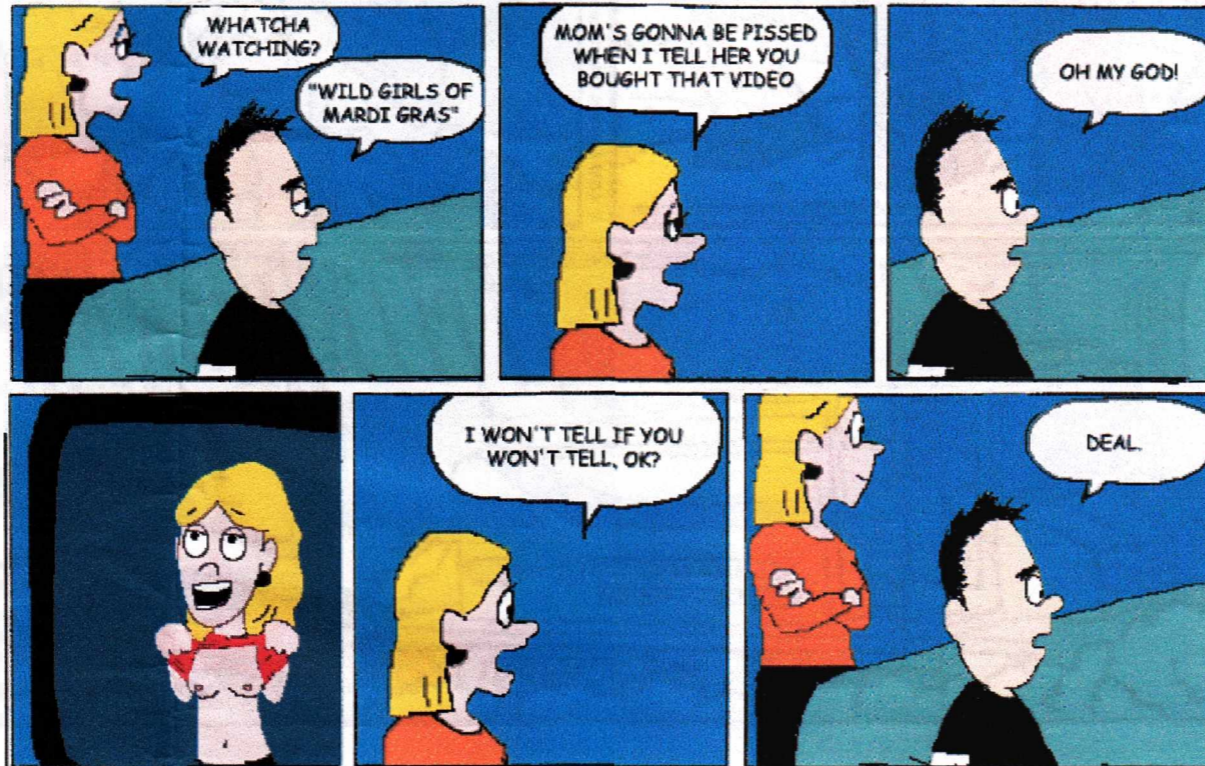
Buffy has a rather higher level of internal logic than a lot of other teevee shows -- and i mean ones that aren't even fantasies (at least in the sense *we* mean when we say "fantasy" -- **Three's Company** was certainly a type of fantasy, but it wasn't what i mean when i say "fantasy".) I'm beginning to get rather annoyed with the present continuity, and am not sure whether i'm happy or annoyed about rumours that Kate has picked up about how Joss plans to deal with this mostly downer current season and its problems.

Guilty Pleasures/E.Ackerman/The quoted Amazon review of **Demolition Angel** "...confirms everything [you]'ve ever believed about those 'reviews'...?"

May i please draw your attention to Amazon Top 500 Reviewer (#359 last time i looked) "fairportfan", from Atlanta? I happen to think I ... I mean, "he" writes pretty good reviews.

Amazon's "Helpful/Not Helpful" voting system on reviews is actually a fairly effective form of peer review...

However, here's two more Amazon reviews of the same book (the second being mine ... I mean, "fairportfan"'s:



Demolition Angel

Robert Crais

Too much smoking!, November 21, 2001

Reviewer: A reader from Huntington Beach, CA
3 stars

I found this book to be very readable and filled with a lot of information about bomb squads that I found fascinating. For some reason, the author is equally fascinated with the heavy smoking habits of the heroine to the point that it was distracting. Why?? Anyway, I'm glad I read it but it could have been a lot more entertaining by subtraction of disgusting habits.

Dark. Scary. Excellent. A New Direction for Crais., July 23, 2001

5 stars

Reviewer: fairportfan from Atlanta

I'm not going to rehash the plot of the book. It's too well-constructed to give you any spoilers, and it's too twisty to do justice to that way anyway.

What I am going to say is that this is the first book in I-don't-know-when that I was literally unable to put down. Once I got past a certain point, everything in my life went on hold until, a couple hours later, I emerged triumphantly at the end of the story.

Let me warn you *not* to expect the same sort of story Crais has been giving us so well with Elvis Cole and Joe Pike -- though there have been hints of darkness in the Pike character and in the most recent book (**L.A. Requiem**), the Cole mysteries are still pretty ops dark and closed in and twisty and it takes you down to where the worms and the bugs and the other dark things live and it shows 'em to you; Crais is working the edges

of Ellroy country here, and it may be disturbing to some people (though I didn't find myself with the feeling that I'd been swimming in lukewarm slime that I usually have after reading Ellroy).

Carol Starkey, who is still trying to come to grips with having been dead for three minutes after a bomb she was working went off, is a sad, sick, brave cop who carries on because The Job is all that's left of her life. "Mr Red", the serial bomber who hunts cops, identified by ATF as the maker of the bomb that kills an LA cop to begin the story, is one of the scariest characters I've encountered in a long time. ATF Special Agent Pell, who works the case with Starkey, is almost as scary as Red.

And the world of explosives freaks and their computer interactions that we're shown is *really* scary, because they're *really* believable.

Judging by the preview for Crais's next book in the back of this paperback, he intends to continue this darker and heavier trend and to not return to Cole and Pike for a while, which is fine; after "L.A. Requiem", Pike and Cole need some time off.

Who recognises this girl? If you can stand a somewhat dark and depressing setting, this is one good read that you ought to try.

LA Requiem, if you haven't gotten to it yet, is going to tell you maybe more than you want to know about Joe Pike -- or, rather, his background, because no-one really learns anything about Joe that Joe doesn't want them to know. Except maybe Elvis.



Playing Pepe le Pew/J.Copeland/
The view of Sherman that Guy so decries, I believe, has pretty much been the view taken of the man and his actions by those who study military history. It has only relatively recently begun to leak out into the popular consciousness, though. Until recently, the public's "heroes" of the Recent Unpleasantness have tended to be people like Stuart or Jackson or other flamboyant/charismatic generals, as opposed to generals who simply set a valid strategic/tactical objective, put their head down, and went for it the best they could, even if that meant, as it were, kickin' and gougin' in the mud and the blood and the beer. Grant and Sherman, two coldly professional soldiers who could not be turned aside (and other slike them), were a major part of the reason for the North's victory.

Like to dream of island vacations, eh? Got this e-mail from an old friend of my family, currently Going Native Big Time in the Islands:

Dreaming about warm and sunny Tortola in the Caribbean? Take a look at our beach villa and all the pictures we have posted on the web for you.

Mention this email and receive 10% off the published rental rates.

We offer an easy payment plan with installment billing on your credit card.

Visit ReservationsBVI.Com to plan your getaway!

Warm & Sunny Regards,

Cynthia Rose, Smuggler's View Beach Villa

ReservationsBVI.Com

Phone 1-284-495-6775 Fax 1-484-214-0188

aVilla4you@aol.com

Cyndi also does catering and gourmet cooking for people vacationing around there.

Your comment that you've never been able to dance in

public like no-one's looking rang a bell; that's exactly how i feel about dancing.

Tyndallite/N.Metcalf/I believe that, in "The Syndic", the Mob (not the Mafia, the Roaring Twenties style Mob, with separate Mobs in each major region) had taken over the entire US, not just New Jersey, driving the Government into exile in England.

New Port/Ned/It's not corrosion per se that causes problems with aluminum wiring -- no one has ever actually seen pure aluminum, since it's so reactive at any reasonable conditions it almost instantaneously covers itself with a molecules-thick skin of aluminum oxide.

No, aluminum's high coefficient of thermal expansion is the problem -- it causes the aluminum to "creep" and loosen connections, resulting in the increased resistance you mention. The apartment were we used to live has aluminum wiring; annually they go through each apartment and make sure that all the connections at the breaker panels are secure.

The 57 Chevy (which design a lot more people who i know approve of than not) wasn't so much "better engineered" than other cars of the period -- it simply came out rather better balanced in the manner that a good hot rod needs to be.

Variations on a Theme/R.Lynch/Re: Aluminum wiring -- the main danger seems to be at the main distribution panel; annual inspection is the ansewer that our former apartment complex went with. Took about five minutes.

"For reading, I take off my glasses." I wish i could do that; to read without correction, i have to hold the material about three inches rom my face and close one eye, as i have to hold it too close for the images to fuse. I had an eye exam a while back, go tnew contacts and wore them for about two weeks; i had to use +1.75 diopter reading glasses over the contacts to read or do close work, so i went back to my 1990-vintage glasses.

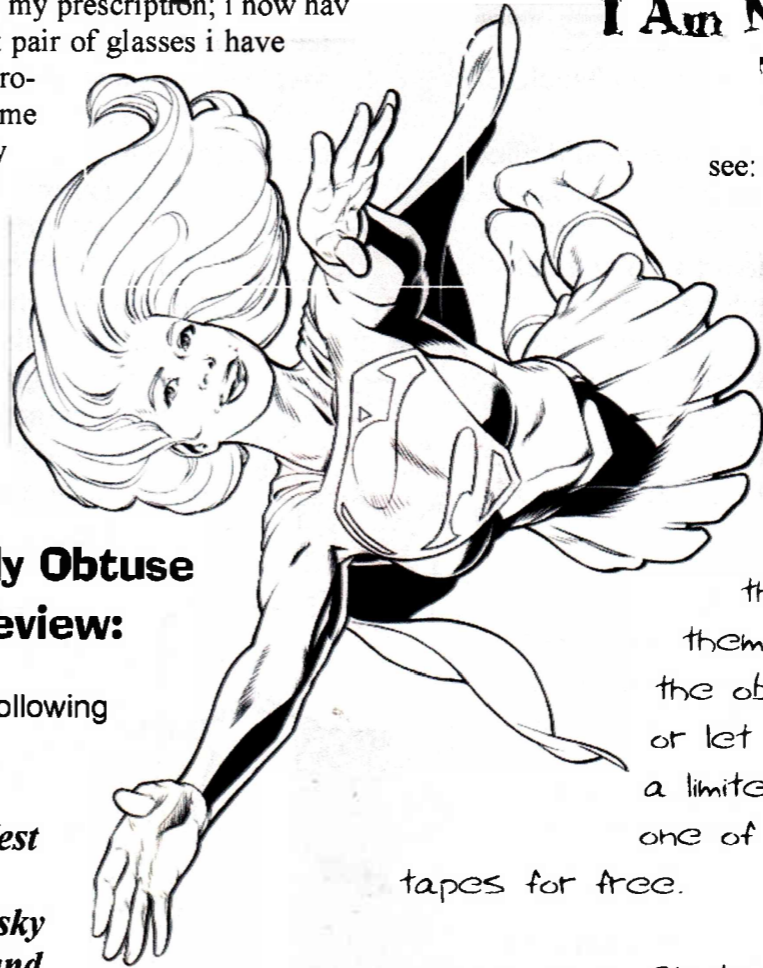
Then my cousin Bill, who works for an ophthalmologist and used to work at Pearle got hold of my prescription; i now hav -- at no expanse to me -- the best pair of glasses i have owned in years, even if they are progressives. They would have cost me something like \$350 - \$400 to buy -- and they include magnetic clip-on sunglasses; they are made of some hyper-refractive plastic we didn't have last time i bought glasses, and are about half the thickness of any glasses i have owned since i reached adulthood.

Another Amazingly Obtuse Amazon.com Review:

0 of 42 people found the following review helpful

Once Upon a Time in the West
Posted August 9, 2000
Reviewer: Michael Rybikowsky
from Charlotte Hall, Maryland US.

This film is a waste of money. It is so slow you can see moss grow on the actors. It should be called Faces. If you can stand to watch the whole laborious thing. You will know every pore in the face of the major actors. I bought this Poor excuse for anything from Amazon.



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Hmmmm....

The "Luann" comic strip is one of my favourites, as he does things in what is ostensibly a "Cute Teenager" strip that you might not be able to get away with in more openly adult-themed ones.

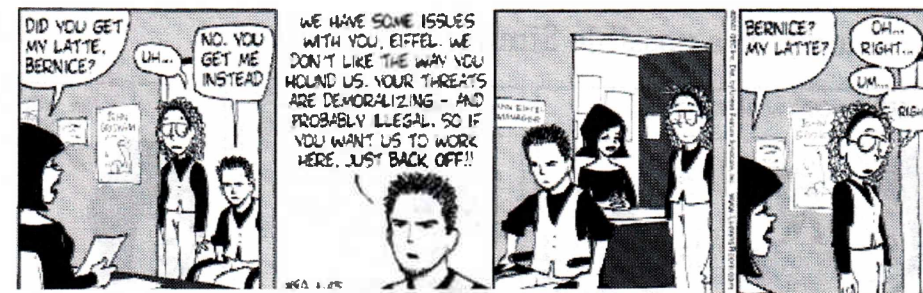
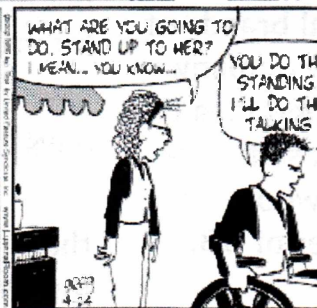
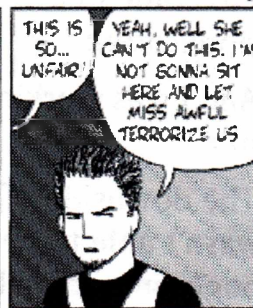
Examples include Luann coming Very Close to Giving In with Miguel in Lover's Lane, Miguel's return to Spain after being framed for Tiffany's cheating, and other things.



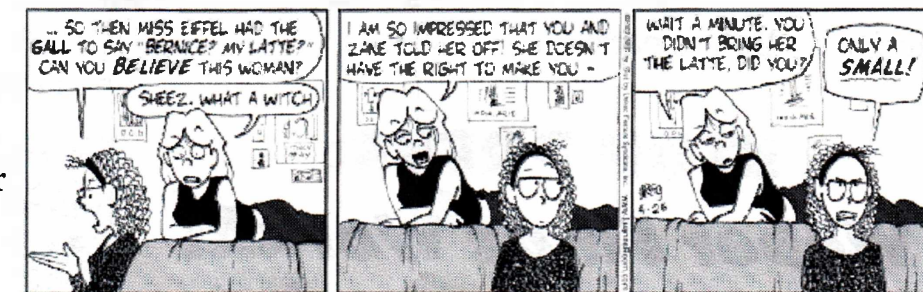
Lately, Luann's friend Bernice (the "Willow" of the strip, as Tiffany is the pre-Scoobie "Cordelia") has been working at a mega-bookstore chain (with a Barnes & Noble parody name). Her immediate supervisor is the wheel-chair bound Zane, toward whom Bernice is having feelings she's not real sure about, complicated by the thought that Zane definitely thinks him and Bernice dating would be a Good Idea.

And then there's store manager Ms. Eiffel, who has been quite bitchy in a manner that stops just short of harassment about "frater-nisation" between Bernice and Zane; it appears to all as if she may have designs of her own on Zane and be contemplating improper use of authority in this pursuit.

MAYBE THIS VERSION IS MORE RECOGNIZABLE...



Okay, so Bernice and Zane confront Eiffel in her office about the matter (well, Zane does the



confronting, but Bernice is there.



Then we have two strips with Luann and Bernice discussing the matter.

And, as of 4/29/02, we have the strip on the next page, which to my

mind suggests a possible Similar But Different



Motive on Eiffel's part.

Well -- they were horribly disorganised then and nothing seems to have changed much, except that their managerial style has a wider arena to play out its absurdities in.

I originally asked if the store at Highway 400 on the edge of Dawsonville had any openings; they said that they didn't, but they gave me the number for the store up in Dawsonville proper (right next door to Bill

either Lexington KY or Alexandria VA for a Fairport Convention concert. Oh, well, there's always next August at Cropredy, if all of us geezers survive another eighteen months and we have enough income to pay my way by then.

Anyway, I worked about three weeks on various shifts, and then they fired most of the staff at the Hwy 400 store, having come up some thousands of dollars short on audit. ((This included the guy who had just transferred to the Dawsonville store as Assistant Manager from the Hwy 400 store the week before.)) So they sent me down there to

cover one shift when they hadn't been able to get anyone hired and trained in time, and the District Manager and the Store Manager asked me if I would be interested in transferring there permanently. I said Okay; it's closer to home and they were offering to keep me pretty well on one shift (it was Day

shift, unfortunately, not third, which is my prefer-

STOP PRESS:

Weber Finds Work!!!

Meanwhile, since Kate still has not found work at her old level, I have gone out and found myself A Job.

This is not A Job that is going to Allow Us To Live At The Level To Which We Had Become Accustomed; it's barely more than Minimum Wage (\$7.25/hr) at a convenience store.

I find myself working at a Kangaroo convenience store; Kangaroo is one of several brands of convenience stores owned by a NC company named "The Pantry". I have a pretty good idea that "The Pantry" is a successor to the SC-based company named "Handy Pantry" in one of whose convenience stores I worked in the summer of '73.

If it is,...



I particularly like the expression on Ms. Eiffel's face in this panel...

Elliott's HQ). I called and left a message for the manager, who called back the next day, inviting me to come in the next day for an application...

And I was working three days later.

The downside of this is that I wasn't able to get away for enough time to make it to



ence a lot of the time, anyway, as I basically live on VST (Vampire Standard Time) when I don't have either job or school or real social life forcing me to actually go out when the Big Shiny Object In The Sky is doing its thing.

So they moved me down there to fill a few more shifts (and to learn the Significantly Different ways in which they do the company's Standard Procedures) preparatory to moving me permanently at the beginning of this week -- except that the regular 3rd shift guy got fired the second day I was there.

I think he mainly got fired for being a pain in the ass and being late a lot.

So all of a sudden I'm working straight shifts on third shift [10PM to 6AM].

The politics of a job like this -- especially given recent events and upheavals -- can get Really Interesting (all the more reason I sympathise with Bernice and Zane, the last [as of 5/6/02] episode of whose job misadventures appears on this page), but nothing has actually blown up yet. So far, the trickiest thing I'm aware of is a more-or-less harassment of one of the second shift clerks by her ex-husband.

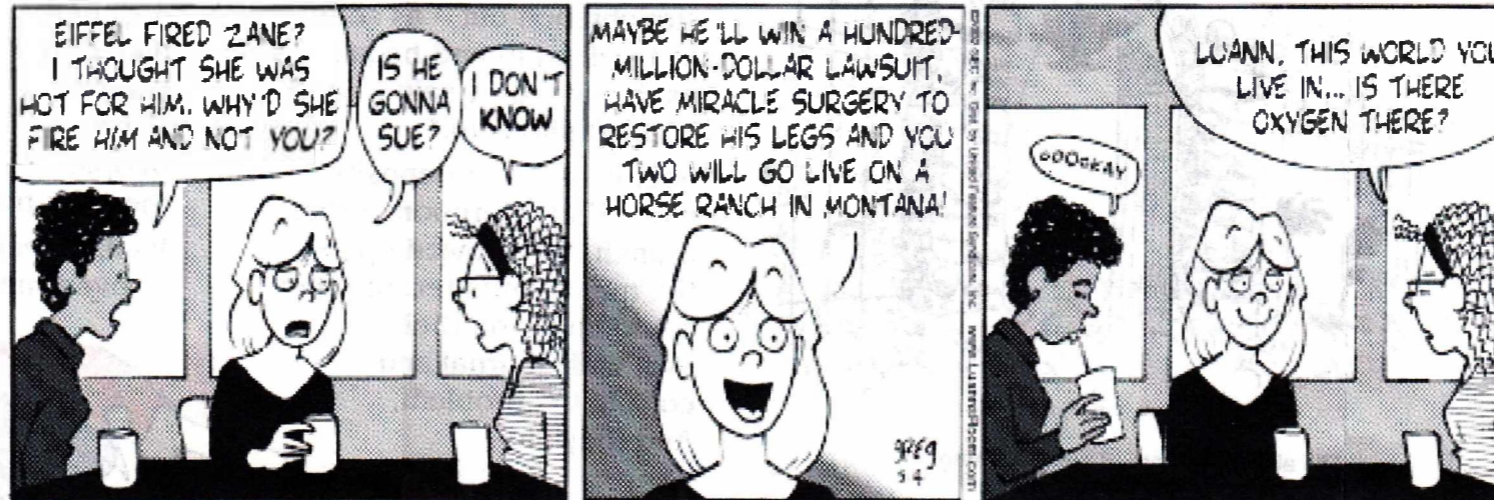
Not nearly as bad as the job in which the manager who was brought in to run an operation he hadn't the remotest understanding of decided

that if I were fired, he could give his boyfriend a job.

The worst part of the whole thing has been that my ankles have been killing me; finally, a month in, they've stopped hurting like hell every shift, though they are still weak and prone to easily

time.

Oh, well, I had Traffic Court last Thursday, and Stepdaughter-Movies-Escort Duty Fraday (*Spider-Man*, of course), and I survived...



George Effinger is dead. Bruce Pelz is dead.

4E Ackerman is in the hospital and apparently not expected to recover.

And those are just the latest.

Uncle Miltie, and someone else -- who was it -- oh, yeah.

Chuck Jones is dead.

Jones had a long and happy life, and he got

to be famous and popular for something as simple and that he loved as much as making people laugh

Simple, right.

Watch a Roadrunner cartoon sometime without getting pulled in and just aitting there laughing. Watch the perfection of the formula, stripped to its barest essentials

The work of a True Master.

Duck Amuck. One Froggy Evening. The Grinch and

turning (under or over, makes no difference to them) if I walk on uneven ground or step on objects that don't support the whole foot evenly.

Back again tonight (Monday) and tomorrow night and the night after -- Wednesday, 5/8, is as far as the current shift schedule runs. The real fun part id the all-staff meeting, fired if you miss it, scheduled for 11AM Tuesday -- exactly in the middle of what ought to be my sleeping



The Phantom Tollbooth: works of genius and perfection and accessible on many levels to anyone.

Gone now, and we will not soon see his equal...

It's only May and it's shaping up to be a really lousy year.

In the past three months, meanwhile, I've totalled our car, leaving us relying on my beat-up truck and Helen's even-more-beat-up 1969 VW Bug.

Kate is still unemployed, and I'm not seeing any signs of anyone offering her a job. My job at Kangaroo is paying enough to cover my own bills, but not rent or other expenses of the household.

I deposited my latest paycheck Friday before 2PM, so it ought to be showing on the balance on the bank's computers today (Sunday). It isn't.

As a matter of fact, there is not even a record on the computer of a pending deposit made Friday.

No problem, says the nice online service lady, just take your receipt in on Monday and we'll get it straight.

Well, lemme see -- I can find the receipts for three out of the last four deposits I've made lately.

Guess which one I can't find?

So I need to go into the bank branch office tomorrow during business hours when I was hoping to be a long way away from there doing the computer repairs I've been promising various family members for weeks...

Life is pretty shitty.

Well, we got the check thing straightened out -- as soon as I walked in and began explaining, they said "...and it didn't show up."

Seems as if NO deposits made that afternoon at that branch had showed up on the main computer, but they could find it on their own daily journal and correct the problem. And they did.

Meanwhile, things continue to be ridiculous at work -- in the last month or so, they have had to fire all but one of the new people they hired -- except for one, and he quit because of the stress right after his two days' training.

So we're down to three clerks and the temporary

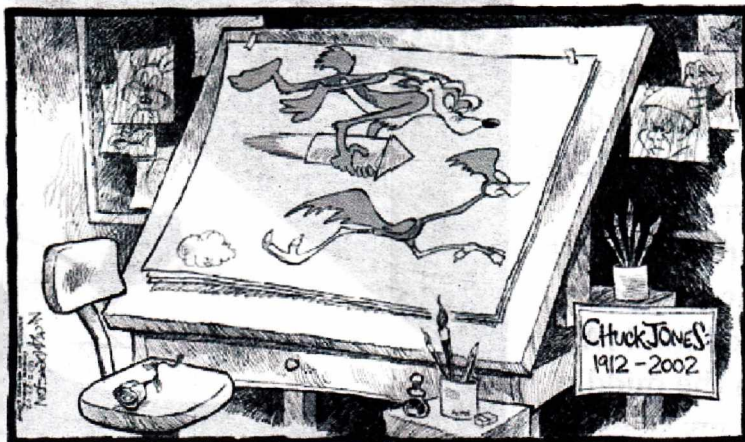
manager, which means I am going to be working every day from now until they find some more people they can trust.

Well, at least I'm getting twenty or more hours of overtime each week.



Chuck Jones, Animator

The above caption, of course, being roughly equivalent to saying "Napoleon Bonaparte, soldier" or "William Shakespeare, playwright"



SUSPENDED ANIMATION

MOLINA
EL ACEVO DIARIO
Managua
NICARAGUA



Sources for Chuck Jones tribute cartoons:
 "Michigan Frog" by Darrin Bell, a freelance cartoonist from California
 "Birdseed" by John Sherffius, the St Louis Post Dispatch
 "Suspended Animation" by Nick Anderson, Louisville (Ky.) Courier-Journal
 "Sign" by Molina, El Diario, Managua, Nicaragua
 "That's All..." by John Cole, Durham (NC) Herald-Sun